

Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual

Title: CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOLS

Section: 301.1

Board Report: 05-1221-PO1

Date Adopted: December 21, 2005

Policy:

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

Rescind Board Report 68-872 "Combination of Schools" and adopt a new Policy on the Consolidation of Schools.

POLICY TEXT:

When considering the matter of consolidation of schools, the Board intends to provide students high quality academic opportunities in a supportive educational environment and to make decisions regarding the utilization of school facilities that provide for the effective and efficient allocation of the Board's limited financial resources. In accordance with existing Board actions and consent decrees, and to the maximum extent consistent with financial constraints, the Board will avoid consolidation of schools if it will have a negative impact on the desegregation or integration of any school.

I. CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOLS

The Board may decide to consolidate two or more schools by: (1) closing one or more schools and reassigning the students to another school within close proximity, or (2) relocating the students of one school(s) to another school building within close proximity without closing or restructuring either school.

II. CONSIDERATIONS FOR CONSOLIDATION

The Board will consider the following factors in any decision to consolidate a school.

1. Space Utilization Level. The Board will consider whether the space available at a school or schools in close proximity to one another is being used in an efficient, cost-effective manner.
2. Physical Condition of the Facility. The Board will review the condition of the facility, including:
 - a. the actual physical condition of the school facility, including the cost to repair any safety hazards and make structural changes necessary to ensure compliance with all city, state and federal laws;
 - b. the extent to which the physical condition of the facility makes continued operation cost-prohibitive;
 - c. whether the continued occupancy of the facility is unsafe or impractical.
3. Potential Alternative Use of School Facility or Site. The Board will consider whether it would be beneficial to use sites designated for consolidation for other programmatic or educational purposes, to open a new school, to expand an existing school or to use the site for other purposes that are consistent with the goals of the Board.
4. Availability of Space for Consolidation. The Board will consider whether another school is located within close proximity that has available space, as measured by design capacity. The identification of a school within close proximity includes a review of any natural barriers, safety hazards and the neighborhood conditions.

III. PROCESS FOR CONSOLIDATION

- A. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may recommend the consolidation of schools to the Board based upon the considerations in Section II. If the CEO proposes to recommend the consolidation of schools, he or she shall provide advance notice to the public of his or her recommendation and shall convene a hearing to elicit public comment regarding the proposed action. The CEO shall be responsible to oversee the orderly consolidation of schools for any consolidation that the Board approves.

- B. To the extent that any consolidation recommended by the CEO requires the closure of a school, in lieu of the procedures set forth above in Section III.A., the CEO shall follow the procedures set forth in the Board's Closing of Schools Policy No. 04-0225-PO2 as may be amended, and any guidelines promulgated by the CEO to implement the policy.

IV. REASSIGNMENT OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Regularly certified and appointed teachers at closed schools whose entire student population is reassigned to one school will all be reappointed to the receiving school consistent with CPS staffing formulas. If the Board decides to consolidate a school through the closure of one or more schools, the Chief Executive Officer shall retain the discretion to retain, reassign or terminate the principal and administrative staff pursuant to Board policy, the Illinois School Code and any applicable agreements.

V. CONSOLIDATIONS RESULTING IN A SHARED FACILITY

If the consolidation of one or more schools results in the sharing of a CPS facility by two separate schools, the schools shall comply with the Board's Shared Facilities Policy No. 01-0126-PO1, as may be amended.

VI. LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCILS AT CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

The Local School Councils of schools closed through consolidation shall be dissolved when the school closes. If either one or more of the Local School Councils in schools approved for consolidation are dissolved, an election may be conducted in a timely manner to establish a new Local School Council that serves the consolidated school, pursuant to section 34-2.1 of the Illinois School Code.

Amends/Rescinds: Rescinds 68-872

Cross References:

Legal References: 105 ILCS 5/34-2.1; Modified Consent Decree entered by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois on March 18, 2004 in the case U.S. vs. Chicago Board of Education No. 80 C 5124