

New ConstructionEvaluation of Existing BuildingsSchool Closing/Consolidation Policy

Whereas, when school enrollment in a specific area of the city has been projected to decline, and

Whereas, the technical literature does not establish by empirical evidence a clear relationship between school size and educational quality, and

Whereas, the efforts to compensate for declining size of school enrollment while maintaining staffing and services essential to a quality education may result in higher operating costs in schools that may be in some cases several hundred dollars per pupil above the citywide average, and

Whereas, the continuation of school differentials when there may be remedies could constitute both a wasteful and inequitable allocation of resources, and

Whereas, the School Board is seeking to provide the best possible education for each pupil and, at the same time, to operate the public schools as economically as possible, and

Whereas, there are many options for reducing the higher costs that occur in some schools including: realignment of boundaries, satelliting one school to another, use of austere personnel practices, other Providence School Department use of available space and sharing facilities and operating costs with other city agencies, closing larger schools to increase the population of smaller ones, and

Whereas, the consideration of any school for possible consolidation or operational change is a matter on which the community and the parents in the school must be kept fully informed and must be given an opportunity to be involved in the decision making process, now therefore be it

Resolved, that the School Board is committed to maintain the quality of education in each school while not permitting substantial inequities in the allocation of resources arising from variations in school size, and be it further

Resolved, that the School Board and the Superintendent, in consultation with the community, will consider the following factors in assessing the future of the school:

- actual and projected enrollment
- long-range need for school facilities in the area
- availability of space in and condition of neighboring schools
- transportation requirements and routes
- socio-economic and racial balance
- operating costs
- modernization needed
- educational program
- staffing
- role of the school in the community
- articulation with secondary schools
- alternative educational and community uses
- budgetary allocations

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Be it Resolved, that the Superintendent shall recommend to the School Board from time to time as he/she deems necessary schools that are appropriate for closing because of low student enrollments, high operational costs or such buildings that are in need of such extensive renovations that the school department cannot reasonably respond.

Be it Resolved, that upon recommendations by the Superintendent, the School Board shall schedule a hearing on recommended school closings.

Be it Resolved, that the School Board will place on notice, communities effected by proposed school closings and offer them an opportunity to speak at such hearings.

Be it Resolved, that within a thirty (30) calendar day period, following the scheduled hearing, the School Board shall issue a formal response on the proposed closing.

Be it Resolved, that following the decision to close a school the Superintendent shall involve parents and interested community members in discussions to insure the orderly transition of students to other schools.

Policy Adopted: October 28, 1971, Resolution #71
Policy Amended: August 28, 1975, Resolution #821
Policy Amended: November 20, 1975, Resolution #861
Policy Amended: February 12, 1981, Resolution #1086
Policy Reviewed: March 11, 1991

Providence Public Schools
Providence, Rhode Island