

EBCD – EMERGENCY SCHOOL & DISTRICT CLOSINGS

Category Recommended – While these policies are not required by law, they are highly recommended for effective school board operations.

ALSO – EBCF, EBCG, IC & IMBA

The Superintendent of Winchester shall establish criteria and procedures for emergency closings for the schools.

No school, office, or system event cancellation or delay will be made without the direct authorization of the Superintendent of Schools. In the event the Superintendent is unavailable, such decisions will be made by a senior administrator specifically designated by Superintendent.

- A. Announcements and Notifications – When the Superintendent/designee decides it is necessary to delay opening, closing any facility or cancel any school event, they will initiate all related communications to the public by communication will be announced via (radio, television, website, school alert system). 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 closings, whether action is taken before or during school hours. In the event of any closings, cancellations, or early dismissals, the Superintendent shall notify the Board.
- B. Delayed Opening of Schools – The Superintendent/designee may delay the opening of school upon determining that weather conditions appear extremely hazardous to operate school buses at the regular early morning hours, but that travel conditions will appreciably improve later in the morning. The public announcement will report the delayed opening, including the cancellation of morning kindergarten, if necessary. Schools and offices shall close on the regular schedules. After-school activities and events will not be affected by a delayed opening.
- C. Closing of schools only for the Entire Day – When the Superintendent determines that weather or other conditions exist or will develop that would make it unwise to open one or more schools any time during the day, the announcement communicated to radio and television stations shall state that the school district is closed. If school is closed for the entire day, all afternoon and evening programs shall also be canceled.
- D. D. Distance Education During Inclement Weather – Pursuant to Board policy IC, the Superintendent may approve school or district-wide instruction by way of remote instruction or other form of “distance learning”. Unless the use of distance education for a specific day has previously been communicated, the Superintendent/designee will include the necessary information regarding the remote instruction/distance learning day in the announcement that school has been canceled.
- E. E. Emergency Early Release – In the event that weather conditions are safe for travel in the morning but become hazardous by the time of normally scheduled dismissals, the Superintendent may decide to release students early. The Superintendent will notify parents as soon as possible in order to allow for the arrangement of after-school care and transportation when necessary. The Superintendent shall develop protocols for dismissal schedules, transportation of students, and notification of stakeholders. If there is an emergency early release, all afternoon and evening programs shall also be cancelled.
- F. Afternoon and Evening Program Cancellations – When schools are open to the end of the school day, but weather or other conditions deteriorate in the late afternoon, the Superintendent/designee may decide to cancel afternoon and evening programs. Schools and offices should plan and communicate alternate dates and times to hold programs or events.
- G. Weekend Closings- When weather or other conditions are predicted or develop that would make it hazardous to operate weekend programs or events, the Superintendent/designee is responsible for decisions regarding cancellations and for notifying the appropriate media.
- H. Staff Responsibilities – When schools are closed pursuant to this policy, staff members shall remain available for work as directed by the Superintendent.

Legal References:

RSA 189:1, Days of School

NH Dept. of Ed. Rule – Ed 306.18, School Year

NH Dept. of Ed. Rule – Ed 306.19, School Calendar

NH Dept. of Ed. Rule – Ed 306.22, Distance Education

Revised: November 1999, July 1998, April 2004, March 2009

Reviewed & Approved by WSB 1/2024