



McLean County Unit District No. 5

1809 West Hovey Avenue • Normal, Illinois 61761-4339

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Kristen Weikle, Superintendent

DATE: April 15, 2026

RE: Enrollment Planning Recommendation

The Internal Planning Committee believes this recommendation prioritizes the current student experience by optimizing building utilization and modernizing specialized programming facilities. The recommendation provides critical enrollment relief to buildings at or near capacity while ensuring fiscal responsibility through the use of the County Schools Facility Tax (CSFT) revenue without increasing property taxes.

Early Learning & Special Programs

- **Early Learning Center (ELC):** Close Brigham and construct a new, customized ELC to serve PreK students from both Brigham and Sugar Creek.
- **18–22 Transitional Program:** Relocate this program from Eugene Field to a new or renovated facility designed for accessibility and special programming.
- **Specialized Services (SS):** Relocate some SS classrooms to schools with available space and no/minimal existing special programming in order to improve districtwide balance and utilization.

Boundary and Enrollment Adjustments

- **Elementary:** Implements boundary changes for Benjamin, Cedar Ridge, Parkside, and Sugar Creek.
 - **Benjamin:** Neighborhoods north of Empire move to Sugar Creek; areas west of Hershey move to Hoose. This alleviates overcapacity at Benjamin.
 - **Cedar Ridge:** Western portions (west of Morris Ave/west of N 1375 Est Rd) and Tracy Drive move to Pepper Ridge. This alleviates overcapacity at Cedar Ridge and eliminates portable classrooms.
 - **Parkside:** Northbrook/Golfcrest neighborhood moves to Glenn. This adjustment, along with enrollment changes, alleviates overcapacity at Parkside and eliminates portable classrooms.
 - **Sugar Creek:** Becomes a K-5 school; northeastern corner moves to Grove.
 - **Towanda:** A small addition to accommodate current Towanda students and to eliminate portable classrooms.
- **Secondary:**
 - **Junior High:**
 - Pepper Ridge students reassigned to Parkside Junior High (PJHS) to relieve Evans Junior High (EJHS). This alleviates overcapacity at EJHS. An addition is recommended for PJHS.
 - Northbrook/Golfcrest students (Parkside E to Glenn) will attend Kingsley Junior High (KJHS) instead of PJHS.

- Students moving from Sugar Creek to Grove will not attend Chiddix Junior High (CJHS).
 - Benjamin students moving to Sugar Creek will still attend Evans Junior High.
- **High School:** Neighborhoods east of Linden, north of Pine, and west of Henry move from Normal Community (NCHS) to Normal West (NCWHS) to balance enrollment.

Implementation Timeline

- **2027-28**
 - Benjamin to Hoose
 - Cedar Ridge to Pepper Ridge
 - Northbrook/Golfcrest to Glenn and KJHS
 - Sugar Creek to Grove and CJHS
 - Small addition to Towanda
 - NCHS to NCWHS
 - SS classroom distribution
- **2028-29:**
 - Pepper Ridge students to PJHS
 - SS classroom distribution
- **2029-30**
 - New Early Learning Center opens (Brigham sold)
 - Benjamin to Sugar
 - 18-22 transitional program opens (Eugene Field sold). If a building is purchased and renovated then this may happen sooner.
 - SS classroom distribution

Financial Overview

The total estimated cost for construction and renovation ranges from \$32.3M to \$45.3M.

- New Early Learning Center: \$20M-\$30M
- 18-22 Facility: \$3.5M-\$6.5M
- Towanda Addition: \$4.4M
- Parkside JH Addition: \$4.4M

*The district will utilize CSFT revenue to finance building bonds. This will ensure no increase in property taxes.

- Board Action: Approval of this plan authorizes District Administration to engage an architect for site evaluation and stakeholder design feedback. Final land/building purchases, designs, and construction costs will require separate and subsequent Board approval.

Student Impact and Logistics

- **Impacted Students:** A total of 611 K-12 students are impacted by these changes:
 - K-5: 287 students
 - 6-8: 200 students
 - 9-12: 124 students
 - Early Learning: Current enrollment is approximately 543 students (enrollment available for up to 640). Actual enrollment fluctuates as children turn three and become eligible throughout the year
 - Eugene Field: Current enrollment is approximately 50 students, with an additional 100 students serviced for VTAP. This fluctuates annually based on IEPs.
- **Options for Families**
 - Enrolled students may remain at their current school through their final grade (5th, 8th, or 12th). Younger siblings are eligible to attend the same school if there is no gap in family enrollment. Families must provide their own transportation once the boundary

- change is implemented (if they remain at a school the student is no longer assigned to).
- Students who wish to begin at their new assigned school sooner than the implementation date may do so through the boundary attendance exception process. Families will provide their own transportation until the boundary change is implemented.
- This [chart](#) outlines the options for families impacted by boundary changes.

Long-Term Facility Strategy

The Internal Planning Committee recommends that district administrators work with architects and the Board to come up with a checklist or district criteria to determine if buildings have an end of life and/or are no longer financially sustainable.