

Baltimore City Public Schools Inclement Weather Policy

Schools may close for the day, open late, or dismiss early if bad weather or an emergency makes it unsafe to get to and from school. Individual schools may also close if they have heating, cooling, electrical, or other maintenance problems. **Full-day closings and delayed openings are announced as close to 5:00 a.m. as possible. Early dismissals are announced as soon as the decision is made.**

Be the first to know!

* Follow @BaltCitySchools on Twitter or like the City Schools Facebook page. Also like the Baltimore Teachers Union on Facebook and follow us @BTUBaltimore on Twitter and @BTUBaltimore on Instagram for the latest updates.

* **Staff:** Check your City Schools email, and sign up through Employee Self Service to get a robocall or text

* Check this website

* Watch local TV stations

When do schools close because of heat?

Early dismissal for all schools without air-conditioning will be considered when...

- The temperature in the majority of classrooms in most buildings **is 85 degrees or higher, and students cannot be relocated to cooler areas**
(principals will report inside temperatures to the district office no later than 10:00 a.m. each day during hot weather)
- or -
- The **outside heat index reaches 100 degrees by 10:30 a.m.**
(this is the "feels like" reading that combines temperature and humidity)

*Note that the district may also consider closing individual schools depending on conditions in specific buildings. This includes air-conditioned schools, if their cooling systems are not working properly and repairs cannot be made quickly.

When might all schools close early?

When schools open on time but weather changes make it unsafe to travel later in the day, schools may close early — usually 2.5 hours early.

When schools close early, extended-day and after-school programs and all interscholastic athletic events are canceled, but lunch is served in all schools.

When does the district close just one or a few schools?

Individual schools may close because of problems in the neighborhood around the school (e.g., a power outage or water main break) or in the school building itself (e.g., a furnace problem that can't be fixed that day). Check out the [building status map](#), and scroll down for more information about closing for heat or cold.

When do schools close because of cold?

Between 6:30 and 9:00 every morning, highly accurate temperature readings are taken in schools.

If temperatures are below 60 degrees in many areas of the building, the principal calls a designated direct phone line at the district office to report a problem.

A facilities technician goes to the school and determines how quickly the problem can be addressed.

If the temperature is below 60 in a classroom, school staff will relocate students to a warmer area of the building. If temperatures below 60 are widespread and the facilities technician determines the problem cannot be fixed within two hours, the principal and district leadership will determine if a closure or early dismissal is necessary.

How are decisions made on “snow days” for the whole district?

Starting the night before, staff check road conditions, neighborhood sidewalks, school parking lots, and school walkways. They also talk with the Baltimore City Department of Transportation, the Maryland Mass Transit Administration, and local weather forecasters.

City Schools' CEO or designee reviews all the information and makes the decision whether to open on time, delay opening for two hours, or close. The decision is made as early as possible — we aim for 5:00 a.m., or earlier if conditions allow.

When does the district delay opening for all schools?

Schools may open two hours late when travel conditions aren't safe at 5:00 a.m. but are expected to get better or travel conditions are safe but could get worse before the regular school day starts. A delayed opening means that half-day early learning programs are canceled and school breakfast is not served.

If the decision is to open two hours late and then the weather gets worse, schools may close for the day. On days with a delayed opening, make sure to check City Schools Twitter, Facebook, or this website before leaving for school, to make sure a change hasn't been announced. We aim to make that updated announcement no later than 7:00 a.m.

More information for staff members

Essential personnel

When the district closes or delays opening, these employees who are considered directly responsible for the safe opening or closing of schools (including charter and contract schools) must report as scheduled. They include the following:

- Principals
- Area facility managers
- Region techs and lead techs
- Building engineers
- Pest control staff

- Contract maintenance staff
- Custodial staff
- Grounds and repair shop personnel
- Transportation administrative staff
- Facilities administrative staff
- Mechanical services staff
- School police
- Cabinet officers ("chiefs")
- Any other employee who was notified of her or his essential designation earlier in the school year

All other personnel are considered non-essential.

School closures vs. district office closures

The decision to close, dismiss early, or delay opening may be different for schools than for the district office. Staff should check announcements and their City Schools email carefully for reporting information.

Liberal leave

When liberal leave is announced as being in effect, employees can use accumulated vacation leave, personal leave, or compensatory time, without making the normal, advance-notice request of their supervisor. Department heads may grant time without pay to an employee who has no paid leave available for use.