2018-2019 IHM EMERGENCY DELAY, CLOSING AND EARLY DISMISSAL

Day School, Grades K-8

Media? Listen for **Immaculate Heart of Mary School** procedures for late arrival, closing and early dismissal.

During inclement weather we completely understand that parents may make the decision to bring their student in late, or not at all, for safety reasons. Those students are marked 'excused' although still marked 'tardy' or 'absent.'

When ANY school district sends their buses to Immaculate Heart of Mary School for an early dismissal, <u>students will be placed on that bus</u>. The exception would be students who do not ride the bus home after school (car riders will be picked up at the early dismissal time by their adult driver, who would know of the early dismissal via **Parent Alert from OptionC**). As stated in our School Handbook *"… there may be a situation that calls for special preparedness on the parts of families and students… may include early dismissals… BE CERTAIN YOUR CHILD KNOWS WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY EARLY DISMISSAL."* What would your student do if sent home early from school on the bus and you are not home? What if he/she forgot the house key? What if the backup neighbor is not home? **You must have a Family Emergency Plan.**

We do the best we can and depend on parents to help plan for these types of situations. Our goal is the same: ***Keep the Children Safe!***

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Who makes the decision to close school or call for a late arrival or early dismissal? Our school makes this decision, however, we typically follow the Forest Hills School District when making this decision. <u>We worry about the safety of our students in these situations.</u> PLEASE formulate a safe plan for your children.

How will I know there is a delay, closing or early dismissal? A message will be sent via email, phone and text through Parent Alert from OptionC for delay/closing information. We will also post this information on the front page of the IHM School website. During the school day if there is an early dismissal we will use the same email, phone and text format through OptionC. ****Please verify your OptionC contact information and options for notification (email, phone and text).**

I don't live in Forest Hills. If my school district is closed must my children come to school if Forest Hills is open? If you live outside of the Forest Hills School District (*Batavia, West Clermont, Milford, New Richmond, City of Cincinnati, etc*.) it is your responsibility to make sure your student arrives on time to our school, even if <u>your</u> school district is on a delay or closed. If you live outside of the Forest Hills School District and your bus system has a delay, your student will be marked 'excused tardy/absent' <u>if they ride that bus to our school</u>. If the student will be late/absent the parent must still call our absent/tardy line (388-5650). It is YOUR decision, however, as to whether it is safe to bring your student out in inclement weather.

You can also listen to local Channels 5, 9 or 12 for the announcement under "**Immaculate Heart of Mary School**."

I live in Forest Hills, West Clermont, New Richmond, Bethel, etc. Will you contact me via OptionC to let me know that those school districts are on a delay or closed so I know the bus schedule has been changed? NO – we will not send an OptionC notice. We will only call you in the morning with Immaculate Heart of Mary School information. We WILL, however, notify you if there is an early dismissal and your school district decides to pick up your child early. The reason for this decision: school districts other than Forest Hills do not contact us in the morning regarding delays and closings but they do contact us regarding early dismissals. We only relay official information.

What is the parents' responsibility?
- Make sure OptionC has your current home/cell/e-mail information at all times.
- In the case of inclement weather wait for a notification via an email call or text from OptionC or watch Channels 5, 9 or 12 for the listing. If this is not possible, make a plan with a friend or neighbor to keep you informed. If your district calls for an early dismissal, and there is time, you may call our school office (388-4086) to leave a message for your child if you plan to come to school to pick him/her up. It is usually safer for students to be on a bus, rather than an automobile, in bad weather. If you usually drive your child home after school <u>LEAVE EARLY</u> to be here at dismissal time.
- <u>Make sure your child has the Family Emergency Plan sheet in his/her book bag at all times</u>. Keep information up to date – it tells your child and the teacher what to do. Do NOT indicate that the child should make a phone call from school as this will not be possible. This Emergency Form can always be found at the bottom of our Newsletter website page (under the Weekly Communications tab).
- There is NO AFTERCARE PROGRAM on early dismissal days. <u>LEAVE EARLY</u> to be here at dismissal time.

If an early dismissal is called what is the school's responsibility? Our responsibility is to send a message to families to the best of our ability. We will see that students are safely on the bus if they are regular bus riders.

What are the 'above the call of duty' things for school closings, delays and early dismissals that the school currently implements?
- Our OptionC system will e-mail, call and text ALL our families within 5 minutes. If you see the IHM ID wait and don't hang up! Parents who opt-in receive text messages.
- Early Dismissals: We have a very limited number of telephones which is why we use our OptionC system (sometimes time is VERY limited before the buses arrive for an early dismissal). You know how difficult it is to make transportation arrangements for your own children – please remember we have 600+ children to consider. Do not tell your child to telephone you from school as this will not happen.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and let's all pray for a safe winter! This memo is always available at the bottom of the Newsletter page on the website.

*includes Preschool and shared parenting