



INSTRUCTION: Schedules

Emergency Closures, Delayed Opening and Early Dismissal of Schools and/or Offices

I. Philosophy

The Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) believes that every child deserves to be educated in a safe environment that is conducive to learning. The Board accepts scientific evidence that children do not adapt to temperature extremes as effectively as adults and that high temperatures and humidity prevent optimal learning in schools that lack air conditioning. This notwithstanding, the Board also believes extreme temperatures in our schools are not healthy for staff. Additionally, the Board recognizes that severe, extreme or inclement weather conditions may require early school dismissal or closure.

II. Definition

Heat Index – as published by the national oceanic and atmospheric administration (NOAA), the measure of how hot it feels when relative humidity is factored in with the actual air temperature.

III. Standards

- A. The Board will build its annual calendar to accommodate inclement weather days.
- B. The Board directs the Superintendent to close all non-air-conditioned schools when the heat index is forecast to reach at least 90° Fahrenheit by 11 a.m. the following day. If the predicted heat index reaches 90 degrees by 3 p.m., parents may permit students to remain home and it shall be considered an excused absence.
- C. Principals shall allow students to carry water bottles at all times, regardless of heat or air conditioning status of the school.
- D. The principal shall have the flexibility to move students to cooler rooms or other appropriate areas, such as the auditorium, multipurpose room, library or shaded outdoor areas.

- E. If schools are closing due to heat, whenever possible, this decision will be publicly announced by no later than 8:00 p.m. the evening prior to the closure.
- F. The Superintendent shall have the authority to cancel all school-sponsored activities based on weather conditions.

IV. Implementation

The Board directs the superintendent to implement this policy.

Legal References: *Annotated Code of Maryland*, Education Article §7-103, *Required School Days and Holidays*
COMAR 13A.02.01.04, *Length of the School Year*

Related Policy: Board of Education Policy 6301, *School Calendar*

Policy		Board of Education of Baltimore County
Adopted:	08/09/16	
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