

## Revamped Watauga School Calendar is Work in Progress

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The Watauga County Schools are trying to deal with the already large number of missed days in the school calendar, announcing that students in the Watauga County Schools will return to classes from the winter holidays on January 4, one day earlier than first planned, to make up one of the days schools have been closed for inclement weather. Their release goes on to say that on the original school calendar, schools were to be closed January 4 for a protected teacher workday, but now this workday has been postponed to January 17 when schools were already scheduled to be closed for the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

The school release goes on to say that “additional changes to the school calendar may occur in January or later, including the possibility of school on Saturdays. Saturdays would only be used at the end of a week in which schools have been closed at least one full day because of snow, a holiday, or a teacher workday. Any decision to open schools on Saturday will be announced to parents and students through the Alert Now automated phone messaging system, local news media, and school websites.

As of December 17, schools have been closed nine days this year for snow and ice. One of the nine days will be recovered on January 4 and the other eight will be made up by moving the last day of the school year to May 31. If additional closings occur, the days that are not made up on Saturdays or through rescheduling of teacher workdays will be added to the end of the year or recovered through shortening spring break.

Schools in the WCS system have been closed an average of 14 days annually for inclement weather over the last 35 years. The number of days missed has varied from as few as four in 1990-91 to as many as 39 in 1977-78.

Updates to the school calendar and the make up plan for school closings are available on the Watauga County Schools website at [www.watauga.k12.nc.us](http://www.watauga.k12.nc.us).”