School as Usual for SPS Students Monday

But District Snow & Ops Teams Continue to Closely Monitor Conditions

SEATTLE – For tomorrow – Monday, Jan. 13, 2020 -- there is no change to the usual schedule for all SPS schools. Schools will be in session on normal schedules.

Meanwhile, in order to remain responsive to potentially changing weather conditions, SPS officials are continuing to focus on the forecast while following the district’s Snow Preparation and System Closure Guidelines.

When the forecast calls for snow or inclement weather, the SPS Ops and Snow Alert Teams engage in a step-by-step protocol in order to arrive at one of three decisions:

-- School is cancelled
-- School start times are on a two-hour delay, buses on snow routes
-- School is on normal schedule

Protocol

• 48 hours before a forecasted snow event, an alert email is sent to team members.
• 24 hours before a forecasted event, an “all-call” test is activated, with 100 percent participation by both teams.
• At 7 p.m. the evening prior to the snow event, SPS snow drivers are alerted to begin road tests starting at 2 a.m.
• Between 2-2:45 a.m., conditions around SPS “hilltop schools” are verified: Snow drivers navigate streets that are typically impacted by snowstorms and freezing conditions.
• After these road tests, drivers report findings into the district office.
• SPS officials gather intelligence from a variety of sources, including weather updates from NOAA, information from bus transportation provider First Student, input from the Seattle Department of Transportation, input from neighboring school districts, and more.
• At 3:15 a.m., teams engage in a conference call.
• At 3:30 a.m., a determination is made, with the superintendent making the final decision by 3:45 a.m.
• The decision is communicated to media (via First Alert), SPS Board staff, and all service providers.
• No later than 5 a.m., the decision is communicated to SPS staff and student families via robo-calls and SPS website information.

For more information about the district’s Snow Preparation and System Closure Guidelines, see the SPS web page dedicated to providing students, families and the public with full information on the matter.

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