



SCHOOL DISTRICT #49 (CENTRAL COAST)

Administrative Procedures Manual

Administrative Procedure: G-2 School Closure and Bus Cancellation

Date: March 2, 2010, Updated July 12, 2018

Principals are to be aware that the Board expects that schools will remain open on all prescribed school days and during all approved school hours. There may be extreme and unusual circumstances which may make teaching areas or the entire school unsuitable or unsafe for some or all the students and, in these cases, schools may need to be closed. The overriding consideration regarding a partial or full school closure is determining the safest environment for the student.

School and/or worksite due to emergent conditions will be of three types:

1. For students only
2. For students and school-based employees, or
3. For students and all employees.

The safety of students within the district is a paramount concern for all staff. In the event that a school closure occurs, student safety needs will be addressed first and foremost. Staff should make appropriate plans for the safety of their own families.

The decision to close schools shall be made only by the Superintendent of Schools or designate. Principals are expected to contact the Superintendent of Schools or designate before any decision to dismiss students due to extreme and unusual circumstances including but not limited to power or water outages.

1. Schools shall not be closed because of cold or inclement weather.
 - 1.1. The decision to keep a student at home for the day because of winter weather conditions shall be made by the parents.
2. Conditions which may necessitate the closure of a school, or a portion of the school include but are not limited to:
 - 2.1. No water for an extended period of time
 - 2.2. Electrical outages for extended periods
 - 2.3. Sewage leaks
 - 2.4. Heating outages for an extended period
 - 2.5. Flooding in school or within the community
 - 2.6. Earthquake warnings
 - 2.7. Tsunami warnings
3. School bus service will not be cancelled because of cold weather.

Individual bus runs may be cancelled for the day (morning and afternoon runs) because of dangerous road conditions. Cancellations will be announced as soon as possible after the decision to cancel a run is made. All efforts will be made to ensure that families are notified when buses are cancelled.

3.1. Students shall not be expected to wait for a school bus for more than fifteen minutes past the scheduled pick-up time. If the bus has not arrived by that time, students should return to their homes or to another prearranged place of shelter and contact the school.

4. Process to determine a partial or full school closure:

4.1. Principals will inform the maintenance department of any utility issues within the building. Maintenance, in will investigate the source of the problem to determine impact on the school environment.

4.1.1. In the case of water, the maintenance department will estimate if the water can be restored within 90 minutes.

4.1.2. In the case of electricity or heating, the maintenance department will estimate if conditions can be restored prior to the following critical issues occurring:

4.1.2.1. That the temperature in the building is below 10 degrees Celsius or is expected to fall below 10 degrees Celsius.

4.1.2.2. That the natural lighting within the building no longer enables instruction to occur or becomes a safety concern for supervision.

4.1.2.3. That the building is has any form of electrical hazard.

4.1.2.4. That entry and exit from the building become obstructed due to an electrical hazard.

4.1.3. In the case of a sewage leak, the maintenance department will investigate the source of the problem and determine if the leak can be isolated or if the leak is pervasive enough to close the school.

4.1.4. In the event of a lengthy utility interruption, the maintenance department will notify the district office with a recommendation for closure or non-closure of the schools.

4.2. In the event of flooding, within the school or community, the maintenance department in consultation with the appropriate road works authority will indicate to the Superintendent/CEO or designate the need for school closure.

4.2.1. The district bus drivers will use their judgement regarding the safety of students with road conditions be it ice, snow, extreme cold weather, and/or flooding. This may not require school closure especially if the conditions are isolated to only certain areas of the community.

4.3. In the event of fire, earthquake or tsunami, all schools will follow procedure S3 emergency Plans and Drills which will be school based plans.

4.3.1. School evacuation will be done through a community emergency response mechanism.

- 4.4. The Superintendent will determine if closure is warranted and to what degree.
The Superintendent shall then notify schools and the maintenance department of the time and degree of school closure (students only/students and school-based staff only/students and all staff).
- 4.5. The Superintendent or designate will notify all bus drivers that they are on standby for early bus runs.
 - 4.5.1. Once notified of the standby all bus drivers will be on regular salary.
5. Parents will be informed of these procedures annually via school newsletters in the fall and periodically throughout the winter months.
 - 5.1. Principals/Vice Principals will advise parents of the school closure and, early in the school year, obtain from parents alternate locations where their children will be supervised in the event of an unexpected school closure and written directions regarding the release of their children.
6. School closures for students only, before the normal commencement of school in the morning, will be announced via telephone call-out system, email, and social media where feasible.
 - 6.1. School closure while school is in session will be announced to the administrators, wherever possible, at least 1 hour prior to student dismissal.
 - 6.2. Student dismissal must ensure that students are directed to go to their homes unless they have been directed to do otherwise by a school official.
 - 6.3. The Principal, upon contact from the Superintendent, will initiate the call-out system to inform parents.
 - 6.3.1. In the administrators absence the Teacher In Charge will initiate the call-out system.
 - 6.3.2. Upon receipt of the call out system report, those students in grades 8-12 identified by the report as having their homes contacted shall be released for transportation; for students in K-7 shall be released only if the report shows confirmation of response by the home.
 - 6.3.3. call-out system instructions should be available outside of school hours, in the homes of the administrators, Teachers In Charge and the school secretaries.
 - 6.3.4. Where the call-out system is unavailable, assigned staff will manually contact families to confirm student transport.
 - 6.4. Schools are to inform bus drivers of the alternate approved drop off for students. Schools will ensure that personnel is available at school to address the safety of students who arrive at school despite the closure.
 - 6.5. The administrator or teacher in charge or teacher designate for the school with the assistance of a volunteer group of staff members will initiate a process to have the student be returned to a safe environment.
 - 6.6. Staff is to ensure that all students' safety has been addressed. In other words, no student has been in inadvertently missed from the evacuation or notification process.

7. School closures for students and staff, before the normal commencement of school in the morning, will be announced via telephone call-out system, email, and social media where feasible.
 - 7.1. Staff will be expected to contact their administrator upon notification of school closure.

8. Preparations for emergencies are to include:
 - 8.1. Phone call-out list accuracy, including a school-based mechanism to inform parents unable to be contacted by phone.
 - 8.2. A school-based system for manual call-outs in the circumstance of the call-out system being unavailable.
 - 8.3. Schools are to ensure that parents have identified an appropriate alternate place where students can go in the case of an emergency. Schools may wish to seek assistance from PAC's and the local Nation in identifying a safe home for such students.
 - 8.4. Schools are to set up a process of how students who do not have a safe place to go will be cared for. The process needs to include where they will be, how will contact be made, who will supervise the students, how will students get to their homes. A copy of the overall process needs to be sent to the district office annually.
 - 8.5. Staff are to prepare personal plans to ensure their own families' safety in the event they are unable to leave their worksite.

9. Excusal of staff from attending the work site
 - 9.1. The site administrator will indicate to staff when they are excused from the work site.
 - 9.2. If students are dismissed and all avenues of safety for students have been met staff may be excused from the school.
 - 9.2.1. This will normally be until the following day.
 - 9.2.2. If it is a prolonged problem staff will be asked to teach at an alternate site.
 - 9.3. In the event of a Board-ordered closure of the work site or cancellation of student attendance, unless otherwise advised, staff shall make a reasonable effort to report to work at their normal work location.
 - 9.3.1. In the event of flooding, staff who live in the critical areas such as Firvale or Saloompt may be excused. A plan of supervision is required for the students under the charge of these teachers.
 - 9.4. If unable to reach their normal work location, staff shall attend a worksite closest to their home.
 - 9.5. Staff reporting for work at a location other than their normal work location shall be assigned appropriate duties by an administrator.
 - 9.6. School administrators shall report staff attendance and work locations to the district office within forty-eight (48) hours.

10. The Superintendent of Schools, or designate, shall make all announcements regarding school closure.

10.1. Communication may be isolated to the area and an evacuation response should not occur unless contact is made directly to the site by a community emergency response member or a senior school district officer.