

# Wayne County Board Of Education

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Todd Alexander  
Superintendent

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March 15, 2024

Michele L. Blatt, State Superintendent  
West Virginia Department of Education  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East  
Charleston, WV 25305



Dear Superintendent Blatt:


On March 25, 2021, in compliance with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 6204, the Wayne County Board of Education approved the closure of Buffalo Elementary and Buffalo Middle School. The closures were contingent upon approval of funding by the School Building Authority (SBA) for the completion of additions and renovations to the existing Buffalo Middle School, resulting in the creation of a Buffalo K-8 school. The West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) approved the closure of Buffalo Elementary and Buffalo Middle School on April 15, 2021.

The Wayne County Board of Education submitted the Project to the School Building Authority for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 and FY-2023 funding cycles. The Project was not approved in FY-2022, and the FY-2023 Needs funding cycle was cancelled by the School Building Authority.

According to West Virginia Code of State Rules 126-176-6 (6.2), a WVBE-approved closure that is contingent upon the awarding of capital improvement funds from the SBA has an expiration date of two years from the date of initial approval of the closure by the WVBE to be awarded funding. In cases where the two-year period elapses and the county has not been awarded SBA funding for the project, the WVBE closure approval becomes null-and-void and the school(s) shall remain in operation. Rule 6.4 further states that if a county wishes to close the applicable school(s) after the two-year expiration date, the county shall be required to complete the full closure process as outlined in this policy and to make all necessary data current for consideration.

As a result of the quoted rules, the Wayne County Board of Education formally requested an extension. In October 2022, the West Virginia Board of Education extended the expiration date of the approved closure from April 15, 2023, to December 31, 2023, allowing the Buffalo K-8 Project to be considered in the FY-2024 funding cycle. Unfortunately, the application to the School Building Authority for FY-2024 was unsuccessful.

Whereas the Governor has requested, and the Legislature of West Virginia has enacted a bill making a supplemental appropriation of money for the FY-2024 to the SBA's School Construction Fund, the Wayne County Board of Education respectfully requests an additional extension to the expiration date of the approved closure of Buffalo Elementary and Buffalo Middle until such time as the supplemental round of funding is appropriated.

Sincerely,  
  
Todd Alexander  
Superintendent

cc: Micah Whitlow, WVDE Director of School Facilities  
Wayne County Board of Education Members