

Considerations for School Districts

In response to school district inquiries, the following checklist was drafted as a resource to assist in the development of possible actions by school districts contemplating a closure. While not an exhaustive list, it may be utilized by administrators, district solicitors and other stakeholders to provide structure to the decision-making process. However, please note that the closure of a school district for lack of funds is an unprecedented event that has not been contemplated in the Public School Code.

Completion of the suggested activities below will likely necessitate a minimum of 60 days and require at least one formal action of the school oversight authority (school board, school reform commission, school receiver, or other body responsible for governing the school district) prior to closure.

1. Calculate how long the district can be closed and still meet these separate deadlines:
 - a. 180 days
 - b. 990 hours (secondary)
 - c. 900 hours (elementary)
2. Calculate:
 - a. The amount of state funding that will be lost if the district does not meet the 180 day requirement. Include potential loss of Pre-K Counts/Head Start State Supplemental funds.
 - b. The amount of state funding that will be lost if the district does not meet the 990/900 hour requirements.
 - c. Federal funds that may be lost due to program discontinuation.
3. Review your district's collective bargaining agreements and develop a plan to address payroll, benefits, and other payments due.¹
4. Review other contracts and plan for any penalties due to cancellations. This review should include, but not be limited to: food services, vendor supplies and IU agreements. This review should also include any early learning partners including, but not limited to, child care and after-school contractors.
5. Develop a plan to address student educational needs and concerns, including:
 - a. K-12 students currently educated by the district
 - b. Early Head Start, Head Start, and Pre-K Counts children
 - c. Young children receiving wrap around care in the school building (early morning, late afternoon care)
 - d. FAPE issues for special education students
 - e. Students in private placements, including AEDY students

¹ There may also be federal WARN Act implications. This act protects employees, their families, and communities by requiring most employers with 100 or more employees to provide 60 calendar-day advance notification of closings and mass layoffs of employees.

- f. Students currently enrolled in charter and cyber charter schools (specifically regarding tuition payments)
 - g. Ongoing transportation requirements including transportation of nonpublic and charter students
 - h. Students attending the district-run cyber program, if applicable
 - i. Student standardized testing
 - j. Teen ELECT participants and placement for their children
6. Outline a plan for making mandated payments, such as debt service.
 7. Consult with your solicitor to discuss legal issues associated with the closure.
 8. Hold a meeting with school oversight authority to take action on the school closure and on the actions developed to address the items above.
 9. Notify the Department of Education (PDE) immediately upon the affirmative vote of school oversight authority for closure action and provide PDE with the documentation developed from this checklist and any other actions associated with the closure. Notify the Department of Human Services of the closure of any certified child care classrooms.
 10. Notify parents of high school students in sufficient time so that they may enroll their children in neighboring districts
 11. Advise surrounding school districts and early learning programs of the potential transfer of students.