



Frederick County Public Schools
Board of Education
SCHOOL CALENDAR
Policy 401

A. Policy Purpose

To outline legal requirements and the Board of Education of Frederick County's (Board) expectations as they relate to the development and adoption of the annual Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) school calendar.

B. Definitions

1. "Operational Impact" is defined as a scheduled event that impairs the school system's ability to effectively deliver the instructional program and meet statutory day and hour requirements. An example of an operational impact may be when high rates of student and staff absenteeism would result in the inefficient use of educational resources, making it more practical to close schools for secular, operational reasons.

C. Policy Statement

The Board recognizes the importance of a well-structured annual school calendar that maximizes consistent instructional time for students, provides professional growth opportunities for teachers, and increase student achievement. In developing the annual school calendar, the Board believes it is important to consider feedback from both the Frederick County community and FCPS staff.

D. Implementation

1. The Board shall develop and adopt a school calendar for the second school year following the year in which the calendar is adopted. For example, the Board adopted the calendar for the 2026-2027 school year during the 2024-2025 school year and shall adopt the calendar for the 2027-2028 school year during the 2025-2026 school year, etc. The calendar shall comply with applicable law, include federal and State holidays that Maryland public schools are legally required to observe, and be developed consistent with parameters established by the Board.
2. **Board Parameters.** The Board will consider the following scheduling best practices when dictating best parameters:
 - a. Including options for Fair Day.
 - b. Maximizing the number of five-day weeks.
 - c. Ensuring contiguous days when not five-day weeks.
 - d. Scheduling logical breaks for instructional terms and semesters.
 - e. Considering the days of the week for two-hour early dismissals and teacher workdays.
3. **School Year**
 - a. State law and regulation requires that schools be kept open for not less than 180 actual

- school days and a minimum of 1,080 school hours during a 10-month period in each school year; for public high schools, the minimum number of school hours is 1,170.
- b. The school year shall be divided into grading terms as the Board deems appropriate.
 - c. The Board's approved calendar shall be posted on the FCPS website and distributed to employees and students.

4. School Day

- a. Schools shall be open a minimum of three (3) hours during each school day.
- b. Unless otherwise allowed by law, regularly scheduled school days shall not be held on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday as identified in section D(5) below.
- c. The Board may request waivers as they deem appropriate.

5. Holidays

- a. Unless explicitly mandated by State law, non-school days within the FCPS academic calendar shall be determined based on operational impact and will not be designated for religious observances or practices.
- b. In accordance with State law, the following days shall be school holidays:
 - i. Thanksgiving Day and the day after;
 - ii. Christmas Eve through January 1;
 - iii. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day;
 - iv. Presidents' Day;
 - v. The Friday before Easter through the Monday after Easter;
 - vi. Memorial Day; and
 - vii. Primary and general election days.
- c. Other holidays, authorized by the Board are:
 - i. Fourth of July.
 - ii. Juneteenth.
 - iii. Labor Day.
 - iv. Additional days as determined by the Board.
- d. If the federal and State observances of a holiday are on different days, the Board shall determine which date shall be the date of observance for FCPS schools.

6. Appropriate Exercises

- a. In accordance with State law, FCPS schools shall devote a part of at least one day to appropriate exercises in recognition of the following:
 - i. Washington's birthday;
 - ii. Lincoln's birthday;
 - iii. Veterans' Day;
 - iv. Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples Day;
 - v. Arbor Day;
 - vi. Black History Month, with an emphasis on Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass and the contributions they made in the fight against slavery; and
 - vii. Other days of national significance.
- b. The Board has designated the following days for scheduling appropriate recognition:
 - i. Memorial Day.
 - ii. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

- iii. Repudiation Day.
 - iv. Constitution Day.
 - v. Other days of cultural or local significance.
7. **Parent-Teacher Conferences.** The Board shall establish dates for parent-teacher conferences.
8. **Early Closing/Delayed Opening.** The Board recognizes that conditions may arise which require emergency provisions for early closings and delayed openings. The Superintendent is charged with responsibility to develop a regulation to implement the provisions of this policy.
9. **Cancellation of School**
- a. The Superintendent or designee may cancel school in the event of inclement weather or any other emergency.
 - b. The principal or designee is responsible for checking the condition of the school building when it is closed for instruction.
10. **Notification of Delayed Opening or Cancellation of School.** If school is closed, the opening of school delayed, or school is dismissed early, the Public Affairs Department shall send notifications through all FCPS communications channels (including email, text, online, social media, and television). They will also notify appropriate media outlets.

E. Related Information

1. **Board Policy**
 - a. [Policy 101, Organization of the Board](#)
 - b. [Policy 416, Progress Reporting](#)
2. **Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)**
 - a. [COMAR 13A.02.01.04, Length of the School Year](#)
 - b. [COMAR 13A.03.02.12, General Provisions](#)
3. **FCPS Regulations**
 - a. [Regulation 400-02, Closing of Schools Because of Weather, Maintenance, or Other Reasons](#)
 - b. [Regulation 401-01, Calendar Committee](#) (formerly 100-07)
 - c. [Regulation 401-02, Emergency Closures of Schools](#) (formerly 400-02)
4. **FCPS Resources**
 - a. [Calendar Committee Webpage](#)
 - b. [Calendar Information Webpage](#)
 - c. [Parent-Teacher Conferences Webpage](#)
 - d. [Negotiated Agreements](#)
 - e. ["Your School Calendar – How is it Determined?" Leaflet](#)
5. **Maryland State Board of Education (MSBE) Opinions**

- a. [*ADC Baltimore v. Baltimore County Bd. of Educ.*, MSBE Op. No. 05-01 \(2005\)](#)
- b. [*Bash Pharoan v. Baltimore County Board of Education \(II\)*, MSBE Opinion No. 18-07 \(2018\)](#)
- c. [*Novak v. Carroll County Board of Education*, MSBE Op. No. 22-07 \(2022\)](#)

6. **Maryland Statutes**

- a. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 7-103](#)

F. Policy History (Maintained by Legal Services)

<i>Responsible Office</i>	Public Affairs Department
Adoption Dates	04/25/01
Review Dates	02/27/06
Revision Dates	03/22/06; 09/24/25