

# CHESAPEAKE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Frequently Asked Questions Due to Weather-Related Closings



### *How does the school system determine to delay school, release students early, or close schools due to weather conditions?*

When severe weather is predicted, has the potential to impact the City, or weather conditions already exist, the daily procedures and practices of Chesapeake Public Schools are reviewed and analyzed by the Emergency Closing Committee. This committee takes into consideration **many** factors when making any decisions about possible delays, early release of students, or the closing of schools:

The **Emergency Closing Committee** is responsible for:

- Consistently monitoring weather conditions and temperatures
- Receiving and reviewing on-going updates from the National Weather Service in Wakefield
- Consulting with the Chesapeake Police Traffic Control Department regarding road conditions
- Consulting with surrounding school divisions leaders
- Retrieving input from members of the transportation department who report back on the condition of the roads
- Conducting daily assessments of all school buildings and facilities by school personnel to address weather related problems
- Assigning each schools' custodial staff to clear entrances and sidewalks when needed
- Working collaboratively with the City of Chesapeake Public Works Department to assist with clearing school parking lots and bus lanes
- Employing volunteer Weather Watchers throughout the city to give assessments of their current neighborhoods and road conditions
- Inspecting schools and neighborhoods to get a first-hand account of road conditions in subdivisions and city streets
- Allowing time for an accurate assessment of weather conditions by delaying the decision to close school
- Partnering and participating on the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) with the City

Overall, any decision that is made is based on all of the factors listed above while always keeping the safety of students and staff as the top priority.

## ***What does it mean when we have a two hour delay?***

When we have a two-hour delay, all schools will start two hours after the normal start time and students should arrive at their assigned bus stops two hours later than their regular bus stop time.

Below is a listing of **Delayed Opening** and **Early Closing** protocols:

### **Two-Hour Delay**

- Breakfast **will not** be served
- Schedules are adjusted to allow lunches to be served
- Chesapeake Career Center (CCC) – Morning Session - **Canceled**  
Chesapeake Career Center (CCC) – Afternoon Session – **Operates on regular schedule**
- A.M. Kindergarten – **Canceled**  
P.M. Kindergarten – **One-hour delay**
- The Governor’s School for the Arts – **Operates on regular schedule**
- SECEP (TRAEP & Re-ED) – **Two-hour delay**
- A.M. Special Education Preschool – **Canceled**  
P.M. Special Education Preschool – **One-hour delay**

### **Early Release**

- Principals are notified via email and/or phone
- Each school office phones are manned until all buses assigned to their school have completed all routes
- Parents are informed via the Parent Alert System (PAS). The Parent Alert System is an automated phone call with a recorded message that will call all homes of students and staff. (It’s essential that we have up-to-date phone numbers listed in Synergy.)
- Information will be broadcasted by our radio station (WFOS-88.7-FM), and TV station (CPS-TV Cox 46/Verizon 42)
- Information will be posted on our website [www.cpschools.com](http://www.cpschools.com)
- Local media WVEC-13, WTKR-3, and WAVY-10 will be notified

## ***If schools are closed due to inclement weather, are after school activities canceled?***

Yes, when schools are closed due to inclement weather, all of our after school activities and athletic practices are canceled as well. This also includes church services that are held in some of our schools and any programs scheduled for the Planetarium.

## ***If schools are closed, are the after-school childcare programs still open?***

No, if schools are closed, then the **after-school childcare programs housed in our school buildings**, such as the YMCA and the Boys and Girls Club, will be closed as well.

Additional activities that utilize school buildings such as Parks and Recreation will also be canceled.

## ***What is a Code Red?***

When schools are closed due to weather conditions, we use the following codes to alert school personnel whether to report to work.

- **CODE RED - SCHOOLS AND OFFICES ARE CLOSED**  
Designated essential personnel are expected to report work.
- **CODE YELLOW - SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED**  
Administrators and twelve-month personnel are expected to report work.
- **CODE GREEN - SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED FOR STUDENTS ONLY**  
Teachers and all other personnel are expected to report to work.

## ***How do we get the most accurate information regarding delays, early releases, or school closings?***

You can monitor the following media/resources for accurate and timely information on changes in the school schedule.\*

### **All are operated by Chesapeake Public Schools:**

1. Parent Alert System (PAS) – Our automated calling system
2. Our School Division Website – [www.cpschools.com](http://www.cpschools.com)
3. The School Division's Radio Station – WFOS-FM (88.7)
4. Chesapeake Public School TV – (Cox 46 / Verizon 42)

\*Local News Stations will also be alerted; however the most accurate information can be found at the sites listed above.

## ***What's the City's responsibility for clearing school parking lots and bus lanes?***

There are over 2,300 lane miles of roadway in Chesapeake. The roads are classified into a hierarchy for snow removal purposes, based on the limits of available resources:

**Emergency Routes:** These roads connect traffic flow to hospitals, interstates, and the neighboring cities, as well as providing essential north/south and east/west corridors across the City.

**Primary Routes:** These are high-volume roads serving as significant travel ways, and connection systems to the Emergency Routes.

**Secondary Routes:** These are moderate-to-low traffic corridors that channel traffic from neighborhoods to primary roads, or provide useful connections for travel and services.

It is important to note that the snow response plan does not include plowing or spreading on neighborhood streets, because of the demand on the limited resources, and geometric constraints (e.g. narrow streets and on-street parking).

The goal is to clear, and keep clear, Emergency Routes within 24-36 hours depending on available resources and snow accumulation rates, before branching out and including the other levels of streets.

Once the city has cleared the emergency, primary, and secondary routes, the City can help clear the schools' parking lots and bus ramps.