



SchoolMessenger[®]

Severe Weather Preparedness

Introduction

Are you prepared for when you need to close school at a moment's notice due to upcoming severe weather? Use the guidelines below to learn more about best practices for weather emergency situations.

Use the Right Broadcast Type

Always send your broadcast as an EMERGENCY Broadcast Type for emergencies like closings.

Please utilize one of the built-in Emergency Broadcast Types, and not a custom Type that you created yourself. Actual Emergency Types are prioritized in the system, and broadcasts using those Types go out faster than custom (General) Types. Inform all Users that will be sending these of this best practice.

Send via all methods to maximize effectiveness

Send your broadcast via Phone, Email, and SMS, if possible, to maximize the effectiveness.

Broadcasts sent with just one type of contact information are less effective and may not reach all of your recipients in an emergency. Inform all Users that will be sending these of this best practice.

Check the Call Time Restrictions of your Users

Check your Users' Profiles to ensure the person or persons responsible for sending broadcasts have the proper time restrictions. Remember that Profile-level changes affect all Users under that Profile.

A System Administrator or Top-Level User with access can do so as follows:

Log in, and browse to the **Admin** tab, then to the **Profiles** sub-tab.

Click **Edit** next to the name of the Profile.

Change the **Can't Schedule Before** and **Can't Schedule After** time settings to match the restrictions that you would like to apply to your Users under those Profiles or choose **No Restriction** for unrestricted access.

Save the changes.

Allow enough time for the broadcast

Always ensure that you have allowed enough time for your staff and parents to receive the broadcast you will be sending with your severe weather contingency plan.

Plan to have the broadcast sent out as soon as possible the day that the weather starts, with enough time between the start of the broadcast and when school would have normally opened so that as many recipients as possible receive the message and are aware of any closures or delays.

Additional Information

Below is some additional information that you can use to help prepare yourself for severe weather emergencies.

Training

Please take advantage of our weather-related best practices training schedule.

We also offer a variety of other trainings and training times designed to fit into busy school administrator schedules. Attendees rave about our thorough and easy-to-follow trainings.

Click the link below to sign up: <http://www.schoolmessenger.com/training/communicate-webinars>

SMS Text Messaging – Preparation Required

Please be aware that the SMS Text Messaging feature of Communicate, unlike the default state of the phone and email message features, is an **opt-in process** that requires involvement and setup on the support side, and on your side.

In order to send an SMS Text Message during severe weather and other emergencies, you must have completed your **SMS Opt-In Campaign**, and then worked with support to set up your account to be able to send these messages.

No worries – the process is easy, and we can help!

Essentially, it just involves a call to support to go over a few questions, and we'll provide you some documentation to get you started on your end with informing your recipients.

We offer materials designed to help you communicate to parents that they need to opt-in to SMS text messaging. Please contact SchoolMessenger Solutions Support for more information, to receive the mentioned materials, and discuss setup on your account.