

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



DATE: March 26, 2002
TO: **BOARD OF EDUCATION**
FROM: Dr. J. Hairston, Superintendent
SUBJECT: **Revision of Superintendent's Rule 6114**
ORIGINATOR: Christine M. Johns, Deputy Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

RESOURCE

PERSON(S): Dr. Donald Mohler, Executive Director for Student Support Services
Ms. Sharon Norman, Director, Communications
Ms. Rita Fromm, Executive Director, Auxiliary Services

INFORMATION

That the Board of Education receive as an information item
an update to Superintendent's Rule 6114, Schedules:
Severe Weather.

The changes to the rule reflect current practice in the Baltimore County Public Schools. During the 2000-2001 school year, a committee studied the attached rule in detail prior to submitting its recommendations. The broad-based committee consisted of the following staff members who were identified as primarily responsible for the coordination of Baltimore County's severe weather procedures:

Dr. Richard Milbourne, Executive Director for Schools, Chairperson
Ms. Rita Fromm, Executive Director, Auxiliary Services
Ms. Sharon Norman, Director, Communications
Ms. Joanne Koehler, Retired (Served as the Director of Food and Nutrition)
Dr. Donald Krempel, Executive Director, Physical Facilities
Mr. Dale Rauenzahn, Director, Student Support Services
Mr. Gary Schlimme, Manager, Computer and Network Support
Mrs. Faith Hermann, Principal, Hereford Middle School
Mr. Dean Terry, Principal, Franklin High School
Mrs. Eileen Roberta, Principal, Kingsville Elementary School
Mr. Jeff Lifton, Director, The Education Channel
Mr. Randy Grimsley, Executive Director, Human Resources
Captain Mark Warren, Safe Schools Facilitator (Served as a consultant to the committee)
Mr. Keen Gooding, Department of Recreation and Parks, (Served as a consultant to the committee)

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Appendix I – Superintendent's Rule 6114

INSTRUCTION: Elementary and Secondary

Schedules: **SEVERE WEATHER**

1. Announcements

When **THE SUPERINTENDENT DECIDES** [it is decided that any facilities are to be closed,] **IT IS NECESSARY TO CLOSE ANY FACILITY OR SCHOOL**, [this] **THE** announcement will be made by local radio and television stations, **POSTED ON THE BCPS WEB SITE, AND SHOWN ON CABLE CHANNEL 73**. Students, parents, and employees should be advised to listen for this announcement and not to call the school, the central office, or the radio or television [station] **STATIONS. WEATHER RELATED CLOSING INFORMATION WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE ON THE AUTOMATED INFORMATION LINE, 410-887-5555.**

2. Delayed Opening of Schools

When weather conditions are such that it appears extremely hazardous to operate school buses at the regular early morning hours, but that travel conditions will appreciably improve later in the morning, the opening of schools may be delayed. [one or two hours.] The public announcement will **REPORT THE DEYALED OPENING** [indicate this], and bus schedules. [as well as school] **SCHOOL** opening times will [automatically] be delayed accordingly. On these [occasions] **OCCASIONS**, all employees shall be expected to report to work at the regular time **EXCEPT TEACHERS, INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS, PAID HELPERS, PERSONAL ASSISTANTS, AND 10-MONTH CLERICAL EMPLOYEES WHO MAY ARRIVE AT THE DELAYED TIME.** [, and schools] **SCHOOLS** and offices shall close on the regular schedules.

3. Closing of Schools Only for the Entire Day

When **THE SUPERINTENDENT DETERMINES** [it is felt] that traveling conditions exist or will develop that would make it unwise to open schools any time during the day, the radio and television announcement shall [state that] **state, "Baltimore County PUBLIC [schools] SCHOOLS are closed."** In this instance, personnel shall act as follows:

- a. Administrative and **TWELVE-MONTH** clerical personnel shall report to the school on the regular schedule in order to open the school office for its normal function.

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[b. Teachers are expected to engage themselves in professional activities and are not automatically required to report to their schools for these activities. However, when road conditions and parking facilities permit, school buildings will be open for teachers' use on these days, and principals are authorized to request teachers to report to the school for specific duties which can be accomplished during days when schools are closed for students.]

b. All central offices will be open, and employees are expected to report to work on the regular schedule.

c. For additional information regarding classified employees, see policy 4270.

4. Absences Due to Emergencies – Inclement Weather, etc.

If professional **AND 12-MONTH CLERICAL** personnel who are required to be on duty are absent due to inclement weather, such absence shall result in the loss of **A** personal business day, salary deduction, or in the case of employees who accrue vacation, the option of charging this absence to accrued vacation days. The procedure for classified personnel is covered in Policy 4270.

5. Early Closings of Schools

a. All Schools

Weather developments while schools are in session may require that schools be closed early. In such cases, all schools shall be notified by telephone, **[and] radio and television stations, THE WEB SITE, AND CHANNEL 73. [will announce the closing time.] [This] THE** closing time will be in relation to the regular closing time of each school, and the announcement will indicate “all Baltimore County **[public schools] PUBLIC SCHOOLS** will close hour(s) earlier than the normal closing time.” **[It is mandatory that all] ALL schools MUST** close in accordance with this announcement in order to coordinate **[our] transportation** and so that parents may know when to expect children to arrive at home. Principals shall adjust school schedules, including lunch, in order to dismiss at the announced time.

IN THE CASE OF HEAT-RELATED CLOSINGS, SCHOOL, CHURCH, COMMUNITY, AND RECREATION AND PARKS WILL DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT TO HOLD AFTERNOON AND EVENING ACTIVITIES BASED UPON THE AVAILABILITY OF AIR

CONDITIONED FACILITIES. THE LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FACILITIES WILL MAKE THIS DECISION FOR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES; THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS WILL MAKE THIS DECISION FOR THEIR ACTIVITIES; THE COORDINATOR FOR ATHLETICS IN THE BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL BE CONSULTED ON DECISIONS INVOLVING THE CANCELLATION OF INTERSCHOLASTIC EVENTS.

b. Selected Schools

[Local weather conditions] CONDITIONS may develop during the school day which make it advisable to close certain schools in some areas while the majority of schools remain in session. The decision to close schools on an individual basis shall be made by THE SUPERINTENDENT UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF the principal and THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS [assistant superintendent] FOR THAT AREA. Any principal who feels that his school should be closed during the school day shall call THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS, [his assistant superintendent] CONSULT WITH THE OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FACILITIES, and discuss the matter [with him] before a final RECOMMENDATION [decision] is made. In these cases, it shall be necessary to coordinate this closing with other schools which use the same buses.

[Since there would be no] A public announcement of the closing of [a few selected schools] THE AFFECTED SCHOOLS WILL BE MADE. HOWEVER, IF THE SCHOOL IS UNABLE TO CONTACT PARENTS INDIVIDUALLY, [small] YOUNG children may be faced with arriving at home [unexpectedly] when no adult is present. EVERY PARENT IS EXPECTED TO COMPLETE THE EMERGENCY DISMISSAL FORM AND RETURN IT PROMPTLY TO THE SCHOOL AT THE BEGINNING OF EVERY SCHOOL YEAR. PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO DISCUSS THE EMERGENCY PLAN WITH THEIR CHILDREN SO THAT CHILDREN KNOW WHAT EMERGENCY PROCEDURES THEY ARE TO FOLLOW IN THE CASE OF AN UNEXPECTED SCHOOL CLOSING. In view of this, the decision to close a few schools shall be weighed carefully and kept to a minimum.

6. WEEKEND AND EVENING PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SNOW EMERGENCY PLAN IN BALTIMORE COUNTY WILL DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT EVENING AND WEEKEND PROGRAMS WILL BE HELD. IF THE BALTIMORE COUNTY SNOW EMERGENCY PLAN IS IN EFFECT OR GOING INTO EFFECT DURING THE TIME OF AN EVENT, THE SCHOOL FACILITY WILL BE CLOSED. IF A SNOW EMERGENCY PLAN IS NOT IN EFFECT, THE COORDINATOR OF ATHLETICS FOR THE BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SHALL BE CONSULTED REGARDING THE CANCELLATION OF INTERSCHOOL ATHLETIC EVENTS.

a. EVENING CLOSINGS

WHEN SCHOOLS ARE OPEN TO THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY BUT WEATHER CONDITIONS DETERIORATE IN THE LATE AFTERNOON, THE OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FACILITIES, WILL REVIEW THE WEATHER CONDITIONS AND MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE SUPERINTENDENT REGARDING CLOSING FACILITIES. THE SUPERINTENDENT WILL USUALLY MAKE THIS DECISION BY 5:00 P.M. THE OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS WILL INFORM THE MEDIA SO THAT THE PUBLIC WILL KNOW THAT EVENING HIGH SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED.

b. WEEKEND CLOSINGS

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SNOW EMERGENCY PLAN IN BALTIMORE COUNTY WILL DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT WEEKEND PROGRAMS WILL BE HELD. IF THE BALTIMORE COUNTY SNOW EMERGENCY PLAN IS IN EFFECT OR GOING INTO EFFECT DURING THE TIME OF A PROGRAM, THE SCHOOL FACILITY WILL BE CLOSED AND ALL SCHOOL-RELATED ACTIVITIES CANCELED. THE OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS WILL USUALLY NOTIFY THE MEDIA BY 7:00 A.M. ON SATURDAY SO THAT THE PUBLIC WILL KNOW THAT SATURDAY HIGH SCHOOL IS CANCELED.

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IF SNOW EMERGENCY PLANS ARE LIFTED DURING THE WEEKEND, OPENING OF THE FACILITY WILL BE CONTINGENT ON THE CLEARING OF PARKING LOTS AND SIDEWALKS. THE LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR AND THE DEPARTMENT OF FACILITIES WILL DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO OPEN FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES. THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS IN CONSULTATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF FACILITIES, WILL MAKE THE DECISION FOR RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS.

7. Closing of the School System

[When] WHEN THE BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ADVISES THE SUPERINTENDENT THAT weather conditions are such that all travel is extremely hazardous, the public announcement [may] will indicate [that], “[all] ALL Baltimore County [public schools] PUBLIC SCHOOLS and ADMINISTRATIVE [Board of Education] offices are closed.” In this case, only specifically designated ESSENTIAL personnel [chief custodians or their designees, and groundsmen] required to MAINTAIN THE FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT [protect the buildings] shall report to work.

8. Use of School Buildings

On days when schools are closed FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER, all planned use of the school [facilities] FACILITIES, [should be canceled.] INCLUDING AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, [Adult evening classes] EVENING CLASSES, [and] professional staff [meetings] MEETINGS, BOARD MEETINGS, AND OTHER COUNTYWIDE SCHOOL SYSTEM EVENTS [are automatically] WILL BE canceled.

[Where local conditions may warrant a deviation from the above, this decision may be made by the principal after conferring with the organization concerned and the Department of Facilities.]

9. Snow Removal

THE DEPARTMENT OF FACILITIES WILL COORDINATE SNOW REMOVAL WITH THE BALTIMORE COUNTY GOVERNMENT. [A detailed plan for the removal of heavy snow will be received from the Office

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of Grounds, Maintenance, and Operations. Principals will direct local school grounds maintenance and custodial personnel in the clearing of driveways, parking lots, and walkways to the extent that manpower and equipment will permit.]

10. Emergency Conditions

The [Associate Superintendent in Administration] DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENTS [is] ARE to be advised of any emergency conditions which exist on school grounds.

Rule

Approved 11/21/68

Revised: 2/9/84

Revised: 3/26/02

Superintendent of Schools