

# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

## MODIFICATION OF SCHOOL HOUR SCHEDULES, DELAYED OPENINGS, ETC.

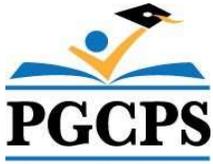
2565

Procedure No.

February 28, 2022

Date

- I. **PURPOSE:** To provide the procedures for delaying the hour for school opening, for closing schools at an earlier hour than usual, for closing schools for an entire day or longer, and for providing alternative schools in emergency situations.
- II. **POLICY:** The Board of Education is committed to providing safe, healthy and supportive school environments, which are vital to student academic achievement and support for school system employees. (Board Policy 0118)
- III. **BACKGROUND:** Certain events such as inclement weather, emergencies (such as power failures, no water, broken pipes, etc.), or other problems may make it advisable to modify the usual school opening or closing schedules or provide a temporary alternative facility for students. These procedures provide for the necessary authorizations to modify school schedules and provide for the communication of information to pupils, parents, and staff.
- IV. **INFORMATION:** Decisions concerning early morning school closings or late openings are made by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or designee. Every effort will be made to make the decision to delay school opening prior to 5:00 a.m. and to begin providing official notification between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- V. **DEFINITIONS:** The following definitions apply to the contents of this procedure:
  - A. **Delayed Opening:** Start of school two hours later than the usual time.
  - B. **Early Closing:** Dismissal of schools prior to the regular closing time.
  - C. **Emergencies:** Heating, cooling and/or ventilating equipment failures, power single/several school failures, broken water mains, inclement weather, or other safety emergency.
  - D. **Faculty:** Instructional staff
  - E. **School Closed:** Schools closed for the day. Schools will not open at all.
  - F. **School Facilities Closed:** Virtual instruction: All instruction will be delivered virtually.



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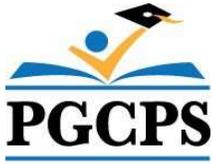
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### VI. PROCEDURES:

#### A. **Delayed opening of all schools:**

1. The CEO or designee will authorize a delayed opening of all schools.
  - a. If it is necessary to delay the opening of school because of inclement weather, dangerous road conditions or any other emergency, which might arise, the Communication Office will be responsible for making sure an announcement is broadcast over the television and radio stations and posted on the PGCPS website, official social media channels, email, text and phone bulletin board between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. The announcement will refer to a two (2) hour delay.
  - b. **Two (2) hour delay:** Schools will begin two (2) hours later than normal. Parents, students and staff shall be notified in advance of the following operating changes associated with the two (2) hour delay.
    - i. There will be NO work-study transportation. Those students should NOT report to school.
    - ii. There will be no half-day Early Childhood Center (ECC), Pre-K or Special Education Programs.
    - iii. Any other school program requiring transportation prior to 12:00 p.m. (noon) will NOT have transportation, including the Howard B. Owens Science Center.
    - iv. All field trips will be cancelled.
    - v. Food Services will offer breakfast.
2. The Principal is responsible for informing parents and staff about the procedures for a two-hour delay annually at the beginning of the school year.
3. A delayed opening will have no effect on dismissal time.



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#### **B. Closing of school facilities for an entire day:**

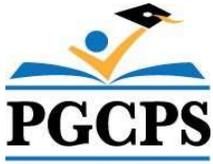
1. The CEO or designee will authorize the shifting of instruction to the virtual platform.
2. The CEO or designee will authorize the closing of school for an entire day.
3. The Communications Office will be responsible for making sure an announcement is provided to television and radio stations, posted on the PGCPS website, official social media channels, email, text and phone messages between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.

#### **C. Early closings of all schools:**

1. The CEO or designee will authorize an early closing.
2. The Communications Office will be responsible for making sure an announcement is provided to television and radio stations, posted on the PGCPS website, official social media channels, email, text and phone messages prior to 10:15 a.m., if possible.
3. Executive Cabinet members and schools will be notified by the emergency communication system and/or email.
4. When the announcement is made for early closing, the Principal is responsible for immediately announcing the school's dismissal time to staff, students and parents through the school's established communication system.
5. When schools have a two-hour early closing, all ECC half-day students will remain in school and be transported home with the regular afternoon dismissal.
6. The following announcement will be made by the CEO when all schools will close early due to expected inclement weather:

“Due to the current weather conditions and the forecast for the remainder of the day, schools will close \_\_\_\_\_ hours early.”

7. All after-school activities, field trips, and events are to be canceled, including athletic games and practices.
8. Food Services will provide lunch.



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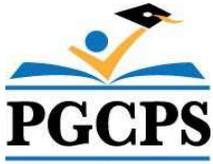
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9. Should weather conditions become unstable, parents should be instructed to listen to radio, television stations and social media for announcements concerning possible early school dismissal.

#### **D. Emergencies affecting single schools or only a few schools:**

1. Emergency situations caused by heating, ventilating, and air conditioning equipment failures, power failures, broken water mains, etc., may make it necessary to make modifications in the school hours or to provide a temporary alternate facility.
2.
  - a. Hot weather will not be recognized as a valid reason for closing all our schools.
  - b. Early dismissal for overheating conditions should be considered only in buildings with large windowless areas when air conditioning or ventilating equipment failures occur.
3. In the event of an emergency, the following procedures will be utilized:
  - a. In the event of a mechanical or electrical failure, which may require a span of time for repair, the Principal should call the Maintenance Department, at 301-952-6500, for information such as the total scope of the problem and the anticipated repair time.
  - b. The Principal should call the Area Associate Superintendent and, if necessary, request permission to close the school or transfer the students to an alternative site.
  - c. If the school is to be closed or students relocated to another site, the CEO/Designee or the Area Associate Superintendent responsible for the school will contact the Transportation Department, Security Services, and Communications so that proper responses can be made by these offices. The CEO will also be notified of any actions taken.
  - d. At the beginning of each school year, each elementary school will develop a plan in collaboration with the Area Associate Superintendent to relocate students to another building (e.g., area high school, middle school, or other system facility) in cases of short-term emergency situations such as no power, no water, pipe breakage, etc.



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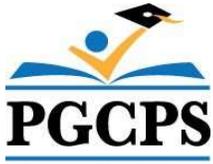
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- i. This plan will be submitted to the appropriate Area Associate Superintendent for concurrence.
- ii. The plans will reflect the following statements:
  - a) Students will be picked up from the base school and transported to the alternate school for the day. They will be returned to their home school prior to normal dismissal time so that dismissal to their homes will follow regular routines, bus routes, etc.
  - b) Arrangements for contingency activities while students are relocated have been made.
  - c) Arrangements for student lunch at the relocation facility have been confirmed.
- e. When schools are closed for any emergency, faculty will be permitted to leave the building after student dismissal and their assigned responsibilities are met. These responsibilities and a schedule shall be developed by the Principal with the faculty in each school and submitted for approval to the appropriate administrative officer designated by the CEO. When an individual school is closed for an emergency, staff will remain on duty unless the decision is made that the entire building is uninhabitable.

#### **VII. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE:**

- A. The Associate Superintendent for Supporting Services will be responsible for monitoring and compliance for this procedure.
- B. Principals are required to:
  1. Share these procedures with staff, students and parents regarding late openings, early dismissals, and emergency relocations annually at the beginning of the school year. This information should be provided both orally and in written communications sent home with students.
  2. Have parents/guardians complete a Family Emergency Form/Card and update it annually.
  3. Collaborate with staff to develop a list of responsibilities and schedule to follow before staff are permitted to leave the building when schools are closed for any emergency. The plan shall be submitted for approval to the appropriate



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administrative officer designated by the CEO.

### VIII. RELATED PROCEDURES:

- Administrative Procedure 2565.1 – Employee Attendance During Inclement Weather and Other Emergency Conditions
- Administrative Procedure 5090 – School Arrival and Dismissal Procedures
- Administrative Procedure 5117 – Early Release of Students During the School Day

IX. MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THESE PROCEDURES: This Administrative Procedure originates with the Chief Administrator for Supporting Services and will be updated as necessary.

X. CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDURES: This Administrative Procedure cancels and supersedes Administrative Procedure 2565, dated July 1, 2020.

XI. EFFECTIVE DATE: February 28, 2022