



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
9th FLOOR, ANDREW JOHNSON TOWER
710 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY
NASHVILLE, TN 37243-0375

BILL HASLAM
GOVERNOR

CANDICE MCQUEEN
COMMISSIONER

March 31, 2015

Via Electronic Mail

Dr. Wanda Shelton, Director of Schools
Lincoln County Schools
206 E Davidson Drive
Fayetteville, TN 37334

wshelton@lcdoe.org

Dear Dr. Shelton:

Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-3004(a) (6), in the event of a natural disaster or serious outbreaks of illness affecting or endangering students or staff, the commissioner of education may waive the requirement for school district calendars to include one hundred eighty (180) days of classroom instruction for the current school year.

On February 21, Governor Haslam declared a Level 2 State of Emergency – Major Disaster – due to the extreme weather conditions throughout the state. This State of Emergency extended through March 2, representing six school days. Because of the unique and rare circumstances of our recent weather and the impact on school districts throughout the state, and because of the Level 2 State of Emergency declaration, the department is accepting requests to waive a maximum number of three instructional days during the period of February 21-March 2, 2015.

You have submitted a request to waive instructional days for Lincoln County Schools. Pursuant to my above referenced authority, I hereby grant a waiver to Lincoln County Schools of three instructional days during the period of February 21-March 2, 2015. Please revise the calendar in EIS to indicate the three days that are waived. Thank you for continuing to notify the Department of revisions to your school calendar.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Candice McQueen".

Dr. Candice McQueen



**Lincoln County
Department of Education**

206 East Davidson Drive
Fayetteville, Tennessee 37334

Wanda Shelton, Ed.D.
Director of Schools

(931) 433-3565 Office
(931) 433-7397 Fax

wshelton@lcdoe.org

March 10, 2015

To whom it may concern:

Pursuant to T.C.A 49-6-3004, the Commissioner of Education may waive the 180-day instructional requirement in very limited cases, including "natural disasters." Because of the unique and rare circumstances of our recent weather, we are requesting that three instructional days be waived for Lincoln County Department of Education's schools. We have used all of our stockpiled days and hope that we have no additional days to miss this year, but historically, Lincoln County has missed for flooding or tornados in the past and we want to be prepared for additional winter weather in the month of March and for this spring's rain and storm season as necessary.

1. Last April, our system was hit by two tornados, an EF 2 hit the Flintville School community and an EF 3 hit the South Lincoln School location directly, causing more than 7 million dollars in damage. The rebuilding of this school took over 100 days and all of our schools were delayed to wait for SLES re-opening. Due to this delay in building readiness, we had to delay our school year by 5 days and adjust our annual calendar to add 2 stockpiled days as PD days during our fall and spring breaks. We also took out our President's day holiday and made it a regular school day. Our parents and staff understood and were fully cooperative, but they have all lived through the tornado aftermath and one revised calendar already this school year.
2. Historically, our board allows us to use two staff development days out of our 13 built in weather stockpiled days. We use one at the beginning of each school year and one before the second semester. These days are truly full staff professional development opportunities and have been used by our system for many years. Rarely have we ever needed our 11 remaining weather days. This year, due to no fault of our own, the southern part of the state has seen more than our usual share of sleet, ice, and snow. We can clear snow fairly rapidly here in the south, but ice is harder to predict and very near impossible to navigate. We have currently used 9 built in weather days for actual weather emergencies and due to the tornado delay in our start date in the fall; we have used 4 stockpiled days for professional development this year. Again, we never use more than 2 built in PD days, but this year we were challenged to delay our start and keep the calendar as close as possible to our usual for our students, staff, and parents. We are currently out of stockpiled days.
3. We have spring break next week and Monday of that week is already in use as a stockpiled day for staff development. Since the number of snow days was unexpected, we did not have time to notify parents of changes in our spring break. Both staff and parents have vacations planned and they have prepared for this break all year. It would not help our attendance rate or our instructional time to add days to the four remaining on our calendar for the spring vacation. We could possibly make up one day if needed on Good Friday, but this is a difficult call as well. We

have graduation set and cannot get the results we need by extending our school year after Memorial Day. Our only option for make-up would be to extend the school day or go on Saturday, and historically, systems that did this have poor attendance. We already operate LEAPS programs in all of our 3-8 grade programs and childcare in many programs, so extending the day to benefit instruction is less of an option than it once was. We are limiting any outside distractions to our instructional time so that our students are fully prepared for the next grade level and for the spring assessments.

4. I request that we receive the three "Level 2 state of emergency days" and I assure you that I will not use those days unless we have weather that prevents our buses and our staff from being safe on the roads as they travel to our schools. I am an instructional leader and there is nothing I want more than our students at school and learning a full year's knowledge in each school year.
5. Delaying the year at the end after TCAP serves to give me more seat hours, but it does not necessarily improve the instructional experiences of our students. Try as we might, time 'tacked on' to our school calendar is not our most productive time.
6. Please advise if you need more information, more documentation such as adjusted calendars, etc. I want what is best for all of our stakeholders and I assure you I will not miss more time without great stress and planning.

Sincerely,



Wanda Shelton

Director, Lincoln County Schools



Linda Tallman

Supervisor of Attendance and Personnel

Paul Rainwater

From: Dr. Wanda Shelton <wshelton@lcdoe.org>
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2015 9:07 AM
To: Paul Rainwater
Cc: 'Linda Watt'
Subject: FW: Weather Days scan
Attachments: Scan F001.pdf

*** This is an EXTERNAL email. Please exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email - OIR-Security. ***

Can you please reply to this email so that I have a confirmation that you have received the message I sent originally on 3/13/2015? I know that you have not acted yet, but I do need to confirm that you received it by the 3/31/2015 deadline.

Thank you so much,

Wanda Shelton

-----Original Message-----

From: Dr. Wanda Shelton [<mailto:wshelton@lcdoe.org>]
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2015 4:10 PM
To: 'Paul.Rainwater@tn.gov.'
Cc: 'Dr. Wanda Shelton'
Subject: FW: Weather Days scan

March 13, 2015

Dear Paul Rainwater:

As directed in the Director's memo, I am making application to have 3 of the weather days forgiven for the 2014-2015 school year. Please see the attached letter and please notify me if you need additional supporting documents. I know that I have only used the maximum days to this point, but traditionally, I have to have time in late March and April for flooding or storm damage.

Sincerely,

Wanda Shelton, Ed D
Director, Lincoln County Department of Education