

Severe Weather & School Closing Information

Who monitors the weather?

The Superintendent of Oconee County Schools and the Chief Operations Officer monitor severe weather conditions.

Where and how is weather information obtained?

The Operations Division monitors weather forecasts and communicates with local and state law enforcement. The Director of Transportation monitors and tests road conditions. The Maintenance Department oversees the conditions at the schools and related buildings. Surrounding counties are consulted regarding their road conditions.

When closing schools, what factors are considered?

The primary concern is the safety of all Oconee County students and employees. While certain areas of the county may appear clear, other parts of the county may be experiencing dangerous weather conditions. Factors for consideration are as follows:

- Weather forecasts
- Expected time and severity of incoming weather
- Temperature and wind-chill factor
- Road conditions as reported by the Director of Transportation, local and state law enforcement, and surrounding counties
- School and building conditions
- Parking lot and sidewalk conditions

Who makes the decision to close the schools?

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for making the final decision based on the above factors and the recommendations of the Chief Operations Officer, the Director of Transportation, and law enforcement personnel.

When is the decision to close made?

The Superintendent attempts to make the decision by 5:30 a.m. on the morning in question or as soon as possible at other times of the day.

How is the public notified?

When Oconee County schools are going to be closed, the notification will be broadcast on local radio and television stations and posted on the school system website (www.oconeeschools.org). In addition, an automated phone message will go out to all parents, employees, and Board of Education members.

If there is no message posted on the system website and no automated phone message is released, then schools are OPEN.

What happens if the school system decides to close during operating hours?

If schools close during operating hours, the public will be notified in the same mode as previously described. Students will be transported home in their normal manner unless parents have specified otherwise ahead of time in PowerSchool or with school administrators.

How will the public be notified if the start of schools is delayed?

If the weather is expected to clear within a few hours, the start of schools may be delayed. Normally Oconee County Schools follows a two-hour delay schedule. If a different schedule is instigated, it will be announced. Buses will run as normal, and schools will dismiss at their regular times.