Appendix F
School Closing Procedures
FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION: Property

Permanent Closure of a School Building

I. Policy Statement

A. The Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) is committed to providing quality educational opportunities for all Baltimore County Public Schools’ (BCPS) students. When student enrollment trends, age or condition of a school building, financial constraints or other factors diminish the quality of education offered, the Board, after encouraging and providing an opportunity for public input, may consider discontinuing the use of a school building in order to promote the efficient and effective use of school facilities and resources.

B. The Board values the community’s input in the decision to close a school building and encourages participation of the public before the final decision is made.

II. Standards

A. In accordance with the Code of Maryland Regulations, the Superintendent shall establish guidelines for the permanent closure of a school building that shall ensure, at a minimum, that consideration is given to the impact of the proposed closing on the following factors:
   1. Student enrollment trends;
   2. Age or condition of school buildings;
   3. Transportation;
   4. Educational programs;
   5. Racial composition of student body;
   6. Financial considerations;
   7. Student relocation; and
   8. Impact on community in geographic attendance area for school proposed to be closed and school, or schools, to which students will be relocating.

B. The Superintendent shall be responsible for recommending the permanent closure of a school building to the Board.

C. Prior to making a final decision to permanently close a school building, the Board shall convene a public hearing to permit concerned citizens an
opportunity to submit their views orally or to submit written testimony or data on a proposed school building closure.

D. Notice of the public hearing shall be given to the parents and guardians of the students who attend the school being considered for closure and to the school or schools to which these students might be relocating. In addition to any regular means of notification used by BCPS, the written notice of the public hearing will:

1. Be advertised in at least two newspapers having general circulation in the geographic attendance area(s) for the school or schools proposed to be closed, and the school or schools to which students will be relocating;

2. Include the following:
   a. The date, time and location of the public hearing;
   b. The time limits for submitting written testimony or data;
   c. The procedures that will be followed by the Board in making its final decision; and
   d. The proposed date of the Board’s vote on the Superintendent’s recommendation; and

3. Appear at least 2 weeks in advance of any public hearings held by the Board on a proposed school closing.

E. The Board shall make its final decision regarding the proposed school closing following the public hearing. Such decision shall be in writing and include notification of the right to appeal to the Maryland State Board of Education.

III. Implementation

The Board directs the Superintendent to implement this policy.

Legal References: Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-115, Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property; Construction, etc., of School Buildings
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-119, Condemnation
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-205, Powers and Duties of County Superintendent
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 9-111, Use of School Site or Building for Public Charter School
COMAR 13A.01.06, *Educational Equity*
COMAR 13A.02.09, *Adoption of Procedures to Govern School Closings*

Related Policies:
- Board of Education Policy 0100, *Equity*
- Board of Education Policy 1230, *Area Education Advisory Councils (AEAC)*
- Board of Education Policy 1280, *Boundary Changes*
- Board of Education Policy 3620, *Inventories*
- Board of Education Policy 3640, *Disposal of Surplus or Excess Property*
- Board of Education Policy 7110, *Determining Needs*

Policy:
- **Adopted:** 02/03/15
- **Revised:** 01/05/21

Board of Education of Baltimore County
FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION: Property

Permanent Closure of a School Building

I. Purpose

To implement Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) Policy 7610 by establishing guidelines for the permanent closure of a Baltimore County Public School (BCPS) building.

II. Definitions

A. Attendance Area – The geographical boundary of a school where students are assigned based on the location of where the student is domiciled with the student’s parent/guardian.

B. Equity – Providing each student with what is necessary to achieve high academic outcomes.

C. Student – A school-aged child who meets specified conditions for establishing domicile in Baltimore County and who is currently enrolled in a BCPS.

D. Student Demographics – Student demographics include, but may not be limited to: enrollment, race/ethnicity, grade level, special programs and free and reduced-price meals (FARMS) status.

III. Process

A. Proposal

1. After recommendation for permanent closure of a school building has been made to the Superintendent, the Superintendent will designate appropriate community superintendent(s) and department heads to develop a proposal to permanently close a school building.

2. In making its proposal, staff shall consider the following:

   a. Factors set forth in State Regulation:

      (1) Student enrollment trends;

      (2) Age or condition of school buildings;

      (3) Transportation;

      (4) Educational programs;

      (5) Racial composition of student body;
(6) Financial considerations;
(7) Student relocation; and
(8) Impact on community in geographic attendance area for
school proposed to be closed and school, or schools, to
which students will be relocating.

b. Other factors shall include but not be limited to:
(1) Community input;
(2) Student demographics;
(3) Student attendance areas;
(4) Equity and the impact the school closure may have on
all students, with a focus placed on marginalized student
groups;
(5) Staffing impact; and
(6) Fiscal impact plan for redistribution of students or
programs.

3. The community superintendent will submit the proposal to close a
school building to the Superintendent for approval.

B. Notice of the Superintendent’s Proposal

Prior to making a recommendation to the Board to permanently close a
school building, the Superintendent will provide notice of the proposed
school closure to the following:
1. Principal(s) of the affected school(s);
2. Staff of the affected school(s);
3. PTA/PTSA board of the affected school(s); and
4. Area Education Advisory Council(s) (AEAC) of the affected
school(s).

C. Recommendation to the Board

1. The Superintendent shall recommend the permanent closure of a
school building during a regular meeting of the Board.
2. Notice of the Superintendent’s recommendation to the Board to
permanently close a school building shall be conveyed as follows:
   a. Each principal of the school building recommended for closure
will provide written notification to the parents/guardians of all
students attending the school recommended for closure and to
the parents/guardians of the school or schools to which
students will be relocating;
   b. The Superintendent will provide written notification to the
PTA/PTSA board of the school(s) recommended for closure;
c. The Superintendent will provide written notification to the AEAC(s) of the affected school(s); and
d. The Department of Communications and Community Outreach (“Communications”) shall issue a press release announcing the recommendation.

D. Public Hearing
1. Following the announcement of the recommendation to the Board and prior to making a final decision to permanently close a school building, the Board shall convene a public hearing to permit interested citizens to submit oral or written testimony or data on the proposed school building closure.
2. Notice of the Board’s public hearing will be provided at least 2 weeks in advance of the public hearing on the proposed school building closure and shall include:
   a. The date, time and location of the public hearing;
   b. Clear time limits for submitting written testimony or data;
   c. The procedures that will be followed by the Board in making its final decision; and
   d. The proposed date of the Board’s vote on the Superintendent’s recommendation.
3. Communications is responsible for ensuring that notice of the public hearing is:
   a. Advertised in at least 2 newspapers having general circulation in the affected area(s) of the county;
   b. Transmitted to the parents/guardians of the students who attend the school building identified for closure and to the parents/guardians of the school or schools to which students will be relocating; and
   c. Posted on the BCPS Web site.

IV. Decision
A. At a regular meeting of the Board, subsequent to the public hearing, the Board shall issue its final decision regarding the recommendation to permanently close a school building. The final decision shall:
1. Be in writing and include the rationale for the school building closure and address the factors set forth in Paragraph III(A)(2) above; and
2. Include notification of the right to appeal to the Maryland State Board of Education as set forth in state regulation.
B. Communications is responsible for ensuring that notice of the Board’s decision to permanently close a school building is disseminated as follows:
1. To the community in the geographic attendance area of the school proposed to be permanently closed and school or schools to which these students will be relocating;
2. Transmitted to parents/guardians of the students who attend the school identified for closure and to the parents/guardians of the school or schools to which these students will be relocating.
3. The written notification required under this Paragraph shall include the right to appeal the decision to the Maryland State Board of Education as set forth in state regulation.

C. Except in emergency circumstances, the decision to permanently close a school building shall be announced at least 90 days before the date the school building is scheduled for closure, but not later than April 30 of any school year.

V. Implementation

A. The Department of Facilities Management and Strategic Planning shall:
1. Prepare documentation as appropriate to notify the Maryland State Department of Planning, the Maryland State Superintendent of Schools and the Interagency Commission on Public School Construction regarding the change in the status of the school(s); and
2. Coordinate, as appropriate, the property transfer to Baltimore County government.

B. Reassignment of Students and Staff
1. Students will be reassigned in accordance with Board Policy and Superintendent’s Rules.
2. Staff who are assigned to a school approved by the Board for closure will be reassigned through the transfer process and in accordance with the Board’s collective bargaining agreements.

C. Redistribution of Assets
1. The Office of Logistics shall oversee reassignment of assets and shall coordinate with all offices responsible for the assets.
2. Materials or equipment that have been deemed surplus, obsolete or broken will be disposed of in accordance with Board policies, Superintendent’s rules and operating procedures.
Legal References:  

Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-109, Establishment of Public Schools
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-115, Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property; Construction, etc., of School Buildings
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-119, Condemnation
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 4-205, Powers and Duties of County Superintendent
Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article § 9-111, Use of School Site or Building for Public Charter School
COMAR 13A.01.06, Educational Equity
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Related Policies:  

Board of Education Policy 0100, Equity
Board of Education Policy 1230, Area Education Advisory Councils (AEAC)
Board of Education Policy 1280, Boundary Changes
Board of Education Policy 3620, Inventories
Board of Education Policy 3640, Disposal of Surplus or Excess Property
Board of Education Policy 7110, Determining Needs

Other:  

State of Maryland Public School Construction Program Administrative Procedures Guide, § 501, Facilities Changes

Rule
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