

Hurricane Matthew tragically swept over the South during the first week of October, and some places were hit harder than others. While the most catastrophic damage was done in the Caribbean, the coasts of Florida, Georgia, and North and South Carolina were negatively impacted by the huge storm, and schools in all four states were cancelled for multiple days.

South Carolina governor Nikki Haley cancelled schools in the Midlands October 5th, 6th, and 7th, and changed the Columbus Day holiday to a make-up day, where both students and teachers had to come to school. Teachers were upset about this because this holiday was supposed to be used for them to catch up on grading their students' work; and although students had 3 days off, having to come to school on Columbus Day did not please them. A number of students were forced to miss the make up day due to events that were already scheduled, such as vacations and appointments.

While teachers were getting behind on grading work and making up assignments, students were given time to review for upcoming tests and complete classwork that had been assigned to them. On top of completing classwork assignments, some teachers also assigned new work over Google Classroom while everyone was out of school, which students and their parents did not approve of. This leads to the debate on what is more important: classes staying on track, or students learning in a traditional classroom setting?

Another debate that has risen is whether or not to extend the first quarter of the school week. Since the impromptu break caused work and grades to get backed up, teachers and students are hoping the quarter will be extended to give them time to catch up on the three days they have missed. So far this year, A-day's have been affected by two cancelations, an early

release, and a pep rally. This negatively impacts classes on strict schedules, such as those with an AP Exam or EOC given on an exact date.

Students, parents, and teachers were all confused as to why Haley called school off in the first place since the weather was so nice October 6th and 7th, and it only rained on the 8th. School was cancelled because districts all over the Midlands, including District 5, sent busses to places on the Coast, including Charleston and Myrtle Beach, to pick up those who needed to evacuate due to their safety being in danger. Schools in the area were also used as evacuee shelters, such as White Knoll High School.

When Hurricane Joaquin destroyed South Carolina last year, no schools had to make up the days that were missed. Although Hurricane Matthew was not as destructive to the Midlands as last year's storm, it is still unknown whether schools will have to make up the 2 remaining days.