



# MOMENCE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

UNIT DISTRICT NO. 1

400 NORTH PINE \* MOMENCE, IL 60954

(815) 472-3501

Gary R. Miller  
Superintendent

**Our mission is to create pathways to intellectual, social and emotional success for all individuals we serve by fostering positive relationships and adding value to the greater community.**

Hello from Momence Community Unit School District No.1

- A. We have had an amazing fall for sure! Every year at this time our administrative team begins to brush up on the cold and snow procedures. We thought this year we would share our process of calling off school so you understand the process.
- B. When there is a pattern of disruptive weather or a watch for a winter storm, the superintendent's in the area begin discussing how to proceed. The initial discussions usually begin 48-72 hours in advance. We spend our time looking at the strength of storms and the potential impact to our schools and schedules. This is a constant monitoring...watching and waiting.
- C. The communication continues and if a watch or warning is called, a conference call is scheduled. By this time, we have lined up a plan B and C in case we need them. Before and after the conference call, we are in contact with the road commissioners and in some cases, law enforcement agencies. I am in contact with the athletic directors and building administrators to create a plan to communicate regarding any students traveling out of district. As a superintendent I even drive some of our rural roads.
- D. All area superintendent's join in the conference call and discuss the data, forecasts, ect. We do not take these decisions lightly and we know despite all of our efforts, there is no absolute way to predict what is coming or the continued intensity of what has already occurred.
- E. What I do know personally is that every decision is made based on the **safety** of our students and staff. There are times when the conditions in town have been much more desirable than in the country. We are one district and have to make decisions based on the continued safety of everyone involved. On our rural routes, wind and drifting can make travel near impossible. As a superintendent, you are always worried about people who may be traveling on days with severe conditions.
- F. I often see and hear of social media posts stating that we are inconveniencing people and I know there are people who question our decisions. Please know it is not our intent to inconvenience people and I simply cannot apologize for trying to keep people safe. We will not always get it right, but it does not mean we have not spent hours trying to in the process. We are trying our best to promote positivity and teamwork and ask for your cooperation in helping us achieve this.

**Inspiring Dreams \* Empowering Minds \* Strengthening Community**

G. I will do my best to explain any circumstances that are occurring outside a traditional snow day. One example of this would be pipes bursting and having to close only one school in the district.

I would also like to commend our maintenance staff and Director of Buildings and Grounds Terry Spencer, for all of the time they spend working with me on any direction these days may take us. When the storms have ended, the department always makes sure buildings are safe and ready.

As I stated before, there is no way to get it right every time, but I assure you we are trying our best. I am so thankful for your on-going support of our schools and for being a part of what makes our district so special.

Go enjoy this great weather how you can!

Gary R. Miller

Superintendent

