



Uwharrie Charter Academy Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)	
Issued: 12/2/2002	Revised:
SUBJECT: Inclement Weather Protocols	

Inclement Weather Protocol

Inclement weather, by its very nature, is highly unpredictable. Making decisions about the welfare of students and staff is a significant responsibility – one that is always made with safety as the highest priority. The following protocol and guidelines are used by the administration and staff when making decisions regarding weather related early dismissal or school cancellations and delays.

Guidelines for Monitoring Weather Conditions

The Director of Operations will assign staff to monitor weather, road, and school campuses to assess whether it is safe to hold school.

School staff will communicate with local and state emergency management officials as appropriate.

Assigned Staff:

- Transportation Coordinator:

Guidelines for School Closure / Early Dismissal

School Closure or Delay for Students Before the School Day Begins

- When conditions warrant, the Director of Operations will recommend to the Superintendent that school be closed for the day or to have a delay in the starting time.
- The Superintendent will make a decision regarding school closure or delay.
- Information on the decision will be forwarded via multiple outlets – Connect 5 notification, Fox 8, UCA website, Social Media, etc.

- It is our goal to make a decision regarding school closure or delay by no later than 8:00 p.m the night before the cancelation or delay if the conditions warrant. If not, then the decision will be made by 5:00 a.m. so that all personnel can be properly notified before buses pick up the first students.

School Closure for Students While Buses Are in Route

- When conditions warrant, the Director of Operations will recommend to the Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent that school be closed for the day.
- In the unlikely event that school does close for the day while buses are in route, a decision will be made whether to drop students at the school to be housed in “shelter format” or to return students to their bus stops. Communication will go out though school messenger to inform the parents and the community.
- Operations Director upon decision and collaboration with the Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent will communicate with assigned staff to coordinate
 - o Assigned Staff: Transportation Coordinator

Early Dismissal for Students

- When conditions warrant, the Director of Operations will recommend to the Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent early dismissal.
- The Superintendent will make a decision regarding early dismissal.
- An announcement will be made over the emergency radio system and will include the time information for dismissal. Additional communications to the public will be made from UCA leaders.
- Transportation will proceed with a ConnectEd notification for all bus drivers to report to work immediately.
- Schools should issue a ConnectEd notification to parents advising them of the early dismissal.
- Transportation will monitor all buses via radio and contact schools when buses have dropped off the last student for each respective school.

Note: Schools are asked to be mindful that buses may not be able to run on schedule, depending on weather conditions. Principals should prepare staff in advance for delays that may occur.

Inclement Weather Protocol for Operational Services Adverse

Weather and A.M. School Delays/Closings

It is the responsibility of the Operations Director to be vigilant and aware of potentially adverse weather or road conditions that may affect the safety of school-related transportation. Being aware includes monitoring weather forecasts on TV, radio, National Weather Service (NWS) and communications with local government agencies on the days/hours leading up to the event and during/after the event. It will also be the responsibility of the Operations Director and Assistant Superintendent to determine if any conditions or situations exist from a campus standpoint that will prohibit schools from opening.

Upon awareness of potentially adverse road conditions or weather, the Transportation Coordinator will notify the Director of Operations by 8:00 p.m. on the night prior to the next school day. In this notification, the Director of Operations will clarify:

- That Transportation is aware of and monitoring potentially adverse road conditions for the next morning;
- That the Transportation Coordinator will call the Director of Operations by 4:45 a.m. of the next morning to review the status of road conditions and make a recommendation.
- The Director of Operations will alert the Assistant Superintendent and the Superintendent of the potential for adverse weather.
- The Director of Operations will assign the necessary staff to monitor, first-hand, the road conditions between 4:00 and 4:30 a.m. on the morning of concern.

Each staff member will report his findings to the Director of Operations by 4:30 a.m. Staff will be assigned to monitor the roads to ensure coverage of all areas of the school district as follows:

- Archdale/Sophia Area: (Kevin Lamb & Chris Wheat)
- Biscoe/Troy/Denton Area: (Casey Harris)
- Ramseur/Asheboro Area: (Clayton Miller & Keith Jessup)
- Seagrove Area: (Amanda Deaton)

By 5:00 a.m., the Director of Operations will hold a conference call with the Assistant Superintendent and the Superintendent to provide the following:

- A definitive recommendation on proceeding with, delaying or closing school based on transportation safety.
- A thorough explanation and justification for the recommendation.
- Information about the status of adjacent and area districts and their transportation decisions.

The Superintendent will make the final decision at or near 5:00 a.m. The Transportation Coordinator will forward the decision to key Transportation personnel and drivers. The Transportation Coordinator will notify the media and send notifications to staff and parents.

If existing or potentially adverse conditions are discovered after the deadline stated above, the Director of Operations will contact the team as noted immediately. Backup for the Superintendent is the Assistant Superintendent.

Inclement Weather Procedures for Non-School Days

School Activities and Events (Athletics, Driver's Education, School Events, Professional Development)

In the case of inclement weather on a non-school day or after school (workdays, weekends, holidays, and or after school), the school's Athletic Director will communicate with the Director of Operations or designee. A recommendation will be made to the Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent regarding the closure or cancelation of events.

If a decision is made to cancel/ delay school activities on non-school days, then the following will occur:

- UCA's school Athletic Director will communicate with the Director of Operations and Assistant Superintendent.
- UCA's Athletic Director will communicate the decision with the school's head coaches and or Driver's Education teachers.
- The Assistant Superintendent will communicate with staff and the public through media, UCA website, ConnectEd notifications, Social Media and email messages.
- When possible, the decision will be made the night before the day of cancellation/delay.

A sample announcement should include the following:

- o All UCA events, activities, and functions are cancelled for [month, date, year]
- o There will be no UCA events, activities and functions before [time] and [date]
- o There will be no evening UCA events, activities, and functions on [date]

The Assistant Superintendent will work with schools to address any field trip or school specific concerns that arise with delays/ cancellations.

Delays/ Cancellations Include:

- Driver's Education;

- Athletic practice, games and events;
- Professional Development;
- School-based events (ex: play practice, PTA meetings);
- Community Ed

Inclement Weather Procedures for Bus Drivers

When inclement weather conditions warrant transportation officials will monitor the situation.

Should it become necessary to delay or close school, school bus drivers will be notified by the Director of Operations. In addition, the Director of Operations will ensure that messages of delay/ closure are communicated using various methods, including Social Media, school messenger system and or radio.

During the school year, especially during winter months, there is a greater occurrence of weather conditions creating unsafe traffic conditions. When such conditions arise, the school system may:

- Delay the opening of school by one or more hours
- Close school early
- Close school for one or more days

In the event of school closings, delayed starts and/or early dismissals, when severe weather is forecasted, (ex: snow, ice, sleet, high wind, floods, thunderstorms and lightning) drivers should contact the Director of Operations for direction.

Flood

Floods occur when an overflowing of a large amount of water beyond its normal confines, especially over what is normally dry land. Floods can occur at any time after a heavy rainfall or thawing of snow. If you come across or approach a flooded street, follow the steps below:

- Do not drive through flooded streets/ roads.
- Contact the Transportation Coordinator to report the flooded street/road.
- Take an alternative route or wait for public safety personnel to determine safety.
- Proceed to school, home or designated shelter as appropriate.

Tornado

- Tornado Watch: This is issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are favorable for the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area.
- Tornado Warning: A **tornado** has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. There is imminent danger to life and property.