

Business and Non-Instructional Operations

School Closing Policy

A building operated and maintained by the Hartford School District may be retired from use when the Board of Education determines that it is no longer useful to the district and/or is unsuitable to meet the current needs or projected needs of the district and/or cannot be operated and maintained within the district's budgetary constraints. The comprehensive long range facilities plan for the district should be a factor in considering the closing of a facility, and should require additional study of the possibility of remodeling the facility for other educational or public purposes. When a building is retired from use it shall be returned to the City of Hartford and shall no longer be operated or maintained by the Board of Education.

Policy adopted: February 4, 2003
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HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Hartford, Connecticut

Business and Non-Instructional Operations

School Construction Shutdown Policy

Any school building that is operated and maintained by the school district may be shutdown for construction activities if the long range facilities plan contains a major addition and/or renovation project for the school and the following conditions apply:

1. The conditions in the building require improvement, modification or expansion to meet programmatic or code related issues.
2. A set of educational specifications has been developed for the project work and they have been approved by the Board of Education
3. A school construction grant application has been reviewed and approved by the Connecticut State Department of Education's School Facilities Unit.
4. A grant commitment letter has been issued to the City of Hartford by the State of Connecticut.
5. Full funding for the project work has been authorized and the Common Council has approved an appropriation for the total cost of the project work.
6. The Hartford School Building Committee has determined that the project budget can support the cost of swing space to relocate students to another location.
7. The Hartford Board of Education has determined the best possible interests of students, parents, and staff will be served by relocating programs to swing space to allow construction to occur.
8. The parents and community are advised of the construction shutdown as soon as practicable prior to the date of transfer realizing the complexity and hardship this will bring to all involved.
9. The parents and community are provided with a timeline of construction activities that defines all the critical items in the construction project and the date when the school will be ready for occupancy.

A school construction shutdown may last between fourteen (14) and twenty-seven (27) months depending on the complexity of the project work. A transfer plan will be developed and published as soon as practicable prior to the construction shutdown. The plan will detail where the programs and services will be provided. The specific location and duration of the shutdown will be defined.

As early as possible prior to occupancy, parents and the community will be notified of the reopening of the renovated facility. A relocation plan will be developed and the actual move-in date will be established.

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School Closing Administrative Procedures

If any school building becomes inadequate because of age, condition, size of site, lack of need or other overriding limitations, or cannot reasonably and economically be brought up to the current educational standards, or cannot be operated or maintained within the district's budgetary constraints, notice of a recommended closure of a school building shall be sent to the parents of the affected school children as soon as practicable before said closure. Further, the recommended building for closure shall be considered for a comprehensive closing study. The Superintendent and the Board of Education shall conduct the comprehensive closing study according to the procedures set forth below.

A closing study will include direct involvement by those communities considered in the study and will be concerned with all the following factors:

1. Building characteristics, age and current physical conditions of the facilities including:
 - A. Age and condition of building including whether or not the building is energy efficient.
 - B. Adequacy of building for programs; existence of multipurpose room and/or other special areas; feasibility of replacement and/or additions.
 - C. Suitability of the building for other uses.
 - D. Capacity of buildings, space to house additional students.
2. Adequacy of site, location, access and other environmental conditions including:
 - A. Adequacy of the building in terms of student health and safety.
 - B. Frequency of vandalism and amount of damage.
 - C. Location and size of site.
 - D. Traffic hazards and/or serious deterrents to learning in surrounding community.
3. Enrollment and program including:
 - A. Enrollment size in relation to that needed to provide quality educational programs and services.
 - B. Enrollment projections indicative of continued small student population.
 - C. Effect upon programs for students in all schools affected by the closing.
 - D. Proximity of the school to community resources.
 - E. Relationship to the plan for special education.
 - F. Transportation factors, including numbers of children bused, time, distance, and safety.
 - G. School performance in relation to No Child Left Behind
4. Cost/Savings project including:
 - A. Staff requirements.
 - B. Comparative per student operating costs related to status quo.
 - C. Food service and student transportation requirements and expenses resulting from school closure.
 - D. Value of property for other uses.
 - E. Saving which might accrue from reducing the number of schools in town.

5. Community considerations:
 - A. Attitudes toward reducing the number of schools and reduction of cost.
 - B. Hardship and/or benefits to parents and/or children resulting from closure; distance from where students reside to schools where assignments would be made.
 - C. Reactions on the part of parents and other patrons to the potential closing of a school(s).
6. Alternatives to closing a school will also be considered. These may include:
 - A. Changing boundaries; effect upon enrollments in schools affected by changes.
 - B. Shifting of programs/grade levels from one building to another.
 - C. Housing of new program(s) in building under construction.

A school closing study shall follow these procedures before submitting their report to the Board of Education.

1. Parents and other school patrons will be involved early in the discussions pertaining to possible school closings and program relocation.
2. An orderly procedure, including the provision of information to all who will be affected, will be used when closing a school. Parents will be informed in advance regarding recommendations and of possible Board action.
3. Attendance boundaries will be realigned when school is to be closed, taking into account distances from other schools, traffic patterns, building capacities, enrollments, and programs.
4. Time will be provided for adequate preparation for closing and reassignment of students and staff members.
5. Alternate uses of the building or disposition of this property will be considered in the light of current and projected needs.
6. The closing committee may make use of outside consultants when considering school closings.
7. The full resource of the office of the Superintendent shall be available to the study committee throughout the deliberations.
8. Two public hearings regarding the closing of a school will be held by the Board of Education, one will be at the school prior to any vote by the Board to close a school.

The final report shall be sent to parents of the school children affected by the recommended school building closure prior to said report being submitted to the Board of Education for any hearing.

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