

COOPERATIVE HIGH SCHOOL

A cooperative high school is one type of school district reorganization. Other types of reorganizations are:

- ⇒ Consolidation
- ⇒ Deactivation
- ⇒ Detachment-Annexation
- ⇒ Dissolution-Annexation
- ⇒ Partial Elementary Unit
- ⇒ School District Conversion

Details for the above can be found in the individual brochures labeled accordingly. A brief summary of each is in the [*School District Reorganization at a Glance*](#) brochure.

A cooperative high school can be beneficial to the districts involved because it can create increased opportunities for students without changing district boundaries. A student's education may be expanded to include class offerings that otherwise would not be available.

A cooperative high school is the establishment of a high school jointly operated by two or more unit or high school districts, each with enrollments of fewer than 600 students in Grades 9 through 12, while retaining the individual districts.

A district with 600 or more students enrolled in Grades 9 through 12 may qualify to be included with one or more districts that have fewer than 600 students by receiving a size waiver from the Illinois State Board of Education. A waiver may be granted based on a finding that such an inclusion would significantly increase the educational opportunities for the district's students.

STEPS TO A COOPERATIVE HIGH SCHOOL

- ⇒ Board resolution and notice by all school boards interested in forming a cooperative high school.
- ⇒ Successful referendum in each district.
- ⇒ Cooperative agreement and governing board formed.

BOARD RESOLUTION AND NOTICE

- ⇒ School boards of each district interested in forming a cooperative high school must, by proper resolution, submit a proposition to the voters in a regularly scheduled election.
- ⇒ Notice shall be published at least 10 days prior to the election in one or more newspapers published in each district.
- ⇒ If there is no newspaper published in the district, the notice should be published in one or more newspapers with a general circulation within the district.

REFERENDUM

- ⇒ The proposition must pass by a majority of those voting in each district.

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT AND GOVERNING BOARD

- ⇒ The agreement for a cooperative high school shall be for a minimum of 20 years.
- ⇒ The agreement may be modified, extended, or terminated by approval of each of the participating districts.
- ⇒ A school district may withdraw from the agreement during its initial 20-year term only if the district is reorganizing with one or more districts.
- ⇒ The agreement for a cooperative high school shall include, but not be limited to, provisions for:
 - Administration
 - Staff

- Programs
- Financing
- Facilities
- Transportation

- ⇒ A board shall govern the operation of the cooperative high school. The governing board shall be composed of an equal number of school board members from each of the participating districts, unless all participating district boards agree to apportion the membership of the governing board to reflect the number of students in each district who attend the cooperative high school.

- The governing board shall be composed of six to 10 members and shall be set by the agreement.
- The school board of each participating district shall select, from its membership, its representatives for the governing board.
- The governing board shall prepare and adopt a budget for the cooperative high school.
- The governing board shall operate in accordance with the agreement and shall have the power to hire, supervise, and terminate staff; to enter into contracts; to adopt policies for the cooperative high school; and to take all other actions necessary and proper for the operation of the school.
- The governing board may NOT levy taxes or incur any indebtedness.

- ⇒ Each participating district shall pay its own per capita tuition cost for the maintenance and operation of the cooperative high school; the manner of determining the per capita cost shall be set forth in the agreement.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Q.** Once a cooperative high school is in existence, can other school districts participate?
- A.** Yes. Additional school districts can be added if they have an enrollment in Grades 9 through 12 of fewer than 600 students or a size waiver has been granted to the district by ISBE. However, the resolution and referendum procedures must be followed in the same manner as the original formation, and a new contract must be executed.
- Q.** Are there any state financial incentives associated with a cooperative high school?
- A.** Yes. A cooperative high school is eligible for two of the four reorganization incentives, specifically, the Teacher Salary Difference and the \$4,000 per Full-Time Certified Staff incentives. Both incentive calculations are based on the specific teachers employed by the cooperative high school.
- Q.** Will the state build a new facility for the cooperative high school?
- A.** No. However, if a new facility is desired, the standard construction provisions apply. As an example, an individual district in the cooperative high school could sell bonds to build a new building and charge the other districts through its per capita tuition charge, per the directive of the governing board. Additionally, cooperative high schools are eligible to apply for School Construction Grants.
- Q.** Who determines the amount of the tuition?
- A.** The manner of determining the per capita tuition cost is set forth in the agreement. Each participating district may actually have a different tuition payment as a result of

applying the determined formula to each respective district.

- Q.** After the initial 20-year period, can the cooperative agreement be renewed for a period of less than 20 years?
- A.** Yes. After the initial 20-year period, the agreement can be renewed by approval of each of the participating districts for any period of time.
- Q.** How are the teachers and educational support personnel hired for the cooperative high school?
- A.** The school board of each participating district shall coordinate with each other and the governing board as to the staffing needs for the cooperative high school and transfer staff as provided in Section 10-22.22c of the School Code.

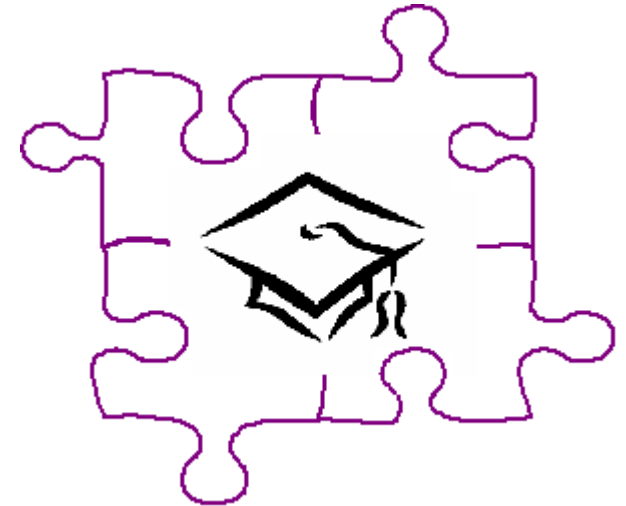
This brochure is not to be used in place of the School Code but as an informational tool. For specific information regarding cooperative high schools, please refer to Article 10, Section 22.22c of the School Code.

For additional information and assistance, please contact the School Business Services Department of the Illinois State Board of Education at 217-785-8779. Information is also available on the [ISBE School District Reorganization webpage](#).

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Cooperative High School

At a Glance



Illinois State Board of Education

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