

Too many districts: Illinois school district consolidation provides path to increased efficiency, lower taxpayer burdens

SPRING 2016

By Ted Dabrowski, Vice President of Policy, and John Klingner, Policy Analyst

Illinois has the most units of local government of any state in the country. Many of its nearly 7,000 units of local government are overlapping, duplicative and contribute to Illinois' growing debt, waste and corruption. These local units of government are also responsible for Illinois' growing property taxes, which already rank as the third-highest in the country. Many of the state's local governments could be consolidated – which would help to reduce their negative effects.

Among the key candidates for consolidation are the state's 859 local school districts, which consume nearly two-thirds of the \$27 billion in local property taxes that local governments across Illinois collect each year. Illinois has the fifth-largest number of school districts in the nation.

Nearly 25 percent of Illinois school districts serve just one school, and over one-third of all school districts have fewer than 600 students. An additional layer of administration for these districts is inefficient.

More than a third of Illinois school districts serve fewer than 600 students

Illinois school districts by student enrollment, 2014 - 2015

Number of students enrolled	Number of districts	Percent of total
10,000 or more	23	3%
2,500 to 9,999	155	18%
600 to 2,499	387	45%
599 or less	294	34%
Total	859	100%

Source: Illinois State Board of Education, "Annual Report 2015"

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On average, Illinois school districts serve just 2,399 students per district, the fifth-lowest among states with school populations over 1 million. Conversely, California school districts average 6,067 students. If Illinois school districts served the same number of students as California, Illinois would have 500 fewer school districts than it has today.

By cutting the number of school districts in half, Illinois could experience district operating savings of nearly \$130 million to \$170 million annually and could conservatively save the state \$3 billion to \$4 billion in pension costs over the next 30 years.

A majority of those savings would be realized by a reduction in district staff. Not only do taxpayers fund the principals, administrators, teachers and buildings at the school level, but they also pay for an additional – and often duplicative – layer of administration at the school district level.

The cost of administrative staffs at school districts adds up quickly. Nearly all districts have superintendents and secretaries, as well as additional personnel in human resources, special education, facilities management, business management and technology. Many districts retain at least one assistant superintendent as well.

Administrative salaries in school districts end up consuming a significant portion of public funding. More than three-quarters of Illinois' superintendents have six-figure salaries, and many also get additional benefits in car and housing allowances, as well as bonuses. In addition, their high salaries lead to pension benefits of \$2 million to \$6 million each over the course of their retirements.

Top administrators in Illinois can expect to receive millions in benefits over the course of their retirements

Current pension and estimated total pension payout of 10 highest-paid school district pensioners in Illinois

Name	Last employer	Final average salary	Current annual pension	Estimated total pension payout*
Wyllie, Lawrence	New Lenox, Lincoln-Way CHSD 210	\$261,707	\$302,991	\$3,699,648
Bangser, Henry	Northfield, New Trier TWP HSD 203	\$307,375	\$294,524	\$7,503,861
Catalani, Gary	Wheaton, Community Unit SD 200	\$316,260	\$293,214	\$7,722,901
Murray, Laura	Flossmoor, Homewood-Flossmoor CHSD 233	\$318,509	\$288,472	\$8,618,414
Curley, Mary	Burr Ridge, Hinsdale CCSD 181	\$302,194	\$280,172	\$8,690,644
Gmitro, Henry	Bloomington, Community CSD 93	\$313,070	\$273,573	\$7,434,857
Hager, Maureen	Highland Park, North Shore SD 112	\$308,937	\$271,653	\$8,269,057
May, Loren	Glendale Heights, Marquardt SD 15	\$357,117	\$267,838	\$5,118,688
Hintz, James	Lincolnshire, Adlai Stevenson HSD 125	\$275,256	\$264,280	\$6,761,829
Lamberson, Jonathan E.	Riverside, Riverside SD 96	\$350,022	\$262,516	\$7,591,835

Source: Retiree data obtained from Teachers' Retirement System pursuant to a 2015 FOIA request, Social Security Administration actuarial data
 * "Estimated total pension payout" is based on approximate life expectancies and retirees' ages as of 2015.

For an example of districts where consolidation makes sense, consider New Trier Township High School District 203 and its six elementary feeder districts. Combining these seven districts into one would eliminate many of the 136 administrators directly employed at the seven district offices, saving local taxpayers over \$12 million a year in salaries alone, or over \$1,000 per student.

Another example is Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District 233 and its two elementary feeder districts. Consolidation would cut down on the three districts' 68 office administrators, saving local taxpayers over \$5 million a year in salary costs, or over \$750 per student.

Those savings don't include the massive reduction in pension costs that would also occur through consolidation.

The consolidation solution

This report does not encourage school consolidation – the decision to consolidate schools should remain in the hands of local taxpayers. But these same local taxpayers shouldn't be on the hook for multiple layers of government – in the form of school districts – that duplicate services, waste tax dollars, increase government debt, and decrease transparency.

Given the challenges facing consolidation efforts, district consolidation will only happen when the state partners with local districts to discuss concerns and craft a solution.

That partnership should come in the form of a district consolidation commission, which would work with local governments to create consolidation and reorganization guidelines, select candidate districts, and establish a process for implementation. The commission would also support the creation of legislation that would mandate its proposed recommendations through an up or down vote, meaning no amendments would be permitted, in the General Assembly.

However, the commission should also be relatively narrow in its scope of recommendations. School district consolidation should focus on reining in the duplicative costs of district administration only – not on equalizing salary contracts or funding new facilities. The state should not provide any incentives for those items, nor should it mandate any school consolidations. And to prevent local property taxes from rising, the commission should develop policies on limiting the merger of local bargaining units in newly combined districts.

If considered carefully and implemented properly, school district consolidation could provide serious financial benefits to both local taxpayers and the state, have a positive effect on student outcomes, and increase government transparency at the local level.

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Introduction

Illinois has the most units of local government of any state in the country. Many of its nearly 7,000 units of local government are overlapping, duplicative and contribute to Illinois' growing debt, waste and corruption.¹

And the more government bodies Illinois has, the higher property taxes go – property taxes are the primary financing vehicle for municipal governments, park and library districts, and schools. Illinois already has the third-highest property taxes in the nation² and without a significant consolidation of government entities, Illinoisans should only expect their tax bills to rise.

Among the key candidates for consolidation are the state's 859 local school districts, which consume nearly two-thirds of the \$27 billion in local property taxes that local governments across Illinois collect each year.³ Illinois has the fifth-largest number of school districts in the nation, and many of those districts are ripe for consolidation.

A reduction of school districts by half, for example, could lead to annual operating savings of nearly \$130 million to \$170 million annually and could conservatively save the state \$3 billion to \$4 billion in pension costs over the next 30 years.⁴

Those savings would be realized by a reduction in district staff. Not only do taxpayers fund the principals, administrators, teachers and buildings at the school level, but they also pay for an additional – and often duplicative – layer of administration at the school district level.

The cost of administrative staffs at school districts adds up quickly. Nearly all of these districts have superintendents and secretaries, as well as additional personnel in human resources, special education, facilities management, business management, and technology. Many districts retain at least one assistant superintendent as well. Often, these administrative staffs support school districts that have either too few students or too few schools to warrant so much bureaucracy.

For example, nearly 25 percent of Illinois school districts serve just one school, and approximately one-third of all school districts have fewer than 600 students. An additional layer of administration for these districts is inefficient.⁵

On average, Illinois school districts serve just 2,400 students per district, the fifth-lowest among states with school populations over 1 million. Conversely, California school districts average 5,963 students. If Illinois school districts served the same number of students as California, Illinois would have 500 fewer school districts than it has today.

Administrative salaries eat up much of public school funding. More than three-quarters of Illinois' superintendents have six-figure salaries, and many also get additional benefits in car and housing allowances, as well as bonuses. Their high salaries lead to pension benefits of \$2 million to \$6 million each over the course of their retirements.

Top administrators in Illinois can expect to receive millions in benefits over the course of their retirements

Current pension and estimated total pension payout of 10 highest-paid school district pensioners in Illinois

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Source: Retiree data obtained from Teachers' Retirement System pursuant to a 2015 FOIA request, Social Security Administration actuarial data

* "Estimated total pension payout" is based on approximate life expectancies and retirees' ages as of 2015.

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Superintendents are only a part of district administrative costs. Other staff members, while compensated at lower levels, also contribute to overhead costs within Illinois' education system.

Despite the clear duplicative costs present in the current system, the path to school district consolidation has significant hurdles. Local officials and residents often have concerns about the loss of local control and issues related to the economics of merging with a nearby district.

Others are concerned that district consolidation could lead to the consolidation of schools. To be clear, the purpose of this report is to address the benefits of district consolidations – not school consolidations. School consolidations should remain a decision of the local boards of any newly unified school districts. As such, any proposals by the state to consolidate school districts should remain neutral on the subject of school consolidations.

If considered carefully and implemented properly, school district consolidation could provide serious financial benefits to both local taxpayers and the state. Moreover, research has shown that district consolidations can have a positive impact on student outcomes and can increase government transparency and community participation.

Illinois has too many school districts

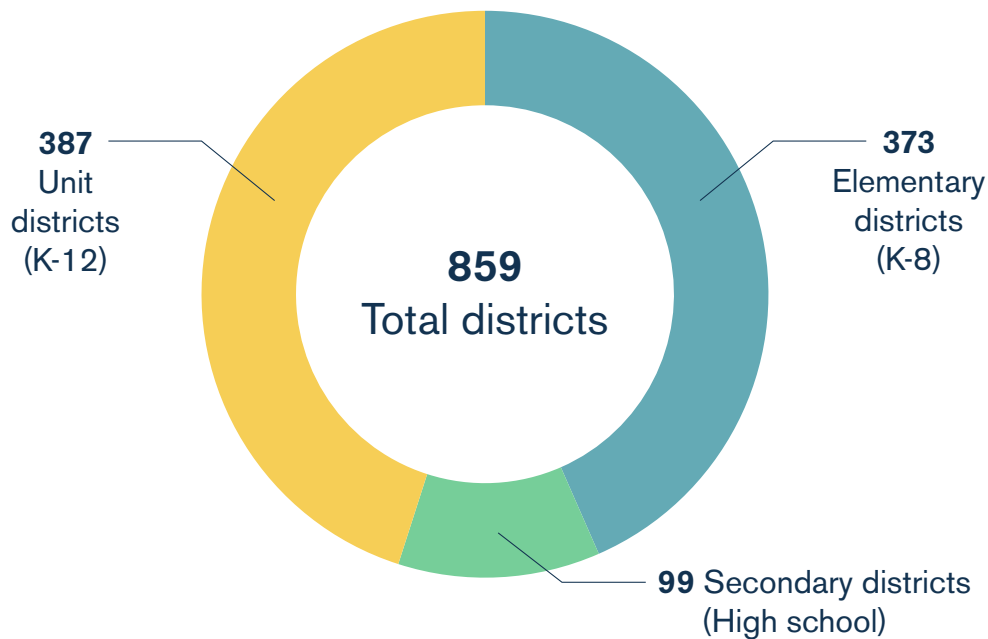
From 1930 through 1970, a gradual consolidation process eliminated 9 of every 10 school districts nationally. The number of districts in the U.S. fell dramatically, to fewer than 20,000 from over 120,000.⁶

Illinois followed similar trends. In 1942, Illinois had more than 12,000 districts – the most of any state in the nation. Over 10,000 of these were one-room schools with an average enrollment of 12 students. By 1955, the state had cut the number of districts to 2,242, and by the year 2000, the district count had fallen to 894.⁷

Today, Illinois has 859 school districts. Nearly 45 percent are elementary, 12 percent are secondary (high school), and 45 percent are unit districts, meaning they serve both elementary and secondary students.

Illinois home to more than 850 school districts

Number of school districts in Illinois by district type, 2015



Source: Illinois State Board of Education, "Annual Report 2015"

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Despite the massive reduction in Illinois school districts, the state is still not efficient when compared with its 14 peer states that also serve 1 million or more students. Florida, for example, averages 40,012 students per district. Georgia, North Carolina, California and Virginia all serve more than twice the 2,400 students per district Illinois does.⁸

Illinois' school districts are inefficient compared with districts in peer states

Students per district in states with more than 1 million students, 2013-2014

State	Total student enrollment	Total number of school districts	Students per district
Florida	2,708,062	67	40,419
North Carolina	1,441,447	115	12,534
Virginia	1,279,544	132	9,694
Georgia	1,723,439	198	8,704
California	6,236,672	1,028	6,067
Texas	5,135,880	1,227	4,186
New York	2,564,711	695	3,690
Washington	1,060,298	295	3,594
Pennsylvania	1,725,820	499	3,459
Indiana	1,034,285	369	2,803
Illinois	2,075,209	865	2,399
New Jersey	1,352,000	590	2,292
Michigan	1,484,612	773	1,921
Ohio	1,854,881	1,016	1,826
Arizona	1,078,033	627	1,719

Source: National Education Association, "Rankings & Estimates 2014 - 2015"

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If Illinois school districts served the same number of students as school districts in California, the most populous state in the country, serve, Illinois would have just 342 school districts. And if Illinois school districts served the same number of students as North Carolina's, Illinois would have just one-fifth of the school districts it has today – and one-fifth of the administrative bloat.

Illinois would have 14-94% fewer school districts if it mirrored student-to-district ratios of peer states

Comparison of Illinois with the 9 most student-to-district-efficient states with student populations over 1 million

State	Total student enrollment	Total districts	Students per district	Number of school districts IL would have if it mirrored the student-to-district ratio of each peer state	Number of districts IL would eliminate if it mirrored the student-to-district ratio of each peer state	Percent of total districts IL would eliminate if it mirrored the student-to-district ratio of each peer state
Illinois	2,075,209	865	2,399	--	--	--
Florida	2,708,062	67	40,419	51	814	94%
North Carolina	1,441,447	115	12,534	166	699	81%
Virginia	1,279,544	132	9,694	214	651	75%
Georgia	1,723,439	198	8,704	238	627	72%
California	6,236,672	1,028	6,067	342	523	60%
Texas	5,135,880	1,227	4,186	496	369	43%
New York	2,564,711	695	3,690	562	303	35%
Washington	1,060,298	295	3,594	577	288	33%
Pennsylvania	1,725,820	499	3,459	600	265	31%
Indiana	1,034,285	369	2,803	740	125	14%

Source: National Education Association, "Rankings & Estimates 2014 - 2015"

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Too many small districts

Small student populations in many Illinois districts also contribute to the inefficiencies of Illinois education. Of Illinois' 859 school districts, more than one-third serve fewer than 600 students. An additional layer of administration, over and above what already exists at the school level, is excessive and expensive for school districts of this size.

More than a third of Illinois school districts serve fewer than 600 students

Illinois school districts by student enrollment, 2014 - 2015

Student enrollment	Number of districts	Percent of total districts
25,000 or more	5	1%
10,000 to 24,999	18	2%
5,000 to 9,999	46	5%
2,500 to 4,999	109	13%
1,000 to 2,499	233	27%
600 to 999	154	18%
300 to 599	162	19%
Fewer than 300	132	15%
Total	859	100%

Source: Illinois State Board of Education, "Annual Report 2015"

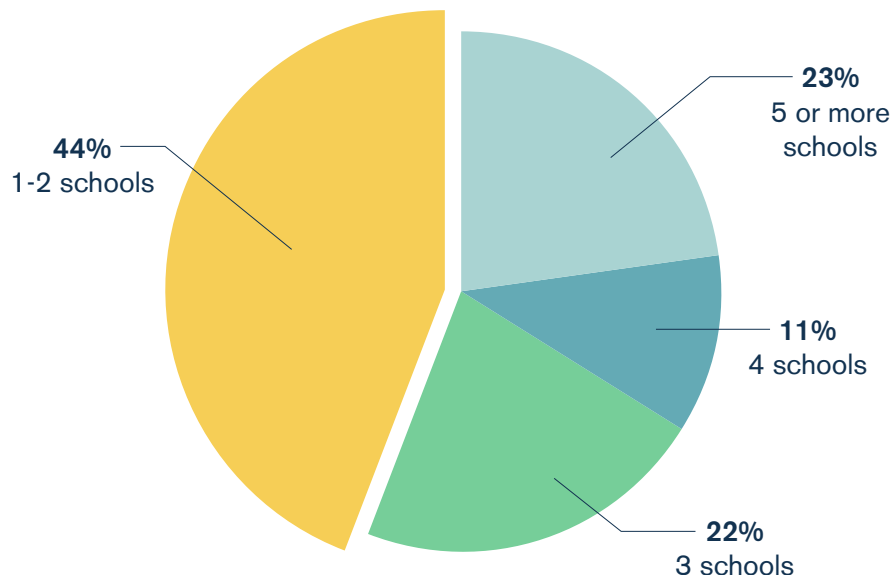
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There are many school districts that oversee too few schools. Twenty-five percent of school districts in Illinois, or 212, are single-school districts.

Another 152 school district offices serve just two schools. This kind of mismanagement presents plenty of opportunities to merge district supervision and reduce administrative costs without interfering with the schools' daily operations.

44% of Illinois school districts serve only 1-2 schools

Number of schools in a district as a percentage of all Illinois school districts, 2014 - 2015



Source: Illinois State Board of Education

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Merging elementary school districts with their high school districts

Finally, there exist many opportunities to consolidate high school districts with their elementary feeder districts. As many of these districts already share boundaries, students and a local tax base, consolidations can be less complex.

Illinois already has 387 such districts, called unit districts, which serve all elementary and secondary students in that district. However, the state still has 373 independent elementary school districts eligible for consolidation with the 99 independent high school districts they feed.

Moreover, Illinois is extremely inefficient in its student-to-district ratio. Over 60 percent of Illinois' districts contain just 14 percent of Illinois' students, based on average daily attendance. Those 511 districts serve on average only 526 students.

By contrast, the remaining districts average nearly 4,700 students (or 3,690 students if Chicago School District 299 is excluded from the calculation).

This inefficient distribution of students and resulting excess bureaucracy costs taxpayers a great deal of money. Not only do local taxpayers fund the principals, administrators, teachers and buildings at the school level, but they also pay for an additional – and often duplicative – layer of administration at the school district level.

The high cost of school district administrations

Salaries

District administrative staffs are costly for the taxpayers who pay for them. Six-figure salaries are common in school district administrations. In fact, 320 Illinois school district administrators, primarily district superintendents, make \$200,000 or more in compensation annually.⁹

More than three-quarters of Illinois' 872 superintendents have six-figure salaries, and many also get additional benefits in car and housing allowances, as well as bonuses. Their high salaries lead to generous future pension benefits: Superintendents on average receive \$2 million to \$6 million dollars in total pension benefits over the course of their retirements.

Top 10 highest-paid superintendents each make over \$340,000

Total compensation of 10 highest-paid district superintendents in Illinois, 2015

Superintendent name	District name	Base salary	Other benefits	Total compensation
Paraday, Troy	Calumet City SD 155	\$297,938	\$102,511	\$400,449
Carmine, Joyce	Park Forest SD 163	\$330,374	\$66,859	\$397,233
Yonke, Linda	New Trier Twp HSD 203	\$336,350	\$35,837	\$372,187
Tivador, Edward	Northbrook/Glenview SD 30	\$335,553	\$34,488	\$370,041
Dosier, Jeffrey	Hoover-Schrum Memorial SD 157	\$170,037	\$198,901	\$368,939
Nebor, Jon	Comm Cons SD 59	\$252,885	\$102,321	\$355,206
Westerhold, Jane	CCSD 62	\$278,738	\$69,542	\$348,280
May, Loren	Marquardt SD 15	\$274,548	\$73,335	\$347,883
Gatta Perez, Nanciann	Indian Springs SD 109	\$254,856	\$91,255	\$346,111
Mansfield, Edward	Homewood-Flossmoor CHSD 233	\$270,852	\$74,109	\$344,961

Source: Illinois State Board of Education, "Administrator and Teacher Salary and Benefits" database

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For example, the highest-paid superintendent in the state, Troy Paraday of Calumet City School District 155, received \$400,449 in total compensation in 2015. Once he retires, Paraday can expect to receive more than \$6 million to \$8 million in benefits over the course of his retirement.¹⁰

Paraday and other district superintendents are not the only well-paid administrators. Over 230 districts have assistant superintendents, and 9 out of 10 assistant superintendents make more than \$100,000 annually.¹¹

But the full cost of each district's administration encompasses far more than just top administrator salaries. It also includes the cost of other staff members.

District administrative staffs often include business services, human resources, facility and technology directors. The salaries of district staff add up, leading to another major cost – pensions.

Pensions

Duplicative district administrators directly increase costs for the state due in large part to the pension benefits these employees receive upon retirement.

Most retired former superintendents are on track to receive millions in pension benefits over the course of their retirements. For example, consider Laura Murray, a former superintendent of Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District 233 who retired in 2008 at the age of 58 and received a starting annual pension of \$238,882.

Murray retired in her 50s and receives an automatic 3 percent increase to her annual pension every year after age 61. Assuming she lives to her approximate actuarial life expectancy, Murray can expect to receive more than \$8 million in pension benefits over the course of her retirement.

Top administrators in Illinois can expect to receive millions in benefits over the course of their retirements

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Source: Retiree data obtained from Teachers' Retirement System pursuant to a 2015 FOIA request, Social Security Administration actuarial data

* "Estimated total pension payout" is based on approximate life expectancies and retirees' ages as of 2015.

High pension payouts, however, are not limited to superintendents. District staff with starting pensions of \$75,000 can expect to earn pensions in excess of \$2 million over the course of their retirements.

Without a serious reduction in the cost of pensions, the state will continue to divert funds away from students in classrooms to pay for teacher and administrator retirements. At the current rate of spending growth, state spending on educator retirements will outpace classroom spending by 2025.¹²

Case studies: New Trier and Homewood-Flossmoor

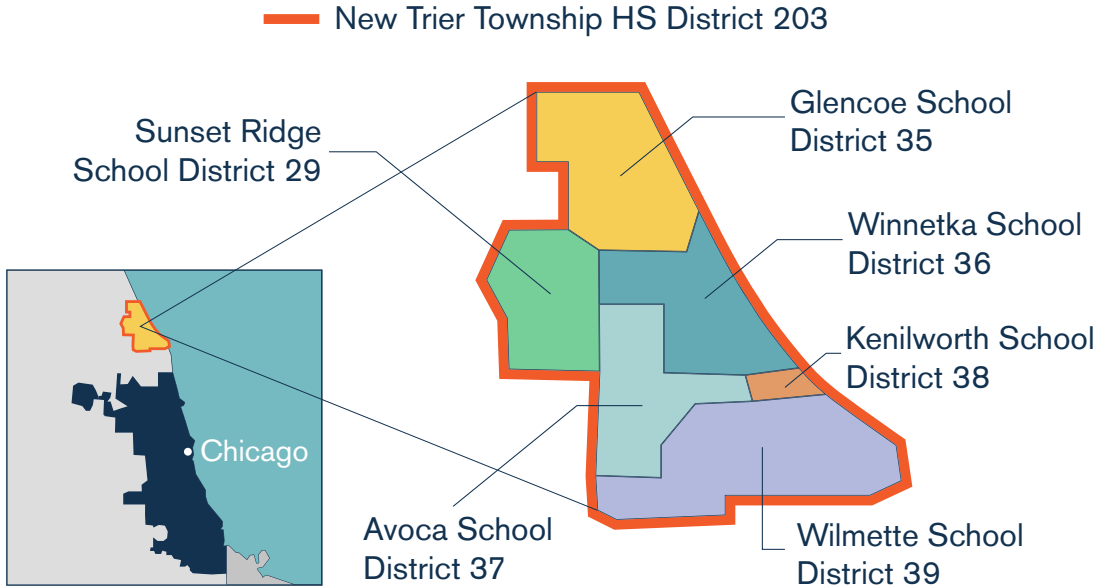
New Trier Township

New Trier Township encompasses several wealthy communities on Chicago’s North Shore. The area has six elementary school districts that feed into a single high school district. A vast majority of funding for the districts (90 percent or more) is provided by local property taxes.

New Trier Township High School District 203 is coterminous (meaning it shares boundaries) with its six elementary districts, which include, for example, Kenilworth School District 38, whose only school serves just 488 students, Sunset Ridge School District 29, whose two schools serve 441 students, and Avoca School District 37, which has just two schools and 662 students.

Combined, the student population for the seven districts totals nearly 12,000.

New Trier Township High School District 203 and its 6 elementary-school feeder districts



Source: Illinois State Board of Education

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With six different K-8 school districts feeding into a single high school district, taxpayers are required to pay for seven different superintendents. The average total compensation for the superintendents in the seven districts is over \$280,000 per superintendent. If the area’s elementary districts were combined with the high school district, New Trier could reduce the number of superintendents down to one, from the current seven. That would save local taxpayers millions of dollars a year, just from the reduction in superintendent compensation alone.

Superintendents in New Trier High School District and its elementary feeder districts
 Total compensation and approximate total pension payout of district superintendents, 2015

District name	Superintendent	Total annual compensation	Approximate total pension payout*
New Trier Township High School District 203	Yonke, Linda	\$372,187	\$7 million-\$9 million
Winnetka Public School District 36	Kocanda, Trisha	\$294,306	\$6 million-\$8 million
Wilmette School District 39	Lechner, Raymond	\$289,941	\$5 million-\$7 million
Avoca School District 37	Jauch, Kevin	\$260,692	\$4 million-\$6 million
Kenilworth School District 38	Kalinich, Kelley	\$259,551	\$6 million-\$8 million
Glencoe School District 35	Crawford, Cathlene	\$257,092	\$6 million-\$8 million
Sunset Ridge School District 29	Stange, Ed	\$249,319	\$3 million-\$5 million

Source: Illinois State Board of Education, data obtained from Teachers' Retirement System pursuant to a 2015 FOIA request, Social Security Administration actuarial data
 *"Approximate total pension payout" is based on approximate Social Security life expectancies. Assumed retirement age is 61 unless older. Starting pension is based on current total annual compensation, so total payout is a conservative estimate. Service and age data are incomplete for Crawford and Kalinich - 30 years of service at retirement age 61 was assumed. @illinoispolicy

But reducing the number of duplicative superintendents is only a start. A majority of administrative staff in each district could be eliminated if the seven districts consolidated.

Wilmette School District 39, for example, employs 41 different administrative and support staff, including a technology director, computer technicians, a communications director, a business manager and curriculum and human resources directors – to name a few.

Many of those positions are duplicated across districts – which could be eliminated by consolidating. Instead of seven administrators handling communications, there would be only one, for example.

In all, the base salaries of all seven district staffs cost New Trier-area taxpayers over \$12 million a year. That’s over \$1,000 per student. By consolidating seven sets of staff into one, New Trier could save local taxpayers millions of dollars annually.

District employee salaries cost more than \$1,000 per student

District-office administrator and support-staff salary and other data for New Trier-area school districts

School district	Number of households	Number of schools	Average daily attendance	Number of district-office administrators and support staff	Total cost of district employee salaries	Average district-office employee salary	Number of students per district-office employee	District-office salary cost per student	District-office salary cost per household
New Trier Township HS District 203	21,119	2	3,977	41	\$3,818,901	\$93,144	97	\$960	\$181
Glencoe School District 35	3,003	3	1,183	8	\$762,180	\$95,273	148	\$644	\$254
Winnetka School District 36	3,940	5	1,625	23	\$2,090,405	\$90,887	71	\$1,286	\$531
Sunset Ridge School District 29	1,556	2	441	10	\$1,245,298	\$124,530	44	\$2,825	\$800
Kenilworth School District 38	936	1	488	5	\$449,722	\$89,944	98	\$922	\$480
Avoca School District 37	2,432	2	662	8	\$777,925	\$97,241	83	\$1,174	\$320
Wilmette School District 39	9,252	6	3,370	41	\$3,331,635	\$81,259	82	\$989	\$360
Combined	NA	21	11,747	136	\$12,476,066	\$91,736	86	\$1,062	NA

Source: Data on district employees and salaries obtained from 2015 FOIA requests to each school district*; Illinois State Board of Education, 2014 – 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 *School districts were asked to return a list of full- and part-time district administrators and support staff that included only those workers employed by the district office, not by individual schools within the district.

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In addition, because the state pays the pension costs of K-12 educators to the Teachers' Retirement System, taxpayers from Effingham to Carbondale to Quincy are chipping in for New Trier district staff and administrative pensions. By consolidating just their superintendents, New Trier could save state taxpayers \$30 million over the next several decades.

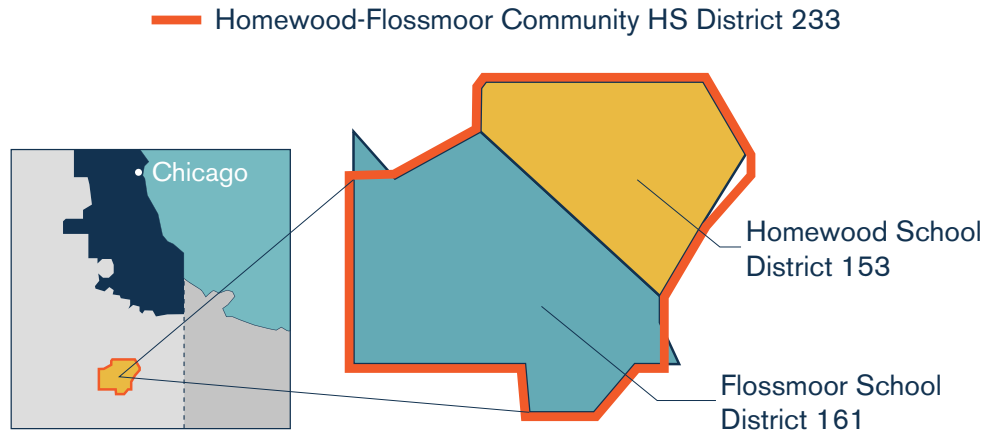
And because the communities in the area are so similar – they already share a common tax base through the high school district, are relatively wealthy, and contain a similar amount of property wealth per student – the financial and tax logistics of integrating the communities into one overall school district would be relatively simple compared with more economically diverse areas.

Homewood-Flossmoor area

Homewood-Flossmoor encompasses several communities in Chicago's Southland area – the villages of Homewood and Flossmoor and small parts of Glenwood, Hazel Crest and Chicago Heights. The area has two elementary school districts that feed into a single high school district. A majority of funding for the districts (70 percent or more) is provided by local property taxes.

Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District 233 shares boundaries with its two elementary districts: Flossmoor School District 161, which has five schools and serves 2,210 students, and Homewood School District 153, which has four schools and serves 1,762 students. Combined, the student population for the three districts totals more than 6,500.

Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District 233 and its 2 elementary-school feeder districts



Source: Illinois State Board of Education

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With two K-8 school districts feeding into a single high school district, area taxpayers are required to pay for three different superintendents. The average compensation for the three superintendents is \$270,000. If the area's elementary districts were combined with the high school district, Homewood-Flossmoor could reduce the number of superintendents down to one and save local taxpayers half a million dollars a year, just from the reduction in superintendent compensation alone.

Superintendent compensation in Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District and its elementary feeder districts

Total compensation and approximate total pension payout of district superintendents, 2015

District name	Superintendent	Total annual compensation, 2015	Approximate total pension payout*
Homewood-Flossmoor Community HS District 233	Mansfield, Edward	\$344,961	\$6 million-\$8 million
Flossmoor School District 161	Doster, Craig	\$242,672	\$4 million-\$6 million
Homewood School District 153	Mitchell, Dale	\$226,821	\$3 million-\$5 million

Source: Illinois State Board of Education, data obtained from Teachers' Retirement System pursuant to a 2015 FOIA request, Social Security Administration actuarial data
 *"Approximate total pension payout" is based on approximate Social Security life expectancies. Assumed retirement age is 61 unless older. Total payout is a conservative estimate, as starting pension is based on current total annual compensation.

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But reducing the number of duplicative superintendents is only a start. A majority of administrative staff in each district could be eliminated if the three districts consolidated.

Flossmoor School District 161's district office, for example, employs 27 different people, from directors of curriculum and technology, to a health secretary and several bookkeepers.

Many of those positions are duplicated across the three districts – which could be eliminated through consolidation. Instead of three technology directors, there would be only one, for example.

In all, the base salaries of all three district staffs cost Homewood-Flossmoor-area taxpayers nearly \$5 million a year. That's over \$750 per student. By consolidating three staffs into one, Homewood-Flossmoor could save local taxpayers millions of dollars annually.

District employee salaries cost more than \$750 per student

District-office administrator and support-staff salary and other data for Homewood-Flossmoor-area school districts

School district	Number of households	Number of schools	Average daily attendance	Number of district-office administrators and support staff	Total cost of district employee salaries	Average district-office employee salary	Number of students per district-office employee	District-office salary cost per student	District-office salary cost per household
Homewood-Flossmoor CHS District 233	14,010	1	2,548	21	\$1,877,221	\$89,391	121	\$737	\$134
Flossmoor School District 161	7,725	5	2,210	27	\$1,808,754	\$66,991	82	\$819	\$234
Homewood School District 153	5,988	4	1,762	20	\$1,252,025	\$62,601	88	\$711	\$209
Combined	NA	10	6,519	68	\$4,937,999	\$72,618	96	\$757	NA

Source: Data on district employees and salaries obtained from 2015 FOIA requests to each school district*; Illinois State Board of Education, 2014 – 2015; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 *School districts were asked to return a list of full- and part-time district administrators and support staff that included only those workers employed by the district office, not by individual schools within the district.

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In addition, because the state pays the pension costs of K-12 educators to the Teachers' Retirement System, taxpayers from Effingham to Carbondale to Quincy are chipping in for Homewood and Flossmoor's district staff and administrative pensions. By consolidating just their superintendents, the three districts could save state taxpayers \$9 million over the next several decades.

And because the communities in the area are so similar – they already share a common tax base through the high school district, contain residents with relatively similar incomes, and contain a similar amount of property wealth per student – the financial and tax logistics of integrating the communities into one overall school district would be relatively simple compared with more economically diverse areas.

What the research says

The rationale for school district consolidation – improved efficiency and a reduction in massive overhead costs – is fairly straightforward. But consolidation, nationwide and in Illinois, has been hard to come by in recent years, triggering significant scholarly research on its benefits and costs.

When it comes to district size, research shows that efficiencies result when districts operate at some “sweet spot” regarding the number of total students in the district. And while not all studies show conclusive results, there is evidence that consolidation can modestly improve graduation rates and has a positive effects on student wages after graduation.

It's important to make one critical distinction about consolidation research. While research is modestly positive regarding district consolidations, it is decidedly negative on *school* consolidations. Most research finds that for students, smaller schools are better than larger ones. Further, many of the costs found in district consolidation are really a function of subsequent *school* consolidations, which can lead to increased transportation costs, capital costs due to new facilities, less engagement by parents at the larger school, and diminished morale among the teaching staff.

There are other potential costs created by district consolidations. These occur when states provide transition funds to merging districts in the form of teacher salary equalizations, operating subsidies and new facility funding. Other potential costs to taxpayers can occur when consolidation affects property values and property taxes.

Following are three key studies conducted on the effects of school district consolidation:

Berry and West (2008)¹³

After the thousands of school and district consolidations performed between the 1930s and the 1970s, little holistic research tested the claims that consolidations would lead to improved efficiencies and benefit students. Education progressives argued that *school* consolidations, particularly in rural areas, would solve the problems of a lack of qualified teachers, limited administrative expertise, and the need for greater course offerings.

Christopher Berry and Martin West, researchers from the University of Chicago and Harvard, respectively, set out to analyze the national, long-term data (1930 through 1970) of school and district consolidations in terms of student outcomes. Rather than look only at test scores, Berry and West chose to analyze real-life outcomes, such as earnings and educational attainment. They found that, after controlling for other factors, district consolidation led to lower high school dropout rates, higher college attendance and a 2 percent increase in earnings as district sizes increased by 1,000 students.

Yet their findings show that *school* consolidations, which had the opposite effect on earnings and education attainment, often served to wipe out the gains of district consolidation. States with smaller schools had greater educational attainment and lower dropout rates. This was particularly true for minority and low-income students.

17 The takeaway for Illinois is that district consolidations make sense, but significant school consolidations do not. The authors also caution that their findings focus on average school and district sizes, and they offer no view on optimal sizes.

Duncombe and Yinger (2005)¹⁴

The Berry and West results analyzed the first wave of consolidations in the U.S. Further research by William Duncombe and John Yinger on New York's rural district consolidation from 1987 to 1995 also finds benefits to consolidation, though they focus on identifying economies of size in operating and capital spending. The research shows that "doubling enrollment cuts total annual costs per pupil by 31 percent for a 300-pupil district and by 14 percent for a 1,500-pupil district." The authors find that capital spending costs are also reduced, though less significantly. Critical to the findings, however, is the need to control capital projects and post-consolidation incentives, as they can serve to greatly diminish the benefits of district consolidation.

The authors conclude that there appear to be diminishing returns to the benefits of consolidation above a certain district size. While consolidating districts makes economic sense, creating mega-districts may lead to increased costs. The sweet spot for district size is in the 3,000-student range, according to Duncombe and Yinger. Other research suggests districts can successfully be as large as 6,000 students.¹⁵

Hoxby (2000)¹⁶

Caroline Hoxby of Harvard also points to potential diminishing returns of consolidation. Hoxby did not research consolidation per se, but the relationship between the number of school districts in metropolitan areas and its effect on school performance. She finds that competition among a larger number of districts and greater consumer choice from among the competing districts leads to higher student achievement and lower spending. Where enrollment is concentrated in a smaller number of districts, competition drops, and school productivity suffers.

Hoxby's paper suggests a second sweet spot, not just in the size of individual districts, but also in the number of districts in a given region. Without sufficient district competition and choice for consumers of education, student outcomes are diminished. Hoxby's findings suggest that district administrative consolidations should be used to maintain or increase the options available to families, not limit them.

Other states

From 2003 to 2004, Arkansas consolidated almost 20 percent of its smaller, rural districts in an attempt to create efficiencies and reduce the number of districts with fewer than 350 students. Importantly, the state did not mandate school consolidations in any way; the goal was to preserve small, high-performing schools that delivered quality.¹⁷ Arkansas found a way to "introduce administrative efficiencies without endangering the quality of the educational experience that can be realized in an intimate setting surrounded by a supportive community."¹⁸

Florida has taken school district consolidation to the maximum in terms of district size. Florida's constitution calls for school districts based on county borders. While the average district has over 40,000 students, the state's 67 districts vary significantly. The state's 29 smallest districts have 1,000 to 10,000 students, while the seven largest districts have 100,000 to 400,000 students.¹⁹ Illinois only has one district that large – the Chicago Public School District.

Florida is also one of the leading states in educational reform and has generated some of the most improved educational outcomes in the nation, particularly with low-income and minority students. Relying on relatively large districts may not be the key factor in this success – Florida is also a lead innovator in school choice, accountability and online learning initiatives – but the existence of countywide districts certainly hasn't compromised learning gains. Large districts have also benefited taxpayers, as Florida spends approximately \$3,000 less per pupil than Illinois and has much smaller unfunded pension liabilities.²⁰

Nevertheless, Florida and six other states – Hawaii, Louisiana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah – have debated recent proposals to divide their mega-districts into smaller districts. This move suggests, in tandem with the research discussed above, that there is a sweet spot for the size and number of districts.

In summary, most research points to opportunities for Illinois to gain efficiencies from district consolidation, though it cautions against the creation of mega-districts. Additionally, the research strongly suggests that the state should not mandate any increase in *school size*. Evidence points to decreasing educational outcomes, in particular for lower-income students.

Consolidation roadblocks in Illinois and how to overcome them

The rules for passing a consolidation referendum are relatively straightforward. To consolidate two school districts, a petition must be signed by either the local school boards or by 50 registered voters or by 10 percent of the voters residing within each affected district. After a public hearing, both the regional and state superintendents must vote to approve the petition. Finally, the petition is presented as a referendum, which must pass by a majority of those voting in each affected district.²¹

But it's not the process that has held consolidation back. It's the politics. Over the past 15 years, the number of districts in Illinois has fallen by just 35 districts, to 859 from 894.

While the financial benefits of school district consolidation are clear, consolidation efforts run into opposition from local taxpayers for a variety of reasons.

Many opponents of school district consolidations express concern over the loss of local control. They worry that schools will be closed and local communities will be hurt.

But taxpayers should not confuse school *district* consolidation with school consolidations. Any laws that consolidate school districts should remain neutral on school consolidations. School consolidations should remain local decisions to be decided by local boards of any newly unified school districts.

There is also concern about the potential costs created by district consolidations. These costs can occur when the state tries to do more than reduce the administrative excess at the district level. For example, in the past the state has provided transition funds to merging districts to equalize the terms in teacher contracts, subsidize operations, and fund new facilities.

In any future consolidations, the state should not provide any such incentives. The goal of school district consolidation is to rein in the duplicative costs of school district administrations – not facilitate school consolidations or equalize salary contracts.

Others also worry about the economics of merging with a nearby district. Merging diverse districts with different wealth, socioeconomic, and educational attainment is inherently complex. And where the consolidation of districts means drawing new boundaries, there will be highly politicized debates over control of valuable tax-generating property.

That means any plan for school district consolidations must include the heavy involvement of local communities in cooperation with state officials.

The path to consolidation

Given the challenges facing consolidation efforts, district consolidation will only happen when the state partners with local districts to discuss concerns and create a cooperative solution.

20 That partnership should come in the form of a district consolidation commission, which would function in a manner similar to the federal government's Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission.²²

The district commission should set consolidation and reorganization guidelines, select candidate districts and establish a process for implementation, taking into account the concerns of local communities. The commission should further support the creation of legislation that would mandate its proposed recommendations through an up or down vote, meaning no amendments would be permitted, in the General Assembly.

However, the commission should also be relatively narrow in its scope of recommendations. School district consolidation should focus on reining in the duplicative costs of district administrations only – not on equalizing salary contracts or funding new facilities. The state should not provide any incentives for those items, nor should it mandate any school consolidations. And to prevent local property taxes from rising, the commission should develop policies on limiting the merger of local bargaining units in newly combined districts.

Conclusion

Rather than punish Illinois residents with more tax hikes, the state and local governments must pursue reforms including pension reform and school district consolidations. Local taxpayers shouldn't be on the hook for multiple layers of government that duplicate services, waste taxpayers' money, increase government debt, and decrease transparency.

The numbers speak for themselves: More than 60 percent of local property taxes in Illinois go toward school funding. And with the large number of districts in Illinois ripe for consolidation, the financial benefit cannot be ignored. A reduction of school districts by half could lead to operating savings of nearly \$130 million to \$170 million annually and could conservatively save the state \$3 billion to \$4 billion in pension costs over the next 30 years.

The state also has a stake in consolidating school districts. Illinois government is a large and sometimes the largest, provider of school funds for many Illinois school districts and is responsible for paying for school district pensions. By virtue of its responsibility to taxpayers, it has the duty to identify waste and propose efficiencies.

The benefits of consolidation would go beyond saving taxpayers money. District consolidation can have a positive effect on student outcomes and would increase transparency as well.

Considered carefully and implemented properly, school district consolidation can provide important benefits to Illinois taxpayers, local school districts and Illinois students.

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- ¹ Brian Costin, "Too Much Government: Illinois' Thousands of Local Governments," *Illinois Policy Institute*, November 2013, https://d2dv7hze646xr.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Too_much_gov-1.pdf; Diane Rado, "With Help of Lawmakers, Illinois Public Schools Now \$20 Billion in Debt," *Chicago Tribune*, April 16, 2016, <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-illinois-school-debt-met-20160416-story.html>.
- ² Nicole Kaeding, "Facts & Figures 2016: How Does Your State Compare?" *Tax Foundation*, February 29, 2016, <http://taxfoundation.org/article/facts-figures-2016-how-does-your-state-compare>.
- ³ Erik Randolph, Ted Dabrowski and John Klingner, "Growing Out of Control: Property Taxes Put Increasing Burden on Illinois Taxpayers," *Illinois Policy Institute*, November 2015, <https://www.illinoispolicy.org/reports/growing-out-of-control-property-taxes-put-increasing-burden-on-illinois-taxpayers/>.
- ⁴ Illinois Policy Institute calculations. Assumes an average reduction of three to four administrative staff for each district that's eliminated, an average salary of \$100,000 and average starting pension of \$75,000.
- ⁵ Illinois State Board of Education, *ISBE 2015 Annual Report*, <http://www.isbe.net/reports/annual15/toc.htm>.
- ⁶ Christopher Berry and Martin West, "Growing Pains: The School Consolidation Movement and Student Outcomes," *Journal of Law, Economics and Organization* 26, No. 1, (April 2010), 1-29.
- ⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸ National Education Association, *Rankings & Estimates: Ranking of the States 2013 and Estimates of School Statistics 2014*, March 2014, <http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/NEA-Rankings-and-Estimates-2013-2014.pdf>.
- ⁹ "Administrator and Teacher Salary and Benefits," *Illinois State Board of Education*, 2015, http://www.isbe.net/research/htmls/salary_report.htm.
- ¹⁰ Assumes retirement at age 61 with 30 years of service, that current total compensation is substituted for final salary, and that Paraday will live to his estimated actuarial life expectancy.
- ¹¹ "Administrator and Teacher Salary and Benefits."
- ¹² Ted Dabrowski and John Klingner, "Pensions vs. Schools," *Illinois Policy Institute*, January 2016, <https://www.illinoispolicy.org/reports/pensions-vs-schools/>.
- ¹³ Berry and West, "Growing Pains."
- ¹⁴ William Duncombe and John Yinger, "Does School District Consolidation Cut Costs?" *Center for Policy Research*, (Syracuse University 2005).
- ¹⁵ Andrew J. Coulson, "School District Consolidation, Size and Spending: an Evaluation," *The Mackinac Center for Public Policy*, May 22, 2007.
- ¹⁶ Caroline Hoxby, "Does Competition among Public Schools Benefit Students and Taxpayers?" *American Economic Review* 90 (2000), 1209-1238.
- ¹⁷ John Chubb and Paul Peterson, *Enhancing the Role of Choice and Charters* (Hoover Press 2003).
- ¹⁸ Chester Finn Jr., *Conclusions and Recommendations of the Koret Task Force* (Hoover Press 2003).
- ¹⁹ Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, Report No. 08-26 (April 2008), <http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/reports/pdf/0826rpt.pdf>.
- ²⁰ Stephen Q. Cornman, "Revenues and Expenditures for Public Elementary and Secondary School Districts: School Year 2012-13, (Fiscal Year 2013)," *National Center for Education Statistics*, January 2016, <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015303.pdf>.
- ²¹ Illinois State Board of Education, <http://www.isbe.net/sfms/pdf/consolidation.pdf>.
- ²² George Schlossberg, "How Congress Cleared the Bases: A Legislative History of BRAC," *Journal of Defense Communities* (2012), <http://www.defensecommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/FINALJournal1.pdf>.

Appendix A

New Trier-area school district offices employ 136 administrative staff, over and above the administrators directly employed at each district school

District-office administrator and support-staff salaries of New Trier Township High School District 203 and its elementary feeder districts

Name	Position/Title	Salary
New Trier Township High School District 203		
Yonke, Linda	Superintendent	\$336,350
Witham, Cheryl	Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations	\$233,398
Sally, Paul	Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	\$182,794
Hayes, Timothy	Assistant Superintendent for Student Services	\$182,794
Sanders, George	Director of Human Resources	\$166,460
Johnston, Christopher	Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations	\$165,000
Ambuehl, Ellen	Director of Special Education	\$148,927
Helfand, Stephanie	Chief Information Officer	\$137,500
Dizon, Nicole	Director of Communications	\$128,460
Arvanitis, Athena	Director of Student Life	\$116,000
Spiwak, Myron	Director of Business Services	\$110,000
Villaluz, Angel	Director of Tech Systems	\$105,000
Williams, Richard	Network and Operations Manager	\$100,000
Krebs, Virginia	Payroll Manager	\$87,205
Shostak, Tatyana	Database Administrator	\$83,507
McDermott, Kimberly	Human Resources Manager	\$83,193
Kelly, Lou	Secretary to the Superintendent	\$75,000
Zaborski, Anthony	Network Engineer	\$75,000
Spektor, Boris	Web Developer	\$72,280
Jickim, Linda	Admin. Assist. to the Assist. Superintendent for Student Services	\$70,747
Wideman, Joan	Secretary to the Assist. Superintendent of Finance and Operations	\$68,884
Asplund, Pamela	Application Support Specialist	\$68,850
Gitau, Moira	Technology Tech III	\$66,919
Stiles, Laura	Administrative Assistant to the Director of HR	\$62,471
McCarthy, Kendra	Transportation and Purchasing Manager	\$60,000
Luby, Nanette	Application Support Specialist	\$59,915
Hall, John	Programmer/Analyst	\$56,650
Mosley, Juanda	Communications Assistant	\$56,074
Harney, Brian	Programmer/Analyst	\$56,000
Costabile, Teresa	Administrative Assistant to Director of Special Ed	\$55,561
Sparkowski, Kimberly	Human Resources Benefits Specialist	\$55,561

Name	Position/Title	Salary
Blair, Yvonne	Business Office Assistant	\$54,254
Ferguson, Barbara	Human Resources Specialist	\$53,788
Blodgett, Elizabeth	Accounts Payable	\$52,480
Ruston, Lindsey	Admin. Assist. for Assoc. Superintendent of Curriculum and Ins.	\$51,375
Bailey, Jeffrey	Technology Project Specialist II	\$51,028
Schlauch, Emmeline	Staff Accountant	\$50,323
Shah, Smita	Business Office Assistant	\$49,707
Hoversen, Mark	Senior Staff Accountant	\$46,202
Avery, Rodney	Business Office Assistant	\$42,888
Kapustiak, Katherine	Substitute Scheduler	\$40,356
	Total salary	\$3,818,901
	Number of staff	41
Avoca School District 37		
Jauch, Kevin	Superintendent	\$206,707
Dever, Beth	Chief School Business Official	\$177,670
Toops, Donna	Director Pupil Services	\$137,016
Meier, Kimberly	Exec. Asst. to the Supt.	\$61,454
Savage, Jacqueline	Payroll/Transportation Clerk	\$55,946
Menegas, Stella	Bookkeeper	\$50,909
Deutsch, Cynthia	Pupil Serv. Admin. Asst./Sub. Coord.	\$45,672
Drugan, Margaret	Personnel/Benefits Secretary	\$42,551
	Total salary	\$777,925
	Number of staff	8
Glencoe School District 35		
Wang, Catherine	Superintendent	\$209,000
Zelaya, Christine	Director of Curriculum and Instruction	\$139,000
Stone, Gayle	Clerical Support Staff	\$48,984
Edelheit, Jason	Director of Finance and Operatations	\$145,900
Conte, Jeanne	Clerical Support Staff	\$52,208
Urban, Johanna	Bookkeeper	\$49,088
Winograd, Maile	Secretary/Communications	\$43,120
Nelson, Roseanne	IT Staff	\$74,880
	Total salary	\$762,180
	Number of staff	8
Kenilworth School District 38		
LeRoy, Crystal	Superintendent/Chief School Business Official	\$185,000
Jones, Julia	Director of Student Services	\$113,300
Culhane, Trish	Bookkeeper	\$56,864
Erokwu, Chike	Communication Coordinator	\$50,000
Lascola, Angela	Business Services and Human Resources Coordinator	\$44,558

Name	Position/Title	Salary
	Total salary	\$449,722
	Number of staff	5
Sunset Ridge School District 29		
Stange, Edward	Superintendent	\$212,592
Greene, Mary Frances	Assoc. Supt./Principal MFS	\$176,639
Beerheide, Tom	Chief School Business Official	\$159,444
Carey, Shelley	Principal SRS	\$159,058
Dunham, Emily	Director of Student Services	\$116,796
Scott, Jennifer	Director of Technology	\$110,261
O'Connor, Jamie	Administrative Assistant	\$81,999
Dreher, Corey	Director of Buildings and Grounds	\$80,000
Dawson, Barbara	Account Receivable Coordinator	\$74,408
Faber, Colleen	Payroll and Benefits Coordinator	\$74,101
	Total salary	\$1,245,298
	Number of staff	10
Wilmette School District 39		
Lechner, Raymond E.	Superintendent	\$243,047
Thrasher, Denise	Adm. for Student and Support Serv	\$175,624
Horowitz, Melanie G.	Administrator for Curriculum and Instr	\$172,950
Flemming, Catherine	Curriculum Coordinator C and I	\$156,211
Buscemi, Gail F.	Business Manager	\$151,623
Glowacki, Heather L.	Administrator for Human Resources	\$146,400
Stankiewicz, Stanley L.	Director of Operations and Mai	\$130,670
DeMonte, Anthony V.	Director of Technology	\$129,000
Lee, Katie	Curriculum Coordinator C and I	\$126,269
Wolf, Martha E.	Speech and Language - E.C.	\$117,906
Martin, Tonya Hennon	Special Education Coordinator	\$114,185
Crispino, Ellen	Controller	\$90,000
DeCristofaro, Ramona M.	Asst Dir of Student Services	\$89,000
Freese, Amy	Coordinator/Intervention Specialist	\$88,491
Bullocks, Glenn E.	Stationary Engineer	\$84,897
Hosler, Patrick J.	Maintenance-Plumber	\$84,059
Stella, Michael R.	Maintenance-Electrician	\$83,232
Esler, Mary Ann	Adm Asst to the Business Mgr	\$73,154
Goldin, Holly	Communications Director	\$69,122
Baird, Benjamin	LBS-Intervention Specialist	\$63,986
Altman, Adam J.	Data Base, Website, System Specialist	\$62,985
Joyce, William R.	Data Base, Website, System Specialist	\$62,985
Bishop, Elizabeth S.	Human Resources Assistant	\$62,067
Reidy, Sean M.	Manager of Technology Services	\$59,891
Schlessinger, Nancy M.	Payroll Coordinator	\$55,588
Harang, Ann	HR Administrative Assistant	\$53,023

Name	Position/Title	Salary
Potisuk, Nancy A.	Adm Asst to the Superintendent	\$52,902
Baumann, Julie	Adm Asst to Admn for Student Serv	\$52,393
Winter, Lisa	Food Service Coordinator	\$49,673
Edwards, Willie	MEC Custodian	\$46,792
Simpson, Laketa N.	MEC Transportation Liaison	\$43,911
Heurich, Barbara J.	Adm Asst to Admn of C and I	\$43,182
Hosler, Jessica	Accounts Payable/Purchasing	\$40,204
Hughes, Kathleen	Adm Asst/Receptionist MEC	\$38,783
Mockus, James A.	Computer Support Technician	\$37,791
Whipps, Thomas P.	Computer Support Technician	\$37,070
Hernandez, Ana E.	PM Head Custodian	\$34,493
Valdovinos, Rosalba	Adm Asst to Technology	\$34,044
Mack, Nathan A.	Computer Support Technician	\$27,690
Pigeon, Ryan	Lead Hardware/Software Splst	\$24,005
Morgan, Cynthia A.	Adm Asst to Technology	\$22,339
	Total salary	\$3,331,635
	Number of staff	41
Winnetka School District 36		
Kocanda, Trisha	Superintendent	\$216,300
Kurr, Gregory	Chief Financial Officer	\$188,000
Hager, Maureen	HR Director	\$156,001
Martin, Elizabeth	Director Of Student Services	\$150,800
Miller, Maureen Chertow	Director Of Technology	\$144,200
Rappaport, Adam I.	Director Of Buildings and Grounds	\$122,700
Wehrheim, Linda	Executive Assistant To Superintendent and School Board	\$93,897
Repp, Robert	Network Administrator	\$85,551
Hughes, Katharine	Community Relations and Communications Coordinator	\$85,000
Koller, Cathleen M.	Administrative Assistant	\$76,316
Colonna, Georgette M.	Bookkeeper	\$75,774
Sward, Janice L.	Administrative Assistant	\$70,195
Lee, Mary I.	Administrative Assistant	\$68,728
Migalla, Elizabeth	Information and Data Coordinat	\$65,585
Fenwick, Laura B.	Web Coordinator	\$63,509
Hasselton, Susan	Payroll	\$62,000
George, Theodore C.	HVAC Supervisor	\$59,317
De Berard, Robert	Accounts Payable	\$58,164
Foley, Karen Marcus	Administrative Assistant	\$55,775
Heller, Justin	Network Coordinator	\$54,460
Perez, Maria	Receptionist	\$47,684
Lascelles, Anne Marie	Ongdeck Director/Publications/Caterer	\$46,405
Lerner, Jessica	Benefits/Administrative Assistant	\$44,044

Name	Position/Title	Salary
	Total salary	\$2,090,405
	Number of staff	23
	Combined total salary	\$12,476,066
	Combined number of district staff	136

Source: Data on district employees and salaries recieved pursuant to a FOIA request to each school district*

* School districts were asked to return a list of full- and part-time district administrators and support staff that included only those workers employed by the district office, not by individual schools within the district.

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Appendix B

Homewood-Flossmoor-area school district offices employ 68 administrative staff, over and above the administration directly employed at each district school

District-office administrator and support-staff salaries of Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District 233 and its elementary feeder districts

Name	Position/Title	Salary
Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District 233		
Mansfield, Edward V.	Superintendent	\$278,978
Parchem, Kenneth	Chief School Business Official	\$185,658
Posing, Gary	Director of Technology	\$150,243
Wagner, Thomas E.	Director of Buildings and Grounds	\$137,292
Bryant, Jodi	Director of Human Resources and PR	\$133,234
Spaniak, Nancy	Director of Curriculum and Prof. Development	\$126,861
Dreger, Kathleen	Director of Special Education/Department Chair	\$125,057
Cherry, Ann M.	Director of Alumni Relations	\$77,263
Dunlap, Susan L.	Business Office Manager	\$73,174
Gnaster, Patricia	Executive Assistant to the Superintendent	\$71,331
Crilly, Susan	Payroll Clerk	\$67,142
Castagna, Nicole G.	Assistant for Public Relations	\$58,448
Strugala, Ruth	Assistant to the Director of HR/PR	\$52,459
Nelson, Roy	Residency Investigator	\$49,254
Lockwood, Karen	Assistant to the Director of Curriculum and PD	\$47,778
Hall, Karen	Assistant, Business Office	\$44,158
Raiser, Lynn	Assistant, Business Office	\$42,578
Burchett, Lloyd	Residency Investigator	\$42,037
Sparr, Judith	Assistant to the Director of Special Education	\$41,829
McAlister, Elizabeth	Switchboard Operator	\$37,710
Gage, Candice C.	Assistant for Director of Buildings and Grounds	\$34,736
	Total salary	\$1,877,221
	Number of staff	21
Flossmoor School District 161		
Doster, Craig M.	Superintendent	\$198,744
LaBella, Frances A.	Director – Business Services	\$140,608
Warke, Amy L.	Director – Curriculum	\$135,363
Wilson, Nancy J.	Director – Special Education	\$133,581
Le, Tony M.	Director – Technology	\$108,150
Tomasino, Christine M.	Technology Staff	\$90,000
Stachacz, Scott M.	Director of Buildings and Grounds	\$82,400
Reid, Steve B.	Technology Staff	\$70,983
Perino, M. Catherin	Executive Associate	\$63,432
Majewski, Pamela	Executive Associate	\$62,801
Razor, Lennard A.	Network Administrator	\$61,800

Name	Position/Title	Salary
Raven, Karin E.	Comptroller	\$61,491
Renko, Jacqueline L.	Bilingual Coordinator	\$58,467
Stadtler, Terri A.	Human Resources Coordinator	\$53,560
Fox, Susan	Confidential Associate	\$52,120
Manning, Courtney A.	Confidential Associate	\$50,343
Kingdom, Michelle L.	Confidential Secretary	\$43,267
Goers, Emily R.	Bookkeeper	\$43,096
Stadter, Nancy L.	Bookkeeper	\$41,969
Alexander, Wanda D.	Receptionist	\$36,334
Hardin, John A. Sr.	Maintenance	\$35,809
Pietrzyk, Donald D.	Maintenance	\$35,809
Stefani, Jennifer L.	Administrative Assistant	\$33,720
David, Ricky	Custodian	\$31,341
Lang Doyle, Deborah A.	Technology Staff	\$30,600
Curtin, Mary E.	Health Secretary	\$26,875
Patterson, Philip A.	Technology Staff	\$26,092
	Total salary	\$1,808,754
	Number of staff	27
Homewood School District 153		
Mitchell, Dale	Superintendent	\$164,300
Gibson, John	Chief School Business Official	\$113,829
Mandisodza, Melanie	Director of Student Support Services	\$93,832
Scardigli, Wayne	Director of Buildings and Grounds	\$91,238
Schaefflein, Kathy	Director for Teaching, Learning, Accountability	\$88,563
Dippold, Bob	Hardware Specialist	\$74,857
Condon, Diana	Personnel	\$59,145
Dunne, Jodi	Accounts Payable	\$59,145
White, Beth	Director of Technology	\$56,925
Brackin, Karen	Payroll and Benefits	\$54,963
Keane, Kevin	Maintenance	\$54,481
Kuehl, Chris	Database Manager	\$45,252
Markert, Mary	Transportation and O and M Support	\$43,056
Pries, Dana	Food Service Director	\$42,143
Dippold, Susan	Grants and Curriculum Assistant	\$41,821
Peck, Shelley	Communications	\$40,105
Dunne, Mary Kay	Registrar and District Receptionist	\$33,830
Hansen, Cathy	Student Support Assistant	\$33,500
Portillo, Kirley	District Driver	\$30,816
Hill, Brian	Buildings and Grounds	\$30,225

Name	Position/Title	Salary
	Total salary	\$2,090,405
	Number of staff	23
	Combined total salary	\$12,476,066
	Combined number of district staff	136

Source: Data on district employees and salaries received pursuant to a FOIA request to each school district*

* School districts were asked to return a list of full- and part-time district administrators and support staff that included only those workers employed by the district office, not by individual schools within the district.

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