



# OVER THE BACK FENCE

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*"Pursuing Excellence in Small and Rural Schools"*

## INTERRUPTED SCHOOL DAYS & HEAT

A major responsibility of a local school superintendent is the health and safety of your students. Section 18-12, the School Code allows the use of Interrupted School Days for "adverse weather conditions". Here is the policy of the Illinois State Board of Education with regard to extreme heat. ISBE allows four options:

1. Amend the public school calendar to start school at a later date
2. Dismiss after 5-clock-hours of instruction
3. Utilize an Emergency Day
4. Utilize an Interrupted Day

If an Emergency Day is utilized it is strongly recommended that an Amended Calendar be submitted electronically through IWAS to the Regional Office of Education (ROE) for approval, to assure that the most up to date Public School Calendar is available on-line via the School Calendar Inquiry. If an Interrupted Day is utilized, an Amended Calendar must be submitted electronically through IWAS, within 30 days of occurrence, to the ROE, who will forward it to ISBE for approval. The Calendar Code for Emergency Day is ED. The Calendar Code for an Interrupted Day is XID. The calendar code XID requires Student Attendance Time to verify a minimum of 1 instructional clock hour was conducted as well as a brief explanation of why the day was interrupted.

ISBE's current policy further states that if the announcement is made in advance (i.e., on the previous day) that school will be closing on any day or days after less than 5 clock hours because of heat, you must use an emergency day(s). You cannot count that shortened day as a full-day of attendance under those circumstances.

So, to use an Interrupted Day for heat, school should be in session and then the decision to dismiss early be made while students are in school.

Think of "snow" or "ice" and early dismissal. School is in session and it begins to snow. The forecast is

predicting heavy snow and/or ice later in the day. A decision to dismiss early is made and procedures for early dismissal begin. Just think what the word INTERRUPTED means. Good luck and stay cool.

## CEP AND NCLB TEACHER REQUIREMENTS

The Center on Education Policy is a national, independent advocate for public education and for more effective public schools. The Center helps Americans better understand the role of public education in a democracy and the need to improve the academic quality of public schools. The Center has completed a report on the NCLB Teacher Requirement. This report examines how states and school districts have implemented the No Child Left Behind Act's teacher quality requirements. The report finds that, according to state and district officials, the NCLB highly qualified teacher requirements have had minimal or no impact on student achievement and have not had a major impact on teacher effectiveness. To read this interesting 41 page report, go to [www.cep-dc.org](http://www.cep-dc.org). At the bottom of the main page the report is found in WHAT'S NEW.

This is the second report regarding teachers and NCLB I have called to your attention. See our August 2007 issue and the NCLB Commission Report.

You should let your congressman know about these reports. This is the year changes could be made to NCLB.

## AIRSS TO BE IN CHICAGO

The Association of Illinois Rural & Small Schools will have a booth at the Triple I Conference in Chicago. We hope to increase our membership by meeting board members and superintendents and answering questions about the association. If you are interested in working the booth, let me know. We will be setting up a schedule. More information about this will be in our October newsletter.

We still need your membership. If you need another invoice, let me know. Remember, there is strength in numbers. Keep in touch with legislators about the 2008 Education Budget.