

Annex E.3 to ASD EOP

EMERGENCY CLOSURE PROCEDURES

October 2017



Anchorage School District
742-4000

Emergency Closure Procedures and Procedures for Changes in Normal Operation

Purpose. This document provides procedural guidance for ASD employees in the event that severe weather conditions, natural disasters, power outages or other unforeseen circumstances result in school closure or a delay in start time. It also outlines work attendance rules for school closure and delayed start days.

Background. Due to location, Anchorage and its surrounding communities experience extreme weather conditions and geologic hazards (earthquakes and volcanic activity) that could impede normal school operations. Snow and ice present the most frequent seasonal risk; starting as early as September and lasting into May. As a large school district (Chugiak to Girdwood), weather and road conditions vary across the District. As a result, the District must anticipate and be prepared to react to extreme conditions.

The goal of the District's Emergency Closure Procedures is to enable informed decisions in the best interest of student, employee and public safety, while minimizing disruption to our staff, students and the community.

Procedures for Determination of Road Conditions.

1. Preparation/anticipation:

- a. Beginning in mid-September, the Senior Director of Transportation (DT) will verify the next day's weather forecast through NWS (or other reputable weather source) before the end of the work day, Monday through Thursday; and on Sunday evenings. When warranted, the DT contacts the Chief Operating Officer (COO) to warn of potential weather conditions that could affect normal District operations.
- b. The COO informs the Superintendent and other Cabinet members of the DT's weather warning. The COO also informs key personnel and issues guidance to ensure the District is postured to assess and respond to road conditions the following morning.

2. Event Day Procedures:

- a. Starting early morning, ASD safety personnel, transportation staff, Maintenance and Operations personnel and others conduct active and passive reconnaissance of the roads within the District's boundaries. The DT and the Senior Director of

Maintenance & Operations (DMO) determine the status of road conditions and schools, and assess the safety and feasibility of busing operations and commuter driving. Information and analysis is obtained from the following sources:

- 1) Anchorage Police Department
 - 2) State of Alaska Road Maintenance Department
 - 3) Anchorage and Eagle River road maintenance departments
 - 4) ASD safety officer, Transportation Supervisor and contractor personnel
 - 5) ASD Maintenance and Operations departments
 - 6) National Weather Service (NWS)
 - 7) Alaska State Troopers (additional resource for Seward Highway)
 - 8) Joint Base Elemendorf-Richardson (673d Air Base Wing)
- b. The DT and the DMO contact the COO no later than 4:45am to report the status of roads, sidewalks and schools; and provide an assessment of the impact on school operations. The COO will then call the Superintendent to provide an update and make recommendations. Based on the information provided and other considerations, the Superintendent will decide on the follow actions:
- 1) **Normal operations:** All schools and District activities open and on schedule.
 - 2) **Delayed opening of schools:** Schools will open later than the normal schedule. School buses will run later than the normal schedule. All staff report at usual time if safety permits.
 - 3) **Schools-only closed:** Teachers may report to alternative work sites of individual choice, provided the missed school day does not have to be made up. If teachers will be required to make up the emergency school closure day, AEA members will be notified on or before the closure day that it is a non-working, non-paid day.
 - a) Custodial staff report; facilities/maintenance staff report; other support staff report as specified in appropriate contract.
 - b) State regulations allow ASD 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.**
 - c) Education Center staff report for work at normal time, or as road conditions allow.

- 4) **All district facilities closed:** Only emergency staff and all facilities/maintenance staff report. Designated emergency staff members have been identified at each school and by each ASD Department Director.
- 5) **School/site-specific closure(s):** In the event an emergency closure applies to a limited number of specific locations, both teaching and non-teaching staff at those locations will follow the attendance rules for school closure days.
 - a) For Teaching Staff: If the effect of the closure exceeds the two possible closure days that are built into the school calendar, those days will be non-working, non-paid days and will need to be made up.
 - b) For Non-Teaching Staff: The procedure will be the same as outlined in **Schools-only closed.**
 - c. If the decision is made to modify school start times or close schools, the COO and Communications Director contact the Cabinet by telephone and text message. Cabinet will notify their direct reports, who in turn will activate their individual “notification trees” to ensure all personnel are notified.
 - d. The COO contacts the 673d ABW commander (227-1900) or deputy commander (351-1746) to inform of the District’s school plans for that day.
4. If the Superintendent is not available, the COO will contact the Deputy Superintendent. If neither is available, the Chief Operating Officer will confer with the DT and make a decision.
5. Communications. All closings or changes in normal operation are to be reported publicly by the Communications Director. The public announcement should be made no later than 5:30am. Exceptions may occur on days when weather or road conditions change rapidly during the morning hours. The Communications Department will notify local media outlets and provide updated information on the following ASD communication channels.
 - a. Website: www.asdk12.org
 - b. Text: via subscription
 - c. Twitter: www.twitter.com/asd_info
 - d. Facebook: www.facebook.com/AnchorageSchoolDistrict
 - e. Phone: 742-4000

6. Deteriorating road conditions during a school day. If weather and road conditions significantly deteriorate after a decision is made not close schools, the Transportation Department (inclusive of ASD Transportation and Reliant) will immediately notify the DT who will contact the COO with analysis and a recommendation(s). The COO will contact the Superintendent or Deputy Superintendent as appropriate.
7. The Chief Human Resources Officer will notify the Senior Director of Human Resources Staffing and Operations, who will notify Substitute Dispatch. The COO will notify Student Nutrition of changes in normal operation.
8. In-service/non-student days: Similar procedures are in effect on non-student days. The content of public and staff messages will be edited appropriately if changes in normal operation occur on an in-service day.
9. After-school activities: A decision to close schools due to unsafe road conditions could result in a concurrent decision to cancel or postpone after-school activities for that day. Weather conditions could also deteriorate during a school day that result in a decision to cancel after-school activities. A decision to cancel after-school activities will be made no later than 12:00pm; and information will be immediately communicated to schools. The Communications Director will notify media and the community.
10. Community Services and rentals: In the event of a school closure due to extreme weather conditions or other circumstances, the District may cancel or reschedule community events that are planned in district facilities. The Director of Community Services will consult with and make case-by-case recommendations to the COO.

Procedures for Changes in Normal School Operation

Hazardous Travel and Work Attendance Rules.

1. Attendance Rules for Delayed Start Days Only:

Principals: Principals will attempt to arrive at school earlier than normal.

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, provided they can travel safely.

Non-Teaching Staff: All non-teaching staff will be expected to report for duty at their regular times provided they can travel safely.

TOTEM: Employees reporting to work by the rescheduled start time will receive pay for the time between the regular start time and the rescheduled start time.

2. Attendance Rules For School Closure Days:

Principals: Principals will attempt to arrive at school earlier than normal.

Teaching Staff: On emergency closure days for schools, teachers may report to alternative work sites of individual choice provided the missed school day does not have to be made up. If teachers will be required to make up the emergency school closure day, AEA members will be notified on or before the closure day that it is a non-working, non-paid day. 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.

Substitutes for school support staff should not be dispatched on school closure days.

Non-Teaching Staff: Custodial employees are expected to report for duty as usual, with building plant operators attempting to arrive at school earlier than normal.

Facilities/Maintenance: Employees are expected to report for duty as usual.

TOTEM: Employees are expected to report for work unless they judge that conditions are hazardous, in which case they will use compensatory time, annual leave, or unpaid leave (in that order) for any time not worked. Employees on unpaid leave may arrange with their supervisors to make up time lost. 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.

ACE: When District facilities are closed to students due to inclement weather conditions, employees will telephone the supervisor if arrival will be late, unless phone contact is not feasible. When an employee arrives

within 90 minutes of the normal starting time, full credit will be given for the day's attendance. If travel to the workplace is hazardous, the absence will be charged in the following order: (1) non-work days; (2) if the employee has no non-work days, annual leave; (3) if the employee has no annual leave, unpaid leave. By mutual agreement between the supervisor and the employee, the employee may be allowed to utilize flexible scheduling to make up work missed or may work from an alternative work site.

3. The following employee groups should not report when students are not in attendance:

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

4. School Closure and Paycheck Release:

In the event that a school closure occurs on a day that paychecks would be released for either monthly paid or bi-weekly paid employees, the following procedures will apply:

- a. School paychecks will be held at the ASD Education Center and will be available for pick-up between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. from the Payroll Department;
- b. Paychecks that are not picked up will be sent to schools for release to employees on the next district workday that schools are open;
- c. Direct deposit advices will be available online as normal.

5. Media Announcements:

The following announcements are typical for public notification:

Delayed Start: "All ASD 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 ASD 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 ASD 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).

6. Emergency Closure Procedures Update: The Chief Operating Officer is responsible to review and update the Emergency Closure Procedures on an annual basis no later than the first week of October.