

## Why do we sometimes delay the opening of school?

Delays allow DOT to salt and scrape roads, to provide decision-making time as conditions change, or to get information about roads in specific areas.

## What time will the bus/school operate if we are on a 2 or 3-hour delay?

Bus schedules will be 2 or 3 hours later than normal, based on the delay. School start times will be exactly 2 or 3 hours later than normal start, depending on the scheduled delay.

## How will I be notified if school is dismissed early due to inclement weather?

A SchoolMessenger message will be sent to all contact numbers for each individual student. Early release information will also be communicated through local radio/TV stations and the Surry County Schools webpage, Facebook page, and Twitter.

## Many times my street is fine, yet schools close. Why not open some schools?

We operate on a county-wide calendar. Since we make up all days missed, we avoid having different schools on different calendars for the remainder of the year. Also, Surry Early College High School and Meadowview Magnet Middle School serve the entire county, so conditions always affect those students.

## What are limited bus routes?

Many days each year the main primary roads are clear and dry, yet secondary roads are suspect. With limited routes, we open schools and run buses on predominately clear roads only. Parents in remote areas may either drive their students to catch a bus on the limited route or drive them to school.

## If buses run limited routes in the morning, will buses run limited routes in the afternoon?

Yes. Our bus drivers must use extreme caution while traveling and we instruct them not to travel roads they could not travel that morning. Also, many of the bus turnarounds become a problem and there is greater potential of our buses getting stuck.

## Why not make decisions the night before so families have more time to make arrangements?

For many reasons, we try to announce school closings the day before; however, conditions and forecasts often change drastically overnight. Therefore, we cannot make the best decision unless we go out early in the morning to check current road conditions.

## Does winter weather deprive our students of important school time?

No. The days missed due to inclement weather are made up as the school calendar will permit. State law requires that all students attend school 180 days or 1,025 hours of instruction.

1. **Surry County Schools website**  
[www.surry.k12.nc.us](http://www.surry.k12.nc.us)
2. **SchoolMessenger — Notification Service**
3. **Surry County Schools Facebook page and Twitter**
4. **Surry County Schools' Mobile App**
5. **Local radio stations**
6. **Regional television stations**



# Surry County Schools

## Guide to School Closings

### 2016-2017



**SURRY COUNTY SCHOOLS**  
*Lighting Pathways to Global Success*

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# GUIDE TO SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The Surry County Board of Education plans to have school on a regular schedule every day that the roads are judged to be safe for bus travel. During hazardous weather conditions, the Superintendent will determine whether school will be delayed, cancelled or dismissed early.

Winter weather requires school administrators to make very difficult decisions involving delays, school closings and limited bus routes. We have prepared the following information to help students and parents understand these decisions for dealing with winter weather.

## SchoolMessenger Service

Keeping everyone informed is a top priority for Surry County Schools. Therefore, we will continue to use a messaging system — SchoolMessenger — which will allow us to send a telephone call to you providing important information about school events or emergencies. We will use SchoolMessenger to notify employees, students and parents of school delays and cancellations due to inclement weather.

The successful delivery of information is dependent upon accurate contact information for each student, so please make certain that we have your most current phone number. If this information changes during the year, please contact your child's school with updated information.

## Most Frequently Asked Questions About SchoolMessenger

### How many times will SchoolMessenger try to call me?

The SchoolMessenger system will make up to three attempts to reach each number with three minutes in between each call.

### How does SchoolMessenger work with my answering machine or voicemail?

SchoolMessenger starts the broadcast immediately upon telephone pickup and listens simultaneously for any interruptions. If the system is not interrupted by noise or someone speaking within the first 3-5 seconds, the message is delivered. If the system detects a greeting longer than a few seconds, the system treats this as an outgoing message from an answering machine and will stop playing, wait for silence (usually after the beep) and then start the message over so that it can be recorded in its entirety. If you only hear part of a message, call recipients can press the number 1 on their telephone and the message will play from the beginning without interruption.

### Where can I get the best information about school closings? (listed in priority order)

1. **Surry County Schools website**  
[www.surry.k12.nc.us](http://www.surry.k12.nc.us)
2. **SchoolMessenger — Notification Service**
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## Most Frequently Asked Questions About School Delays and Closings

### Who actually makes the decision?

The Superintendent determines if school is delayed or closed with assistance from the Inclement Weather Team, the Surry County Department of Transportation (DOT), the Surry County Sheriff's Department, 911 Communications, National Weather Service, and other local agencies.

### What is the process of deciding to close schools?

Information is acquired from multiple agencies and the Inclement Weather Team begin road checks throughout the county by 4:00 a.m. Every effort is made to arrive at a decision by 6:00 a.m. in order to notify the public.

### When can we expect a decision?

A decision will be made by 6:00 a.m. at the latest unless conditions are changing rapidly, requiring delays or changes in status.

### How will I know if school is delayed or closed?

All employees, students and parents will receive a SchoolMessenger message by 6:00 a.m. if school is delayed or closed. All delays and closings will be announced on local radio and regional television stations as well as our webpage.