



Good afternoon.

During this unprecedented national health emergency, I know that school districts and charter schools face a myriad of issues and uncharted waters in terms of dealing with school governance and operations. I know that school board members continue to face heart-breaking decisions that impact the lives of students and their families.

As boards across the state work through challenging governance, leadership, and management issues I have been moved by the genuine concern of our members for the children who are impacted by these decisions.

Our schools are the hub of our communities and the epicenter of so many memorable events in the lives of our children. While the unfortunate reality is that there will likely be more disruptions ahead for our children I know that our school boards will continue to act in the best interests of the public school children in Idaho.

Know that ISBA will continue to serve our members throughout this time. Feel free to reach out to any of us by email or cell phone to let us know how we can assist you in the days and weeks ahead.

With that said, we have received many questions about closing schools, so we are providing the following information.

- *Section 33-512, Idaho Code states that, “The board of trustees of each school district shall have the following powers and duties”...*
- *ISBA’s Model Policy states: “The Superintendent may order the closure of schools in the event of extreme weather, facility failures, or other emergency in compliance with established procedures for notifying parents, students, and staff.”*

Our recommendations

1. First, check your local policy related to school closures. It may be different than ISBA's model policy.
2. We always recommend you meet as a Board to make this decision, however, that may not always be possible.
3. If your superintendent makes the decision to close school (pursuant to your policy), the Board should schedule a special meeting as soon as possible to ratify that decision.
4. Remember that the district/charter needs to notify the State Department of Education that your yearly calendar has changed. Send those notifications to Julie Oberle at:
jaoberle@sde.idaho.gov

I know that many of you are concerned about testing and waivers of mandatory instructional hours. The State Department of Education and the State Board of Education are currently monitoring that and will send information if/when they deem it necessary.

Please be well everyone, **Karen**