

Snow and School Closure Procedures

If snow is in the forecast, University Prep monitors the situation closely and gives as much advance notice as possible about school closure. Please note that University Prep does not follow the public school schedule in such instances. Notifications of school closures are disseminated for University Prep by the Public Schools Emergency Communication System (PSECS). PSECS is used by nearly every local radio and television station to obtain the latest information about school closures. The information becomes available to all broadcasters simultaneously, and then each radio or television station determines when it will broadcast the information. You can access the most recent closure information from PSECS directly via the Internet at www.schoolreport.org. Closure information is also put on the school's answering machine as soon as a decision has been reached and is updated regularly.

University Prep also uses AlertNow to notify you of school closures, whether they occur before or during school. This rapid notification system will contact you (at your requested phone numbers) with a prerecorded message. The system is only as good as the phone numbers you have submitted, so it is critical that you call the Main Office as soon as possible to update your information if any of your emergency numbers change. For more information about the AlertNow system, you can review the parents' page at <http://www.alertnow.com/parents.html>.

The decision-making process on whether or not to open school begins very early in the morning. Because conditions vary so greatly within the Puget Sound area, representatives in different parts of the region are contacted to ascertain the road and

snow conditions. Of paramount concern is the safety of our students and staff. We encourage every family to assess their particular situation and decide whether or not it is safe for their child to travel that day.

IMPORTANT! Please have a plan in place to help your child safely reach home if it becomes necessary to dismiss school early. Be sure you have talked with your child about the plan, which should include alternate caregivers and pick-up locations, such as a shopping mall, where your child can wait in a warm environment. Calling home is not an adequate plan. You may not be home; phone lines may be very busy, and it would be difficult for 450 students to make calls in a timely manner. We ask that students leave school as quickly as possible so that our staff may also leave when there are adverse traveling conditions. Your student should always be dressed for cold weather and carry phone numbers in case the expected connection at a predetermined location is not made.

We have agreements with the out-of-state schools listed below to help us communicate if local phone lines are down in an emergency. Long distance lines are often not affected when local lines are unusable.

Catlin Gabel School (Portland, OR): 1.503.297.1894

Chapin School (New York, NY): 1.212.744.2335