

<b>FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>	<b>Reg. No. 400-2</b>
<b>Subject: CLOSING OF SCHOOLS BECAUSE OF WEATHER, MAINTENANCE, OR OTHER REASONS</b>	<b>Date of Issue: 10/26/79</b>
<b>Preparing Office: Office of the Superintendent</b>	<b>Amended: 2/4/09</b>

I. Policies 401.6, 401.7, 401.8

II. Procedures

A. Closing Schools for the Day for Inclement Weather

The Transportation Department shall be responsible for recommending to the superintendent or designee that individual schools, feeder school areas or all schools be closed for the day for reasons of inclement weather.

The Transportation Department shall base the recommendation on information from:

1. National and regional weather information services
2. State and/or local police
3. County and state roads departments
4. Driver reports
5. Physical inspection of roads by Transportation Department supervisors
6. School districts in adjacent counties

B. Delayed School Openings

If weather conditions require that school be delayed one (1) hour or more, the Transportation Department will notify the media according to the procedures outlined in Section II. L. Inclement weather delays will affect programs as follows:

1. School opening delayed one (1) hour:

- A.M. classes for pre-kindergarten, special education pre-kindergarten, Career and Technology Center, and Heather Ridge programs begin one (1) hour later than usual and dismiss at the regular time.
- P.M. classes for pre-kindergarten, special education pre-kindergarten and Career and Technology Center follow their regular schedules.

2. School opening delayed two (2) hours:

- A.M. classes for pre-kindergarten and special education pre-kindergarten begin two (2) hours later than usual and dismiss one (1) hour later than usual, providing an estimated 1.5 hour session.
- P.M. classes for pre-kindergarten and special education pre-kindergarten begin one (1) hour later than usual and dismiss at the regular time, providing an estimated 1.5 hour session.
- P.M. classes at the Career and Technology Center begin 40 minutes later than usual and dismiss at the regular time.

NOTE: For purposes of administering this regulation, times indicated are approximate.

### C. Early Dismissal For Inclement Weather

#### 1. Early Dismissal: All Schools

- a. In the event the weather pattern causes unsafe road conditions throughout the county, the Transportation Department may recommend to the superintendent of schools or designee that all schools dismiss early. The superintendent or designee will notify the associate superintendents.
- b. The associate superintendents shall notify schools.
- c. The Transportation Department shall notify the following individuals and offices of the decision to dismiss school early: (1) bus drivers, (2) the Communication Services Office, (3) the news media, and others as outlined in Section II. L.
- d. The Communication Services Office shall notify FCPS staff and others as needed.

#### 2. Early Dismissal: Individual Schools

- a. In the event the weather pattern causes unsafe road conditions in a particular area of the county, a building principal may recommend to the Transportation Department that his/her school be closed early. If the Transportation director or designee is unavailable, the principal should contact the appropriate associate superintendent.
- b. The Transportation Department, in consultation with the appropriate associate superintendent(s) and the building principal, makes the decision.
- c. The Transportation Department shall notify the bus drivers who serve the school.
- d. The Transportation Department shall notify the Communication Services Office and media as outlined in Section II. L.

#### 3. Special Schedule Accommodations - Early closings because of inclement weather will affect some programs, as follows:

- a. When schools close for emergency reasons one (1) hour earlier than usual:
  - A.M. classes for pre-kindergarten, special education pre-kindergarten and Career and Technology Center proceed on their regular schedules.
  - P.M. classes for pre-kindergarten, special education pre-kindergarten, Career and Technology Center and Heather Ridge programs are shortened by one (1) hour.
  - Elementary magnet programs follow the schedule for full-day programs.
  - Flexible Evening High School and the Twilight program at Heather Ridge School are cancelled.
- b. When schools close for emergency reasons two (2) hours earlier than usual:
  - A.M. pre-kindergarten and special education pre-kindergarten students remain at school for dismissal with full-day students.
  - P.M. classes for pre-kindergarten, special education pre-kindergarten and Career and Technology Center programs are cancelled. Career and Technology Center students remain at their home schools.
  - Flexible Evening High School and the Twilight program at Heather Ridge School are cancelled.

c. When schools close for emergency reasons up to three and one-half (3 ½) hours earlier than usual:

- A.M. pre-kindergarten and special education pre-kindergarten students remain at school for dismissal with full-day students.
- A.M. classes at the Career and Technology Center follow the regular schedule.
- P.M. classes for pre-kindergarten, special education pre-kindergarten, and Career and Technology Center programs are cancelled.
- Flexible Evening High School and the Heather Ridge Twilight program are cancelled.

D. Cancellation of After-School, Evening and Weekend Programs and Activities because of Inclement Weather

1. Except as noted in Section E below, if schools are closed on a regularly scheduled school day, all after-school and evening activities shall be cancelled, including events scheduled by outside user groups.
2. Except as noted in Section E below, on non-school days when the snow emergency plan is in effect in Frederick County, all after-school, evening and weekend programs and activities shall be cancelled. (Refer to FCPS Regulation 100-1.)

E. Cancellation of Daycare Programs because of Inclement Weather

Daycare centers operating in FCPS schools will independently make decisions regarding modifications to their program schedules and communicate accordingly with the media, the building principal and the families they serve.

F. School Closing for Maintenance and Other Reasons

1. In the event of failure of building systems (electrical, plumbing, etc.), the principal shall notify the director of Maintenance and Operations and the coordinator of School Security. The Maintenance Department will survey the situation and take the necessary corrective action. If the problem is serious and likely to affect the school operation, the principal shall be responsible for communicating the status to the instructional director. The appropriate associate superintendent of School Improvement, Instruction and Administration will make the closing decision, if warranted.
2. The director of Maintenance and Operations will review the proposed closing with the Transportation Department; the Maintenance Department; the appropriate School Improvement, Instruction and Administration Office; the Food Service Department and the Communication Services Office. The director of Maintenance and Operations will then recommend appropriate action to the superintendent or designee.
3. The Communication Services Office will notify local radio and TV news media and utilize FCPS electronic and broadcast media to communicate the news.

G. Schools Closed, Central Offices Open

When all schools are closed due to any condition while central office facilities remain open:

1. Essential personnel will report to work. Each member of the superintendent's cabinet shall annually determine, assign and notify those employees designated as essential personnel.

2. Non-essential twelve-month employees, including twelve-month teachers, shall report to work or take annual/personal leave.

#### H. School System Closed or Opening Late, Including All Offices

When all schools, school offices, and central offices are closed or opening late due to weather or other conditions:

1. Non-essential personnel shall not be required to report to work, but may be called to work as the need arises.
2. Essential personnel (defined above) shall report.
3. An essential employee's request for annual leave for the day may be denied.
4. Time and one-half will be paid to eligible support services personnel for hours worked on that day for the closed hours.
5. Essential personnel shall remain at the facility until such time as it is properly secured and protected, arrange for snow removal or other activities affecting school reopening, and insure clearance of any hazardous condition that could have a serious impact on safety or facility operations.

#### I. Central Office Schedule

The central office is defined as any non-school building. Any change in the central office schedule due to weather will be announced as outlined in Section II. L. If no specific announcement is made regarding the central office, it will operate on the normal schedule.

#### J. Overtime

Overtime will be paid as authorized in accordance with FCPS Regulation 300-24 (Overtime Pay and Compensatory Time) and in conjunction with collective bargaining agreements.

#### K. Liberal Leave

1. Personnel designated essential by the principal or department supervisor are exempt from the liberal leave policy.
2. When schools are closed due to inclement weather and a liberal leave policy is announced, employees who normally report to work when schools are closed should be aware of the following guidelines:
  - a. Employees must inform their supervisor if they will be absent or late.
  - b. Employees may use either personal or annual leave. If annual and personal leave are exhausted, the employee may request to have leave charged against future earned leave (pay stub will show a negative balance).
  - c. Support employees may, with supervisor's approval, make up time in lieu of using leave.
  - d. FASSE, FCTA and FCASA agreements outline some aspects of employee leave procedures in more detail. Supervisors and employees are encouraged to reference current agreements.

**L. Notification**

1. Whenever possible, morning decisions to close or delay school will be made by 5:00 A.M. and communicated to media outlets by 5:30 A.M.
2. Whenever possible, early closing decisions will be made by 10:00 A.M. and communicated internally and to media outlets promptly thereafter.
3. With a 1-hour delay, re-evaluation of the decision will occur by 6:00 A.M. With a 2-hour delay, re-evaluation will occur by 7:00 A.M. Such decisions will be promptly thereafter communicated to the news media and internally.
4. In the event it becomes necessary to close schools or delay the start of schools, the Transportation Department will notify in the following order:
  - a. The associate superintendents, director of Maintenance and Operations, coordinator of School Security, and the Food Service officer.
  - b. The FCPS television manager, or designee, for announcements on:
    - FCPS-TV-Channel 18,
    - Internet communication via [www.fcps.org](http://www.fcps.org), and
    - FCPS email subscription service.
  - c. Major local and regional radio and television stations.

**M. Exceptions**

The superintendent reserves the right to make exceptions to this regulation as deemed appropriate.

Approved:

*original signed by*

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Linda D. Burgee  
Superintendent