

EMERGENCY CLOSURE

Procedures

September 2009



Anchorage School District |

Anchorage, Alaska

742-4000

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCEDURES,
PROCEDURES FOR CHANGES IN NORMAL OPERATION,
AND PROCEDURES FOR CANCELING BUS TRANSPORTATION
DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Weather conditions resulting in hazards from flood, snow, ice or extremely cold temperatures severe enough to interrupt transporting pupils and staff travel to assigned schools, may result in a delay in starting time or closing of one or all of the schools, or one or more programs within the district. The following procedure will be used until further notice:

A. The director of transportation services will determine the status of bus operations and road conditions by collecting data from the following sources:

- Anchorage Police Department
- State of Alaska road maintenance department
- Anchorage and Eagle River road maintenance departments
- ASD safety officers and contractor personnel who have driven area roads prior to 4:30 a.m.
- ASD maintenance department personnel

B. The director of transportation services will call the assistant superintendent for support services to report status of bus operations and road conditions. The assistant superintendent will then call the superintendent. The information from the above sources will be analyzed and a decision made from among those listed below:

1. **No schools closed:** normal operation.
2. **Delayed opening of schools:** Schools will open one hour later than the normal schedule. School buses will run one hour later than the normal schedule. All staff report at usual time if safety permits.
3. **Schools only closed:** All teachers report to alternative work sites, of individual choice.
Custodial staff report; facilities/maintenance staff report; other support staff report as specified in appropriate contract.

<p>Please note: State regulations allow us to declare in-service and emergency closure days to be "days in session" up to a total of 10 per year. Any closure that occurs after the exhaustion of those 10 days will require an adjustment to the school calendar, in order to meet the statutory requirement for length of the school year.</p>

4. **All district facilities closed:** Emergency staff only report, including all facilities/maintenance staff. Designated emergency staff members have been identified at each school. Other impacts are described above.

- C. If the assistant superintendent for support services is unable to contact the superintendent, then the assistant superintendent and the director of transportation will confer and make the decision.
- D. All coordination should be completed by 4:30 a.m. The final decision for a change in normal operation will be made by the superintendent no later than 5:00 a.m. The superintendent will confirm any change in normal operation with the leadership team.
- E. All closings or changes in normal operation are to be reported to radio and television stations in the Anchorage area by the executive director of communications starting immediately after notification by the superintendent. Notification should be completed approximately 20-30 minutes after communications is alerted. Public announcements should start no later than 5:30 a.m.

**INFORMATION WILL ALSO BE POSTED ON THE DISTRICT'S WEB SITE:
www.asdk12.org**

- F. The communications department will update announcements on the ASD web site and the district's main switchboard, 742-4000.
- G. The executive director of human resources will notify substitute dispatch and the assistant superintendent for support services will notify student nutrition of changes in normal operation.

Similar procedures are in effect on non-student days. The content of messages relayed over selected radio stations will be edited appropriately if changes in normal operation occur on an in-service day.

HAZARDOUS TRAVEL AND WORK ATTENDANCE

DETERMINATION OF SCHOOL CLOSURE

On days when it is deemed necessary to alter normal operation procedures (delayed opening, school closures, altered transportation or work schedules) because of weather or road conditions, a determination to that effect will be made by the superintendent before 5:00 a.m. If the action taken constitutes an emergency school closure and students are directed not to report, or if the conditions occur on an in-service day, the following procedures will be employed:

NOTIFICATION

Anchorage radio and television stations will be notified and will carry information on the status of delay in opening, school closure, transportation changes, or changes in the normal work schedule. Principals, administrators and the primary secretary will be requested to report to work early in their buildings so that they can assist with telephone inquiries regarding weather conditions, the status of school opening time, school closure and determination of the need for substitutes. The ASD Education Center main telephone line will carry a recorded message encouraging callers to listen to the radio, or call their schools for the latest information.

ATTENDANCE RULES: DELAYED START DAYS ONLY

TEACHING STAFF: Teachers will report for duty at their regular times and be prepared to supervise students whose parents deliver them at the normal time.

NON-TEACHING STAFF: All other staff will also report for duty at regular times. When a member of the school staff, excluding principals, is absent because of weather conditions **when schools are open** and the supervisor acknowledges that travel to the work place is hazardous, the absence will be charged as follows:

- (1) The employee may elect to be paid for the day by submitting a leave request that will be charged to annual leave or if unutilized compensatory time has been accrued, that may be used.
- (2) If the employee has no annual leave days accrued or does not wish to charge the day to annual leave, the absent day will be unpaid.
- (3) Supervisors and principals will allow ACE and TOTEM employees to use flexible scheduling to make up work missed.
- (4) ACE employees may work from an alternate worksite by mutual agreement between the supervisor and the employee.

ATTENDANCE RULES: SCHOOL CLOSURE DAYS ONLY

TEACHING STAFF: On emergency closure days for schools, teachers may report to alternative work sites of individual choice. Since normal service to students cannot be provided due to circumstances beyond the control of teachers, other duties may be undertaken in any appropriate location. Alternate

sites of individual choice may include homes if it is the professional judgment of individual teachers that homes are the appropriate places in which to perform their duties under emergency conditions. *Unless otherwise announced, schools will reopen on the following day and teaching staff should report to their normal work locations.*

**Teachers who have pre-arranged personal/sick leave for a day that is declared an emergency closure day will have their leave accrual charged as originally scheduled for that day unless a call changing their request is received by the substitute dispatch system prior to the beginning of the public announcements at 5:30 a.m.*

Please note, state regulations allow us to declare in-service and emergency closure days to be “days in session” up to a total of 10 per year. Any closure that occurs after the exhaustion of those 10 days will require an adjustment to the school calendar, in order to meet the statutory requirement for length of the school year.

NON-TEACHING STAFF: building plant operators and principals will attempt to arrive at school earlier than normal when schools are closed. Facilities/maintenance staff will report as usual.

When support staff arrives within 90 minutes of the normal starting time on days *when schools are closed*, full credit will be given for the day's attendance. In extenuating circumstances the supervisor may extend the 90-minute guideline.

Substitutes for school support staff should not be dispatched on school closure days. Support staff represented by TOTEM, but not regularly assigned to schools, are to be treated like school employees during an emergency school closure that affects all schools. TOTEM employees are expected to report for work unless they judge that conditions are hazardous, in which case they may elect to take leave, use compensatory time or arrange with their supervisors to make up lost time at a later date within the school year.

Custodial employees are expected to report for duty when schools are closed. All facilities/maintenance staff are expected to report for duty when schools are closed.

The procedures listed above for non-teaching staff do not apply to the following employee groups. The following employee groups should not report when students are not in attendance.

- a. Bus drivers will be notified by 5:30 a.m.
- b. Bus attendants.
- c. Student nutrition employees working in school buildings.
- d. Crossing guards and noon duty attendants.

SCHOOL CLOSURE AND PAYCHECK RELEASE

In the event that a determination to close schools is made on a day that paychecks and/or direct deposit advices would normally be released for either monthly paid employees or bi-weekly paid employees the following procedures will apply:

- School paychecks/direct deposit advices will be held at the ASD Education Center and will be available to be picked up between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. from the Payroll Department;
- Paychecks and direct deposit advices that are not picked up will be sent to schools for release to employees on the next District workday that schools are open.

TYPICAL MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements are typical of the notification to be given to the media:

Delayed Start

“All Anchorage public schools will open one hour later than usual today due to weather and road conditions. School buses are operating one hour later than the normal schedule. All school district employees will report for duty at their regular time.”

Schools Closed

“All Anchorage public schools are closed today due to weather and road conditions. Employees should follow emergency closure procedures for their building or department. Unless otherwise announced, schools will reopen tomorrow” (or on Monday if closure occurs on Friday).

All District Facilities Closed

“All Anchorage public schools and support facilities are closed today due to weather and road conditions. Only emergency staff should report for duty, including all facilities and maintenance staff. Unless otherwise announced, schools will reopen tomorrow” (or on Monday if closure occurs on Friday).