

PLANNING ISSUES—EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Objectives

1. To facilitate and support the availability of quality public school systems efficiently and conveniently serving all parts of Kane County.
 2. To acknowledge the importance of the educational services provided by the school districts servicing Kane County by encouraging appropriate school district participation in the development review process.
 3. To recognize that development impacts the capital and operational expenses of school districts and their ability to provide quality educational services.
 4. To recognize the acquisition of school sites with other public improvements as an integral part of an overall system of community facilities.
 5. To encourage municipalities to coordinate land use planning in recognition of the effects of new residential developments on school districts by ensuring that the capital costs of schools are incorporated in any land use decisions.
 6. To advocate and support State of Illinois legislative action that will provide adequate funding of public education for both capital and operational expenses.
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Chapter Focus



As growth and development occurs in Kane County, school districts experience increased student enrollment and require additional funds. The State of Illinois holds the primary responsibility for financing public education, according to the state constitution. However, the present level of state funding does not provide the majority of revenues to school districts. The majority of funding comes from local property taxes. Through local governments, schools receive additional funding from land/cash ordinances as a result of new development. It is important for local governments to facilitate relationships between developers and school districts to ensure compensation for new students. Through land use planning, local governments can also control growth in their communities, the necessity of new schools, and the influence and timing of new school construction. Kane County is committed to working with municipalities and will continue to coordinate land use planning activities with the municipalities, give school districts the opportunity to participate in the development review process, and annually review the county land/cash contribution ordinance. Cooperative efforts by the state, the county, municipalities, schools, and private developers can support one of the county's most important attributes, its educational services.

This chapter examines:

- Kane County school districts
 - School funding
 - School expenses and infrastructure
 - Future directions for educational services
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Kane County School Districts

There are 15 school districts whose areas are entirely or partially within Kane County. Nine of these school districts have their administrative offices within the county and are served by the Kane County Regional Office of Education. Figure 77 depicts Kane County school district and township boundaries. School districts administered by the Kane County Regional Office of Education are depicted in blue. School districts administered by adjoining counties are shaded in gray.

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The nine community unit school districts of Kane County provide education for elementary, junior high/middle school, and high school students. Student enrollment in these districts during school year 2001 - 2002 increased by 25,000 since 1993 to approximately 105,000. It should be noted that the figure of 105,000 includes students residing outside Kane County, yet whose school districts report to the Kane County Regional Office of Education. For example, some students residing in Cook County may attend school in Elgin District #U-46, which is administered by the Kane County Regional Office of Education. Conversely, some students living within Kane County may attend school in a district reporting to an adjacent county. These students are not included in the 105,000 reported by the Kane County Regional Office of Education.

In school year 2001 - 2002, there were 11,033 students from Kane County and the surrounding area enrolled in non-public (private and parochial) schools in Kane County. These students comprised 11% of the total school population enrolled in public and non-public schools in the county. The majority of non-public school students attended approximately 30 private and parochial schools.

The rate of student enrollment growth in the nine community unit school districts of Kane County can be indicated by percentage growth or numeric growth (Refer to Figure 78). By percentage growth, the fastest growth school districts between 1993 and 2001 were Geneva School District #304 at 62%, Kaneland School District #302 at 38%, and Dundee School District #300 at 35%. Numerically, the fastest growing districts were Elgin School District #U-46 (an additional 8,621 students), Dundee School District #300 (an additional 4,482 students), and St. Charles School District #303 (an additional 2,762 students).

Increased student enrollment is due to four factors: (1) new residential development, (2) regeneration of older neighborhoods, (3) good quality schools, and (4) expanding families. New residential developments often attract younger families with school age children. As younger families regenerate older, existing neighborhoods, they contribute to the influx of school enrollment. Regenerated neighborhoods are often attributable to the good reputation of a community's school district. As families expand in size, school districts also gain additional children.

Over time, school districts experience population fluctuations as families with school-age children mature. This cycle generally occurs over a 20-to 25-year period. When the population cycle is at its lowest and there are smaller numbers of school-age children, the result is excess school capacity. When the cycle is at its height with larger numbers of school-age children, school districts may experience overcrowding. This cycle needs to be addressed when making investments for school facilities.

Higher Education

Kane County is served by two public community colleges, Waubensee Community College (WCC) in Sugar Grove and Elgin Community College (ECC) in Elgin. The community colleges provide accredited coursework designed for Associate degrees and certificates. These include Associate of Art or Science and Associate of Applied Science in career and technical areas. In addition, adult basic education, English as a second language, non-credit continuing education, and workforce development are provided to the community. Bachelor and Master Degree opportunities are provided by Judson College (Elgin) and Aurora University (Aurora). A number of regional colleges and universities offer courses at the community colleges or in other local facilities in Kane County.

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In 2001, the Elgin Community College student body included 9,636 students with 75% attending part time and 25% attending full time. Ethnic minorities were 37% of the total student body and the average age of an ECC student was 28 years old. One-third, or 1,000 of 3,000 area high school graduates, choose ECC every year.



Waubonsee Community College's (WCC) enrollment for spring 2003 was 9,362 with 21% attending full time and 79% attending part time. Ethnic minorities are approximately 37% of the total student body, and the average age of a WCC student is 30 years old. Of those students receiving Associate Degrees, 72% transfer to four-year schools. Of those, 85% of the transfer students attend Illinois colleges and universities.

In addition to college transfer programs, both community colleges are actively involved in workforce development. They serve by offering occupational degree and certificate programs in a number of areas leading to certification, continuing professional education, and customized training for business, industry and government organizations. Additionally, they are involved as partners in the Workforce Investment Act through their local Illinois Employment and Training Centers (IETCs).

Aurora University is an independent, comprehensive university founded in 1893 offering 40 undergraduate degrees, 6 masters degrees, and 2 doctoral degrees. More than 4,000 degree seeking students and approximately 10,000 non-degree program students are enrolled in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. The average age is 24 years old for undergraduate students and 31 years old for graduate students. The university is organized into four colleges: the College of Arts and Sciences, George Williams College including the School of Nursing, School of Social Work and School of Professional Studies, College of Business, and College of Education.

Judson College is a fully accredited, four-year college in Elgin. The college is an American Baptist affiliated, evangelical Christian college of liberal arts, sciences and professions. It is co-ed and offers a Bachelor of Arts degree through traditional college course work. The college provides educational opportunities for working adults through the Adult Instructional Model Program, which enables working adults to earn an undergraduate degree through flexible class scheduling and college course credits over the Internet.

School Funding

According to the 1970 State of Illinois constitution, "The State has the primary responsibility for financing the system of public education" (Article 10, paragraph 1). However, state sources actually account for only about one-third of school funding, while local revenues, primarily the local property tax, supply over 50% of financing. In school year 2000—2001, the proportion of financing for all school districts in Illinois was local revenues, 52%; state, 38%; and federal, 10%. In Kane County, the proportion of school revenues was local, 70%; state, 26%; and federal, 4%.



An increase in state funding of education in accordance with the state's constitutional mandate is necessary. Increasing the state's share of funding could, if properly administered, benefit educational services, as well as serve to reduce individual property taxes. In addition, school districts should continue to seek alternative sources of revenue from grants, foundations, and other non-taxed funds.

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Currently, approximately 65% of an individual's property tax supports public education. The exact percentage of property taxes given to each school district is derived from state aid formulas. The amount of state revenues provided to each school district varies with the relative wealth of each district (as measured by property values), the number of students attending, a measure of the incidence of poverty, and the local tax effort exerted by the school district, as measured by minimum qualifying property tax rates. This description of the state aid formula was taken from the report, "State, Local, and Federal Financing for Illinois Public Schools, 1994-95," p.1 published by the Illinois State Board of Education.



The property value component of the formula is calculated as one-third of the assessed market value as determined by the township assessor. This calculation is termed the equalized assessed valuation (EAV) of property; and is determined for each school district on a per-pupil basis. The equalization factor is determined at the state level. Kane County's equalization factor generally approaches 1.0. Differences in property values between districts sometimes results in inequities in state revenues received by school districts.

The amount of revenue each school district receives from property taxes is based upon a function of the total school tax rate multiplied by the EAV in the district. In 2001 - 2002, Kane County's total school tax rates per district ranged from 4.01% to 5.18% with a median of 4.38%. EAV had a far greater spread, ranging from \$300 million in Central School district #301 to \$3.2 billion in Elgin District #U-46, with a median of \$747 million.

School districts listed by proportion of revenues received from property taxes approximate their order by EAV/pupil. In school year 2001 - 2002, Geneva School District #304 received the highest proportion of revenues from local sources (primarily property taxes) at 83%. East Aurora School District #131 received the lowest proportion at 36%. The median for all Kane County school districts was 72%. St. Charles District #303 had the highest EAV/pupil at \$155,781, while East Aurora District #131 had the lowest at \$45,208. The median for all county school districts was \$113,513 (Refer to Figure 79).

School Expenses and Infrastructure

School financing is broken into two categories, capital and operational expenses. Funds for capital expenses are derived from voter-approved referendum bonds, primarily financed through property taxes and land/cash contributions from new developments. In recent years, the State of Illinois has provided some funds for capital expenses. However, the local school districts and taxpayers provide the majority of capital expense funds. When school districts face overcrowding, they must consider whether to pursue the construction of new buildings or additions, or to utilize existing facilities in new ways. A primary consideration by school districts is whether a new building will be utilized over the long-term as enrollment fluctuates. When a school district deems that new facilities are required to best serve the district's children, a property tax increase is usually necessary to finance construction.



Operational funds cover the costs of teacher and staff salaries; all moveable supplies; equipment, building and grounds upkeep and repair; transportation; and employee benefits. Over 60% of the operational funds for the school districts of Kane County are derived from property taxes. The remaining portion is contributed from state and federal sources. During 2001 - 2002, the average operating expenditure per child in Kane County schools (both elementary and high schools) was \$7,518. Central School District #301 had the highest operating expenditure per child at \$8,411; East Aurora #131 had the lowest at

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\$6,507 (Refer to Figure 79). The operating expenditure figures are based on per ADA (Average Daily Attendance).

A school districts' capital and operational funds are often impacted by new and existing residential land uses. Balanced growth management can help reduce a school district's needs for new capital infrastructure. This begins by a coordinated effort by the county and municipalities to plan for a balanced variety of land uses. In regard to educational services, the aim is to provide tax revenue sources and an appropriate distribution of residential development such that the educational services can be provided for residents in a timely manner. Municipalities have a powerful tool in the form of annexation agreements to assure full funding of school capital needs. Developments that do not provide capital contributions through annexation agreements to school districts should be discouraged.

Kane County school districts obtain a relatively small proportion of capital funds through land/cash contributions from new developments. In many cases, land/cash contributions account for less than 10% of the funds needed for facilities and land. The land/cash contribution for new development in unincorporated Kane County is authorized by state legislation and required by the Kane County Subdivision Regulations. The amount of a land/cash contribution is determined through a formula established by the Land/Cash Subcommittee of the Development Committee of the Kane County Board. The Development Committee reviews the Land/Cash Ordinance with the Regional Superintendent of Schools on an annual basis, amending it as needed (Refer to Figure 8o).

In the past, there has been an effort to pass state legislation that would enable school districts to collect capital impact fees from new residential development (Refer to Figure 8o). Capital impact fees would contribute a portion of the funds for the new and improved facilities required by increased student enrollment. They can be designed to be sensitive to revenue as well as demand and cost. Legislation allowing the use of capital impact fees would enable any county or municipality experiencing growth to enact ordinances to collect such fees. Several municipalities in Kane County have recently approved capital impact fee ordinances.

Legislation for impact fees should incorporate the following elements:

- needs assessment and long-range planning;
- clearly defined uses of fees including land acquisition and site improvements, construction of facilities, and/or additions to existing buildings;
- provisions to strengthen intergovernmental communication and cooperation;
- local discretion regarding details of procedure and implementation; and
- accountability requirement

Future Direction for Educational Services

Quality of life in Kane County is directly tied to the quality of its school system. The caliber of educational services is one of the most critical areas a family examines when deciding where to live, thus directly affecting property values. The school system also affects the county's economic vitality through its role in training future citizens and the work force. In addition, the county's schools form a critical component of public infrastructure.

Continued growth and expansion of schools, mostly in the critical growth portion of the county, is expected during the next 25 years. The national trends in education include a variety of initiatives, including multiple disciplinary studies, block scheduling, year-round school, multiple assessments, higher levels of accountability,

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and greater utilization of technology. At the federal level, No Child Left Behind will continue to have a strong influence on local control and decision making.

Kane County will continue to provide opportunities for school district input and advice throughout the development review process on matters pertaining to schools. There are several stages in the county subdivision review process that provide for school district comments (Refer to Figure 81). Kane County also encourages the municipalities to provide increased opportunities for school district input in their development review processes.

To build better neighborhoods and more livable communities, schools should be thought of as an integrated part of the community rather than as an independent entity. The planning and design of more community-centered schools can enhance education opportunities for all ages, improve walkability to schools and after-school events, and provide a central location for community activities. This can be accomplished through a combination of more compact suburban development and a renaissance of cities and towns, so that residential development is balanced with appropriate commercial, industrial, institutional, and open space uses.

Policies

1. Promote balanced growth by planning an appropriate amount of commercial, research, or industrial uses addressing growing school district needs to cover capital and operational costs.
2. Promote land use policies that recognize the capital and operational impacts of residential development on Kane County school districts.
3. Recognize that the planning decisions made by Kane County and the municipalities directly affect applicable school districts and their ability to maintain current levels of educational services.
4. Recommend that sites for new school facilities be carefully selected so that they are easily accessible by walking to the maximum number of students without adversely impacting the transportation network or surrounding land uses.
5. Encourage the use of school facilities for multiple purposes, including parks, recreation centers, and community meeting places.
6. Review the Kane County Land/Cash Ordinance with the Kane County Regional Office of Education on an annual basis.
7. Encourage and promote good communication between Kane County and the school districts through the objectives established for the Planning Partnership Areas.
8. Work with Kane County municipalities, the Regional Office of Education, and school districts to address school funding at the state level.
9. Encourage and support the Kane County Regional Office of Education and local school districts in seeking resources such as grants, foundation contributions, and non-taxed funds for school operations.

Figure 77—School District & Township Boundaries Map

SCHOOL DISTRICT and TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES

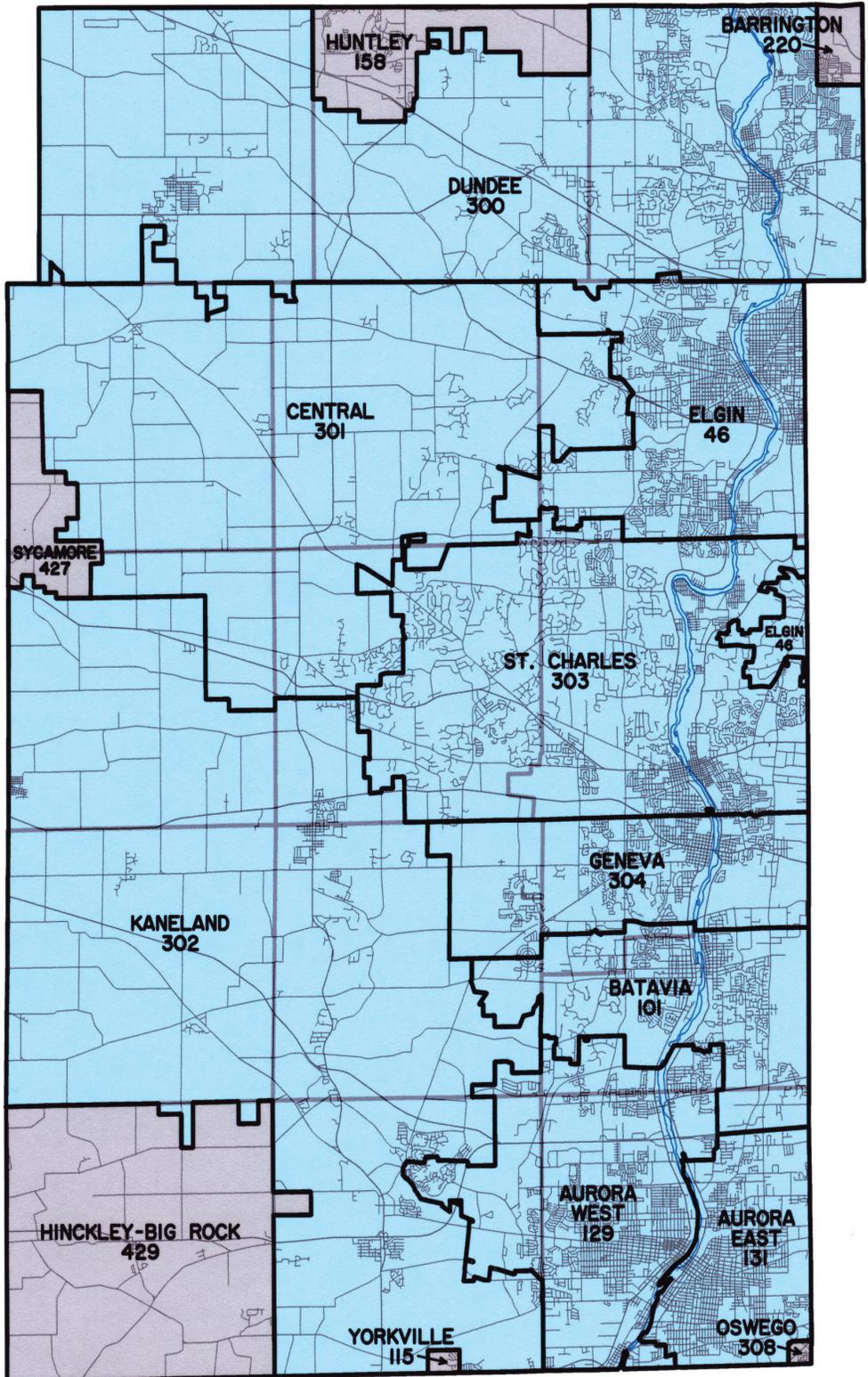


Figure 77

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

- 46 -- ELGIN
- 101 -- BATAVIA
- 115 -- YORKVILLE
- 129 -- WEST AURORA
- 131 -- EAST AURORA
- 158 -- HUNTLEY
- 220 -- BARRINGTON
- 300 -- DUNDEE
- 301 -- CENTRAL
- 302 -- KANELAND
- 303 -- ST. CHARLES
- 304 -- GENEVA
- 308 -- OSWEGO
- 427 -- SYCAMORE
- 429 -- HINCKLEY-BIG ROCK

TOWNSHIPS

HAMPSHIRE	RUTLAND	DUNDEE
BURLINGTON	PLATO	ELGIN
VIRGIL	CAMPTON	ST. CHARLES
KANEVILLE	BLACKBERRY	GENEVA BATAVIA
BIG ROCK	SUGAR GROVE	AURORA



 KANE COUNTY GIS
Development Department
Planning Division
TJM 10/04

PLANNING ISSUES—EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**Figure 78****Student Enrollment in School Districts Served by the Kane County Regional Office of Education**

	Enrollment as of 1983	Enrollment as of 1993	Enrollment as of 2001	Percent Change (1993 to 2001)
Elgin U-46	25,212	29,377	37,998	29.3
Batavia #101	2,848	4,349	5,776	32.8
Aurora West #129	8,513	8,628	11,110	28.8
Aurora East #131	8,757	9,038	10,888	20.5
Dundee #300	10,451	12,675	17,157	35.4
Central #301	1,143	1,766	2,306	30.6
Kaneland #302	1,951	2,080	2,862	37.6
St. Charles #303	6,568	8,987	11,749	30.7
Geneva #304	1,959	3,136	5,071	61.7
Kane County Total	67,402	80,036	104,917	31.1

1. Source: Kane County Regional Office of Education, Annual Report, July 1, 1983—June 30, 1984.
2. Source: Kane County Regional Office of Education, Annual Report, June 1, 1993—June 30, 1994.
3. Source: Kane County Regional Office of Education, Annual Report, July 1, 2001—June 30, 2002.

Figure 79**School Year Tax and Pupil Costs**

	Enrollment as of 11/01	Average Daily Attendance ¹	2001 Equalized Assessed Valuation ²	2001 Equalized Assessed Valuation/ Average Daily Attendance	Total School Tax Rate ²	Operating Expenditures (K-12) ²	Operating Expenditures/ Average Daily Attendance
Elgin U-46	37,998	34,581	\$2,945,085,654	\$85,164	5.23	\$269,139,603	\$7,782
Batavia #101	5,776	5,330	\$571,081,422	\$107,144	4.65	\$34,839,970	\$6,536
Aurora West #129	11,110	9,739	\$896,698,603	\$92,072	4.24	\$61,418,450	\$6,306
Aurora East # 131	10,888	9,619	\$416,954,853	\$43,347	4.65	\$60,009,650	\$6,238
Dundee #300	17,157	15,375	\$1,599,324,524	\$104,021	3.88	\$102,204,154	\$6,647
Central #301	2,306	2,137	\$269,142,579	\$125,944	4.89	\$16,591,579	\$7,763
Kaneland #302	2,862	2,541	\$311,918,095	\$122,754	5.03	\$19,130,903	\$7,528
St. Charles #303	11,749	10,435	\$1,478,472,737	\$141,684	4.22	\$76,864,828	\$7,366
Geneva #304	5,071	4,643	\$594,799,913	\$128,106	4.48	\$33,503,235	\$7,215
Kane County Total	104,917	94,400	\$9,083,478,380	\$96,223		\$673,702,372	\$7,136

1. Source: Kane County Regional Office of Education, Annual Report, July 1, 2001—June 30, 2002.
2. Source: Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Local Education Agency Retrieval Network, 2001.

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Figure 80

Capital Impact Fees

A capital impact fee is a charge imposed by a local government on new development, as a condition of development approval, for a proportionate share of the cost of public facilities needed to serve new development.

Land/Cash Ordinance

A land/cash ordinance requires that each subdivider or developer be required to dedicate land for school sites to serve the immediate and future needs of the residents of the development, or to make a cash contribution in lieu of actual land dedication, or a combination of both.

Source: Kane County Development Department.

Figure 81

School District Input to the Development Process

SCHOOL DISTRICT INPUT TO THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

