

## Local Strategies for Supporting Community-Centered Schools

1. Remove Minimum Acreage Requirements
2. Remove Minimum School Size Requirements
3. Remove Bias for New Construction
4. Address Community Concerns about Reusing Older Buildings
5. Require Full Cost Analysis for New Construction
6. Promote Coordinated Planning Among Agencies
7. Authorize Sharing of Facilities
8. Fund Regular Maintenance and Repair
9. Evaluate State Support of Student Transportation
10. Review School Closing and Consolidation Options

## Policy Recommendations for Encouraging Community-Centered Schools

- I. **School Size (site size and enrollment)** - Minimum acreage standards and school enrollment requirements make it difficult to fit schools within biking and walking distance to students.
  1. Eliminate minimum acreage standards in district policy.
  2. Develop a community based vision for schools considering programmatic needs, enrollment size, community needs, sharing uses and facilities, and alternatives that allow more students to walk or bike to school.
  3. Use a community based decision-making process about specific school location based on the adopted vision
- II. **Encourage School Renovation** - Level the playing field with new construction.
  1. Eliminate "percentage rules" that discourage renovation if it costs, for example, two-thirds of the expense of new construction.
  2. Prioritize spending for repair/renovation projects over new construction, maintaining current facilities in good repair to reduce renovation costs
  3. Develop a plan to adapt current sites to new needs first, before considering a new site
- III. **Conduct a Full Cost Accounting of School Site Decisions**
  1. Compare costs of renovation and reuse with new construction options
  2. Include the cost of extending infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, and sewers
- IV. **Coordinate Planning** - Include schools as part of coordinated, sustainable land use planning.
  1. Include school district personnel in regular local/regional planning meetings and trainings.
  2. Include long-term plans for school facilities into local comprehensive plans making sure they meet community visions and goals, require any changes to meet sustainable land-use goals.
  3. Encourage mixed use and compact residential development to reduce distance to school.
  4. Require that new residential developments provide connectivity and safe routes to schools.
- V. **Share Facilities** – Maximize opportunities to share facilities and costs.
  1. Authorize sharing or joint use of facilities by schools, municipalities and nonprofits.
  2. Develop guidance regarding liability, fee structures, insurance, security concerns, and dividing construction and operation costs.
  3. Examine opportunities for sharing in long range plans and encourage them with comprehensive plan policies.
  4. Explore opportunities for shared facilities in every renovation, reuse, or new site decision.
- VI. **Minimize transportation/health related costs** – Encourage walking biking and in lieu of state supported busing.
  1. Conduct a transportation cost-benefit analysis when making site decisions.
  2. Assess different school locations for their potential health effects using health impact assessments.
  3. Prepare and a walkability and bikeability analysis of proposed school sites.
  4. Evaluate each site for to determine full cost of student transportation, and indirect costs such as number of vehicle miles traveled by staff, students and parents and impacts on air quality.