

**SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46
Elgin, Illinois**

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURES

2011-12

I. General Comments

1. The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for closing buildings.
2. Employee work day:
 - a. All twelve-month administrators, elementary principals and assistant principals are expected to report to work on emergency days.
 - b. All other twelve-month employees including twelve-month secretaries are expected to work on emergency days.
 - c. Administrators in all other categories will not work on emergency days but will have their work year extended.
 - d. All other non-twelve month employees will not work on emergency days but will have their work year extended.
3. In the event the Superintendent closes schools, principals will develop emergency closing plans for their buildings, which include the closing of a full day or an early closing. See below.
4. Principals will clarify with staff the conditions and ramifications of closing schools.
5. When the regular school day is canceled as a result of inclement weather, all school activities are canceled.
 - a. Any exceptions must be approved by the Assistant Superintendent.
 - b. When high schools are closed prior to the end of a school day or school is canceled due to a weather related emergency, the principal needs to notify opponent schools of the closing and inability to participate in any jointly scheduled events.
6. The Chief of Staff or designee will contact the media of an all-day closing by 5:45 a.m. and when early closings have been determined.
7. Communication Plan:
 - a. The Chief of Staff or designee will alert all parents and employees who are currently in Connect-Ed by 5:45 a.m. in the event of an all day closing.
 - b. District-wide closing
 - i. Principals should not send an extra_Connect-Ed call to parents.
 - c. Individual School Closing – if the Superintendent authorizes an individual school to close based on the recommendations of the Chief Operating Officer, the communication plan will be developed with the Principal of the school and the Chief of Staff or his designee.

II. Decision Process - Closing Due to Weather

1. The Directors of Transportation and Plant Operations are made aware of weather conditions the night before to plan accordingly.
2. By 4:00 a.m., the Director of Transportation begins the assessment of road conditions. Information is gathered from State, County and local police and from surrounding school district personnel.
3. The Director of Plant Operations begins an assessment of school parking lots, buildings, emergency exits for fire/smoke, and air handling systems functionality at each facility.
4. The following are the usual conditions that result in closing schools:
 - a) Severe wind-chill factor.
 - b) A heavy snow during the night:
 - a. Weather causes roads to be hazardous.
 - b. Weather causes sidewalks and walking paths to be hazardous.
 - c. School parking lots are hazardous for driving and walking.
 - d. Emergency exits to buildings are blocked.
 - e. Building air handling systems are blocked.
 - c) Other severe or hazardous weather conditions.
5. The Directors of Transportation and Plant Operations report their recommendations to the Chief Operating Officer by 5:00 a.m.
6. The Chief Operating Officer provides recommendations to the Superintendent.
7. The Superintendent will make the decision to close schools for the day, if possible, by 5:15 a.m.
8. If schools are closed, the communication plan occurs in the following order:
 - a. ConnectEd message to all staff
 - b. ConnectEd message to all families
 - c. Media
 - i. Notification on school closing web services

III. Early Closing - Decision Process

1. The decision to close school early is made by the Superintendent based upon input from the Chief Operating Officer:
 - a. The Directors of Transportation and Plant Operations will monitor the weather conditions and report to the Chief Operating Officer.
 - b. The Coordinator of School Safety will communicate with local municipalities on conditions and report to the Chief Operating Officer.
2. If closing early, the Director of Transportation will coordinate pick-up schedules with principals.

IV. Decision Process - Closing Due to Emergency

Process for determination of the closing of an individual building or all schools in an emergency situation, i.e., power failure, flooding, water shut-off, etc. is as follows:

1. The principal and head-custodian are notified of the situation.
2. Notify District Safety to coordinate communication and response plan.
 - a. District Safety will notify the Superintendent and Cabinet.
 - b. Plant Operations is notified and then calls the appropriate agency - Commonwealth Edison, NICOR (NI-Gas), etc.
 - c. District Safety coordinates and communicates with municipalities.
3. The Superintendent makes the final decision whether or not to close the school.
4. The principal or District Safety Coordinator contacts the Transportation and Food Services Departments as needed.
5. Principals have predetermined plans for staff and students for the emergency closing of the building. The staff is expected to work the normal workday. The work site, however, may be in a location away from the building.
6. The Chief of Staff or designee will make any appropriate announcements regarding the closing via ConnectEd, E-mail and Internet messages for the following:
 - a. Appropriate student families.
 - b. Appropriate staff.
 - c. Media.

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES:

ELEMENTARY PLAYGROUND PROCEDURES

The building principal has the responsibility to determine, or to establish a process to determine, when students will be allowed to stay in a building or when they will have to stay outside before school, during classroom physical education, or lunchtime activities on days when weather is inclement.

It is realized this decision is difficult to make as it balances the questions of weather conditions, supervisory resources, and students' need for physical activity during the school day. The decision itself is based on both objective and subjective criteria. Listed below are administrative guidelines for this procedure.

Students are not to be kept outside or required to go outside if the following conditions exist:

OBJECTIVE CRITERIA

1. A weather advisory or warning is in effect (i.e., tornado watch).
2. Rain, hail, lightning or thunderstorms are evident in the area.
3. Temperature is below 10 degrees or a wind chill factor of 10 degrees or below exists in the late morning (about 10:30 a.m.).
4. Condition exists on the playground, in relation to weather that creates an adverse situation, i.e., low area standing-water, shady area, limited sun, open area-excessive wind.
5. Hazardous conditions exist on the playground area, i.e., construction or repairs.
6. Parent note (single day) or medical excuse.

SUBJECTIVE CRITERIA

1. Appropriate outdoor clothing is not worn by the student.
2. Student's particular health condition is questioned.
3. The age of the student may dictate if he or she should remain inside.
4. The student is having difficulty interacting peaceably with his or her classmates.
5. Adequate supervision is not available.