

As survivors of Hurricane Michael, we know only too well what our friends in the Big Bend of Florida are facing as they recover from Hurricane Idalia. Our Team of Teams stands ready to assist as needed, and we gladly share our “lessons learned” and resources with anyone who asks.

As we approach the heart of hurricane season, I want to make sure we all share the same expectations when it comes to the safety and well-being of our students and staff. Our district prioritizes keeping everyone safe during challenging weather conditions, and that sometimes means adjusting our normal operations to accommodate impending bad weather.

While we strive to provide as much notice as possible about any changes to the school schedule, it's crucial to understand that these decisions are intricate and can sometimes change rapidly based on the evolving nature of storms and their tracks. Our primary concern is the safety of our students, staff, and families, and our decisions are always made with this in mind.

Hurricane paths and weather patterns can be unpredictable, and storm tracks can shift unexpectedly. This often requires us to make decisions on school closures, early dismissals, or delays on relatively short notice. We recognize the inconvenience such changes can cause and greatly appreciate your understanding as we navigate these challenging situations.

Our district works closely with local emergency management agencies, meteorologists, and other relevant authorities to gather as much information as possible about impending weather events. When making a decision about school closures, we consider many factors, including:

- The storm's intensity, projected path, and potential impact on our area
- Arrival time of tropical storm windows and any potential impacts on our morning and afternoon routines
- Transportation safety and the ability of students, parents/guardians and staff to travel safely to and from our schools
- The impact school closures have on local employers
- The loss of meals for students when schools are closed

In the event that we need to adjust the school schedule due to severe weather, we will communicate through our official channels, including phone calls, text messages, emails, and updates to our district website. **This is why I continue to request parents/guardians to keep your contact information up to date in Parent Portal so that you can receive timely notifications.**

Please note, you will not have to guess or ask a friend about our plans if you have working contact information in Parent Portal because we will notify you directly.

We understand that these decisions can disrupt daily routines, and we genuinely appreciate your support and cooperation as we prioritize safety. Together, we can ensure that our school community remains resilient and ready to face any challenges

that may come our way. While we did not experience terrible impacts from Idalia, we know that preparedness is key, and we must always be vigilant during hurricane season. Governor DeSantis and the Division of Emergency Management have put together a fabulous website that's full of free resources. You can find that at <https://www.floridadisaster.org/>.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and for entrusting us with the education and safety of your children. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to your school administration or our district office.