

Merger

Alabamaⁱ

School districts in Alabama may merge with local action and sometimes approval in a vote of the public. School districts never require state approval in order to merge.

City and county school districts may consolidate through an agreement. If voters petition, the consolidation will require voter approval in a referendum. Additionally, county school districts in Alabama may create tax districts within their school district, and such a tax district may merge with a city school district with the agreement of the school boards of each district and voter approval in a referendum.

Alaskaⁱⁱ

School districts in Alaska may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public.

Because school districts in Alaska are contiguous with municipalities, changes to municipal boundaries will change school district boundaries. Municipalities may merge with a voter petition, approval by the Local Boundary Commission, a state entity created by the state constitution, and voter approval in the municipalities proposed to be consolidated in a referendum. School districts may also be merged when municipalities dissolve and join another school district, which involves a similar process. Finally, school districts may be merged when an area incorporates as a borough, when a borough annexes additional territory containing other school districts, or when a city reclassifies itself so that its territory becomes a part of the borough school district. Each of these processes may occur through a voter petition, approval by the Local Boundary Commission, and voter approval. Additionally, the Local Boundary Commission may submit a proposal for a boundary change to the state legislature and the boundary change will take effect if the legislature does not actively disapprove it.

In some cases of school district merger, the new school district must meet certain population and/or funding requirements. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.”

Arizonaⁱⁱⁱ

School districts in Arizona may merge in several ways, all of which require local action and approval in a vote of the public. School districts do not require state approval in order to merge, except in rare cases. School districts in Arizona may also be involuntarily merged if they are essentially non-operational.

School districts in Arizona may merge with school board action or voter petition and voter approval in each affected district. Districts may also merge to form a union high school district, also with school board action or voter petition and voter approval. Finally, joint school districts, which are located in

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more than one county, may be created through voter petition, review by the State Board of Education, and voter approval in each county. In addition, the county may attach school districts not providing high school grades to adjoining districts.

In cases involving the creation of a union high school district or joint school district, the State Board must determine that the merger meets certain population and funding requirements, and must consider funding and equity and geographic factors. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements,” and “Considerations for Approval.” In more typical cases of school district mergers, the county superintendent will prepare a report including funding and equity, and educational factors, but the county is not required to approve the merger.

Arkansas^{iv}

School districts in Arkansas may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and typically, approval in a vote of the public. School districts in Arkansas may also be involuntarily merged if they fail to meet minimum population, accreditation, facilities, or academic requirements. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.”

School districts may merge with consolidation, which requires voter petition, school board action, approval by the State Board of Education, and voter approval in a referendum in the affected districts. Alternatively, school districts may merge through annexation, which also requires voter petition, school board action, and State Board approval, but which may be approved by either voters in the receiving district, or by the receiving school board. School districts may also be involuntarily merged by the State Board if their ADM falls below 350, or in cases of loss of accreditation, facilities distress, or academic distress.

In cases of school district mergers, state entities must determine that the merger meets certain diversity requirements. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.” In cases of voluntary consolidation, the State Board will consider geographical criteria. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

California^v

School districts in California may merge through local action, typically approval by a state entity, and sometimes approval in a vote of the public. School districts in California may also be involuntarily merged to a neighboring district if they fail to meet minimum population requirements for a school district. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.”

School districts may merge with voter petition, school board action, or county committee action; approval by the State Board of Education, and voter approval in a referendum. The election area for the referendum will be determined by the State Board. However, school district mergers may be approved by only the county committee, without State Board approval, if all affected school boards and the county superintendent of schools approve. Elementary school districts with fewer than eight students and high school or K-12 school districts with fewer than eleven students may be involuntarily dissolved

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by the county committee.

In considering school district mergers, the county committee and the State Board must determine that the merger meets demographic, and funding and equity requirements. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.”

Colorado^{vi}

School districts in Colorado may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public.

School districts may merge with school board action or voter petition, approval by a local planning commission, a school district accountability committee, and the Commissioner of Education, and approval by a majority of voters in a referendum in each affected school district. If the plan requires an increase in the tax rate, voters must also approve the tax rate. School districts may also be involuntarily dissolved and annexed to neighboring school districts. If a school district loses accreditation, it may be merged through the process described above. If a school district loses accreditation, fails to provide grades K-12, or has fewer than fifty students, the State Board of Education may also initiate a separate process for dissolution and annexation, which requires approval by a local planning committee, the Commissioner of Education, and the school boards of the affected school districts.

In cases of school district merger, the Commissioner of Education will consider funding and equity and educational factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Connecticut^{vii}

Some school districts in Connecticut may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public.

Town school districts in Connecticut may merge by forming regional school districts. The process to do so includes action by the town legislative body, approval by an appointed regional school study committee and the State Board of Education, and voter approval by each town in a referendum.

Delaware^{viii}

School districts in Delaware may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public.

School district mergers in Delaware must be initiated by the State Board of Education and must be approved by voters in each affected district in a referendum.

Florida^{ix}

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School districts in Florida may merge with local action and approval in a vote of the public. School districts never require state approval in order to merge.

Contiguous county school districts may merge with voter approval in each county.

Georgia^x

School districts in Georgia may merge with local action and approval in a vote of the public. School districts never require state approval in order to merge.

Independent school districts may merge with the county school district with a voter petition and voter approval at a referendum in the independent school district. Additionally, any two county or independent school districts may consolidate with voter approval in each district.

Hawaii

Hawaii state law does not describe a process for school district merger.

Idaho^{xi}

School districts in Idaho may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public. School districts may also be involuntarily merged if they fail to meet minimum population requirements for a school district. (For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.”)

Contiguous school districts may merge with board action or voter petition, approval from the State Board of Education, and voter approval by each school district in a referendum. The State Board may also merge school districts that have not operated a school for at least one year, has had less than five students for two years, or has an insufficient number of trustees.

Illinois^{xii}

School districts in Illinois may merge with local action, sometimes approval by a state entity, and typically approval in a vote of the public.

School districts may merge with school board action or voter petition, approval by the regional superintendent, approval by the State Superintendent, and voter approval by each district in a referendum. Alternatively, school districts may be dissolved and attached onto one or more other school districts through school board action or petition by voters or property owners and approval by a regional board of trustees. School districts with a general population of less than 5,000 or with fewer than 750 students may be dissolved and annexed by the regional board without a vote in a referendum.

In cases of school district merger, the regional superintendent or the regional board of trustees will

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consider educational and funding and equity factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Indiana^{xiii}

School districts in Indiana may merge with local action and sometimes approval in a vote of the public. School districts do not require state approval in order to merge, except in rare cases.

School districts may merge with action by school boards or voter petitions, and if voters request it, majority voter approval in each participating school district at a referendum. School districts may consolidate as a metropolitan school district through a similar process. School districts may also consolidate as a county school district when school boards pass identical resolutions. A school district may also annex another district when both adopt identical resolutions. Voters may petition to have the annexation reviewed in court. Finally, school districts may consolidate through a separate process that requires school board action, approval by the State Board of Education, and voter approval either through a petition signed by 55% of voters in the proposed district or by approval in a referendum.

In cases of merger approved by the State Board, the state will consider funding and equity and educational factors. In cases where a school district merger is reviewed by a court, the court may consider funding and equity, educational, and geographical factors, and sometimes grade level and population. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Iowa^{xiv}

School districts in Iowa may merge with local action and approval in a vote of the public. School districts never require state approval in order to merge.

School districts may merge with a voter petition, approval by the area education agency, and majority approval by voters in at least three quarters of the affected districts and a majority of voters overall. (School districts in Iowa are overseen by fifteen area education agencies.) School districts may also dissolve by the same process if at least 95% of the assessed property value of the school district will be attached to one district. Otherwise, school districts may dissolve with a voter petition, approval by the school boards of the districts to which territory will be attached, and majority voter approval.

In cases of school district mergers, the area education agency will consider population, funding and equity, educational and geographic factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Kansas^{xv}

School districts in Kansas may merge with local action, approval in a vote of the public, and typically approval by a state entity.

School districts may merge with action from school boards, approval by the State Board of Education,

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and voter approval in the proposed school district. Alternatively, school districts may be dissolved and attached to another district through a voter petition and majority approval in a referendum. School districts may also be dissolved with a school board petition, and approval by the State Board if the State Board finds that the district fails to meet minimum requirements to be a school district. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.”

Kentucky^{xvi}

School districts in Kentucky may merge with local action and sometimes approval in a vote of the public. School districts do not require state approval in order to merge, except in rare cases.

Contiguous school districts may merge with only concurrent action by their school boards. Additionally, independent school districts may merge with the county school district with school board action and approval by the county board of education. If the county board refuses the proposal or if the school boards cannot agree on a proposal, the proposal must be approved by voters at a referendum. If the independent school district cannot meet its current operating expenses from projected revenue and the two boards cannot agree to the terms of a merger, the proposal must be approved by the State Board of Education.

Louisiana^{xvii}

School districts in Louisiana may merge with local action, approval in a vote of the public, and sometimes approval by a state entity.

School district mergers may be initiated by school board resolution, or an act of the state legislature, and must be approved at a referendum by voters in each school district.

Maine^{xviii}

School districts in Maine may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public.

Municipal school districts may form a regional school district, or an “alternative organizational structure” with school board action, approval by the State Commissioner of Education and majority approval in each school district. Municipal school districts may also join a regional school district through a similar process.

In cases of school district mergers, the State Commissioner must determine that the merged school district meets certain grade level and population requirements. Additionally, approving entities will consider funding and equity, and educational factors. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements” and “Considerations for Approval.”

Maryland

Maryland state law does not describe a process for school district merger.

Massachusetts^{xix}

School districts in Massachusetts may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and sometimes approval in a vote of the public.

City or town school districts in Massachusetts may merge by forming a regional school district, which requires action by the town selectmen and school board, approval from a regional school district planning board and the state Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, and voter approval at a town meeting or election. Regional school districts may also expand to encompass additional towns or cities, which requires action from the board of the regional school district and approval by the state commissioner.

In cases of school district merger, the approving entities will consider population, funding and equity, educational, and geographical factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Michigan^{xx}

School districts in Michigan may merge through local action, approval in a vote of the public, and sometimes approval by a state entity. School districts may also be involuntarily merged if they fail to meet minimum financial criteria, or are essentially non-operating.

School districts may merge through one of several processes. Consolidation requires a school board resolution or voter petition, approval by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and majority voter approval in each school district. Annexation requires a school board resolution from the annexing school district, and voter approval in each district, if bonded debt is to be assumed by the annexing district and voter approval in only annexed district if it is not. Finally, intermediate school districts may divide and attach them onto neighboring school districts with school board action or voter petition and voter approval in the district. School districts may also be involuntarily dissolved and annexed to another district by the State Superintendent if there are not enough residents willing to run the district or if it meets certain criteria demonstrating lack of financial viability, growing deficit, and declining enrollment.

Minnesota^{xxi}

School districts in Minnesota may merge through local action, approval by a state entity, and sometimes approval in a vote of the public.

School districts may merge with school board action or voter petition, approval by the Commissioner of Education, and approval by each school board. If any school board fails to approve the proposal, voters may approve by petition instead. If either school boards or voters call for a referendum, the proposal

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must be approved by a majority in each school district. Alternatively, school districts may be dissolved and attached to other districts with county board resolution, voter petition, or voter approval at an election. Dissolution requires voter approval in a referendum if the proposal was initiated by petition or election, if the original petition advised a referendum, and if the dissolution order makes a different plan for annexation than was requested. The county Board of Commissioners may initiate this dissolution process for districts that fail to maintain a school.

Mississippi^{xxii}

School districts in Mississippi may merge through local action, approval by a state entity, and sometimes approval in a vote of the public. School districts may also be involuntarily merged by a state entity.

School districts may merge with school board action. If voters petition, the merger must be approved by a majority of voters in each school district in a referendum. Alternatively, school districts may dissolve with petition from two thirds of voters in the district and become annexed to another district. All processes that involve the “reorganization, abolition or alteration” of a school district also requires approval by the State Board of Education. Additionally, the Mississippi state legislature has also enacted statutes specifically merging certain school districts.

Missouri^{xxiii}

School districts in Missouri may merge through local action, and approval in a vote of the public, and sometimes approval by a state entity. School districts may be involuntarily merged if they fail to meet minimum population requirements, or are essentially non-operational.

School districts mergers may be initiated by local school districts or by county governments. Mergers initiated by local school districts require school board action or a petition by voters and voter approval in each affected district in a referendum. School districts may also dissolve with a voter petition and voter approval in the dissolving district. Alternatively, the county government may initiate school district merger by adopting reorganization plans. This process requires approval by the State Board of Education and majority voter approval in each affected school district. The State Board may also order a school district merged when a boundary change leaves the remaining school district with fewer than twenty students or when a school district fails to meet the minimum term set in law or is classified as unaccredited.

In cases of county-initiated school district mergers, the county will consider funding and equity and educational factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Montana^{xxiv}

School districts in Montana may merge with local action and approval in a vote of the public. School districts never require state approval in order to merge.

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School districts may merge with a school board resolution or a petition by voters and voter approval in a referendum.

Nebraska^{xxv}

School districts in Nebraska may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and sometimes approval in a vote of the public. School districts may be involuntarily merged if they are essentially non-operational.

School districts in Nebraska may merge through either a petition process or a board process. The petition process requires a voter petition, approval by the State Committee for Reorganization of School Districts, and majority approval in a referendum. The board process requires school board action and approval by the State Committee, but not a referendum. Additionally, any two school districts serving a population of more than 150,000 may create a unified school district with approval from the State Committee. Finally, the State Committee may dissolve school districts that have less than three voters, fail to maintain an elementary school, or that contract for instruction for more than two consecutive years.

In cases of school district mergers, the State Committee will consider funding and equity and educational factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Nevada

Nevada state law does not describe a process for school district mergers.

New Hampshire^{xxvi}

School districts in New Hampshire may merge with local action and typically, approval in a vote of the public. School districts do not require state approval in order to merge, except in rare cases.

School districts may merge in one of several ways: School districts may merge by creating a cooperative school, with approval by a planning committee, and approval by voters in each district at a meeting. Enlarging a cooperative school district will also require voter approval in both the existing and joining school districts at a meeting. If there are multiple school districts serving the same town, those districts may merge with only state approval. Finally, a special school district organized under a special act of the state legislature may dissolve itself and join the town school district with only the voter approval at a meeting.

In cases of school district merger where a cooperative school district is formed, approving entities will consider population and funding and equity factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

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New Jersey^{xxvii}

School districts in New Jersey may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public. School districts may also be involuntarily merged to a neighboring district if they are essentially non-operational.

School districts in New Jersey may merge by creating a regional school district. This requires action from the local school board, approval by the State Commissioner of Education, and voter approval in each municipality. Existing regional school districts may also be enlarged through a similar process. Finally, county superintendents may eliminate non-operating school districts and merge them onto neighboring districts.

New Mexico^{xxviii}

School districts in New Mexico may merge with local action and approval by a state entity. School districts never require voter approval in order to merge. School districts may also be involuntarily merged to a neighboring district if they fail to meet minimum grade level requirements or are essentially non-operational. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.”

School districts may merge with identical resolutions from each local school board and approval from the State Board of Education. Alternatively, school districts may merge through a slightly different process, which involves a district requesting an investigation by a survey committee, approval by each school board, and approval by the State Board. The State Board may also involuntarily merge school districts that fail to maintain a junior or senior high school or have an unaccredited or deficient school.

In cases of school district merger, the State Board must determine that the new school district would meet certain funding and other requirements. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.”

New York^{xxix}

School districts in New York may merge with local action, sometimes approval by a state entity, and typically approval in a vote of the public. School district mergers may also be initiated by a regional or state entity.

School districts may merge in one of several ways, depending on the type of school districts involved. School districts may merge with a petition by voters, approval by the State Commissioner of Education, and voter approval at a meeting or referendum. School districts may be added to a central school district with only a voter petition and voter approval, if voters request it. School districts may be added to a union free school district with action from either the local school board or a regional superintendent, approval by the State Commissioner, and voter approval at a meeting. Common school districts or union free school districts may merge with a voter petition, approval by the Commissioner, and voter approval at a meeting. Finally, school districts may merge with a city school district of less than 125,000 with a vote at a meeting of the non-city school district and approval by the State Commissioner. The regional superintendent also has the power to “dissolve, reform and construct” school districts.

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North Carolina^{xxx}

School districts in North Carolina may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and sometimes approval in a vote of the public. School districts may also be merged by a county entity, with state approval, or by a state entity.

School districts may merge in one of several ways. Local school boards may agree to consolidate, with approval by the State Board of Education, as well as approval by other county and local entities, and sometimes voter approval in a referendum. City school districts may dissolve with State Board approval and become a part of the county school district. County boards of commissioners may merge all districts in the same county, with State Board approval. School districts in contiguous counties may merge with the approval of the State Board, the approval of the tax-levying bodies of the school district, and if voters petition, voter approval in a referendum. Finally, the State Board may merge contiguous county school districts.

North Dakota^{xxxii}

School districts in North Dakota may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and typically approval in a vote of the public. School districts may also be involuntarily merged to a neighboring district if they fail to meet minimum financial criteria or are essentially non-operational.

School districts may merge with action from the local school boards, county committee hearing, approval by the State Board of Education, and majority voter approval in each district in a referendum. School boards may also request that the county superintendent dissolve the district and merge it to one or more other school districts. The county superintendent will also merge school districts that are not financially able to educate students. Either the county superintendent or the county committee may dissolve and merge school districts that have not operated a school for a year and have not reorganized. Both dissolution processes require a county committee hearing and approval by the State Board.

In all cases of border changes, the new school district must meet certain grade level requirements. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.” In cases of school district mergers, the county committee will consider population, funding and equity, and geographical factors. In cases of involuntary school district mergers, the county committee will additionally consider educational factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Ohio^{xxxiii}

School districts in Ohio may merge with local action, sometimes approval by a state entity, and sometimes approval in a vote of the public.

School districts in Ohio may merge in one of several ways, and school district mergers may be initiated by local action, or action by education service centers or by the State Board of Education. Two or more school districts in the same county where the county has less than 100,000 people may merge with a voter petition, review by a study commission, and voter approval in at least two school districts. A

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district may be transferred to another district in the same educational service center with either a voter petition or a resolution of the governing board of the educational service center, and voter approval. School districts may also be transferred to an adjoining educational service center through a similar process, except that voter approval is only required if voters petition. The State Board of Education, with a request from the local school board or based on its own studies, may also transfer an entire school district to another school district, with majority voter approval in both districts.

The State Board may transfer a school district with less than \$4,000 of taxable property wealth per student to a school district with more than 25,000 students without voter approval but with the approval of the educational service center. In a separate process, the State Board may create a new school district from one or more school districts and voter approval is required only if voters petition. Finally, Ohio state law also specifically provides for territory transfer in cases where a city or village annexes all or part of the school district: If the school district's entire territory is annexed, that school district is automatically merged to the city or village school district. In cases of school district merger initiated by the State Board, the State Board will consider educational factors. For more information, see "Considerations for Approval."

Oklahoma^{xxxiii}

School districts in Oklahoma may merge with local action and approval in a vote of the public. School districts do not typically require state approval in order to merge, but school districts may also be involuntarily merged by the state if they fail to meet minimum academic requirements or are essentially non-operational.

School districts may merge in one of several ways: They may consolidate with school board action or voter petition and voter approval in each affected district. Alternatively, school districts may annex all of another school district through a similar process. School districts may also dissolve with a majority vote and be attached to neighboring districts by the State Board of Education. The State Board may also involuntarily merge school districts that are "academically at-risk," as well as those that lose accreditation or fail to open or maintain a school.

Oregon^{xxxiv}

School districts in Oregon may merge with local action and sometimes voter approval. School districts never require state approval in order to merge. However, school districts may be voluntarily merged to a neighboring school district if they fail to meet minimum population requirements or are essentially non-operational. For more information, see "Minimum Requirements."

School districts may merge with action from local school boards or a voter petition and action from the district boundary board, which consists of the governing body of the county. The district boundary board will give notice before the merger takes effect, and if voters petition, the merger will be submitted to a voter referendum where it must receive majority approval in each district.

The district boundary board may also involuntarily merge a school district onto one or more other

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school districts if the district failed to operate a school for one year, or meet minimum population requirements. (See “Minimum Requirements.”) Additionally, school districts may join union high school districts with voter approval in both the district to be merged and the union high school district.

Pennsylvania^{xxxv}

School districts in Pennsylvania may merge with local action and approval by a state entity. School districts never require voter approval in order to merge.

School districts may consolidate with action from local school boards and approval by the state Superintendent of Education. If a city with a population of more than one million annexes an area in a smaller school district, the school district will be annexed to the city school district.

In cases of school district merger, the state Superintendent will consider educational factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Rhode Island^{xxxvi}

School districts in Rhode Island may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public. A state entity may also begin the process of merging a school district onto one or more neighboring districts if the district fails to meet minimum population and funding requirements.

School districts in Rhode Island may voluntarily merge with action from city and town councils, approval by a regional school district planning board and review by the state Board of Regents, and voter approval in each city or town. The State Commissioner of Education may begin the school district merger process if they find that a district has failed to maintain a high school enrollment of at least one hundred students or no longer has the fiscal capacity to provide an education consistent with the law. State-initiated school district mergers must also include approval by a regional school district planning board and voter approval in each city or town.

In cases of school district merger, the regional planning board will consider funding and equity factors. In deciding whether to initiate school district mergers, the State Commissioner will consider demographic and funding and equity factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

South Carolina^{xxxvii}

School districts in South Carolina may merge with state or county action, and sometimes local action and approval in a vote of the public. School districts may also be involuntarily merged to a neighboring school district if they fail to meet certain academic or financial requirements.

School districts may be merged by state action: The General Assembly may merge school districts. Additionally, the State Superintendent may take over management of a school district if a state of emergency is declared in the district, which includes the power to consolidate the district with other

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districts. Alternatively, county boards of education may merge school districts. The latter process also requires approval from the area's delegation to the state legislature or majority voter approval through a petition or through a combination of a petition and a referendum.

In cases of school district merger, the county board of education will consider educational factors. For more information, see "Considerations for Approval."

South Dakota^{xxxviii}

School districts in South Dakota may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public. School districts may also be involuntarily merged to a neighboring district if they fail to meet population requirements or other minimum requirements for a school district. For more information, see "Minimum Requirements."

School districts may merge through school board action or voter petition, review by the Secretary of Education, and majority vote in each school district. In addition, school districts with fewer than one hundred students or that lose accreditation may be involuntarily merged by the state.

In cases of school district merger, the Secretary of Education will consider population, funding and equity, and educational factors. For more information, see "Considerations for Approval."

Tennessee^{xxxix}

School districts in Tennessee may merge with a process that sometimes requires local action and sometimes requires approval in a vote of the public. School districts never require state approval in order to merge.

School districts may be merged if a special school district is transferred to the county school district, with approval by a majority of voters in a referendum in the special school district. If the merger would at least double the enrollment in the county school district, a transition committee including local leaders and state-appointed members will develop the transition plan. School districts in counties with multiple school districts may also merge by consolidating in a county school district with action from a county planning commission, approval from the governing body of any affected municipality or any affected school district, and approval from voters in each city and special school district and in the remaining area in a referendum. The plan must be filed with the Commissioner of Education, and the Department of Education may make recommendations, but state approval is not required. County school districts may also merge by creating a multi-county school district, which requires the approval by the governing bodies of the county, and that a plan be filed with the Commissioner of Education.

Texas^{xl}

School districts in Texas may merge with local action and approval in a vote of the public. School districts never require state approval in order to merge. School districts may also be involuntarily

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merged for failing to meet minimum academic standards or if they fail to meet other minimum standards for school districts.

School districts may merge with school board resolutions or voter petition and voter approval in each school district. School districts may also merge with one or more other districts by voluntarily dissolving their own school districts, with action by the board of trustees and voter approval in the district to be dissolved. Additionally, the State Commissioner of Education may merge certain school districts, including districts that have been rated “academically” unacceptable for two years, districts that have failed to operate a school district for a full year, and districts that have lost their accreditation.

Utah^{xli}

School districts in Utah may merge with local action and sometimes approval in a vote of the public. School districts never require state approval in order to merge.

School districts may merge if the majority of members of each affected school board present a resolution to the county legislative body. Alternatively, the school board or voters in each district may petition the county legislative body to have the question come to a vote in a referendum. The merger must be approved by each district.

Vermont^{xlii}

Some school districts in Vermont may merge with local action, approval in a vote of the public, and sometimes approval by a state entity.

City or town school districts may merge by forming a union school district, which requires school board action or voter petition, approval by the State Board of Education, and voter approval at school district meetings. Formation of the district requires voter approval in all the districts deemed necessary to the union school district, though other school districts may also vote. Additionally, union school districts may merge by adding additional town or city school districts to the union school district. This type of merger may be initiated by either school district outside of the union school district or the union school district and requires approval by the State Board and approval by a majority of voters at a town meeting for that purpose. Finally, an incorporated school district may surrender its charter and become a part of the town school district with only a vote at a town meeting announced for that purpose.

In cases of school district merger where a union school district is being formed, the State Board will consider educational factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Virginia^{xliii}

School districts in Virginia may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and sometimes approval in a vote of the public.

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The State Board of Education may merge school districts with the consent of the school boards and governing bodies of the county, city, or town affected. Additionally, school district mergers may occur if cities and counties merge or if cities with school districts transition to town governments. City/county consolidation requires a petition to the circuit court and voter approval at a referendum. Cities with fewer than 50,000 may transition to town government with an ordinance passed by a majority of voters and by petitioning the circuit court.

In considering school district border changes, the State Board should consider population, grade level, educational, and geographical factors. In considering school district border changes that involve changes to municipal boundaries, the court may also consider population and funding and equity factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Washington^{xliv}

School districts in Washington may merge with local action and typically approval in a vote of the public. School districts never require state approval in order to merge. School districts in Washington may also be involuntarily merged if they fail to meet minimum population requirements, or are essentially non-operational. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.”

School districts may voluntarily merge with a voter petition to the Education Service District Superintendent and approval by voters in the affected school district in a referendum. The Education Service District Superintendent will call the election, but their approval is not required. Financially insolvent school districts may also be dissolved and annexed to one or more contiguous districts with an agreement between the insolvent district and the annexing district and approval by the financial oversight committee. The Superintendent of Education may also file a petition to dissolve a financially insolvent school district with the recommendation of the financial oversight committee. Finally, the Education Service District Superintendent may dissolve a school district and annex it to neighboring districts if it has fewer than five students in grades K-8 or if it has failed to maintain the minimum school term required by law.

Approving entities will consider funding and equity, educational, and geographical factors only in rare cases of dissolution. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

West Virginia^{xlv}

School districts in West Virginia may merge with local action, approval by a state entity, and approval in a vote of the public.

All school districts in West Virginia are county school districts; counties themselves may consolidate with approval from 55% of voters in each affected county. However, the formation of a new school district in this way will likely require legislative approval.

Wisconsin^{xlvi}

FRONTIER

School districts in Wisconsin may merge with local action, and sometimes approval in a vote of the public. School districts do not require state approval in order to merge, except in rare cases. School districts in Wisconsin may also be involuntarily merged if they are essentially non-operational.

School districts in Wisconsin may voluntarily merge by consolidating one or more districts, or by dissolving and being attached to other districts. Consolidation requires approval by the affected school boards and, if voters petition or if a school board requests a referendum, majority voter approval in each affected district. Dissolution requires school board approval, an advisory referendum, if voters petition or if the school board requests it, and approval by the School District Boundary Appeal Board. The School District Boundary Appeal Board is a state entity with members appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Additionally, the School District Boundary Appeal Board may involuntarily consolidate school districts that have failed to operate sufficient classes at each grade level for two or more years.

In considering school district border changes, school boards and approving entities should consider demographic, finance and equity, educational, and geographical factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

Wyoming^{xlvii}

School districts in Wyoming may merge with local action, and approval by a state entity. School districts never require voter approval in order to merge. School districts in Wyoming may also be involuntarily merged if they are essentially non-operational.

School districts in Wyoming may merge when district boundary boards, with the consent of the affected school boards, submit a proposal to the State Board of Education for approval. District boundary boards are county entities, and include the county assessor, the board of county commissioners, and the county treasurer. A school district may also be involuntarily consolidated if they fail to maintain a school for six months in any school year. The district boundary board will submit to the State Board a proposal to combine the school district with one or more adjoining districts.

New districts formed through border changes must meet certain funding requirements. For more information, see “Minimum Requirements.” Additionally, in considering school district border changes, the State Board should consider funding and equity, and educational factors. For more information, see “Considerations for Approval.”

For a look at all states’ laws regarding school district borders and to learn more about the impact of these policies, visit edbuild.org/content/frontier.

Citations

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