



January 5, 2018

Dear DCPS Families,

Now that we are in the winter months, we have begun experiencing inclement weather. Almost every year Washington experiences a few days of very cold, icy, or snowy weather that necessitates closing or delaying school. We want to ensure our students and families are prepared with important and up-to-information.

How do we decide to close school?

The decision to delay or close school is informed by a number of factors, including temperature and wind chill, levels of snow and ice, road conditions, the availability of public transit, and how these conditions are forecast to develop over the course of the day. Multiple agencies inform the decision, including advice from weather and city government experts, as well as the Mayor. A decision is typically made between 4:00-5:00 a.m. the morning of the delay or closure.

How is the public notified of school closings?

The best source of information is the DCPS Twitter account (@dcpublicschools). Information will also be shared on the DCPS website (dcps.dc.gov), DCPS social media accounts, and local TV and radio stations.

What does a 2-hour delay mean?

A delay causes schools to open 2 hours later than the normal start time. Schools will still close at the regular time. A delay does not count as a "snow day" and does not need to be made up later in the year. Any before-school programs will be cancelled. Schools will decide individually how to alter their bell schedule for a delay and if they will serve breakfast. When the opening of school has been delayed due to weather, afterschool programs will usually operate as scheduled, though we recommend contacting your school for details.

What if inclement weather develops during the school day?

Early dismissals are used only in extreme situations such as when travelling to and from school threatens student safety. The Chancellor will decide whether to cancel extended day programming, afterschool programming, or an athletic event. If we need to close early, DCPS will immediately inform schools and families, and all students will still be served lunch before dismissal. Like a 2-hour delay, early dismissals do not need to be made up later in the year.

When will school be made up?

D.C. State law requires DCPS to have a minimum of 180 school days. To meet this requirement, traditional calendar schools will need to make up some days at the end of the year.

- If we have **1 snow day**, June 13 becomes a full-day. June 14 becomes a half-day with dismissal at 12:15 p.m.
- If we have **2 snow days**, June 13 and 14 will become full days, and June 15 will become a half-day with dismissal at 12:15 p.m.

Extended Year schools will not need to make up any snow days.

Student safety is our top priority, and we are committed to educating every student in a safe learning environment in every school, every day.

Sincerely,

Michael Gaal

Deputy Chancellor, Innovation and Systems Improvement, DC Public Schools