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## **SCHOOL CLOSURE**

The District's facility planning processes are designed to ensure the provision of well-maintained and highly utilized school facilities that effectively accommodate student learning needs. A variety of facility planning considerations may necessitate the closure or reconfiguration of a school.

This policy is designed to ensure jurisdictional compliance with the principles and requirements of Alberta Education policy and regulations on school closure.

### **Definitions**

"Closure" means to:

- Close a school permanently or for a specified period of time;
- Close entirely three (3) or more consecutive grades in a school; or
- Transfer all students from one (1) school building to one (1) or more other school buildings on a permanent basis.

"Reconfiguration" means the addition or removal of one (1) or more grades to or from a school.

The Board holds that it is desirable to operate schools that provide the best possible facilities and resources for all students.

When, in the judgment of the Superintendent, or a committee of the Board, the continued operation of a school is deemed to be disadvantageous to the District, the Superintendent, or the committee of the Board, will refer the possible closure of that school to the Board for consideration.

### **Specifically**

1. When a referral from the Superintendent or a committee of the Board concerning the possible closure of a school is received by the Board, the Board will determine whether or not to proceed with further study.
2. Once closure is chosen as a possibility, the Board shall notify the students, parents, teachers and public of the possibility.
  - 2.1 The notice will indicate that a thorough study of the situation will be undertaken.
  - 2.2 An initial public information meeting, to which all interested persons are invited, will be conducted to make public the Board' intentions and to notify the public that no decision will be made immediately.
  - 2.3 A minimum of two (2) Trustees shall attend the initial public information meeting.
3. Following the public information meeting, a Board advisory committee will be struck, consisting of two (2) members of the Board and two (2) parent representatives. The principal of the school and the Superintendent shall serve as resource persons to the advisory committee. This committee will be chaired by a Trustee, and will:

- 3.1 Request input from all interested parties,
  - 3.2 Assess and organize all relevant information, and
  - 3.3 Make recommendations to the Board within ninety (90) days.
4. The committee shall address, but not be restricted to the following topics:
    - 4.1 The attendance area of the school,
    - 4.2 The health and safety of students,
    - 4.3 The attendance at other schools of the relocated students,
    - 4.4 The busing arrangements which may be necessary,
    - 4.5 The effect of the closure on the social environment,
    - 4.6 Program implications for the relocated students,
    - 4.7 The educational and financial impact of closing the school,
    - 4.8 The educational and financial impact of not closing the school,
    - 4.9 Possible alternate uses of the school, and
    - 4.10 Disposition of the staff.
5. On receipt of the report of the advisory committee, the Board may pursue closure by Notice of Motion at a regular Board meeting proposing that a specific school be closed and specifying the date of such closure:
6. Following a notice of motion to close a school, the Board shall set a date for the purpose of discussing the proposed resolution.
    - 6.1 Advance notice of at least three (3) weeks shall be provided and the public must be made aware of the proposed closure and this public meeting date.
    - 6.2 A reasonable period of time shall be provided at the meeting of the Board prior to the vote on the notice of motion for the presentation of responses to the Board.
    - 6.3 The Notice of Motion shall include:
      - 6.3.1 The school and grades affected by the proposed school closure;
      - 6.3.2 The date upon which the Board plans to vote on the motion to close the school.
7. Notwithstanding the above, the period of time between the initial referral by the Superintendent, or a committee of the Board, and the vote on the notice of motion shall not be less than five (5) months.
8. The Board shall not make a final decision on the proposed school closure until at least three (3) weeks have passed since the date of the public meeting and at least three (3) weeks have passed since the date of the Notice of Motion referred to in Section 6.
9. The Board shall give due consideration to any written submissions related to the proposed school closure that it receives after the public meeting.
10. The Board shall, by resolution decide whether or not to close the school.

11. If the decision is to close the school, the District shall forthwith notify the Minister in writing of the decision.
12. All school closure procedures shall be initiated and completed within the school year in which the decision to close the school is made.

Legal Reference: Section 45, 45.1, 58, 60, 113, 200, 201, 270, 271 School Act  
Alberta Regulation 238/1997 (consolidated to 231/2012)