



Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Mohammed Choudhury

DATE: April 26, 2022

SUBJECT: Request from Dorchester County Public Schools for a Calendar Modification

PURPOSE:

To consider the request to waive one day of student attendance for Dorchester County Public Schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

BACKGROUND/HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Education Article §7-103 requires schools to be open for student attendance for 180 days. Subsection (b) (iv) provides the State Board of Education the authority to adjust the length of the school year by granting waivers of the 180-day requirement. Such adjustments may be granted if normal school attendance is prevented because of natural disaster, civil disaster, or severe weather conditions.

Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 13A.02.01.04, further specifies the conditions for granting a waiver of the 180-day school year requirement and includes the following:

1. The school system demonstrates they have made sufficient effort in providing instruction through calendar planning and modifications; and
2. Natural disasters, civil disasters, or severe weather conditions are sufficiently significant to warrant a waiver of days.

The conditions required for waiver applications are specified in COMAR 13A.02.01.04 (C) and include the following:

1. The local school system developed a calendar which included days to be used to make-up days lost. Depending upon past experience, this number could range from 3 to 10 days; and
2. The local school system has modified its calendar by scheduling school on make-up days provided in the original calendar and by extending the school year 3 days beyond the previously scheduled closing date.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Dorchester County Public Schools was closed seven days due to inclement weather. On Friday, October 29, 2021, Dorchester County was in a state of emergency due to expected flooding and the school system closed to allow for emergency preparedness. The request submitted by Dorchester County Public Schools on April 6, 2022 asks for a one-day waiver of the 180 day instructional requirement. Dorchester County Public Schools has used the four inclement weather recovery days built in its School Calendar. Additionally, Dorchester County Public Schools adjusted its School Calendar to recover two days, January 27, 2022, and April 19, 2022, as instructional days. If the waiver is granted, the last day of school will be on Wednesday, June 15, 2022.

ACTION:

It is being requested that the Maryland State Board of Education approve the request to waive one-day of the 180-day instructional requirement for Dorchester County Public Schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

Attachment: Waiver Request from Dorchester County Public Schools.



Every Child a Success

W. David Bromwell
Superintendent of Schools

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF DORCHESTER COUNTY

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April 6, 2022

Mr. Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Mr. Choudhury:

In the 2021-2022 school year, Dorchester County Public Schools (DCPS) has experienced severe inclement weather events that resulted in DCPS being closed for seven (7) school days. DCPS placed four (4) inclement weather days within our school calendar for 2021-2022. Additionally, we adjusted our school calendar to recover two days for in-person instruction January 27, 2022, and April 19, 2022.

Friday, October 29, 2021, Governor Hogan placed Dorchester County in a state of emergency due to expected flooding. This state of emergency closed our schools to allow for emergency preparedness and our local high school was utilized as an emergency shelter for county residents.

On behalf of the Board of Education of Dorchester County, and in accordance with the Education Article 7-103, Annotated Code of Maryland, I respectfully ask that you grant a one (1) day waiver from the 180-day school requirement for the students of Dorchester County Public Schools. This would allow the DCPS school calendar to reflect, Wednesday, June 15, 2022, our originally scheduled end date, as the last day for students. This would assist us as we close out the current school year, prepare our facilities for summer academies, administer summer professional development, and school improvement activities. Our parents and community would be incredibly grateful as well.

Thank you for your consideration and request. Please feel free to contact me at 410-228-4747, extension 1001, if you have any questions.

Very sincerely yours,

W. David Bromwell
Superintendent of Schools

WDB/cd