How are snow days determined?

The decision to close schools is based on a number of factors. These factors include:

- Road conditions
  - Condition of roads throughout district*
  - Visibility

- Weather conditions
  - Wind
  - Temperature

- Weather Forecast
  - Short-term
  - 24 hour forecast

* Traverse City Area Public Schools covers 300 square miles and a wide variety of terrain, including hills, highways, and back roads.

Who makes this decision?

“Wake-up callers” take shifts to monitor the weather and determine whether or not it is necessary for the “road checkers” to go out and drive the roads at 3:00 a.m. The road checkers report conditions back to the director of transportation who consults with the associate superintendent of finance and operations. The associate superintendent then discusses with the superintendent for a final decision.

TCAPS also works in collaboration with the GT Road Commission. The Road Commission uses technology that analyzes road temperature and GPS as it relates to the timing of dropping sand/salt.

What time is a school closure decision made?

The determination is made by 5:00 a.m., if possible, and by 6:00 a.m. at the latest.

What happens if weather gets worse after TCAPS has made the decision to keep schools open?

Weather conditions are reviewed up until 6:00 a.m., which is the latest time schools may be canceled. If the weather does not warrant school closure at 6:00 a.m., then school will be open. TCAPS will continue to review current road conditions and incoming weather with the GT Road Commission and the National Weather Service up until 6:00 a.m.

Will you consider alternatives like 2-hour delays?

Two-hour delays have been considered, but the district has found delays disrupt the operations of schools and families to such a great extent that delays are not considered a viable option.
What other schools are closed when TCAPS closes?

TBAISD. The non-public schools in the area are notified of TCAPS’ decision. If they use TCAPS transportation, they follow the decision.

Will TCAPS close early if the weather turns bad after the start of school?

Closing early has been considered in the past, but the district has found that this disrupts the operations of schools and families to such a great extent that closing early is not considered as a viable option.

If a bus is late because of adverse weather, will parents be notified of the delay?

When individual buses are running more than 10 minutes behind, this information will be posted on the Transportation Hotline (231.933.1955).

What about extracurricular activities such as athletics, musical performances or other school functions or meetings?

When school is canceled due to weather, all elementary and middle school events are automatically canceled, including LEAP, parent-teacher conferences, PTO meetings, etc. Decisions regarding high school athletic and/or ticketed events (musicals, concerts) will be made on a case-by-case basis. If an event is held, it will be non-mandatory participation only. Coaches, teachers and/or advisors will communicate to impacted staff and students the status of the event.

If school is closed, does TCAPS provide child care options?

At this time, TCAPS does not provide child care options on snow days.

How are school closings communicated to the public?

The decision to close school is first communicated via Transportation Hotline (231.933.1955). From there, a variety of steps are taken which include updating the TCAPS website (www.tcaps.net), TCAPS Facebook and Twitter accounts, and then to all media outlets. Media outlets report this news within minutes of TCAPS’ notification. To subscribe to the district’s School Closings & Alerts RSS feed, visit www.tcaps.net/alerts. Check with your school for other notification options (ex: some schools use Remind 101).

How many snow days are allowed before the district has to schedule “make-up” days?

The state currently forgives six days due to conditions outside of a school district’s control.

Will snow days have to be made up?

TCAPS officials review lost time due to snow days and options to make up any necessary time and/or days at the beginning of April.
What if I think it is too dangerous to send my child to school, but school has not been canceled?

The final decision regarding the attendance of a child on an inclement weather day is a personal decision parents must make for their family. It should be noted that the safest form of pupil transportation to and from school is the school bus.