

McCormick Elementary School

Early Dismissal Due to Inclement Weather

As we know, the Baltimore region of Maryland is known for fast traveling winter storms. Sometimes, they come when least expected. The following policy is provided to you as we plan for every contingency throughout the winter months.

Should it be necessary to close schools early due to inclement weather, the procedures outlined below will apply for **one, two and three-hour** early dismissals when all schools are closing early. Dr. Dance recognizes that a decision to close two-hours early poses problems in some schools with the dismissal of morning Pre-Kindergarten children and the resultant need to serve food to these youngsters; additionally. Lunch schedules and vocational-technical center transportation are affected in the secondary schools. It is recognized that bus drivers, whose jobs depend on accident-free driving records, are concerned about transporting children on potentially dangerous roads for an extra trip on days when driving should be limited rather than expanded. In view of these concerns, the decision to close schools two-hours early will be made only in emergency situations such as those involving sudden or violent storms or road conditions requiring treatment more extensive than that which can be completed for a three-hour early dismissal. When possible, one and three-hour closings will be used.

One-Hour Closing

Student Dismissal – students, grades pre-kindergarten through 12, in all schools will be dismissed one hour earlier than normal. Afternoon pre-kindergarten students will be dismissed with students in grades kindergarten through grade five and will travel home on the same buses as these students. For **McCormick** students, dismissal will be at **2:10 p.m.**

Lunches – Lunches will be served to students as usual.

Media Announcements – The following message will be given to television and radio stations: **“All Baltimore County Public Schools will close one-hour earlier than normal closing time.”**

Two-Hour Closing

Student Dismissal – Students in grades kindergarten through 12 in all schools will be dismissed two-hours earlier than normal. There will be no afternoon pre-kindergarten. Morning pre-kindergarten students will remain at school until dismissal for students in grades kindergarten through five and will travel home on the same buses as these students. For **McCormick** students, dismissal will be at **1:10 p.m.**

Lunches – Every effort will be made to serve lunches to all students who normally eat lunch at school; thus, some adjustments to lunch schedules will be necessary. Morning pre-kindergarten students will be fed a snack using the normal procedures. Pre-kindergarten students will not be served a full lunch.

Media Announcements – The following message will be given to television and radio stations: **“All Baltimore County Public Schools will close two-hours earlier than normal closing time. There will be no afternoon pre-kindergarten. Morning pre-kindergarten will be dismissed with the other elementary school students.”**

Three-Hour Closing

Student Dismissal – Students in grades kindergarten through 12 in all schools will be dismissed three-hours earlier than normal. There will be no afternoon pre-kindergarten. Morning pre-kindergarten students will remain in the elementary schools until dismissal for students in grades kindergarten through 5 and will travel home on the same buses with these students. For **McCormick** students, dismissal will be at **12:10 p.m.**

Lunches – Every effort will be made to serve a limited lunch to all students who normally eat at school; thus some adjustments to the lunch schedule will be necessary.

Media Announcement – The following message will be given to television and radio stations; “**All Baltimore County Public Schools will close three-hours earlier than normal closing time. There will be no afternoon pre-kindergarten. Morning pre-kindergarten will be dismissed with the other elementary students.**”

In the event that all Baltimore County Public Schools are closing for one, two or three-hour early dismissal, it is the responsibility of families to listen for media broadcasts to determine the approximate time students should be arriving home.

Schools will not be calling individual families regarding this information.

Please talk with your school age child so that they know where to go and what to do when schools are dismissed early.

Absence Notes – When a child is absent from school, it is mandatory for the parent/guardian to submit a note to the teacher explaining the reason for the absence. These notes should be presented on the day the student returns to school. If your child is absent for more than three days in a row due to illness, we ask that you contact the school nurse, Ms. McGuirk.

Safe Schools Reporting Act

The Safe School Reporting Act of 2005 requires that each school make available to families copies of the Maryland State Department of Education’s (NSDE) *Victim Harassment and Intimidation Report Form* now available at each school. Should an incident of harassment or intimidation occur, local school administrators will investigate the acts and report the outcome of the investigation to the local school system. Information regarding this report form is available by contacting the school; this information is not available in the Student Behavior Handbook.

Forgotten Books and Supplies

Classroom doors are locked as teachers exit the building. Because of personnel limitations, and for security reasons, classrooms will not be unlocked after **6 p.m.**

McCormick Volunteers

Baltimore County Public Schools requires that all volunteers complete an application before volunteering at school. This application requires references and an affidavit of criminal history. Volunteerism at McCormick Elementary includes, but is not limited to, ***working in the classroom, accompanying students on field trips, and Title I activities held at school.***

If interested, please call or see Mrs. McGuirk, school nurse, for additional information. Adults wishing to participate in school sponsored field trips are encouraged to complete these forms well in advance of the scheduled trip.

Custody Issues

Please be reminded that the school **must** have copies of all current court ordered custody arrangements on file in our office. Without these documents, the school is unable to comply with some requests made by families. If you have any questions regarding legal documents, please contact Ms. Boudier, McCormick's guidance counselor.

Student Safety – Before and After School Care

Ensuring the safety of our students, and your children, is a priority of the school. The following considerations are stressed for each family to help McCormick meet our goal of "safety first."

- Parents/guardians **must** provide the school with written instructions regarding change of daycare, altered arrangements for student transportation as well as information regarding persons permitted to pick a child up from school. Written statements requesting change must include the name of the student as well as the signature of the legal parent/guardian making the request. A reliable telephone number must be included so that verification from the office can be determined. We ask that students/parents/guardians submit these requests first thing in the morning.
- Parents/guardians are discouraged from telephoning the school to make changes in daycare, student transportation and/or unknown persons sent by the family to withdraw a student from school. It is legally impossible for the school to verify if the caller is legally permitted to make such a request. If calling the school is a last resort in an emergency situation, the caller must be prepared to answer questions related to their child's *Student Emergency Form 2013-2014* that families are required to complete annually.
- *Student Emergency Forms, 2013-2014*, must be updated by the parent/guardian as telephone numbers (work/home/cell) and contacts change throughout the year. These forms can be sent home at your request.
- Parents/guardians are discouraged from withdrawing students at the end of the day just prior to walker/bus rider dismissal. This is a hectic time of day for students, teachers and office personnel. It is possible that vital information could be lost to the teachers, and ultimately your child, could be lost in the various announcements made at the end of the day.
- If an adult's arrival at school is the only option in an emergency situation, this request can only be made at the office and after proper identification has been verified. Teachers will not permit a student to leave their classroom unless verification has been received from the office.

Emergency Forms/Early Dismissal Forms

It is imperative that all families return the emergency forms to the school. This information must be available to staff in the event of a critical situation involving your child. It is equally important that this information be updated as family situations change throughout the school year. **Remember, students may not be released into the custody of any individual without their name appearing on the student's emergency form.** Any person withdrawing a child from the school must prove identity using a driver's license or other form of identity.