



January 2017

Dear Parents,

Providing a safe learning environment is the top priority of the Paulding County School District. Local school safety teams, administrators and district office personnel meet regularly to plan and educate one another to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

The primary purpose of this letter is to provide important information to all parents regarding actions that should be taken in the event of weather-related school closings, delayed school openings, and early dismissals.

Parents will be notified via Blackboard, our mass notification service, in the event of any of the situations listed below. However, it is important that the names and phone numbers in Infinite Campus are correct. If your address, home phone or cell phone number has recently changed, please contact your child's school to update that information.

SCHOOL CLOSURE (DUE TO WEATHER OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCE)

*Whenever there are threats of winter weather conditions, the district administrative staff begins monitoring conditions, receiving regular updates from the National Weather Service and the Paulding County Sheriff's Department. When a decision is made to close school, central office staff informs all district and school administrators. A call is placed to all parents and staff using our Blackboard notification system. The school district website is updated first with closing information. Local television stations are notified. **Parents should confirm all information they see online or on-air with the school district's website (www.paulding.k12.ga.us)**.*

DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING

*In the event that weather conditions warrant, the beginning of a school day could be delayed. If that situation should occur, school opening would be delayed until 10:00 a.m. A call through Blackboard would be sent out as soon as the decision is made. Local television stations would be notified. The school district website would be updated first with closing information. **Parents should confirm all information they see online or on-air with the school district's website (www.paulding.k12.ga.us)**.*

EARLY RELEASE FROM SCHOOL (FOR AN UNEXPECTED WEATHER EVENT)

There may be times when an unexpected weather situation occurs after school has already begun, and an early release from school becomes necessary. Once that decision has been made, an immediate call would be made to parents using our Blackboard notification system. Plans regarding Learning Bridge ASP would be communicated at that time. Schools would begin the process of dismissal in reverse of the normal order. High schools and middle schools would dismiss first, followed by elementary schools. By reversing the order of dismissal, we provide our least experienced drivers the opportunity to arrive home sooner, and allow older siblings to be home when their younger siblings arrive as this would be an unexpected event and parents might not have had the opportunity to put an emergency plan in place. Plans regarding Learning Bridge ASP would be decided at that time.

EARLY RELEASE FROM SCHOOL (PLANNED PRIOR TO A WEATHER EVENT)

There may be times when a weather situation is expected to impact Paulding County and the decision is made to conduct an early release from school to ensure students and staff are home when the severe or winter weather arrives. This decision would be made prior to the start of school on the affected day. When that decision is made, parents would be informed using our Blackboard notification system. Plans regarding Learning Bridge ASP would be communicated at that time. Local media would be informed. The district website would be updated with early release information. A planned early release in case of weather would be conducted the same way any other planned early release is carried out (elementary schools dismiss first, followed by middle & high schools). By receiving advanced notice of an early release, parents have the opportunity to put a plan in place. The goal is to ensure all students and staff are home by the time severe or winter weather arrives in our area.

Please remember meteorology is not an exact science. In fact, forecasts are often wrong. There are a number of factors that must be in place for a system to bring snow to our state and county. Closing school is not an easy decision as it disrupts the instructional process for students and teachers.

We appreciate your patience and understanding in the days leading up to a potential weather event as we work with our local authorities and weather experts to determine the safest course of action for every student in the district.