

## 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 brochure [\*School District Reorganization At a Glance\*](#).

A cooperative high school could be beneficial to the districts involved as a result of increased opportunities for students without changing district boundaries. A student's education may be expanded to include class offerings otherwise not available.

A cooperative high school is the establishment of a jointly operated high school 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 less than 600 students by receiving a size waiver from the State Board of Education. A waiver may be granted based on a finding that such an inclusion would significantly increase the educational opportunities of the district's students.

## STEPS TO A COOPERATIVE HIGH SCHOOL:

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

### BOARD RESOLUTION AND NOTICE:

- ⇒ Boards of each district interested in forming a cooperative high school must, by proper resolution, submit a proposition to the voters at a regularly scheduled election
- ⇒ Notice shall be published at least ten days prior to the election in one or more newspapers published in the 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 twenty 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 twenty-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 governing board, which shall govern the operation of the cooperative high school, shall be composed of an equal number of board members from each of the participating districts, unless all participating district boards agree to base the membership of the governing board on the number of students in each district who attend the cooperative high school
  - The membership of the board shall be not less than six nor more than ten and must be stated in 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 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 less than 600 students or a size waiver has been granted to the district; 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.

**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 as a result of applying the determined formula to each respective district.

**Q. After the initial twenty-year period, can the cooperative agreement be renewed for a period of less than twenty years?**

A. Yes. The agreement can be renewed by approval of each of the participating districts for any period of time after the initial twenty-year period.

**Q. How are the teachers and educational support personnel hired for the cooperative high school?**

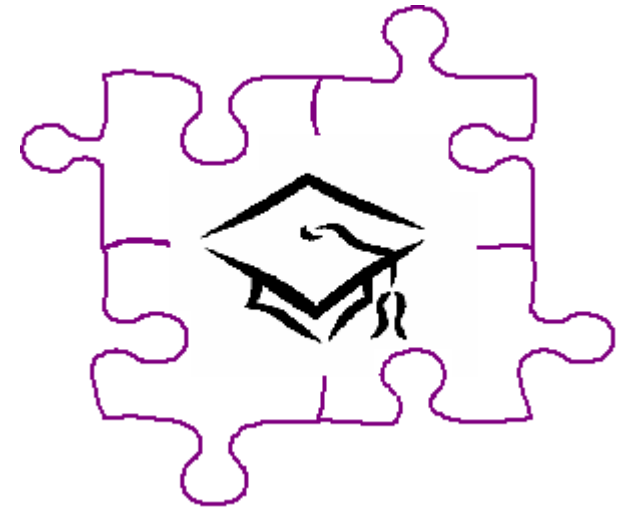
A. The school board of each participating district shall coordinate with each other and the governing board as to the staffing needs for the cooperative high school and transfer staff as provided in Section 10-22.22c of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-22.22c).

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, 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 web page at: <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/School-District-Reorganization.aspx>**

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# **Cooperative High School At a Glance**



**Illinois State Board of Education**

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