



**Warren County Public Schools**  
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OFFICE OF THE  
SUPERINTENDENT

## **Press Release**

**November 19, 2021**

### **Inclement Weather Procedures**

When weather impacts our area, it can have an effect on the operation of the school system. Conditions can change swiftly and the safety of our school community is our top priority. When a weather event impacts our area, it may be necessary to close schools, dismiss early, open late, or move to virtual learning.

### **Safety Concerns**

- Student and staff safety
- Driving safety for students and staff
- School access
- Bus stop access
- Student and staff attendance
- Utility concerns

### **Weather related process**

When making a decision on the safe operation of schools due to severe weather, the director of transportation and other transportation employees check weather and road conditions in the county. The director of transportation communicates with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), National Weather Service, Warren County Sheriff's office, and neighboring school transportation departments. School personnel drive school-bus routes in order to assess the conditions of the roads. Our weather decision-making process involves taking road temperature checks, ambient air temperature checks, and visual checks.

### **Decision and Communication**

After we complete our weather-related process, the transportation director will submit a recommendation to the superintendent. The superintendent will also confer with neighboring school system superintendents. The superintendent will make the final decision on the operation of schools by 5:30 a.m. The superintendent may use the following designations: closed, one-hour delay, two-hour delay, early dismissal, or virtual learning.

*"The Trek To Excellence Takes Everyone"*

Once the decision has been made, and if there is an adjustment to the school day, WCPS will communicate to families through instant messenger (text and phone call), email, post on the division's website, and through the following media outlets:

- WZRV 95.3/WFTR1450
- WAPP 104.9/105.5
- Q102.5/WFQX 99.3
  
- WHSV-TV CH 3
- WRC-TV CH 4
- WTTG-TV CH 5
- WJLA-TV CH 7
- WUSA-TV CH 9

### **One-hour delay**

A one-hour delay will be used when weather conditions or road conditions are not clear and sunlight or other factors will improve safety. If a one-hour delay is used, the following start times will be followed: Elementary 9:00 a.m. and Secondary 10:00 a.m.. All schools will operate on a modified school schedule. If weather and road conditions deteriorate, an announcement updating the school division's status will be made by 7:30 a.m.

### **Two-hour delay**

A two-hour delay may also be used due to the uncertainty of weather or road conditions and the probability of road improvement due to sunlight or other factors. If a two-hour delay is used, the following start times will be followed: Elementary 10:00 a.m. and Secondary 11:00 a.m. All schools will operate on a modified school schedule. If weather and road conditions deteriorate, an announcement updating the school division's status will be made by 8:30 a.m.

### **Early Dismissal**

There are times when weather conditions can deteriorate after school is in session for the day. If an early dismissal is announced, the following release times will be followed: Elementary 12:00 p.m. and Secondary 1:00 p.m. *During serious/severe weather conditions, the early dismissal times may be changed if necessary. If early dismissal times are changed, families will be notified through identified communication channels.*

### **Canceled**

A canceled designation will be used when road conditions and/or other factors make it impossible for students and staff to make it safely to school. No instruction will occur if schools are canceled. *This designation may require that additional days be added to the school calendar in order to meet the 180 school days or 990 hours requirement of the Virginia Department of Education.*

## **Virtual learning**

In order to meet the 180 school days or 990 hours requirement, the Virginia Department of Education has set forth guidelines for virtual instruction and when schools may be closed to in-person instruction due to weather-related concerns. Students will be required to complete assignments, attend meets, or participate in classroom activities as prescribed by the teacher for that day. All virtual learning days can be counted towards a school division's total number of days or school hours. Virtual learning days will run on a two-hour delay schedule. All virtual learning day decisions will be made by 1:00 p.m. the day before the expected weather event.

Chris Ballenger, Ed.D.  
Superintendent