

SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE

2000 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Sponsor: David N. Cox

AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION; REQUIRING THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO CONDUCT A STUDY AND MAKE A REPORT ON WHETHER THERE SHOULD BE AN OPTIMUM SIZE FOR SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS BASED ON STUDENT POPULATION.

This act enacts uncodified material.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. **School and school district size study -- Report.**

(1) The State Board of Education shall conduct a study during the year 2000 interim to determine:

(a) if there should be an optimum size for schools and school districts within the state's public education system, based upon student population;

(b) whether smaller or larger schools and school districts, in terms of student population, would better promote the mission and maintain the characteristics of the state's public education system detailed in Sections 53A-1a-103 and 53A-1a-104; and

(c) whether a ceiling or range on the size of schools and school districts, in terms of student population, should be established in statute.

(2) The board shall include consideration of the following issues in its study:

(a) the benefits to students and their parents associated with having smaller or larger schools and school districts;

(b) economies of scale, if they exist, in terms of administrative and support costs associated with having smaller schools and districts and how those costs if increased by having smaller districts could be mitigated;

(c) the acquisition, transfer, construction, and maintenance of capital facilities associated with creating smaller or larger school districts;

(d) space sharing with business and school models with long-range community needs; and

(e) the process by which:

(i) larger districts could be divided into smaller districts;

(ii) smaller districts consolidated into larger districts; and

(iii) new districts would be created as the state's student population continues to grow.

(3) In conducting its study, the board shall seek input from:

(a) local school boards and local school superintendents;

(b) public school administrators, educators, and classified personnel;

(c) higher education personnel from the state's colleges of education;

(d) students and parents of students;

(e) the business community; and

(f) the general public.

(4) (a) The board may establish a task force or use a subcommittee of the board to facilitate the study.

(b) The board shall make a report of its findings, together with any recommendations for proposed legislation, to the Education Interim Committee and the Strategic Planning for Public and Higher Education Committee prior to November 30, 2000.