



## **SCHOOL CLOSURE**

**EFFECTIVE DATE 3/1/15**

## **PROCESS**

**SOP 3.13**

**SIGNATURE**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "A. J. ...", is written over the signature line.

**PROPOSED BY Director of Government Relations**

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCESS is to provide a written policy and procedures that goes beyond statutory language for overseeing school closure. This process includes, but is not limited to, a plan of action for schools closing prior to the end of the school year or due to financial difficulties, procedures for timely notification to parents, orderly transition of student records, disposition of school funds and assets and submitting closing assurances and other documentation that may be required by the Ohio Department of Education guidance.

## **SCOPE**

The SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCESS applies to all Charter School Specialists staff involved in the closure of a sponsored community school.

## **PROCEDURE**

1. The Compliance Department will identify schools that will be closing for the current school year based on non-renewal, termination, statutory required closure or voluntary school closure.
2. If a school experiences financial difficulties or closes prior to the end of the current school year, CSS staff may take over operation of the school in order to enable the school to complete the current school year.
  - a. At the end of the current school year the Compliance Department shall institute the closing procedures listed below.



3. The Compliance Department shall develop and review annually an internal closure guidance document which may be shared with the schools in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Education's suspension and closing procedures.
4. Compliance Department shall review the most updated guidance provided by the Ohio Department of Education and statutory requirements and develop an internal school closure plan with a defined timeline that includes, but is not limited to guidance for setting expectations for stakeholders, box labeling protocols, a timeline for orderly transition of student records, disposition of school funds and assets ( which may include auction, inventory or donation) and procedures for parent notification.
5. Compliance Department shall provide to the governing authority the ODE community school the current suspension and/or school closing procedures and other support materials, including the suspension and closing assurances template and sample parent letter, which includes a list of area schools and reference to the Ohio Department of Education website that can be used to locate other school options, local report card data, graduation information and Ohio's Learning Standards and Ohio State testing information.
  - a. Compliance Department shall provide technical assistance on the closure process for all stakeholders, including but not limited to school governing authority, school staff, management company and school treasurer.
  - b. The closure process includes:
    - i. Providing community school suspension and closing procedures to all stakeholders, including but not limited to: communication with parents, providing lists of area schools, web resources, scheduling of the final FTE audit with the Ohio Department of Education, student record disposition procedures, scheduling an audit with the Auditor of State, procedures for transitioning teachers and staff, developing a plan in the event teachers or staff leave prior to the end of school year, forming support networks, requirements for governing authority members; and
    - ii. Collecting closure status report documents; and
    - iii. Emails and other communication for follow-up on closing procedures; and
    - iv. Providing procedures for box labeling of school records and high school records; and
    - v. Guidance for disposition of assets, including prioritizing payments to vendors, inventorying assets, distribution plan, notification of auction (if applicable), donation of assets (if applicable) and ensuring STRS and SERS contributions are complete.
6. Compliance Department shall regularly review all elements of the ODE suspension and closing procedures and work closely with the Governing Authority, Operator/Management Company (if



applicable), school staff and school treasurer to ensure all required elements are being implemented. Reviews and requests for additional documents, as needed, will be conducted a minimum of two times per month throughout the closure process by the Compliance Department.

7. The Compliance Department shall provide guidelines to the school governing authority, school staff, management company (if applicable) and school treasurer regarding completion of the Ohio Department of Education suspension and closing assurances template (i.e. Quarterly Closing Assurances).
  - a. School staff and/or management company staff (if applicable) shall complete the appropriate sections of the suspension and closing assurances template.
  - b. School treasurer shall complete the appropriate sections of the suspension and closing assurances template.
  - c. After completion, the school governing authority should review the suspension and closing assurances template and authorize the governing authority president to sign the completed document.
  - d. The Compliance Department shall review and submit the completed suspension and closing assurances template via Epicenter on the schedule prescribed by ODE.
8. Compliance Department shall monitor the closure following the ODE suspension and closing procedures and ensure timely and thorough completion of all elements. Any deviation regarding the timeliness or completeness of any element in the process shall be reported to the President.
9. At the conclusion of the SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCESS, Compliance Department shall communicate with all stakeholders and provide all required documentation to ODE, the Ohio Auditor of State and other entities impacted by the closure of the school. The Compliance Department will establish a goal of completing all closure tasks and submit final documentation within 60 days of receipt of the final closing audit conducted by the Auditor of State.
10. The SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCESS shall promote:
  - a. The immediate priority of assisting students and their families in maintaining an effective educational environment, including the selection of new schools and the transfer of necessary student records;
  - b. Supporting school staff in the transition;
  - c. Securing school property;
  - d. All required reporting; and
  - e. Maintaining transparent communication with all stakeholders throughout the process.



## **DOCUMENTATION / VERIFICATION**

*Location of documentation:*

S:\Closed-Suspended-Reassigned Schools\Closed Schools\Closures FY\School Name

*Supporting documentation included with this process:*

1. ODE Community School Suspension and Closing Procedures.
2. Model letters and notifications
3. NACSA Accountability in Action: A Comprehensive Guide to School Closure
4. Document retention schedule
5. Training Materials
6. Sample Email Communication
7. Sample Parent Letter
8. CSS Internal Closure Procedures - Non Renewals
9. CSS Internal Closure Procedures - Voluntary Closure
10. Closure Responsibility Table

## **DOCUMENT HISTORY**

Orig. Date March 2015

Rev. October 2015

Rev. March 2017

Rev. October 2018

Rev. August 2019

## **REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Reviewer of the SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCESS is as follows:

Reviewed By: Management Team

Date: 08/30/2019

Approved By: President David L. Cash, Jr.

Date: 09/11/2019

The effective date is as of the date signed above. Processes are consistently reviewed and revised as necessary throughout the term. The SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCESS may be implemented as currently written and will be formally evaluated and revised as necessary going forward.