



**2017 - 18**  
**INCLEMENT WEATHER PLAN**

**How does Guilford County Schools (GCS) determine whether to close or delay school when inclement weather is predicted?**

The **Superintendent** has assigned responsibility to the **Chief Operations Officer** for recommending whether to close or delay school or release students early when inclement weather is predicted. The **Chief Operations Officer** oversees the **Director of Transportation** and a team of **Transportation Supervisors** who are assigned to areas of Guilford County to check the roads and weather conditions throughout the county.

When predicted inclement weather threatens to make road conditions unsafe for school bus travel, the **Transportation Supervisors** review assigned roads and advise the **Director of Transportation** of the road conditions by 5 a.m. The director takes into consideration all reports received from supervisors regarding road conditions, reviews radar images, consults with the local branch of the National Weather Service, and makes one of the following recommendations to the **Chief Operations Officer**:

1. School opens at the normal time;
2. School opening will be delayed one or two hours;
3. School will be closed early; or,
4. School will not open for that day.

The **Chief Operations Officer** confers with the **Superintendent**, who makes the final decision. The decision to close or delay school, including how long to delay, will be announced to the media, via Connect-Ed®, posted on the GCS Website ([www.gcsnc.com](http://www.gcsnc.com)) and on GCSTV 2 not later than 5:30 a.m. by the **Director of Communications**. *If school opens at the normal time, an announcement will not be made. Therefore, no announcement in the media indicates that school will operate on a normal schedule.* If inclement weather occurs after the school day has begun, a decision regarding early release will be made as quickly as possible.

Whenever possible, if a decision regarding school closing can be made the evening prior, the **Chief Operations Officer** shall notify the **Superintendent** of the recommendation and seek final approval no later than 4:30 p.m.

If schools close for the day, road conditions will be reviewed again that afternoon and observations reported in time for the evening news, whenever possible. If road conditions are not likely to improve before the next morning, school will be canceled.

Notification will be announced to the news media, posted on the GCS Website ([www.gcsnc.com](http://www.gcsnc.com)) and broadcast on GCSTV 2. The Connect® system as well as social media also will be used to make this announcement. Whenever possible, the announcement will be made in time for the 6 p.m. evening news reports.

If the afternoon review finds that school is a possibility for the next day, the decision may be deferred until the next morning and the announcement will be made by 5:00 a.m.

**Extended School Cancellation Due to Inclement Weather:**

By the end of the **fifth** school day, if some roads remain unsafe for school bus travel and are not likely to be safe for school bus travel within the next three days, **Bus Drivers** or **Transportation Supervisors** will call parents/guardians of students who have provided their telephone number (see below) and who live on impassable roads. Drivers will provide

them with a recommended nearby bus stop/stop time on a cleared road. The parent/guardian needs to advise the bus driver or transportation supervisor if he/she will or will not bring the student to the suggested alternate bus stop location to ride the bus. For planning purposes, and to avoid confusion, the alternate stop will be the drop-off point for that child that afternoon. The bus driver will provide the student with a note at the afternoon drop-off explaining to parents and/or guardians as to where the bus stop will be the next morning.

*If a student is picked up from or dropped off at a child care center, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to advise the child care center to accommodate this plan and meet the bus at the alternate location.*

Bus drivers have been instructed to solicit all students' home telephone numbers via a standard Guilford County Schools form signed by the director of transportation. Parents/guardians are asked to complete the form and return it directly to the bus driver. Bus drivers for special needs students already have home telephone numbers but parents of special needs students will be asked to validate that number with the driver during a student pick-up or drop-off.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

**High Schools** - On the first day that schools are closed due to inclement weather conditions, all school activities will be canceled, unless permission to proceed has been given by the **Chief of Schools**. Under no circumstance should students be penalized for failure to attend activities when school is closed, even when special permission to proceed has been granted.

**Elementary and Middle Schools** – No school activities, including the ACES program, games, practices, rehearsals, performances, etc., shall take place when school is closed or dismissed early due to inclement weather, unless permission to proceed has been given by the **Chief of Schools**.

Inclement weather conditions may also cause after-school activities to be cancelled on days schools close at the regular time. These closings will be announced by the school, broadcast on GCSTV 2 and posted online at [www.gcsnc.com](http://www.gcsnc.com).

### **Severe Weather – Watches and Warnings**

**Severe Weather Watch** – Transportation operations will proceed as usual during a severe weather watch. The **Director of Transportation** monitors conditions to ensure safe travel can be made by school buses. In order to maintain consistency in schedules, school buses will not deviate from the normal scheduled routes and will not make additional bus stops.

**Severe Weather Warning** – If a severe weather warning is issued before buses are loaded and away from campus, bus operations will be suspended and the students, under the direction of their principal, will take shelter in the school building until the warning is expired. If a severe weather warning is issued after buses have departed from the school, bus drivers will be instructed to proceed cautiously to a safe area to park the bus until the storm warning has expired.