



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 3, 2015

Via Electronic Mail

Beth Litz, Director of Schools
Sweetwater City Schools
220 S. Clark Street
Sweetwater, TN 37874

beth.litz@scstn.net

Dear Dr. Litz:

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 Sweetwater City Schools. Pursuant to my above referenced authority, I hereby grant a waiver to Sweetwater City 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

Sweetwater City Schools

P.O. BOX 231

SWEETWATER, TENNESSEE 37874

(423) 337-7051

March 2, 2015

Dear Commissioner McQueen:

As Director of Sweetwater City Schools, I am officially requesting that Sweetwater City Schools be granted a waiver of three (3) instructional days during the 2014-15 school year. Sweetwater City Schools have a total of thirteen (13) days stockpiled within our school calendar for inclement weather and staff professional development. Our four (4) days for professional development have already passed leaving us with nine (9) for inclement weather. To date, we have missed ten (10) days of instruction with our students.

Our students and staff were in attendance only eight days during the month of February. We were out for two days due to illness, as recommended by our local Health Department, we missed February 17-20 due to the ice storm, and February 24-27 due to two different snow storms that enveloped our area. This brought the total days of school missed in Sweetwater City to ten (10). Currently, we have an identical school year calendar as Monroe County because of our need to share transportation with a larger district.

Attached to this letter, you will find a letter from the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) stating that on February 16, 2015 a total of 13,039 citizens of Monroe County, of which Sweetwater is a part, were without power due to the ice storm that crippled our area of the state during the week of February 16. Many of our students and staff were without power in their homes for that entire week. One of our six school buildings was without power Monday through Thursday. I have also included information from our local newspaper showing the devastating effects of this storm in our area.

Based upon our current calendar, we will not be able to make up any of these instructional days unless we utilize an administrative day scheduled for teachers the day before the end of the student school year on May 21. This is an option should we miss more days between the present time and the anticipated end of the school year. If we extend our year past Memorial Day this will impact our ability to provide summer school instruction to our students in the greatest need of remediation and interventions as well as influence the number of staff available to provide this instruction.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this request to waive three instructional days from the 2014-15 instructional calendar for Sweetwater city Schools.

Sincerely,



Dr. Beth Litz, Director

Sweetwater City Schools

Paul Rainwater

From: Candice McQueen
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 9:33 PM
To: Paul Rainwater; Christy Ballard
Cc: Hanseul Kang; Janice Mann
Subject: FW: Sweetwater City Schools information
Attachments: SCS waiver request.pdf; TEMA report.pdf; Paper page 1.pdf; paper page 8.pdf

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Candice McQueen, Ph.D.
Commissioner
Tennessee Department of Education
9th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243



From: Beth Litz <beth.litz@scstn.net>
Date: Monday, March 2, 2015 at 8:58 AM
To: Candice McQueen <candice.mcqueen@tn.gov>
Subject: Sweetwater City Schools information

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Dr. McQueen,

I hope that your week has begin on a much lighter weather note than weeks past! I am attaching an official letter to request a waiver of three (3) instructional days for Sweetwater City Schools for the current school year. Also, you will find attached a letter from TEMA and an article from our local newspaper regarding the ice storm we survived earlier in February. Please let me know if you are in need of further information. Hopefully, we will be able to provide uninterrupted instruction for the remainder of the year!

Thank you for all you do each day and please let me know when you are able to visit our schools!

Think Spring :)
Beth

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Dr. Beth Litz
Director of Schools

Sweetwater City Schools
220 S. Clark Street
P.O. Box 231
Sweetwater, TN 37874

phone (423) 337-7051
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