

## INCLEMENT WEATHER AND OTHER EMERGENCIES INFORMATION

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Winter weather emergencies, such as snow and ice, may cause disruptions in school operations, including the closure of school, a delayed opening, or an early dismissal. This letter provides information about the procedures used when such disruptions occur. Information also is provided about the weather contingency plan that would add student instructional days to the end of the scheduled school year if schools are closed for more than four days due to excessive weather emergencies.

### **Closure of School**

When schools are closed systemwide, all instructional programs and extracurricular activities in schools are canceled. Private day care providers in school buildings may elect to stay open if the schools are closed but the administrative offices are open. In extreme conditions, administrative offices also may be closed.

### **Delayed Opening**

A delayed opening means that schools open two hours later than scheduled. All buses operate on the same delayed schedule and, therefore, the pick-up times are two hours later than normal. When elementary schools open on a delayed schedule, the following programs are canceled: morning kindergarten, Head Start, pre-kindergarten, and other specialized programs or field trips scheduled before 12:00 noon. However, afternoon kindergarten, Head Start, and pre-kindergarten begin at the regular time. Full-day kindergarten will follow the regular school schedule. Parents should continue to check for radio, television, or Web announcements in the event a decision to delay the opening of schools is reconsidered and a decision to close schools for the day is made at 7:00 a.m.

### **Early Dismissal**

An early dismissal means that schools will close 2.5 hours earlier than scheduled. All buses operate on that same early schedule and, therefore, drop-off times are 2.5 hours earlier than normal. When elementary schools close early, afternoon kindergarten, Head Start, pre-kindergarten, and other early childhood programs are canceled, as well as any special programs or field trips scheduled after 12:00 noon. Morning kindergarten students ride home with upper-grade students. Full-day kindergarten students will follow the regular school schedule. Head Start and pre-kindergarten students will be dismissed at 10:30 a.m.

### **Lunch and Bus Schedules for Morning Kindergarten, Head Start, and Pre-kindergarten**

On early dismissal days, morning kindergarten students ride home with all other students and will remain in class until the entire school is dismissed. Head Start and pre-kindergarten students will be dismissed at 10:30 a.m. The school will provide lunch for morning kindergarten students. Should this be necessary, parents will be asked to reimburse the school for the cost of lunch. **It is important to remember that kindergarten students will be riding regular afternoon take-home routes with older students and will not be taken to their normal midday stops. It is the parents' responsibility to make the necessary arrangements to meet their students at the stops that are generally the same as the morning pick-up point.**

### **Public Announcements**

Information about school operations is announced publicly as soon as possible on area radio and television stations, Cable Channel 60, County Cable Channel 6 or Cable Channel 34—MCPS TV, FirstClass, on the

Internet at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org) or at [Schools-Out.Com](http://Schools-Out.Com), and on a taped telephone message service at 301-279-3673. Emergency e-mail announcements are available by signing up for MCPS QuickNotes on the school system's home page. If schools are closed or delayed, the announcement is made no later than 6:00 a.m. (or the night before if possible). If schools are closing early, the announcements are made by 11:00 a.m.

### **Emergency Weather Contingency Plan**

An emergency weather contingency plan will add student instructional days to the end of the scheduled school year if schools are closed more than four days because of weather emergencies. The planned school year for students ends on June 15, 2005. However, if schools are closed for more than four days due to weather emergencies, the following schedule would extend the school year in order to add the necessary make-up days:

1. If schools are closed for five days, the school year will be extended by one day to June 15, 2006.
2. If schools are closed for six days, the school year will be extended by two days to June 15 and June 16, 2006.
3. If schools are closed seven days, the school year will be extended by three days to June 15, June 16, and June 19, 2006.
4. If schools are closed for eight days, the school year will be extended by four days to June 15, June 16, June 19, and June 20, 2006.
5. If schools are closed nine days, the school year will be extended by five days to June 15, June 16, June 19, June 20, and June 21, 2006.

### **Weather Conditions and Decisions**

The school system uses a variety of sources of information to determine whether to close schools, delay the opening of schools, or dismiss schools early. These sources include actual physical inspection of road and school conditions by transportation officials and other staff at areas throughout the county, and an analysis of independent reports from the National Weather Service, Accu-Weather, and the news media. The most severe weather conditions within the county are used as the basis for decision-making. Consistent procedures are maintained in order to respond quickly to emergency weather conditions and protect the safety and well being of students.

All public schools within Montgomery County adhere to the same schedule concerning emergency weather conditions. The decision to change school operations is made by the superintendent of schools or his designee and affects all schools within the school system.

Sincerely,

Darryl L. Williams  
Principal