



SUSAN LEE COLLINS
Superintendent

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School Closure, Delay Start, and Early Dismissal

Dear Parent:

The following is the procedure for calling off school due to inclement weather and the guidelines for delayed starting of school or early dismissal.

Deciding whether to close school, delay start, or early dismissal because of hazardous weather is one of the most difficult decisions which faces the administrative staff and is probably the least understood procedure in the school system. Because weather and road conditions will sometimes change between the evening hours and the time that school commences, many times a decision cannot be made until 4:00am-5:00am in the morning. What would appear to be hazardous conditions at 9:00 o'clock in the evening may change during the night, depending on temperatures and the amount of work that the Department of Highway crews can accomplish.

There is a definite procedure for making such decisions. Contact is made to the Department of Highways, the National Weather Service as well as with bus operators in various areas in the county. With this information, it is the responsibility of the superintendent and the assistant superintendent in charge of supportive services to make the decision for the opening or closing of school.

All buses are equipped with chains, and the operators are instructed, "When in doubt, chain up." Drivers also have the option of deciding whether to make their particular runs. If, in their opinions there are hazardous conditions in their areas they can contact the supervisor of transportation and advise him of these conditions.

If the decision is made to close school, delay start, or early dismissal, an announcement will be made as soon as possible on ParentLink, local radio and television stations as well as on the board website (<http://www.harcoboe.com>) and on the West Virginia Department of Education website (<http://wvde.state.wv.us>).

Finally, part of this decision must be made by parents. If, in the opinion of a parent, conditions exist in his/her part of the county which might be dangerous, he/she should definitely consider these factors in determining whether to send his/her child(ren) to school. Consideration should also be given to the length of time that the child(ren) wait(s) for bus transportation. Parents should use their own judgment if they feel the length of time is excessive. Absences due to parental discretion regarding inclement weather conditions shall be considered as excused absences. Therefore, schools shall not penalize students by reducing grades, but shall provide the opportunity for work missed to be made up.

DELAYED START:

In the event that hazardous road conditions or weather necessitate a delayed start of school openings, the following guidelines shall apply:

1. School opening may be delayed two hours.
2. Principals will adjust their respective school schedules to accommodate for the delay.
3. Lunch hour shall be as near the regular time as possible to coordinate with UTC.
4. In case of a two hour delay, there will be Gifted classes.
5. Dismissals at the end of the day will be at the regular time.

EARLY DISMISSAL:

In the event that school needs to be closed early during the day, the following guidelines shall apply.

1. In the case of a two hour early dismissal the UTC buses will not run in the p.m.
2. Lunch hour will be adjusted so that students may have an opportunity to eat.
3. Principals will adjust their respective school schedules to accommodate for the early dismissal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Susan Lee Collins".

Susan Lee Collins
Superintendent