

TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Schools 

DATE: February 25, 2025

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

Purpose

To consider the request to waive one day of student attendance for Wicomico County Public Schools for the 2024-2025 school year. Wicomico County Public Schools requests to end the school year on Friday, June 13, 2025, after 179 days instead of Monday, June 16, 2025.

Background

Education Article §7-103 requires that schools be open for student attendance for 180 days. The State Board of Education has 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 due to a natural disaster, civil disaster, or severe weather conditions.

The conditions for granting a waiver of the 180-day school year requirement are specified in Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.02.01.04 and include the following:

1. The local education agency has demonstrated that 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 a waiver application are specified in COMAR 13A.02.01.04 (C) and include the following:

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

In considering applications for waivers, the State Board of Education may waive the final day needed to complete the 180-day schedule if that day falls on a Monday (COMAR 13A.02.01.04D(2)(a)).

Executive Summary

Wicomico County Public Schools were closed on January 6 through January 10, 2025, and January 22, 2025, due to inclement weather. Wicomico County Public Schools have utilized two (2) of the three (3) inclement weather recovery days in its 2024-2025 School Calendar (February 3, 2025, and June 12, 2025). Wicomico County Public Schools has also added three (3) additional instructional days, February 17, 2025, Presidents' Day, April 17, 2025, and June 13, 2025, to its 2024-2025 School Calendar. Accordingly, the last day of the 180-day instructional requirement will be on Monday, June 16, 2025. Consistent with COMAR 13A.02.01.04D(2)(a), the one-day waiver will allow school to end on Friday, June 13, 2025.

Action

Request that the Maryland State Board of Education approve the request to waive one day of the 180-day instructional requirement for Wicomico County Public Schools ending the 2024-2025 school year on Friday, June 13, 2025, at 179 days consistent with COMAR 13A.02.01.04D(2)(a).

Attachments

Waiver Request from Wicomico County Public Schools



Wicomico County Public Schools

2424 Northgate Drive, Salisbury • P.O. Box 1538, Salisbury, MD 21802-1538 • 410-677-4400

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

Micah C. Stauffer, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

February 14, 2025

Dr. Carey Wright
State Superintendent
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Dr. Wright,

On behalf of the Wicomico County Board of Education, I am formally requesting a waiver for one school day on Monday, June 16, 2025.

As outlined below, our efforts to recover instructional time lost to severe winter weather have resulted in Monday, June 16, 2025 becoming our 180th school day. Pursuant to COMAR 13A.02.01.04(D)(2)(a), which states:

- (2) *In considering this application, the State Board of Education may waive:*
 - (a) *"The final day needed to complete the 180-day schedule if that day falls on a Monday."*

Given these circumstances, our request aligns with the waiver criteria.

In early January, a severe winter storm forced the closure of our schools for five consecutive school days. On January 6 and 7, the Governor declared a State of Emergency due to over eight inches of snow, high winds, icy road conditions, and single-digit temperatures. These hazardous conditions prevented us from reopening schools until Monday, January 13. Additionally, on January 22, schools were closed again due to inclement weather, further emphasizing the unusually severe nature of this winter season.

In accordance with COMAR 13A.02.01.04(D)(1)(a), WCPS incorporated three make-up days into the original school calendar: November 27, February 3, and June 12. We utilized two of these days and added three additional instructional days. The Wicomico County Board of Education approved an amended school calendar with the following changes:

Date	Original School Calendar	Amended School Calendar
Monday, February 3, 2025	Closed for Professional Development Day	Now a School Day
Monday, February 17, 2025	Closed for Presidents' Day	Now a School Day
Thursday, April 17, 2025	Closed for Spring Break	Now a School Day
Thursday, June 12, 2025	No School	Now a School Day
Friday, June 13, 2025	No School	Now a School Day

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Dr. Carey Wright
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At this point, we have exhausted all make-up days built into the school calendar and added three days to our school year. Extending the school year to June 16 would create significant challenges for families and staff. These include disruptions to summer school, summer plans, delays to school facility maintenance schedules, and impacts on preparations for the next academic year. Additionally, it would affect partnerships with community organizations that provide summer programs for students and professional development for staff.

Thank you very much for considering this request. Please feel free to contact me should you need any additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Micah C. Stauffer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Micah C. Stauffer, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools