

Closing Schools

It is the responsibility of the Colorado Springs School District 11 Board of Education (the Board) to operate the school system in an instructionally and economically sound manner that best services the District mission, vision and business plan. As instructional economies of scale, financial conditions and/or populations mature or shift within Colorado Springs School District 11 (the District), the operation of certain school buildings may no longer be feasible. It may be necessary for the Board to determine if school(s) are needed for their original purpose or should be put to use to benefit the District or public in other ways.

In determining when a facility is to be retired for regular school purposes, the Board shall be guided by a combination of factors, not limited to the following:

1. **Educational Program:** the school's ability to meet the needs for providing a modern and flexible educational program including instructional economies of scale and the need to consolidate, reconfigure, or relocate existing programs.
2. **Enrollment-percent:** utilization/student enrollment as a percentage of building capacity.
3. **Building Capacity:** the building's ability to economically accommodate enrollment.
4. **Enrollment Trend:** the variation in enrollment patterns for recent time frames.
5. **Permit Trend:** the variation in permits out and permits in.
6. **Transportation Eligibility:** the school enrollment boundary as analyzed for District transportation eligibility.
7. **Academic Success:** the school's rating on the various State rating systems.
8. **Facility Condition:** the school's facility condition as measured on a uniform scale for all district schools.

The Superintendent, in coordination with the Board, and with input from the District Attendance Area, Enrollment, and School Building Capacity Committees (See Board Regulation JC-R), shall maintain a list of triggering thresholds for the factors listed above. In the event a school meets or exceeds the appropriate triggering threshold for a significant number of the above criteria, the Superintendent may notify the school principal and school community that the school has been placed on "watch" status. Once a school has been placed on watch status, the school shall make significant progress to reduce the number of triggering criteria within two school years. The school is encouraged to collaborate with the administration and its community in developing plans and determining courses of action and resources needed to make progress on reducing triggering factors. In the event that a school fails to make significant progress on reducing the number of triggering factors, the Superintendent shall have the option of extending the watch status or recommending school closure to the Board. (See Board Policy JC).

If the Superintendent deems it necessary to recommend closure of a school(s), the following procedures shall be followed:

1. Upon receipt of a recommendation from the Superintendent that a school or schools should be closed and after reviewing the supporting data, the Board may instruct the Superintendent to notify the parents/guardians of students attending the school(s) affected, informing them of the action being considered and the reasons therefor, and of the arrangements proposed for the education of their children. A time schedule and the process for community input and notification will be published. Any recommendation to close or consolidate a campus should be considered for approval by the Board.
2. If the Board approves the closure of a school, the students and their parents/guardians shall be informed of the alternative educational arrangements available to the students, to include the students' new bounded school, as well as anticipated transportation arrangements.
3. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the affected staff members and review with them their rights of transfer to other locations. They shall be assisted in obtaining mutually satisfactory assignments subject to applicable laws and employee handbooks/agreements.
4. The Superintendent or designee shall discuss the following with receiving schools impacted by closures: grade distribution, pupil-teacher ratio, adequacy of receiving schools to house redirected students, proposed attendance boundaries, potential transportation adjustments, economic considerations regarding annual operating costs of the facility, potential staffing changes, potential program changes, as well as other anticipated impacts.
5. To ensure the smoothest possible transition, the Board shall direct that schools scheduled for non-operation the following year be closed as of the end of the regular school year unless emergency conditions dictate otherwise.
6. If emergency conditions dictate that a school be closed during the regular school year, the Board shall allow the Superintendent a minimum of one month to implement the Board's order to close a school. The Superintendent shall use this one month period to work with parents/guardians, teachers and administrators in the sending and receiving schools to prepare students for the change.
7. If the Board votes to close the school(s) in question, the school(s) shall be vacated and reutilized in a manner that best serves the District. The Board shall consider various factors to include, but not limited to, the following: other uses that the District might make of the building, or sale to external parties. The historic value of any building may also be considered by the Board. In such cases, it may take special action to provide for its preservation.

Adopted February 23, 1983
Revised January 1985

Revised April 9, 2014

CROSS REF.: DN, School Properties Disposition
FF, Naming of District Facilities, Properties and Assets
JFBA/JFBB, School Choice – Open Enrollment and Transfers
JC and JC-R, School Attendance Areas and School Building Capacity
District 11 Capacity Report

Policy Owner: Director of Facilities, Operations and Transportation