



PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS

P.O. Box 232 • 39 Bank Street S.E. • Chatham, Virginia 24531

Mr. James E. McDaniel

Division Superintendent

SS-04/11-12

TO: Principals and Central Office Personnel

FROM: Dr. Jeffrey B. Early, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services *JBE*
Bobby L. Lovelace, Director of Transportation *BLL*

SUBJECT: Inclement Weather "Operational Guidelines"

DATE: July 7, 2011

Enclosed you will find a copy of the operational guidelines for use in responding to inclement weather. Revisions have been made to the guidelines for the 2011-2012 school term. Please distribute copies of the **CLOSING SCHOOL OR DELAY OF SCHOOL OPENING DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER PLAN** to the appropriate personnel.

Thank you very much.

JBE/BLL/djs

INCLEMENT WEATHER OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

- I. Our first priority must be to do everything possible to ensure the **SAFETY** of our students and staff members.

II. Staff Expectations During Inclement Weather

A. Role of Maintenance Staff

1. To report to work as early and safely as possible.
2. Maintenance will work with two pickup trucks equipped with snow blades in cleaning sidewalks and parking areas around the Central Office, Pittsylvania Career & Technical Center, Transportation Department, and Chatham area schools. Work in areas outside of Chatham if necessary. Further instructions are to come from the “field coordinator” (Mike Hutson).
3. All other men should report to “field coordinator” (Mike Hutson) for further instructions and job assignments.

B. Role of Transportation Staff

1. To report to work as early and safely as possible.
2. Transportation will work with the dump truck in clearing parking areas at the Central Office, Pittsylvania Career & Technical Center, Transportation Department, and Chatham area schools. Further instructions are to come from the “field coordinator” (Bobby Lovelace).
3. All other men should report directly to “field coordinator” (Bobby Lovelace) for instructions and job assignments.

C. Role of Principals and Custodial Staff

1. To report to work as early and safely as possible.
2. To clear sidewalks at the earliest possible time to allow for the opening of the school office.
3. To use school-based equipment for snow removal when possible. **If the situation requires the services of an outside contractor, please get prior approval.**
4. To ready the school and grounds for reopening at the earliest possible time.
5. Principals: To get all 12-month personnel and **ALL** custodians back to work as soon as the weather and road conditions permit.
6. High school principals and feeder school principals are to coordinate efforts in securing a commitment and estimate of cost from a snow-removal contractor. Regional consolidation may help to further reduce overall costs.

III. Bus Driver Discretion and Judgment

- A. Whether schools are opening on a “1-2 hour” delay basis or regular schedule, bus drivers are asked to use good judgment as to whether they can safely travel on certain roads. The same basic guideline applies when schools close early. If schools close early, it is critical that parents who live on affected roads be contacted for an agreed upon drop-off point or some other mutually agreed upon arrangement.

- B. Drivers should work with the school administrative assistant and principal in contacting parents who live on one of the roads or streets that cannot be traveled by school bus. Every effort should be made to make arrangements for a suitable morning pickup and afternoon drop-off point. It is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR PARENTS AND THE BUS DRIVER TO COORDINATE PICKUP TIME AND DROP-OFF TIME.**

NOTE: Principals are expected to work with their bus drivers in developing a list of students on each bus, parents' names, home phone numbers, and work phone numbers.

IV. Expectations of Parents

1. To accept the fact that there may be times when, even though schools are open, not every road can be traveled by school bus. The same concept would apply if schools close early.
2. To know that the bus driver and principal will do everything possible to arrange for a suitable parent/driver rendezvous point when their particular road remains unsafe.
3. To please exercise PATIENCE and appreciate our ongoing focus on the safe transportation of their children to and from school.

V. Expectations of Media

1. To make announcements in accordance with the information provided by Dr. Early or Mr. Lovelace.
2. To make announcements in the most timely manner possible, and as accurately as possible.

VI. Expectations of All Personnel, Parents and The General Public

1. To appreciate the size and scope of Pittsylvania County
 - a. Covers nearly 1,000 square miles
 - b. Has numerous unpaved roads and a large number of isolated paved roads.
2. To be aware that “delayed opening” or “closed” decisions take into account the county as a whole.
3. To be aware that one possible option may be to close a single school or delay the opening of a single school. This would require quick and definitive coordination between pupil transportation, the affected school, parents and the media.

School personnel should report any concerns/problems relative to weather and road conditions to Dr. Early or Mr. Lovelace at the earliest possible time.

CLOSING SCHOOL OR DELAY OF SCHOOL OPENING DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements concerning the closing or delay of school opening due to weather conditions are made as early as possible in the morning after it has been determined that road conditions are unsafe.

Whenever possible, depending on weather conditions and the status of county roads, a decision will be made and announced the night before. In any case, a decision will be made and

announced by 6:00 a.m. if at all possible. Changing weather conditions may dictate a change in the original decision. Therefore, it should be emphasized to school personnel that they should continue to listen to the radio and/or television stations in case changes are made in the first announcement.

Announcements are made in priority order over:

- (1) Alert Now
- (2) Pittsylvania County Schools website: www.pcs.k12.va.us/public/weather.html
- (3) All local radio & television stations

School personnel should be aware that some stations are not on the air or do not have personnel to answer the telephone prior to 6:00 a.m.; therefore, the announcements may be delayed on those stations. When weather conditions are uncertain, students and personnel should listen to stations which do make early announcements.

II. WORK SCHEDULE FOR SNOW DAYS

A. In the event that Pittsylvania County Schools are closed, the following code plan will be in effect. The “closed announcement” given to the media will also include the code appropriate to the situation on that particular day. Personnel should therefore listen carefully to the **ENTIRE ANNOUNCEMENT** provided by the radio or TV stations and have readily available a copy of the code information.

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED - - - -

1. Employees follow Plan A
2. Employees follow Plan B
3. Employees follow Plan C
4. Employees follow Plan D
5. Employees follow Plan E

NOTE: Teachers and aides **SHOULD NOT REPORT** unless it is announced as a Teacher Professional Day.

PLAN A - ALL operations are closed and no employees should report to work.

PLAN B - Transportation personnel, maintenance personnel, custodial personnel, (including 10-CALENDAR MONTH CUSTODIANS), and administrative personnel should report to work at the regular time or as soon as road conditions permit.

PLAN C - ALL employees (EXCLUDING TEACHERS) who work more than a 200-day contract should report at the regular time. 10-CALENDAR MONTH CUSTODIANS ARE ALSO EXPECTED TO REPORT.

PLAN D - ALL employees (EXCLUDING TEACHERS) who work more than a 200-day contract should report at 10:00 a.m. 10-CALENDAR MONTH CUSTODIANS ARE ALSO EXPECTED TO REPORT.

PLAN E - Transportation personnel, maintenance personnel, custodial personnel, (including 10 - calendar month custodians), and administrative personnel should report to work at 10:00 a.m.

B. When Schools Close Early Due to Inclement Weather

1. Teachers and aides will be dismissed after all students have departed for home.
2. **Schools office personnel may leave after all buses have completed their scheduled routes.**

C. When Schools Open on a Delayed Schedule

1. The Central office and school offices will open on the regular schedule unless announced otherwise.
2. Central office and school office personnel will report to work according to the regular schedule. Teachers will report at the time corresponding to the delayed opening of school. Example: one hour delay, the teachers will report one hour later than normally scheduled to arrive.

NOTE: Early closing announcements will be made by means of the office/administrative pager.

III. SPECIAL NOTE

1. In the event of a “tornado watch” we will attempt to use good judgment as to whether/when buses are allowed to leave school for the afternoon routes. The presence of strong winds, thick/heavy-looking clouds, and generally unfavorable weather conditions may **BE GOOD CAUSE TO HOLD ALL BUSES AT SCHOOL UNTIL CONDITIONS BECOME MORE FAVORABLE.**
2. In the event of a “tornado warning” all buses will remain at the respective schools until the warning status has changed.

Revised July 7, 2011