



# OXFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Oxford Public Schools' Families, Students, and Staff

**FROM:** Kristine Nash, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools

**DATE:** December 14, 2020

**RE:** Inclement Weather ("Snow Days") and Other Emergencies

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In his October 19<sup>th</sup> weekly update, MA DESE Commissioner Jeff Riley clarified whether school districts could schedule students for a remote learning day in the event that schools are closed during the 20-21 school year due to inclement weather or other emergencies. This would be in lieu of making up the time later in the school year. As you are aware, as a result of the pandemic, all school districts were required to create multiple learning plans for the 20-21 school year, including a plan for remote learning. These plans include synchronous and asynchronous learning as well as other components to ensure that academic subjects are aligned to the state standards, that student work is graded, that regular communication with students and parents occurs, and that procedures for tracking student attendance are in place. Oxford Public School's remote learning model follows these DESE guidelines.

Because school districts across the Commonwealth had to comply with these guidelines, the Commissioner made the determination to give districts a new option for the 20-21 school year regarding "inclement weather/emergency days". **This option is that on days when schools would be closed because of inclement weather or other emergencies, districts can provide all students with remote learning in a manner consistent with the above regulations, and thus not have to add additional days at the end of the year.** However, a district also has the option to continue to treat those days as "snow days" (no school days) and thus make up those days later in the year.

After consideration of the above and discussion with administrators and others in leadership positions, I have determined that in the event of inclement weather or some other emergency that would necessitate a closure during the 20-21 school year, **Oxford Public Schools will switch to a remote learning day instead of a "no school day."** **In addition, the district will also switch to a remote learning day instead of a "delayed two hour school opening."**

However, there may be occasions this year **when we will need a "NO SCHOOL" day.** This would happen when the inclement weather or emergency creates loss of power in Oxford and other surrounding towns (Dudley, Charlton, Worcester, Spencer, Webster, Auburn) where approximately 50% of our teaching staff reside making it impossible to hold a remote school day.

4 MAPLE ROAD, OXFORD, MA 01540 · (508) 987-6050 · FAX (508) 987-6054

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**For our K-12 students and families who have opted to be fully remote this year, nothing will change in your school day if we have inclement weather or any other emergency.** Remote teachers will continue to instruct, just not from their classrooms. However, for parents and guardians of remote learning students, please still listen to the news stations in the morning or evening prior to a snow event or other weather related emergency. If there is a power loss due to the storm or emergency in Oxford or the surrounding identified towns, **then there will be NO SCHOOL for ALL students, both in-person and remote students. That announcement will go out to you as it has in the past via OneCall.**

One other reminder, when a “Remote School” day is called, the schedule for students is the same schedule as if students who are in-person learners were in school. This means that should a “Remote School” day be called on a Friday, that day would remain as it currently is, a half-day teaching day for students.

Finally, we will continue to use a two-hour early release as we have in the past. Nothing will change should we need to release students before the end of the regular school day because of impending inclement weather conditions or some other type of emergency. **However, if school is released two hours early for in-person learners, all students, including full remote students, will have their regular school day shortened by two (2) hours.** As a reminder to parents and guardians of full remote students, please be mindful that on an early release day, you will receive a OneCall message and should you not be home, you will need to let your child/children know that the school day has been shortened.

The following is a summary of the announcements that you will receive this year in case of a weather related event or some other emergency:

**SCHOOLS REMOTE – EARLY MORNING OR NIGHT BEFORE**

Good Morning or Good Evening (if call is made the night before). Oxford Public Schools will be remote today (tomorrow). Again, there will be no in-person learning today (tomorrow). Scheduled in-person learning will be held remotely. Schools will follow their regular bell schedules. Staff members should work remotely and not report to their buildings. In addition, all afternoon/evening school clubs, activities, and sports have been cancelled.

**SCHOOLS CLOSED – EARLY MORNING OR NIGHT BEFORE**

Good Morning or Good Evening (if call is made the night before). Oxford Public Schools will be closed today (tomorrow) due to inclement weather. There will be NO REMOTE LEARNING due to numerous reported power outage issues. Again, public schools are closed. All in-person classes and remote classes are cancelled and staff members should not report to their buildings. In addition, all afternoon/evening school clubs, activities, and sports have been cancelled.

**SCHOOLS EARLY RELEASE – SAME DAY**

Oxford Public Schools will be dismissing in-person learning **two (2) hours early** today due to impending inclement weather and road conditions. Again, public schools in Oxford will be releasing two (2) hours early today for all in-person learning. In addition, the regular school day for all full remote learners will be shortened by two hours and end at the same time as in-person learning. All afternoon/evening school clubs, activities, and sports have been cancelled.