

Considerations for School Districts from CDE: Before You Make a Decision to Close a School

Outdoor air quality is one factor local educational agencies (LEAs) need to consider when making a school closure decision. LEAs should consider the factors below, in addition to any other relevant local conditions or concerns, when deciding to close school.

Health and Safety:

- **Indoor air quality.** Ventilation and filtration systems at schools may offer a higher level of protection than residential systems.
- **Supervision.** The school environment provides appropriate student supervision by trained and caring adults who can ensure students remain indoors.
- **Student support services.** School may be the primary place where students receive needed health and counseling services.
- **Nutrition services.** Schools serve healthy meals to a significant proportion of students. If school is closed, it is a substantial challenge at best for LEAs to feed students.
- National School Lunch Program Meal Reimbursement During Disaster: Education Code 49505 allows for the LEAs to submit an application for meal reimbursement during a disaster. The disaster would require a state or federal declaration for the county affected by the disaster.

The application is available on the California Department of Education website at

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sn/documents/disastermealapp.doc>

Using an Equity Lens:

- Socioeconomically disadvantaged families may not have options for alternate child care.
- Working parents and guardians are disproportionately affected by school closure and could suffer significant professional or economic consequences as a result.
- Students receiving free or reduced-price meals may not have a reliable alternate source of healthy food.
- Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) may not have access to needed services during school closure.
- Schools provide safe and supportive environments for their students; our most vulnerable students rely on them most.

Instructional Time:

- Instructional time is foundational to students' academic achievement. LEAs should consider adding instructional days or minutes to the school calendar when time is lost due to school closure.
- LEAs that have a foreseeable loss of instructional time due to a history of school closures should consider adding "built-in emergency" days to the annual school calendar.
- Information on requesting credit for lost attendance and instructional time during an emergency is available on the California Department of Education's website at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/pa/j13a.asp>.

Guidance for Families When Schools are Closed:

- Stay indoors.
- Keep doors and windows closed.
- Consult a Physician if you have concerns about your child's health.