

Nelson County Public Schools

Inclement Weather Closing and Delay Information

Nelson County Public Schools is committed to providing safe, reliable transportation to and from school daily for all of our students. While living in beautiful Central Virginia has untold benefits, inclement weather sometimes makes safe student transportation difficult to accomplish. The topography of Nelson County includes 472 square miles of mountainous terrain which poses challenges for our Transportation Department, even in relatively good weather conditions. Recognizing that the safety of our students is of paramount concern, weather plays an important factor in deciding whether it is safe to operate. Weather patterns affect our various communities in differing degrees. We use information gleaned from a variety of sources, including forecasts from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Doppler Radar, to predict the impact on our county. While it may be clear in one area of the county, another may be experiencing severe weather. Thus the decision to close or open on a delayed schedule is sometimes not understood by those who remain unaffected.

Only second to safety, is the importance that the decision has on the impact to instruction and the quality of education that our students are to receive. Large numbers of absences by students or staff make the delivery of instruction and subsequent learning by students greatly diminished. Every minute of the instructional day is important as children prepare to enter the world of work, take professional occupational exams or participate in the Standards of Learning tests. Our goal is to give each child the very best opportunity for success.

As an aid in helping you understand our practice involving the operational status of the schools during inclement weather, we have established the following guidelines for your use in weather related instances:

How are schools affected by inclement weather?

1. Schools will not operate if the main roads have not been cleared by VDOT or remain slick. The YMCA childcare offering will not likely be available during this time.
2. If the majority of the secondary roads have not been cleared or remain slick then, too, we will not have school but the YMCA childcare will likely operate in at least one of our elementary schools.
3. If the majority of secondary roads have been cleared but only a small percentage (5 or less) remain problematic, we will make every effort to work with the affected riders to arrange an alternate pick-up location or alternate method of service delivery so that school can be held. Needless to say, parents should exercise discretion when allowing a young, inexperienced driver, to drive to school in less than ideal driving situations.
4. There are times in which we will utilize a delayed schedule in order to give more time for evaluation purposes and/or the weather to improve so that the commute to school can be accomplished in a safe manner. The delay usually allows for the temperature to become warmer and the drivers to have better visibility of road conditions.
5. If inclement weather begins while school is in session, the situation will be evaluated and a decision will be made with safety as a top priority. The situation will dictate whether it is prudent to remain in school in hopes that the weather will improve or whether to dismiss school early and send students home.