

**From:** [Cohn, Gary](#)  
**To:** [EPS.MailList](#)  
**Subject:** Friday's Schedule and OSPI's News Release on State of Emergency & Waiver Days  
**Date:** Thursday, February 14, 2019 3:09:47 PM  
**Attachments:** [image003.png](#)

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Colleagues, thank you for your flexibility in responding to these very unusual weather conditions the past two weeks, and for keeping the safety of our students uppermost in your thinking. Please take a few moments to read the rest of this message regarding safe school operations and conditions under which school districts may obtain waivers from the requirement to provide 180 days of instruction.

As you prepare for your Valentine's Day evening, know that **tomorrow, Friday, February 15, we will be operating school on a normal Learning Improvement Friday schedule.** However, we will operate buses on snow routes and there will not be any out-of-district transportation. The weather forecasts we are reading indicate the temperature will not drop below freezing tonight, so we can count on a bit more relief from the snow and ice overnight.

As of today, we have experienced five snow closure days, and three late start days. We are now past our cushion for minimum basic education hours, and need to find a way of recapturing two hours before the end of the year. Any more late start days due to inclement weather will make that situation worse. As of today, without any specific school board action, **the last day of school will need to be Monday, June 24** to make up for the five lost days.

I've received several inquiries about waiving some school days rather than making up days. (I am aware that several myths are being circulated.) The information below arrived from OSPI last Tuesday, along with some instructions for 180-day waiver applications. (Waivers are for student instructional days, not staff work days.) While Superintendent Reykdal can waive the number of required school days, **OSPI is not authorized to waive the minimum instructional hours required of districts by the Basic Education Act.** As with our previous experience in this arena, this limiting factor (minimum hours) is what will prevent us from submitting a waiver request without arriving at a solution for the lost instructional hours. The communications office will be providing on the district website a brief explanation of our approach to snow day make-up (adding days to the end of the year).

Once the threat of further snow closure has passed, I will be able to take a solution for a waiver application to the school board. Please be careful out there.



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**From:** OSPI News Release <[waospi@public.govdelivery.com](mailto:waospi@public.govdelivery.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2019 2:11 PM  
**To:** Cohn, Gary <[GCohn@everettsd.org](mailto:GCohn@everettsd.org)>  
**Subject:** OSPI NEWS RELEASE: REYKDAL: Schools Can Apply to Waive Missed Days during State of Emergency for Storm

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## Schools Can Apply to Waive Missed Days during State of Emergency for Storm

*Several school districts have canceled school this week due to the winter storm. Many have asked about the possibility of waiving those missed days. Below is Superintendent Chris Reykdal's statement.*

**OLYMPIA—February 12, 2019**—On February 8, Governor Inslee issued a proclamation declaring a statewide state of emergency related to this week's winter storm. We expect the proclamation to be lifted at midnight on February 15, 2019.

State law allows the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to waive missed school days, and school districts will have the opportunity to apply to waive days that were missed while the state of emergency was in effect. However, there is no legal authority to waive the mandatory average of 1,027 hours of instruction for students.

Even when a waiver is granted for missed days during a state of emergency declared by the governor, school districts are required to meet the average total instructional hour offerings. Most districts have a daily schedule that more than ensures they meet 1,027 hours even if they reduce their total days by two or three. When that can't be achieved, districts will continue to meet their required hours by eliminating release days, adding days to the end of the year, or by any other means legally provided to local school boards.

Some members of the public have expressed concern about the potential need to move graduation dates as a result of missed days. This is entirely a local decision, but past experience has shown us districts do not typically need to move graduation dates as a result of severe weather or makeup days that may be necessary.

Although storms and events like this can disrupt school districts' planned yearly calendars, there are many ways to make up instructional hours and I am confident our schools will plan accordingly. We do not expect districts to apply for waivers until we are completely through the winter season, and all of the unforeseen weather impacts are behind us.

Superintendent Chris Reykdal



**All students prepared for post-secondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement.**

Led by State Superintendent Chris Reykdal, OSPI oversees K-12 public education in Washington state. Our mission is to provide

funding, resources, tools, data and technical assistance that enable educators to ensure students succeed in our public schools, are prepared to access post-secondary training and education, and are equipped to thrive in their careers and lives.

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