

Regulations Governing Reduction of State Aid When Length of School Term Below 180 Teaching Days or 990 Teaching Hours

8 VAC 20-521-10. Definitions.

The following words and terms when used in this regulation shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Declared state of emergency" means the declaration of an emergency before or after an event by the Governor or by officials in a locality that requires the closure of any or all schools within a school division.

"Instructional time" means the period that students are in school on a daily or annual basis as defined in the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia, 8VAC20-131.

"Severe weather conditions or other emergency situations" means those circumstances presenting a threat to the health or safety of students that result from severe weather conditions or other emergencies, including, but not limited to, natural and man-made disasters, energy shortages or power failures.

"Teaching days" means days when instruction is provided.

"Teaching hours" means hours when instruction is provided.

8 VAC 20-521-20. Length of school term.

A. The length of every school's term in every school division shall be a minimum of 180 teaching days or 990 teaching hours in any school year.

B. Nothing in these regulations shall prohibit a school division from exceeding the 180 teaching day or 990 teaching hour requirement in any of its schools.

8 VAC 20-521-30. Completion of teaching hours.

A. When severe weather conditions or other emergency situations have resulted in the closing of a school or schools in a school division for five or fewer days, the school or schools shall make up all missed days by adding teaching days to the school calendar or extending the length of the teaching day.

B. When severe weather conditions or other emergency situations have resulted in the closing of a school or schools in a school division for six or more days, the school or schools shall make up the missed days in accordance with §22.1-98 of the Code of Virginia by adding teaching days to the school calendar or extending the length of the teaching day.

C. Nothing in these regulations shall preclude a school division from making up missed teaching days by providing students with teaching hours equivalent to such missed teaching days.

8 VAC 20-521-40. Waivers for a declared state of emergency.

A. The Board of Education may waive the requirement that school divisions provide additional teaching days or teaching hours to compensate for closings resulting from a declared state of emergency.

B. If the local school board desires a waiver for days missed as the result of a declared state of emergency, it shall submit a request for a waiver to the Board of Education. The request shall include evidence of efforts that have been made by the school division to reschedule as many days as possible.

C. The division superintendent and the chair of the local school board shall certify that every reasonable effort for making up lost teaching days or teaching hours was exhausted before requesting a waiver of the requirement.

D. The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Public Instruction to approve, in compliance with these regulations, reductions in the school term for a school or the schools in a school division.

E. If the waiver is denied, the school division shall make up the missed instructional time in accordance with 8VAC20-521-30 and §22.1-98 of the Code of Virginia.

8 VAC 20-521-50. Funding.

A. There shall be no proportionate reduction in the amount paid by the Commonwealth from the Basic School Aid Fund if a local school division:

1. Completes instructional time in accordance with 8VAC20-521-30 and §22.1-98 of the Code of Virginia; or

2. Obtains a waiver for closings resulting from a declared state of emergency in accordance with 8VAC20-521-40.

B. The local appropriations for educational purposes necessary to fund 180 teaching days or 990 teaching hours shall not be proportionally reduced by any local governing body due to a reduction in the length of the term of any school if the missed days are made up in accordance with 8VAC20-521-30 or the schools in a school division have been granted a waiver in accordance with 8VAC20-521-40.

8 VAC 20-521-60. Administration.

A. The Virginia Department of Education shall annually notify local school divisions of the provisions of these regulations and the Code of Virginia regarding reductions in the length of the school term.

B. Local school division superintendents shall certify by April 15 of each school year that they have read and complied with these provisions and are implementing a plan for

making up any missed time that has not been waived in accordance with these regulations.