



# INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

Albemarle County Public Schools

December 2016

## Determining School Schedule Changes

Every school day, our buses travel a geographical area of nearly 750 square miles to transport our students to and from school. The decision to change the school schedule or cancel school due to inclement weather is based solely on student safety and takes into consideration:

- Road conditions for bus travel and student and staff drivers;
- Weather forecasts; and
- Assessments by law enforcement, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and other localities.

The school division considers four options when bad weather becomes a factor in the school schedule:

- Delay the opening of school by one hour;
- Delay the opening of school by two hours;
- Dismiss school early; or
- Cancel school for the day.

Albemarle County's large size and mixture of rural and urban settings creates a unique challenge for the school division in determining school delays and closings. Our buses travel roads ranging from multi-lane highways to narrow dirt roads crossing mountains and one-lane bridges. Often roads in the urban ring around Charlottesville may be clear while those in more rural areas may be inaccessible for a longer period of time following a storm. When a significant portion of the county's roads cannot be navigated safely by school buses, the decision is made to close school.

## Early Morning Timeline

*Each inclement weather event is unique. While we sometimes have enough information to make and communicate scheduling decisions in the evening, the timeline below represents a general guideline of the decision-making process when it occurs in the early morning.*

**2 to 4 a.m.** Transportation Services Road Assessment Team drives assigned routes to evaluate conditions and hazards for school buses in six sections of the county. Other team members monitor weather forecasts and consult with other agencies and localities.

**4:30 a.m.** Road Assessment Team reports to Director of Transportation.

**4:45 a.m.** Director of Transportation submits recommendation to the Superintendent's Office and final decision is made regarding school operations.

**By 5 a.m.** If decision is made to change the school schedule, communications process commences.

**5:15 to 5:30 a.m.** School Schedule Hotline updated: (434) 296-5886

**By 6 a.m.** Local media notified. School division announces decision by voice, email and text to all subscribers of the [Electronic School Notification System](#) and posts announcement to school division website and social media sites.

## Notification of Schedule Changes

Families can learn the division's school schedule status during inclement weather in several ways:

**Receive an alert from the [Electronic School Notification System](#).** Parents are provided an opportunity at the start of each school year to enroll to receive electronic notifications from the school division by phone (landline or cellular) and/or email. Parents also may enroll at any time by contacting their child's school.

**Call the School Schedule Hotline.** Call (434) 296-5886 to listen to a pre-recorded message about school operations for the day. *Para español, llame al (434) 975-9332.*

**Visit the [Albemarle County Public Schools website](#).** Look for the red notification banner at the top of any web page. Detailed information about delayed openings, early closings, and cancellations is provided on the [Closings & Delays](#) web page.

**Connect with us through Social Media.** "Follow" us on [Twitter](#), or "Like" us on [Facebook](#).

**Tune in to local media outlets.** School schedule changes are broadcast on several local radio and television stations, as well as local media websites.

**Call the Community Hotline.** Call (434) 975-9331 to find out if the school buildings will be available for scheduled building rentals during inclement weather.



Pritchett Lane &amp; Riverview Lane (Jan. 25, 2016)

## Child Care Arrangements

**The After-School Enrichment Program will not operate if school dismisses early.**

Please make certain your child's school has current information regarding where your child should go in the event of an early closing.

## Inclement Weather Make-up Days

**If needed**, inclement weather days will be made up in this order:

- February 20, 2017
- March 31, 2017

Remaining inclement weather days will be made up with hours accumulated by the schools in excess of the minimum 990 hours required by the standards of accreditation.

## Last Day of School

The last day of school will be:

**Friday, June 9, 2017**

*This is a half day for students, followed by a half work day for teachers.*

## Mid-Morning Reassessment

*When we opt to close schools based on icy road conditions or a forecast, we may reserve the option to open school buildings for certain after-school activities, in the event that road conditions improve or the forecast does not come to fruition.*

**10 to 11:30 a.m.** Transportation Services reevaluates road conditions and hazards throughout the county, monitors forecasts, and consults with other agencies and localities.

**11:45 a.m.** Director of Transportation submits recommendation to the Superintendent's Office and final decision is made regarding after-school operations.

**By 1 p.m.** If approval is granted for schools to hold extracurricular activities, individual schools determine which of their activities will take place and announce decision by voice, email and text using the [Electronic School Notification System](#).

**Note:** *If you do not hear from your school by 1 p.m., all after-school activities remain canceled.*

## Electronic School Notification System

Albemarle County Public Schools uses an electronic system to notify parents, guardians and employees of important events within the school division, including school schedule changes due to inclement weather. This system has the ability to send messages via phone, email and text.

Parents have the opportunity to enroll in the [Electronic School Notification System](#) when they initially register their child for school, and again at the beginning of each school year, when they verify their child's registration information.

**Not yet registered?** If you have a child in Albemarle County Public Schools and would like to enroll in the [Electronic School Notification System](#), or if you need to update your contact information for emergency notification purposes, please **contact your child's school** to provide one or more current phone numbers and/or email addresses.



Doctors Crossing (Jan. 25, 2016)