

Book	Policy Manual
Section	5000 Students
Title	EXCESSIVE HEAT IN SCHOOLS
Code	po5205
Status	Active
Adopted	July 1, 2020

#### **5205 - EXCESSIVE HEAT IN SCHOOLS**

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines under which the Pocahontas County Board of Education can determine the best process for protecting our students and employees from the conditions created by excessive heat in our school facilities.

It is the recommendation of the Pocahontas County Board of Education that on all days in which schools are in session and students are in attendance prior to August 15<sup>th</sup> of any particular school year and/or after June 15<sup>th</sup> of any particular year shall be established as three hour early dismissal days for students, regardless of the weather conditions on those days. This is permitted based upon the total number of accrued minutes that exist in the regular school day. Employees will be required to remain at work unless specifically directed by the county superintendent of schools. (If the county has depleted all of its accrued time, we are not legally permitted to send students home as we would not have met the full day in session requirement.)

The Board chooses not to designate exact temperatures in the schools as a determination of whether or not to have school dismissed early. Other factors such as presence of wind, humidity, sky conditions, etc. influence the levels on comfort in a school building and make it very subjective in the decision-making process. Also, the locations of the five schools naturally lend itself to different temperatures and comfort levels in these schools at the same time of the day and cannot be equally considered in the area of comfort for students.

By law, parents are given the latitude to pick up their children at any time that they determine that weather conditions, whether from cold or from heat, are such that the parent feels it unsafe for their children to be at school. A note to the principal is required from the parent if they wish to have the absence designated as excused. Please note that, according to the Attendance Policy, parents may have a total of five written notes per semester for such purposes as illness not involving a doctor's excuse, calamity, and weather-related issues. (This is not an additional five days that parents may claim.) In the event that a new state law or policy lessens or increases the number of parent notes allowed per semester or per year, this policy will automatically adjust to that prescribed legal number.

The Superintendent of Schools has the discretion to release students from school at any time due to inclement conditions if he/she considers it necessary, but each county is required to make every effort to ensure that all students are in school for 180 full school days.

This policy will go into effect upon passage.