

A. Purpose

To implement Board of Education of Frederick County (the “Board”) [Policy 401, School Calendar](#), and to establish guidelines for determining, communicating, and managing school schedule changes due to inclement weather, emergencies, or other operational disruptions.

B. Background

1. In Frederick County Public Schools (“FCPS”), the safety and well-being of students and staff is the highest priority. Adverse weather conditions can significantly impact transportation, disrupt school operations, and compromise overall safety. Given the unpredictable nature of weather patterns, it is essential to have a clear, consistent, and responsive framework for making timely decisions about school closures.
2. Beyond weather-related concerns, there are instances when individual schools may face facility issues—such as maintenance needs or infrastructure challenges—that make it unsafe or impractical to hold instruction. This Regulation establishes a structured decision-making process to guide closures due to weather, maintenance, or other critical circumstances, ensuring that every action taken prioritizes the health and safety of our school community.

C. Definitions

1. “Emergency Closure” is defined to mean the temporary closure of a school or facility due to unforeseen circumstances that jeopardize the health, safety, or well-being of students or staff or both, and includes, but is not limited to, inclement weather conditions (*e.g.*, snowstorms, flooding, extreme temperatures), failure of building systems (*e.g.*, electrical, plumbing), or other emergencies such as natural disasters, utility outages, or security threats.
2. “Emergency Personnel” is defined as an employment status determined, assigned, and notified annually by the Superintendent’s Cabinet, and includes the lead Facility Service Worker, assistant lead Facility Service Worker, specified operations and maintenance personnel, and any additional staff designated by a Cabinet member.
3. “Overtime” is defined to mean work performed by an employee in excess of 40 hours per week.
4. “Unscheduled Leave” is defined as unscheduled annual or personal leave typically granted during weather-related or other Emergency Closures and/or events when an employee is unable to report to work

D. Procedures

1. **Evaluation of Inclement Weather Impact on School System Operations**
 - a. The Chief Operating Officer (“COO”), in consultation with the Transportation Department, shall be responsible for recommending to the Superintendent that individual schools or all schools be closed for all or part of the day due to inclement weather.
 - b. The COO shall base the recommendation on information from:
 - i. National and regional weather information services.
 - ii. Law Enforcement Partners.
 - iii. County and state roads departments.
 - iv. Physical inspection of roads by Transportation Department Managers.
 - v. Physical inspection of FCPS facilities.
 - vi. School districts in adjacent counties.

2. **Delayed School Openings Due to Inclement Weather.** When school opening is delayed by two (2) hours due to inclement weather, the following schedule adjustments apply:
 - a. A.M. classes for pre-kindergarten begin two (2) hours later than usual and dismiss one (1) hour later than usual, providing an estimated 1-½ hour session.
 - b. P.M. classes for pre-kindergarten begin one (1) hour later than usual and dismiss at the regular time, providing an estimated 1-½ hour session.
 - c. A.M. classes at the Career and Technology Center begin approximately two (2) hours later than usual and dismiss about one (1) hour earlier than usual.
 - d. P.M. classes at the Career and Technology Center begin approximately 40 minutes later than usual and dismiss at the regular time.

3. **Early Closure/Dismissal of Schools Due to Inclement Weather or Other Emergencies**
 - a. **Early Closure/Dismissal: All Schools**
 - i. In the event the weather pattern causes unsafe road conditions throughout the county, the COO, in consultation with the Transportation Department, may recommend to the Superintendent that all schools close/dismiss early.
 - ii. The COO will notify:
 1. School principals;
 2. The Associate Superintendent of Public Affairs; and
 3. Appropriate staff per the FCPS emergency response calling tree.
 - iii. The Public Affairs Department will notify FCPS staff, the news media, and other stakeholders in accordance with the procedures outlined in paragraph D(11) of this Regulation.
 - b. **Special Schedule Accommodations**
 - i. When schools close/dismiss one (1) hour earlier than usual due to an Emergency Closure, school schedules are impacted as follows:
 1. A.M. classes for pre-kindergarten and Career and Technology Center proceed on their regular schedules.
 2. P.M. classes for pre-kindergarten, Career and Technology Center and Heather Ridge programs are shortened by one (1) hour.
 3. Full-day pre-kindergarten classes follow the schedule for full-day programs.

- ii. When schools close/dismiss two (2) hours earlier than usual due to an Emergency Closure, not inclement weather-related, school schedules are impacted as follows:
 - 1. A.M. pre-kindergarten students remain at school for dismissal with full-day students.
 - 2. P.M. classes for pre-kindergarten and Career and Technology Center programs are canceled. Career and Technology Center students remain at their home schools.
 - iii. When schools close/dismiss up to three and one-half (3-½) hours earlier than usual due to an Emergency Closure, not inclement weather-related, school schedules are impacted as follows
 - 1. A.M. pre-kindergarten students remain at school for dismissal with full-day students.
 - 2. A.M. classes at the Career and Technology Center follow the regular schedule.
 - 3. P.M. classes for pre-kindergarten and Career and Technology Center programs are canceled.
- 4. **Cancellation of After-School, Evening, and Weekend Programs and Activities Due to Inclement Weather**
 - a. Except as noted in paragraph D(5) below, if schools are closed on a regularly scheduled school day, all after-school and evening activities shall be canceled, including events scheduled by community user groups.
 - b. 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 canceled, including events scheduled by outside user groups.
 - c. The COO may make exceptions when warranted.
 - d. The FCPS Athletics weather-related procedures chart is located at: [Athletics Weather-Related Procedures](#).
- 5. **Cancellation of Parks & Recreation Programs in Community Gyms and Daycare Programs**
 - a. Frederick County and Frederick City Parks & Recreation programs operating in community gyms in FCPS schools and daycare programs 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.
 - b. In cases of severe weather, FCPS may restrict all access to schools including Parks & Recreation programs and daycare programs.
- 6. **Closure of Schools for Maintenance and Other Reasons.**
 - a. In the event of failure of building systems (electrical, plumbing, etc.), the school principal shall notify the Director of Safety and Emergency Management, who will initiate the FCPS emergency response calling tree.
 - i. The Maintenance Department will survey the situation and take the necessary corrective action.
 - ii. The Executive Director of Facilities will review the conditions, and will recommend appropriate action to the COO.

- b. The Superintendent delegates the authority to the COO to make a decision whether to close an individual school for a maintenance or non-weather related issue.
 - c. The COO will notify staff, as appropriate, per the FCPS emergency response calling tree.
 - d. The Public Affairs Department will notify local radio and TV news media and utilize FCPS electronic and broadcast media to communicate the decision in accordance with the procedures outlined in Paragraph D(11) of this Regulation.
- 7. Delay/Closure of Schools Due to Tornado Warning**
- a. If a tornado warning is in effect for Frederick County before 5:00 A.M., all schools will be delayed two (2) hours.
 - i. If a warning is issued for one (1) designated area of the county, the school system may elect to delay opening of schools in that area only.
 - ii. If there are tornado warnings in more than one (1) area, the entire school system will be delayed.
 - b. Tornado warnings issued between 7:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. will be evaluated based on location and operational status of schools and transportation.
 - c. Communication of decisions outlined in D(7)(a) and (b) above will occur in accordance with the procedures outlined in paragraph D(11) of this Regulation.
- 8. Emergency/Weather-Related Status for Employees.** FCPS employees should refer to the [FCPS Weather Delays and Closings Webpage \(www.fcps.org/weather\)](http://www.fcps.org/weather) for up-to-date closing information and status announcements.
- 9. Overtime**
- a. Nonexempt staff are paid time and one-half the employee's regular hourly rate for time worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek, in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).
 - b. Overtime compensation for staff who are directed to report to work on a day when FCPS is closed due to an Emergency Closure are eligible for overtime pay, as specified in Section 4.03 of the [Board and Frederick Association of School Support Employees \(FASSE\) Negotiated Agreement](#), and in Appendix D of the [Board and Frederick County Administrative and Supervisory Association \(FCASA\) Negotiated Agreement](#).
- 10. Employee Attendance and Leave**
- a. Emergency personnel who report as directed on a day when FCPS is closed due to an Emergency Closure are not authorized to use liberal leave.
 - b. Employees should refer to [FCPS Regulation 300-04, Employee Attendance](#), for a full description of leave options on delayed opening or emergency closures.
- 11. Notification**
- a. Whenever possible, morning decisions to close or delay schools will be made by 5:00 A.M. and communicated to media outlets by 5:30 A.M.
 - b. Whenever possible, early closure/dismissal decisions will be made by 10:00 A.M. and communicated internally and to media outlets promptly thereafter.
 - c. With a 2-hour delay, re-evaluation may occur by 7:00 A.M. If the original decision is

changed, it will be communicated to the news media and internally by 7:30 A.M.

12. **Exceptions.** The Superintendent reserves the right to make exceptions to this Regulation as deemed appropriate.

E. Related Information

1. **Board Policy**
 - a. [Policy 401, School Calendar](#)
2. **FCPS Regulations**
 - a. [Regulation 300-04, Employee Attendance](#)
3. **FCPS Resources**
 - a. [Athletics Weather-Related Procedures](#)
 - b. [How FCPS Decides to Cancel or Delay School During Bad Weather](#)
 - c. [In the Event of Bad Weather or an Emergency...Here's How to Check School Status](#)
 - d. [Negotiated Labor Agreements](#)
 - e. [Standard Operating Procedures - Use of Facilities \(Rev. 08.23.24\)](#)
 - f. [Weather Delays and Closings Webpage](#)
4. **Federal Law**
 - a. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
5. **Maryland Statutes**
 - a. [Md. Code Ann., Educ. § 7-103.2](#)

F. Regulation History (Maintained by Legal Services)

<i>Responsible Office</i>	Office of the Chief Operating Officer
Adoption Dates	10/26/79
Review Dates	
Revision Dates	07/08/11; 08/15/12; 11/14/13; 11/10/16; 11/20/19; 10/29/20; 02/09/23; 09/12/25