

**EMERGENCY CLOSINGS, DELAYED OPENINGS AND EARLY DISMISSALS - AR**

**I. Procedures**

**A. Closing/Delay/Early Dismissal for inclement weather**

The Transportation Department shall be responsible for recommending to the Superintendent or designee that an individual school, or all schools be closed/delayed/dismissed early 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. Spotter reports
6. Physical inspection of roads by Transportation Department staff
7. School districts in adjacent counties

**B. If schools are closed on a regularly scheduled school day, all after-school and evening activities shall be cancelled, including events by outside groups.**

On non-school days, when the snow emergency plan is in effect in Talbot County, all after-school, evening and weekend programs and activities shall be cancelled, including events scheduled by outside groups.

**C. School Closing for maintenance and other reasons**

In the event of building system (electrical, plumbing, etc.) malfunction or failures, the principal and/or school manager shall notify the Plant Operations Manager and Director of Support Services. The Maintenance Department will survey the situation and take the necessary corrective action. If the problem is likely to affect the school operation, the principal shall be responsible for communicating the status to the Director of Support Services. The Superintendent/designee will make the closing decision, if warranted.

The Director of Support Services will review the proposed closing, as appropriate, with the Transportation Department, the Maintenance Department, the School Administration, Food Services Department and any other appropriate department.

Local media will be notified and TCPS electronic communication vehicles will be utilized to communicate the news.

## **II. Notification**

Whenever possible morning decisions to close or delay school will be made and communicated to media outlets and other agencies and organizations by 5:30 a.m. Parents and staff will be informed via automated phone notification system.

With a 90 minute delay, re-evaluation of the decision may occur by 7:00 a.m. If the original decision is changed, it will be promptly communicated to media outlets, parents and staff.

Whenever possible early closing decisions will be made by 10:00 a.m. and communicated internally and to media outlets thereafter. Parents will be informed via automated phone notification system.

## **III. Procedures to be followed by Staff**

If schools have a delayed opening, are closed all day (in which case a public announcement is made before schools are scheduled to open in the morning) or if students are dismissed early, the following personnel procedures are to be followed:

- A. Teachers: Teachers are to report to work in the manner dictated by the procedures contained in the WORKING CONDITIONS Article of the Negotiated Agreement.
- B. Twelve Month Employees: Twelve (12) month employees are always expected to report to work as normally scheduled on days when students are not in attendance, unless otherwise notified.
- C. Delayed Openings and Early Dismissals: All other (non-teacher) educational staff members, secretaries, clerks and cafeteria employees that are defined as ten (10) or eleven (11) month employees are required to report to and remain at work, unless otherwise notified.
- D. Delayed Openings Followed by School Closing: Instructional Assistants who have reported for and are at work when schools are closed following a delayed opening shall be excused for the remainder of the day. These employees shall be provided two (2) hours of compensatory leave time to be taken within the next pay period. School Managers are responsible for administering the leave(s) and maintaining accurate records.
- E. Schools Closed All Day: All other (non-teacher) educational staff members, secretaries, clerks, and cafeteria employees that are defined as ten (10) or eleven (11) month employees are NOT REQUIRED to report to work, unless otherwise notified.

F. Liberal Leave: No twelve (12) month employee is required to report to, or remain, at work if they believe that their personal safety is being compromised; however, in the circumstances described above, the individual twelve (12) month employee is required to take available personal, annual, or unpaid leave. This is also applicable for any day declared a “State of Emergency” by the Governor. Employees who elect to take leave as described above will submit a Leave Form upon their return to work.

SPECIAL NOTE: It is NOT APPROPRIATE to take sick leave unless an employee experiences a medical condition covered by the sick leave policy. Should an employee determine not to take leave and not report to work, the payroll department will be directed to deduct a per diem amount.

G. Work Day: On days of inclement weather, when students do not attend school, the length of the work day may vary slightly at the discretion of the individual School Manager. In order for an employee to be counted in attendance, the workday should be no less than 80% of their normal workday or scheduled hours.

H. School Managers: School Managers are responsible for the maintenance and processing of accurate attendance records.

#### **IV. Duties of Administrators, Supervisors and Head Custodians**

A. Administrators and Supervisors: If schools have a delayed opening, are closed early or are closed all day, Principals, School Managers and other administrators with comparable responsibilities are expected to report to work as described above. They are also expected to direct the activities of custodians, and other twelve (12) month employees, and are expected to know at all times the condition of their buildings and the whereabouts of personnel assigned to them so that appropriate action can be taken as needed.

B. Head Custodians: Head Custodians (or their alternates) are expected to contact their School Manager, Principal and Plant Operations Supervisor in accordance with pre-arranged plans and report on building conditions and may receive special instructions as necessary. Particular care should be taken to make certain that school administrators are able to make contact with the custodians and Plant Operations staff by telephone or other means.

C. Communication: It is the responsibility of School Managers, Principals, supervisors and administrators with comparable responsibilities to convey these instructions and procedures to all persons they supervise.

#### **V. Other Activities**

When school is closed all activity scheduled in the building is cancelled. If the sponsoring individual or group wishes to hold its activity even though the building is closed, the Superintendent/designee shall be contacted for approval.

## **VI. Cooperation of Parents**

Principals and other staff members can assist in the application of these procedures by making appropriate information available to parents. Parents should be advised that they have the ultimate responsibility for protecting the health of their children and must always decide whether a child's health will be endangered by sending him/her to school. Children who are absent because of health reasons or seriously inclement weather must be marked "absent" but such absences may be excused, depending upon the circumstances of each case.

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