

Emergency Closures**

The superintendent is empowered to close the district schools or to dismiss school early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies which threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. Such action is never to be taken lightly, for public education is one of the principal functions of the community, and should be maintained at a normal level except in extreme circumstances. When this regularity of operation ceases, serious difficulties are caused and the welfare of children may be jeopardized. Schools may not properly be closed merely to avoid inconvenience. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour or to dismiss students early, the administration has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible. Therefore, if conditions affect only a single school, only that school shall be closed.

In the case of high water, schools that are not affected will operate even though some students in low areas might be sent home early, or some students may not be able to attend. Students will be sent home early in such areas to avoid putting transportation equipment through water, and buses will not meet their regular schedules if high water covers the route.

In making the decision to close schools, the superintendent or his/her designee shall consider many factors, including the following principal ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of children:

1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted;
2. Driving, traffic and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities;
3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition which would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous;
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

The superintendent shall weigh these factors and shall take action to close the schools only after consultation with traffic and weather authorities, local principals and school officials from neighboring districts. Students, parents and staff shall be informed early in each school year of the procedures which will be used to notify them in case of emergency closing. When schools are closed for emergency reasons, staff members shall comply with their respective collective bargaining agreement in reporting to work.

Whenever the buses are not running on a regular schedule, or it appears questionable as to whether buses will operate, the transportation supervisor, after consultation with the superintendent, will contact the radio and television stations by 7:00 a.m. and release information concerning bus schedules and/or school schedules for that day.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[OAR 437-002-0360](#)

[OAR 437-002-0377](#)

[OAR 581-022-1420](#)

[OAR 581-022-1620](#)

[OAR 581-053-0002](#)