

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Abnormal conditions sometimes occur which require temporary suspension of school activities. These possible conditions include acts of violence or terrorism; inclement weather (ice and snow storms) or other natural disaster; failure of power, gas, or water supply; breakdown of the heating system; etc. The safety, welfare, and health of students and employees are the basic factors to be considered. The superintendent shall have the responsibility to continue or suspend the normal school day activities. In the event the Department of Homeland Security issues a Severe Condition (“Red”) Alert, school activities may be suspended and the school buildings evacuated at the direction of local civil defense officials. Alternatively, school officials may be instructed to initiate “lockdown” procedures during a “red alert.”

School Dismissal

To assure the orderly suspension and resumption of school activities, the following procedures shall apply:

1. The superintendent shall announce the decision to continue or suspend activities during an impending emergency. In case the superintendent is unavailable, the superintendent's designee shall act in announcing the decision.
2. The decision to continue or suspend activities is to be communicated by the superintendent or a designee to all commercial broadcasting media that serves the school district area.
3. The decision to continue or suspend activities is to be announced, if possible, by 6:30 a.m. of the day involved. A decision is to pertain to one day unless otherwise specifically stated. Suspension of school activities related to a Homeland Security alert will be announced as soon as possible. School activities will be resumed only when considered safe to do so.
4. If an emergency occurs after schools have begun activities for the day, every possible consideration shall be given to the continuance of school activities until the regular dismissal hour unless directed otherwise by local civil defense officials. In the event an early dismissal becomes probable or emergency evacuation becomes necessary, the decision to continue operations, to dismiss school early, or to evacuate the school is to be communicated to the local radio and television stations with a request that announcements be made at least every 30 minutes from the time of the decision until 1:00 p.m. or until the time of dismissal, whichever is earlier.
5. The superintendent or a designee will immediately notify the director of transportation who shall make all necessary arrangements regarding bus transportation. In the event of an emergency evacuation, transportation personnel will be informed as to the safest routes to transport staff and students to designated places of safety.
6. Decisions pertaining to the suspension of activities are to be relayed immediately to building principals.
7. The absence of a publicized decision is to be interpreted as a decision to continue operations.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS (Cont.)Lockdown Procedures

The school district may be required to initiate lockdown procedures related to a Homeland Security alert. Circumstances may require that all persons remain indoors and create a barrier against contaminated air outside. The process known as “shelter-in-place” is a matter of survival. Available information will be used to assess the situation. If large amounts of debris are observed in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, the following actions will be taken:

1. All staff and students will be moved to interior rooms with few windows, if possible.
2. All doors will be locked and all windows, air vents, and dampers will be closed.
3. Fans, air conditioning systems, and forced air heating systems will be turned off.
4. All windows, doors, and air vents will be sealed with plastic sheeting and duct tape. Supplies and tools will be maintained in each designated safe area. Staff should be ready to improvise, using items on hand to seal gaps so that a barrier may be created against any contamination.
5. Designated personnel will monitor radio, television, and/or Internet reports for official news and instructions as they become available.
6. Power sources will be shut off as instructed.

Emergency supply kits will be maintained in each designated secure area and will include food and water enough for staff and students for three days.

During lockdown, staff and students will not be permitted to leave the secure area and no person will be allowed to enter.

Staff Requirements

1. All 12-month employees are expected to be on duty when activities are suspended in the schools. If one or more 12-month employees cannot report for work, excuses for the day will be a matter of individual request for consideration. Principals have a responsibility for their schools, and emergency conditions require that principals be available to handle unanticipated situations. Principals should report to their schools if possible. A decision about early dismissal of 12-month employees shall be made on the basis of the needs of the system.
2. Compensatory time or additional pay is not authorized for services performed while activities are suspended.
3. If fewer than 180 teaching days remain after the days of suspended activity are deducted, the time lost is to be made up as directed by the superintendent. Normal school hours and duties are to be observed on makeup days.

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4. If at least 180 teaching days remain after days of suspended activity are deducted, students will not be required to make up days lost.
5. If it is required that the days be made up in order to meet state requirements of planning days, all teachers and other school assigned personnel are to report and observe regular hours for the designated makeup days.