



# DIAMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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EXCELLENCE THROUGH EFFORT

Office of the Principal

November 16, 2016

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. Also, information 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 Schools**

When schools are closed system-wide, all instructional programs and extracurricular activities in schools are canceled. Private child-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. If this occurs, private child-care programs located in school buildings are closed as well.

## **Delayed Opening**

A delayed opening means that schools open two hours later than scheduled. All school 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 sessions of Head Start, prekindergarten, and other specialized programs or field trips scheduled before 10:50 a.m. (e.g., the Thomas Edison High School of Technology morning session). Activities that begin after 10:50 a.m. will be held as scheduled. Afternoon sessions of prekindergarten begin at the regular time. 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 (by 7:00 a.m.).

## **Early Dismissal**

An early dismissal means that schools will close 2.5 hours earlier than scheduled. All school 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 prekindergarten and other early childhood programs are canceled as well as any special programs or field trips scheduled after 10:50 a.m. Morning prekindergarten and morning half-day Head Start students will be dismissed at 10:50 a.m.

## **Public Announcements**

Information about school operations is announced publicly as soon as possible on area radio and television stations, Montgomery County Public Schools Cable TV (Comcast Channel 34, Verizon FOS Channel 36, and RCN Channel 89), Outlook, on the Internet at [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org), and on a recorded telephone message 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 5:00 a.m. (or the night before if possible). If schools are closing early, the announcement is made by 11:00 a.m.

### **Winter Weather: Stay in Touch with MCPS**

MCPS offers numerous ways for parents to learn about school closures, delayed openings, and early dismissals due to inclement weather.

- **AlertMCPS:** Receive text messages or emails from MCPS during weather-related emergencies and other major events that impact school system operations. Parents can also sign up to receive alerts specific to their child's school. Subscribe to AlertMCPS at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency/alertmcps.aspx>
- **MCPS homepage:** [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org)
- **QuickNotes email news service:** Subscribe at <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/quicknotes/subscribe/>
- **MCPS cable channel:** Comcast 34, Verizon 36 or RCN 89
- **Recorded information (English and Spanish):** 301-279-3673
- **Ask MCPS:** 301-309-6277. Staff take calls from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, in English and Spanish.
- **MCPS Twitter:** <http://twitter.com/mcps>
- **Local radio and TV stations:** Visit <http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency/> for more information.

### **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 current school year for students ends on Friday, June 16, 2017. 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 19, 2017.
2. If schools are closed for six days, the school year will be extended by two days to June 19, and June 20, 2017.
3. If schools are closed for seven days, the school year will be extended by three days to June 19, June 20, and June 21, 2017.
4. If schools are closed for eight days, the school year will be extended by four days to June 19, June 20, June 21, and June 22, 2017.
5. If schools are closed for nine days, the school year will be extended by five days to June 19, June 20, June 21, June 22, and June 23, 2017.

### **Weather Conditions and Decisions**

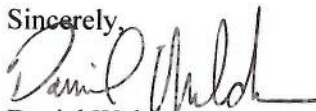
The school system uses a variety of sources of information to determine whether to close schools, delay the opening of schools, or dismiss schools early. These sources include actual physical inspection of road and school conditions by transportation officials and other staff at areas throughout the 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 relating to 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.

You can find additional emergency information on the MCPS website:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Walder". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Daniel Walder  
Principal