

Construction

Concepts and Roles in Planning for Educational Facilities

Construction

This policy governs major renovation and construction projects which are determined through budgetary process. Projects which are implemented by the local legislative body and are not maintenance oriented are governed by this policy. For Cap and Non projects see Policy- 7110. Regular maintenance and repair are part of ongoing operations and are not governed by this policy.

Concepts and Roles in Planning for Educational Facilities

It shall be the policy of the Board of Education to plan for educational facilities. The Board shall maintain an instrument for determining the need for new facilities or for major facility improvements. The instrument shall be reviewed at least biannually. The instrument may incorporate local demographics, community use of educational facilities, projected enrollments, local educational philosophies and policies, existing and planned educational programs, existing facilities, and the ability of the local electorate to provide needed facilities.

The policy reflects the responsibility of the Board of Education to plan for education facilities and the local legislative body's responsibility to raise funding for and to construct needed educational facilities. This policy governs major renovation and construction projects. The definition of a major renovation or construction project is determined through budgetary process. Projects which are implemented by the local legislative body and are not maintenance oriented are governed by this policy.

A. Goals and Objectives

- (1) Identify an educational need for a new facility or renovation to an existing facility.
- (2) Plan for a new facility or renovation to an existing facility.
- (3) Gain public approval for the construction or renovation of a facility.
- (4) Construct or renovate a facility in cooperation with the Town's Permanent Building Committee.

B. Assumptions

This policy assumes all educational programs will be housed in spaces that comply with all applicable building codes and regulations. Further, this policy assumes that spaces provided to educational programs shall not hinder the attainment of educational goals and objectives and that the goal of the Board of Education is to provide facilities with the best possible conditions for attaining educational goals.

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C. Community

- (1) It is recognized that public educational facilities are constructed primarily for public educational activities, but are owned by the public and will be made available for public use wherever that use does not adversely effect educational activities. The design of educational facilities shall take into consideration public use and make accommodations for that use wherever practical and consistent with building use practices. Some of the community uses which shall be considered include recreation, use of facilities for emergency shelters and by non-profit organizations.
- (2) Community demographic information will be considered. Information to be considered shall include road maps with existing and planned sidewalks, maps and descriptions of existing and planned industrial and housing changes, population statistics and local and regional planning studies past, present, and future.

D. Enrollment

The projection of student enrollment is an essential element in educational facility planning. However, any projection is based upon assumptions and subject to inherent weaknesses. Projections will be considered the best estimate at a given point in time. Therefore, enrollment projections shall be updated annually or when new data becomes available or when assumptions change or prove untrue.

- (1) The methods that may be used to predict enrollment include cohort survival, students per dwelling unit and/or percentage of total population.
- (2) Some of the statistics concerning enrollment which will be maintained include the past 5 (five) year enrollment, 8 (eight) year predictions, and enrollment summaries by school for past year, present year, and next year. Other statistics will include non-public school enrollment by grade level and students with identified learning disabilities by district and by grade for each school. Existing school districting maps and plans to redistrict will be included.

E. Educational Philosophies and Policies

To the extent that educational philosophies and policies affect facilities, they will be considered in the development of the educational facility plans.

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F. Educational Programs

Educational facilities must be based on the activity to be housed. Facilities that do not conform fully hinder fulfillment of the goals and objectives of the programs housed as well as the philosophy and objective of the curriculum.

G. Facilities

Planning for educational facilities will take into consideration the capacity of existing facilities and systems and their adequacy to house existing educational programs and the physical condition of the facilities.

(1) The instrument will consider individual building inventories consisting of construction dates, renovation dates, floor plans, legal capacity by space, type of construction, listing of educational spaces and handicap access information. Such information will also be shared with the Town's Permanent Building Committee.

(2) Retirement of Buildings

A building operated by the school district may be retired from use when the Board of Education determines that it is no longer useful to the district and/or is unsuitable to the current needs or projected needs of the district. Recognizing that the closure of a facility may well be an emotional one, the Board of Education will appoint a committee representing a cross-section of opinion in the school district and the community as well as representing the people in the area served by the facility to study the issue and to recommend alternatives for the Board to consider, including retirement, alternative use, remodeling, continuation in use, or any other recommendations the committee might choose to make.

When a building is retired and determined to no longer serve an educational purpose it shall be returned to the Town and shall no longer be operated or maintained by the Board of Education.

(3) Naming of Facility

It shall be the prerogative of the Board of Education to establish the need and appropriateness for naming any school unit, which includes all outdoor and indoor facilities of the school. When the need has been determined, guidelines will be established by the Board of Education and input will be sought from members of the community.

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H. Finance

The Town has the responsibility of funding the construction of educational facilities. The Board of Education recognizes the need to plan new facilities, in cooperation with the Town's Permanent Building Committee, within the Town's ability to pay. Therefore, liaison shall be established with the Town when a particular need is determined for new facilities or for improvement to existing facilities. After a project has been identified an estimate of the cost will be developed and given to the Town for consideration and inclusion in the Town's long-range Capital Improvement Plan.

All possible sources of funds that will help defray direct costs to the local taxpayers including, but not limited to, State Department of Administration Services grants and Federal grants will be investigated. Funding options shall be discussed with the Board of Finance as early as possible following identification for the need of a construction project.

I. Conclusions

A list of facility inadequacy and/or future needs shall be developed and presented to the Board of Education for their consideration.

Legal Reference: New Fairfield Code of Ordinances, Division 8, Building Committee

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NEW FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Fairfield, Connecticut