COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Community Involvement

Closing of School Buildings

I. Policy Statement

A. The Board of Education of Baltimore County (Board) is committed to providing quality educational opportunities for all Baltimore County Public Schools’ (BCPS) students. When student enrollment trends, age, or condition of a school building, financial constraints, or other factors diminish the quality of education offered, the Board may consider discontinuing the use of a school building in order to promote the efficient and effective use of school facilities and resources.

B. The Board values the community’s input in the decision to close a school building and encourages participation of the public before the final decision is made.

II. Process

A. The Superintendent shall be responsible for recommending the closing of a school building.

B. The recommendation shall, at minimum, ensure that consideration is given to the impact of the proposed closing on the following factors:
1. Student enrollment trends;
2. Age or condition of school buildings;
3. Transportation;
4. Educational programs;
5. Racial composition of student body;
6. Financial considerations;
7. Student relocation;
8. Impact on community in geographic attendance area for school proposed to be closed and school, or schools, to which students will be relocating.

C. Prior to making a final decision to close a school, the Board shall convene a public hearing to permit public testimony by interested citizens.

D. Notice of the public hearing shall be given to parents and guardians of
students who attend a school being considered for closure and to the school or schools to which students might be relocating. Notice of the public hearing will be made:

1. By written notice in at least two newspapers having general circulation in the affected area(s) of the county at least two (2) weeks in advance of the public hearing.

2. The notice of public hearing will include:
   a. The date, time, and location of the public hearing;
   b. Any applicable time limits for submission of written testimony or data; and
   c. The proposed date of the Board’s vote on the Superintendent’s recommendation.

E. The Board shall make its final decision regarding the proposed school closing following the public hearing. Such decision shall be in writing and include all appeal rights found in State regulation.

III. Implementation

The Board directs the Superintendent to implement this policy.

Legal References: Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §4-115(D), Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property; Construction, etc., of School Buildings
COMAR 13A.02.09, Closing of Schools

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 1280, Boundary Changes
Board of Education Policy 3620, Inventories
Board of Education Policy 3640, Disposal of Surplus or Excess Property
Board of Education Policy 7110, Determining Needs

Policy Adopted: 02/03/15