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307 EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the procedures and public notifications for closing of school district facilities due to hazardous weather or other emergency conditions.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The superintendent or designee is empowered to close any or all school district facilities or to alter the start or ending time of a school or program in the event of hazardous weather or conditions that threaten the health and safety of students or district employees.

III. GENERAL FACTORS

Factors to be considered in the decision to close a facility or to alter the start or ending time of a school or program, include:

- A. Existing and predicted weather conditions
- B. Advice of the transportation contractors concerning driving, drivers, traffic and parking conditions affecting all transportation, public and private.
- C. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make programs or facilities operation difficult or dangerous.
- D. Inability of employees to report to duty, which might result in inadequate operation of district facilities, or deficient supervision or instruction of students.
- E. Discussion with neighboring school districts experiencing similar weather or emergency conditions

IV. NOTIFICATION

- A. Emergency closing, late start, and early release (“emergency closing”) procedures will be publicized each school year, and actual emergency closings will be announced through school district communication mediums and local media outlets.
- B. Whenever possible, the decision to close school for the day will be made by 5:30 a.m. and notification to students and families will occur at least two hours prior to normal K-12 school start time. In the event of a school delay or early dismissal, decisions will be made as soon as possible to provide appropriate notification to staff and families.

- C. If a student flex learning day is declared, it will be included in the communication to families, students and staff.
- D. Student and/or staff make-up days may be declared as needed.
- E. When an emergency closing occur, employees will observe the terms of their respective contracts concerning reporting for work (see Appendix I).
- F. Each school or district facility will develop a facility plan detailing procedures for facility-specific emergency closing. The facility plan will be in accordance with overall district procedures and guidelines.

V. EMERGENCY CLOSING IMPLEMENTATION

- A. Late start
 - 1. If a late start is declared (i.e. two-hour delay), staff, students, and parents should continue to monitor media reports and/or district website for additional announcements, change in status or possible closing.
 - 2. When a late start is declared:
 - a. All morning Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes are cancelled
 - b. Kids choice will start late, in accordance with the emergency announcement (e.g. two hours late)
 - c. All morning Early Childhood (ECSE and ECFE) and Community Preschool classes are cancelled
 - d. After-school and evening activities, including ABE, ECFE, Kids’ Choice and Preschool Care will take place as scheduled.
- B. School Cancellation
 - 1. When conditions are so adverse that travel and normal school operations are most difficult, if not impossible, or other emergencies occur, the schools will be closed for the entire day.
 - 2. In general, all student and public activities in the district buildings will be cancelled when schools are closed. Exceptions are to be cleared by the Superintendent of Schools (see Appendix II).
- C. Early dismissal:
 - 1. Whenever possible, the District will avoid calling for an early dismissal that results in sending students home school early (either by bus or foot), recognizing the additional challenge or burden such a decision can place on families.

2. If it is determined by the Superintendent of Schools that it is a prudent decision to send students home early, it will be done by the advancement of all building dismissal and bus schedules on an hourly time basis.
3. When an early dismissal is declared, the following programs are as noted:
 - a. Afternoon and evening Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes may be cancelled
 - b. Afternoon and evening ECFE and preschool programs may be cancelled
 - c. After-school Kids' Choice will be canceled



Appendix I to Policy 307

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES AND REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

1. **SCHOOLS CLOSED: UP TO SEVEN (7) DAYS**

The district may declare up to seven emergency flex learning days based on school closings; five of the possible flex learning days are reserved specifically for weather-related closings and two of the possible flex learning days are reserved for any type of school closing. Employees follow the parameters listed below:

For each of the sites/departments noted below, the district will ensure that one pre-designated administrator, clerical and custodial staff member (one from each group) will report to work:

- Secondary Building (administrator, clerical, custodial)
- Kaposia Education Center (administrator, clerical, custodial)
- Lincoln Education Center (administrator, clerical, custodial)
- Community Learning Center (one designee only)
- District Office (one designee only)
- Family Education Center (one designee only)

Custodial and Maintenance Employees

Full-time employees will report to work as designated by supervisor. Full-time employees who do not report to work will use available time off or take leave without pay. Part-time employees do not report to work and are not paid, unless designated by supervisor.

Directors, Principals, Assistant Directors/Coordinators, District Support, Technology and 12-month Clerical and 12-month Student Support employees

Employees have the option to report to work, work from home, or use available time off. Employees are to obtain pre-approval from their supervisor, identifying which option they will select and the respective work plans.

Teachers

Employees have the option to report to work or work from home when an emergency flex learning day is declared. Employee who work from home must be able to meet the expectations of the flex learning plan.

Kids' Choice Paraprofessionals (12 month employees)

Employees do not report to work, but have the following options:

- Make-up time by participating in approved professional development within a designated timeframe
- Use available vacation or personal leave time
- Take leave without pay

Paraprofessionals, Clerical, Student Support and Nutrition Services employees who work less than 12-months:

Employees do not report to work, but have the following options:

- Make-up time by participating in approved professional development within a designated timeframe
- Use available vacation or personal leave time
- Take leave without pay

Substitutes

Substitute employees do not report to work and are not paid.

2. **SCHOOLS CLOSED: EIGHT (8) DAYS AND BEYOND**

Student and staff make-up days may be declared in the event of three (3) or more school closings from a combination of non-weather closings (days 1-3) or weather-related closings (days 6-8). The first two of any combination of these closing days will be declared flex learning days. When schools are closed and make-up days are necessary, employees shall follow the parameters listed below:

For each of the sites/departments noted below, the district will ensure that one pre-designated administrator, clerical and custodial staff member will report to work:

- Secondary Building (administrator, clerical, custodial)
- Kaposia Education Center (administrator, clerical, custodial)
- Lincoln Education Center (administrator, clerical, custodial)
- Community Learning Center (one designee only)
- District Office (one designee only)
- Family Education Center (one designee only)

Custodial and Maintenance Employees

Full-time employees will report to work as designated by supervisor. Full-time employees who not report to work will use available time off or take leave without pay. Part-time employees do not report to work and are not paid, unless designated by supervisor.

Directors, Principals, Assistant Directors/Coordinators, District Support, Technology and 12-month Clerical and 12-month Student Support employees

Employees have the option to report to work, work from home, or use available time off. Employees are to obtain pre-approval from their supervisor, identifying which option they will select and the respective work plans.

Teachers

Employees do not report to work and will be expected to work on the designated make-up day(s) as determined by the School Board.

Kids Choice Paraprofessionals (12 month employees)

Employees do not report to work, but have the following options:

- Make-up time by participating in approved professional development within a designated timeframe
- Use available vacation or personal leave time
- Take leave without pay

Paraprofessionals, Clerical, Student Support and Nutrition Services employees who work less than 12-months:

Employees do not report to work and will be expected to work on the designated make-up day(s) as determined by the School Board.

Substitutes

Substitute employees do not report to work and are not paid.

3. LATE START

When a late start is called (i.e. two-hour delay), district staff are to report, unless otherwise noted below, as soon as practical and as conditions allow.

Kids Choice Paraprofessionals (12 month employees)

Employees report as noted in the announcement (e.g. if a two-hour delay is called, then staff should report two hours later than their usual reporting time).



Appendix II to Policy 307

GUIDELINES FOR CANCELLING AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

1. When the school district is closed prior to the start of the school day due to hazardous weather, all buildings are closed to activities and building use, unless otherwise designated under paragraphs 7 and 8 below. District offices and the district buildings and grounds department may need to be open to facilitate the removal of snow and ice so that school can reopen the following day.
2. When an individual school is closed due to building-related problems, a determination about after-school activities will be made with the principal, superintendent or designee, director of buildings and grounds, and the facility scheduler, as may be necessary.
3. On occasions when school is in session but weather concerns arise after school has begun, a decision must be made about activities and/or building usage scheduled after school. A decision will be made on a district-wide basis by the superintendent or designee. This decision will be made and communicated as early as possible but may not always be made by the close of the school day. Upon closure, notification will be initiated by the director of communications or designee.
4. All school/building closure announcements will be posted as soon as practical on the district website, distributed via appropriate district communication channels, and sent to local media outlets.
5. For county, state or other multijurisdictional events, a separate determination will be made by the superintendent or designee.
6. Saturday and Sunday events may also need to be cancelled due to hazardous weather or building-related problems. The superintendent or designee will make a decision on a district-wide basis. Upon closure, notification will be initiated by the director of communications or designee.
7. On occasion, the superintendent, in consultation with the principal, activities director, director of buildings and grounds, facility scheduler, and/or designee may decide to hold voluntary varsity extra-curricular activities in an effort to continue with seasonal competitions. Such a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis. In the event that a decision is made to hold a practice or competition on a day in which school or other activities are canceled, coaches/advisors are prohibited from penalizing a player/participant who is not able to attend the voluntary practice or event. Communication about individual activity practices and events will be the responsibility of the activity's coach/advisor.
8. Offsite events and Minnesota High School League sponsored special events (e.g. hockey, skiing, tournaments) need special consideration because the venues have been reserved. The superintendent or designee and activities director will make a determination regarding these events. An announcement will be initiated by the director of communications or designee if activities are cancelled.