

RETIREMENT OF FACILITIES –SCHOOL CLOSURE

PURPOSE:

This policy is established for the purpose of setting forth the North Kingstown School Committee’s commitment to and expectations for the proper management and communication of the potential closure of North Kingstown School District facilities.

PHILOSOPHY:

When considering the matter of consolidation of schools, the North Kingstown School Committee wishes to maintain quality academic opportunities in a supportive educational environment. The Committee also prioritizes the utilization of school facilities that are an efficient allocation of the District’s financial resources.

POLICY STATEMENT:

I. CONSOLIDATION/CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS

The North Kingstown School District may decide to consolidate schools by closing one or more schools and reassigning the students to other schools within close proximity.

II. CONSIDERATIONS FOR CONSOLIDATION

The District will consider the following factors in any decision to consolidate schools:

- Administration Issues
- Condition of the building and what is most cost efficient
- Enrollment
- Impact on students and families
- Impact on the delivery of education
- Potential Alternative Use of School Facilities or Site
- Special Education Issues
- Transportation Issues

1. Administration

The District will examine the cost efficiencies that will be gained or lost by closing a facility and will detail a cost projection for the schools accepting students from the closed facility.

2. Condition of the Proposed Closed Facility

The District will review the condition of the facilities, including:

- a. the actual physical condition of the school facility, including the cost to repair any safety issues and make structural changes necessary to ensure compliance with all town, state and federal laws;

- b. the extent that the physical condition of the facility and what is the most cost efficient to maintain;
- c. whether the continued occupancy of the facility is unsafe or impractical.
- d. whether the facility accepting the re-districted students is structurally sound and in better physical condition than the building closed, in compliance with all town, state and federal laws; has a greater capacity for the increase in students.

3. Enrollment.

The District will consider drops in enrollment in deciding whether the space available at schools is being used in a cost effective manner.

4. Impact on the delivery of education

The District will consider the potential impact of any school closure on the delivery of education including student/teacher ratios, number of school transitions for students, school community atmosphere with increased or decreased student population, sufficiency of media center/computer labs for student population, and all other possible impacts on education.

5. Impact on students and families

The District will consider potential impact of consolidation or closure of a school on start times, student/teacher ratios, number of school transitions for students, school community atmosphere with increased or decreased student population, and the potential for families having children in different schools.

6. Potential Alternative Use of School Facilities or Site.

The Superintendent shall make a recommendation for potential alternative use or a recommendation to retire any district facility in accordance with this policy. In making the recommendation, the Superintendent will consider whether it would be beneficial for consolidation according to the programmatic or educational mission of the District.

- a. Upon retirement or discontinued use of a district building, the responsibility for care, control and management of the closed building immediately is transferred to the Town of North Kingstown, pursuant to RI General Law, North Kingstown Town Charter and any applicable agreements releasing the NKSD from budgetary responsibility.

7. Special Education

The District will analyze how the closure of the building will affect the special education programs occupied within the proposed closed building and the opportunities at other schools as a part of **and simultaneously with**, the planning for the placement of typical education programs before recommending a proposal to the School Committee.

8. Transportation

The District will review how closing a school will impact transportation of all students in the district and review if there will be efficiency in the closing of a facility. The District will communicate transportation changes according to timelines set forth in this policy.

III. PROCESS FOR BUILDING CLOSURE

1. The Superintendent shall recommend the consolidation of schools to the School Committee based upon the considerations in Section II. The recommendation shall be provided no later than June 30 of one full year prior to the planned closure. Included in this recommendation is a projection to which school displaced students will be assigned. The School Committee shall convene no less than three meetings to elicit public comment and discussion regarding the proposed closure. The agenda for these meetings shall notice closure of a school specifically on the agenda. These meetings shall be publicized according to RI General Law and community groups, PTO's, SELAC and SAC members will be invited to attend the discussion.

2. The Superintendent shall be responsible to oversee the approved closure and consolidation of schools.

IV. REASSIGNMENT OF TEACHERS, STAFF AND ADMINISTRATORS

NEANK and the ESP contracts will govern the placement of teachers and educational support professionals at closed schools. If the School Committee decides to consolidate schools through closure, the Superintendent shall retain the discretion to retain, reassign or terminate the principal and administrative staff pursuant to District policy, RI General Law and any applicable agreements or contracts.

V. PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION AND SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL AT CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

The local Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO) and School Advisory Councils (SAC) impacted through consolidation shall be dissolved upon a school closure. The Committee will advise the PTO to create a policy for fund distribution prior to the school closure. All groups with club funds shall create a plan for fund transfer or distribution. The plan shall include a statement of the total amount of money left in the fund and the group's recommendation for the placement of the funds, and shall be sent to the Business Director, and the plan shall be placed in the packets of the School Committee for approval.

First Read: 5/12/2009
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