SCHOOL RECONFIGURATIONS

School districts find it necessary, from time to time, to make changes to their school organization. Examples of changes include opening or closing a school, changing the grade structure of a school or its name and closing a school building. The following laws and regulations apply to these changes and require the approval of the Department.

LAWS AND REGULATIONS FOR SCHOOL CLOSINGS

1. 22 Pa. Code § 349.28: Closing of school buildings to K-12 educational use
2. Article V, 24 PS § 5-524: Closing school or department; notice to, and suspending employees; other employment
3. Article VII, 24 PS § 7-780: Public hearing prior to closing school
4. Article XIII, 24 PS § 13-1311: Closing schools
5. 22 Pa. Code § 4.41(c): Scheduling [approval of the Department for changes]

LAWS AND REGULATIONS FOR ANY CONFIGURATION CHANGE

• 22 Pa. Code § 4.41(c): Scheduling [approval of the Department for changes]

EMAIL SUBMISSION REQUIRED

Once a district has followed the appropriate above laws and regulations for their specific needs, they then should submit the following required information to PDE for approval.

All submissions must be by electronic submission from the email of the superintendent, so please respond by email and email attachments. Board minutes may be sent in the format in which they are produced; however, the letter from the superintendent must be signed and converted to PDF to be sent via email attachment. Requests may be sent via email with Delivery and Read Receipts Requested. Please send email communications to ra-school-configs@pa.gov.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

1. The Superintendent's or Chief School Administrator's signed letter on letterhead stating the school district's intentions
   • Include the current and proposed configuration in the Superintendent's letter for each school affected by the change, whether by increasing or decreasing student population (see the following suggested table format)
   • Include the Superintendent's email address because the approval will be sent via email to the Superintendent
2. The School Board Minutes, plainly and clearly supporting the decision.

Send the letter and board minutes from the superintendent's email to the School Services Unit (ra-school-configs@pa.gov)
**SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR SCHOOL CONFIGURATION SUBMISSION**

If the change is to be a new school, PDE will supply the 4-digit school/branch code. This information is needed for every school that will be affected by the change, including changes in the student enrollment in any building due to the change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(info)</th>
<th>Original configuration</th>
<th>Proposed Configuration (where different)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School name</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-digit school/branch code</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>[provided by PDE]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student enrollment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School address</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School telephone number</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mailing address (if different)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective change date</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example format for Superintendent's letter

**IMPORTANT NOTES**

1. All changes must be submitted to and received by the Department by July 31 (or the last Friday before July 31, if July 31 falls on a weekend) to be effective for the coming school year. The Department will not authorize changes for the coming school year before June 14, regardless of the date sent.
2. The effective date of approved school organization changes will be July 1 of the new school year, regardless of the date received and processed.
3. Once configuration changes are approved, the Division of Data Quality will update EdNA v.2. You will not need to update EdNA v.2 for these particular changes.
4. The Division of Data Quality will contact the Superintendent when their work is complete and will supply the Superintendent with the branch codes for new schools or with changes to the school's four-digit branch code, where necessary.
5. This approval does not necessarily mean the AYP status will start "fresh."
6. Approved configuration changes do not imply approval for curtailments or furloughs. For this, please see the link [Alteration and Curtailment of Programs](#).
22 Pa. Code § 349.28
Closing of school buildings

(a) Notification. Any school district which closes a school building to educational use shall notify the Department prior to such closing. The notification shall include the reason or reasons for such closing and shall describe how the closing contributes to the orderly development of attendance areas.

(b) Approval. When Department approval is a prerequisite for the closing of a school building, such approval will be based upon its conformance to a long-range attendance area plan.

(c) Reimbursement. When a school district closes a school building upon which it is receiving school building reimbursement, the Department may—upon receipt of justification—authorize the continuation of reimbursement payments thereon. In the absence of such Department authorization, reimbursement shall cease following the amortization payment which next falls due. Should the building be reopened for use as a public school, reimbursement shall be reinstated for amortization payments which fall due following such reopening.

Article V, 24 PS § 5-524
Closing school or department; notice to, and suspending employees; other employment

The board of school directors of any school district, including merged or union districts, and any boards of school directors establishing any joint school or department, shall not close any school or department during the school term, unless such action shall advance the orderly development of attendance areas within an approved administrative unit and has been approved by the Department of Public Instruction. In the event a school board shall determine prior to the beginning of the next school term to close any school or department, sixty (60) days’ notice, in writing, prior to the closing of any school or department, shall be given to all temporary professional and professional employees affected thereby, unless such action shall advance the orderly development of attendance area within an approved administrative unit and has been approved by the Department of Public Instruction. Upon failure to give written notice of intention to close any school or department, the school district shall pay such employees their salaries until the end of the school year during which such schools or departments were closed.

Temporary professional or professional employees, whose positions are abolished as a result of the action of the board of school directors in closing a school or department, or reassigning pupils in its effort to consummate partially or wholly the orderly development of approved administrative and attendance areas, may not be suspended until the end of the school year if such action is taken during the school year or later than sixty (60) days prior to the opening of the next school term.

The payment of salary to any temporary professional or professional employee shall be discontinued immediately, if such employee obtains other employment which, in the judgment of the board of school directors, could not have been obtained or held if such school or department had not been closed: Provided, however, That if the salary in the new position is less than the salary the professional employee would have received had he remained in the employment of the school district, the school district shall be liable for the difference.
Article VII, 24 PS § 7-780
Public hearing prior to closing school

In the event of a permanent closing of a public school or substantially all of a school's facilities, the board of school directors shall hold a public hearing on the question not less than three months prior to the decision of the board relating to the closing of the school. Notice of the hearing shall be given in a newspaper of general circulation in the school district at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of such hearings.

Article XIII, 24 PS § 13-1311
Closing schools

The board of school directors of any school district may, on account of the small number of pupils in attendance, or the condition of the then existing school building, or for the purpose of better graduation and classification, or other reasons, close any one or more of the public schools in its district. Upon such school or schools being closed, the pupils who belong to the same shall be assigned to other schools, or upon cause shown, be permitted to attend schools in other districts.

Whenever the average term attendance of pupils regularly enrolled at any one-room school in any school district of the fourth class or in any district of the third class, which is located wholly within the boundary lines of a township, it ten (10), or less than ten (10), the board of school directors shall close such school. If the board of school directors does not deem it feasible to close such school, it may present its petition to the Department of Public Instruction, showing the reasons why such school should not be closed. Thereupon the department shall consider such petition, and shall make such order as may seem just in the premises. If any school has been closed because the average term attendance of pupils enrolled was ten (10), or less than ten (10), and has been reopened upon order of the department, and the average term attendance is twelve (12), or more, after such reopening, such school shall be considered re-established.

22 Pa. Code § 4.41(c)
Scheduling

(c) A school district shall obtain approval of the Department prior to establishing a new school or changing school organization.

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