

BARKER GUIDELINES

The Barker guidelines were laid down by the State Board of Education in the Case of Norman Barker, et al., 1 D.P.I. App. Dec. 145 (1977). These guidelines were reviewed and approved by the Iowa Supreme Court in Keeler v. Iowa Bd of Public Inst., 331 NW2d 110, 112 (Iowa 1983).

The guidelines deal with local board decisions involving the closing and/or restructuring of attendance centers.

They are:

1. A timeline should be established in advance for the carrying out of procedures involved in making an important decision. All aspects of such a timeline would naturally focus upon the anticipated date that the Board of Directors would make its final decision in the matter.
2. All segments of the community in the school district should be informed that a particular important decision is under consideration by the Board of Directors.
3. The public should be involved in providing sufficient input into the study and planning involved in important decision making.
4. Sufficient research, study and planning should be carried out by the board and groups and individuals selected by the board. Such things as student enrollment statistics, transportation costs, financial gains and losses, program offerings, plant facilities, and staff assignment need to be considered.
5. There should be an open and frank public discussion of the facts and issues involved.
6. A proper record should be made of all the steps taken in the making of the decision.
7. The final decision must be made in an open, public meeting and a record be made thereof.