

The steps that the School District would need to follow if it chose to close a school pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-260(k.1):

1. Hold two hearings and allow for public discussion of the proposed closing.
 - a. Advertise hearings in legal organ:
 - i. Identify school to be closed and location of new or existing school where students will be reassigned;
 - ii. Identify proposed size of new school (number of students and grade configuration);
 - iii. Proposed expansion of existing schools to accommodate reassigned students;
 - iv. Total cost (broken down by state and local shares) for school construction; and
 - v. Plans for use or disposal of closed school property.
2. The Board of Education must request formal written comments or suggestions regarding the organization pattern or school sizes.
3. An individual of the community who is a qualified and registered voter and who resides in the School District can file a Notice of Intent to File a Petition; a petition expressing opposition to the decision of the Board of Education to close the listed school.
 - a. Must be filed within 30 days after second hearing;
 - b. Actual petition must be filed within 60 days of Notice of Intent received by Board of Education;
 - c. Within 10 days after receipt of the petition, the Board must provide Election Superintendent a copy of the petition;
 - d. The Election Superintendent must validate the signatures on the petition against the official list of qualified voters; and
 - e. If 25% of those signatures on the petition are registered and qualified voters (registered and qualified to vote at the last proceeding general or special election) then the petition has been "verified."
4. Within 15 days after the Election Superintendent verifies or qualifies the petition and the number of required signatures, the Board must notify any person who filed a Notice of Intent of the petitioner's right to select a delegation of those who signed the petition.
5. Within 20 days of receiving this notice, petitioners must determine a delegation of no more than 10 members of the petition, 6 of whom must be parents of students in the school to be closed.

6. The Chairman of the Board of Education shall notify the delegation of a day, time and place of a meeting to address the differences regarding the school closing. The Board of Education and the delegation have within 60 days from the date that the petition was validated by the Election Superintendent to try to negotiate a final decision.
7. If no such negotiation is agreed upon, the Election Superintendent must call and hold a special election at which time the voters shall determine whether the particular school is to be closed.
8. If more than one-half of the votes cast in the special election are against the closing of the school, then the school must remain open for the next four years.