

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DATE: October 19, 2010

TO: **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

FROM: Dr. Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent

SUBJECT: **REPORT ON UNPLANNED AND EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

ORIGINATOR: Joe A. Hairston, Superintendent

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INFORMATION

The Executive Summary regarding unplanned or emergency school closings is attached for information only.

**Department of Planning and Support Operations
Office of Transportation
Report on Unplanned and Emergency School Closings**

Executive Summary

In Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), the decision to close schools and/or related activities or to delay the instructional day shall be made by the superintendent. The decision is based upon student safety and the ability to effectively deliver the educational program. Superintendent's Rule 6303 guides the procedures for unplanned closures, delayed openings, and early dismissals of schools and related activities during the scheduled school week and on weekends.

Systemwide unplanned closures, delays, and early closings are most often associated with inclement weather. Conditions are monitored and evaluated daily and on the weekend by the Office of Transportation and reported to the superintendent. In addition to inspecting physical road conditions, the Office of Transportation utilizes important partnerships and critical sources of diagnostic data and information in its assessment including the AccuWeather service, state and local law enforcement, state and local highway operations, and county emergency operations. The BCPS Department of Physical Facilities, Office of Maintenance and Grounds also provides on-site assessment regarding the conditions of school buildings and grounds.

The decision to close, delay, or initiate an unplanned early dismissal of selected schools is most often associated with an isolated or localized utility failure such as electric, gas, and/or water, or is the result of a community-based emergency. Information regarding the emergency is assessed by the Department of Physical Facilities in conjunction with local law enforcement as needed and is provided to the deputy superintendent or chief of staff and shared with the superintendent. The Office of Transportation coordinates closely with the affected school(s) to establish dismissal times and procedures.

All internal notification and outside media notification regarding the decision to close or delay the school day and/or related school activities is initiated by the Office of Transportation.

Superintendent's Rule 6303 and related procedures are routinely shared with administrative and supervisory staff to ensure the highest level of continuity in our ability to deliver the instructional program.