



Summary of County and State Board of Education Roles in the School Closure Process

County Board of Education Role

The county board of education is the local decision-making body responsible for initiating, preparing, and conducting the closure or consolidation process. Its main duties include:

1. Preparation of Impact Statement and Data

- The county must prepare a comprehensive impact statement and supporting data detailing effects of a closure and/or consolidation on enrollment, facilities, finance, personnel, transportation, educational programs, and the community.
- This information must be submitted to the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) Office of School Facilities before public posting and being made available for public inspection for 30 days before the hearing.

2. Public Notice and Hearings

- The county must advertise the public hearing for three consecutive weeks prior to the hearing.
- Notices must also be posted at all affected schools and employee work areas.
- Separate public hearings are required for each school to be closed or consolidated and for each receiving school.
- At least a quorum of county board members and the county superintendent must attend.

3. County Board Deliberation and Vote

- After completing all notice, posting, and hearing requirements, the county board must take a formal vote to approve or deny the proposed closure or consolidation.
- All documentation — including proof of notice, hearing transcripts, and public comments — must be retained.

4. Submission to the West Virginia Board of Education

- Once the board votes to approve a closure, the county must submit a formal request for state approval to the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE).
 - The submission must include all required evidence, assurances of compliance with law and policy, and justification for the action.
 - If the closure was not included in the county's Comprehensive Education Facilities Plan (CEFP), a CEFP amendment must also be submitted.
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West Virginia Board of Education Role

The WVBE functions as the oversight and approval authority to ensure all statutory and procedural requirements are met before any closure becomes final. Its responsibilities include:

1. Rulemaking and Oversight

- The WVBE promulgates detailed rules (Policy 6204) specifying what data counties must include in closure documentation, how public hearings must be conducted, and how impact statements are structured.
- It ensures uniformity and procedural fairness across all counties.

2. Review and Approval of County Submissions

- The WVBE reviews the county's complete closure package — including the impact statement, supporting data, CEFP amendment (if applicable), and all public documentation — to verify compliance with W. Va. Code §18-5-13a and relevant policies.
- The WVBE may approve or deny the request based on whether the county met all procedural and substantive requirements.

3. Coordination with the WVDE and SBA

- The WVDE Office of School Facilities provides technical review and coordination.
 - If the closure is tied to a West Virginia School Building Authority (SBA) funding request, WVBE approval is required before the project can be considered for SBA funding.
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