



## CLOSING SCHOOLS CHECKLIST

When schools are being closed and not being used for other school district operations, the option of leasing the property to others is not always possible. Many closed schools remain vacant and school boards are then concerned about how to preserve the value of the asset and reduce or eliminate their liability exposure. The following checklist of suggestions and recommendations will assist in the closing and securing of your property.

- Remove all non-fixed assets from the building;
- Maintain operational status of all safety and security systems;
- If possible, keep utilities on; if not prepare pipes and water sources for weather conditions;
- Turn off water supply and drain system, including sprinkler system, and reduce heat to a minimum. If heat is to be turned off the boiler system must be properly drained and laid up;
- Shut off non-essential electrical breakers and gas/propane systems;
- Secure all doors and windows to prevent unlawful entry into the building. This could include locking all openings and boarding up windows to prevent/minimize glass breakage, if appropriate;
- Repair breakage, graffiti, etc.
- Remove accumulations of all combustible materials, rubbish or hazardous materials;
- Are there fire safety code requirements for vacant buildings in your jurisdiction?
- Maintain exteriors of buildings and adjacent grounds;
- If the property is valuable, provide alarm or watch service, and a prompt, reliable means of communication for the service. Buildings of lesser value still should have periodic human surveillance, usually with supervision of water flow and alarms, if applicable;
- Investigate opportunities for COMMUNITY or MUNICIPAL support in monitoring buildings including soliciting the cooperation of local neighbors to report trespassers or suspicious activities and local police forces for additional patrols. Consider a School Watch Program by posting signs in conjunction with police and neighborhood support;
- Perform periodic checks of the facility including the protection and security systems and DOCUMENT the inspection.

Even after the building has been closed, the liability exposure remains in respect to grounds and play equipment. As such you should consider the following:

- If you are not able to have another entity take responsibility for the grounds and playground equipment and you are not able to maintain the equipment, all playground equipment, including goalposts should be removed;
- Signage should be posted confirming that trespassers will be reported to authorities.

Any damage or injuries should be reported to SPP by completing an On-Line Incident Report.

Contact a Risk Management Consultant at any time for risk management advice.

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