



# Navigating Declining Enrollment

*A Toolkit for California District Leaders to  
Design Stronger Schools and Systems*

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# Contents

## Overview

- About This Toolkit
- Audience for This Toolkit
- How This Toolkit Is Organized
- Defining School and System Redesign
- The Human Side of Enrollment Decline

## Component A: Enrollment Decline Analysis

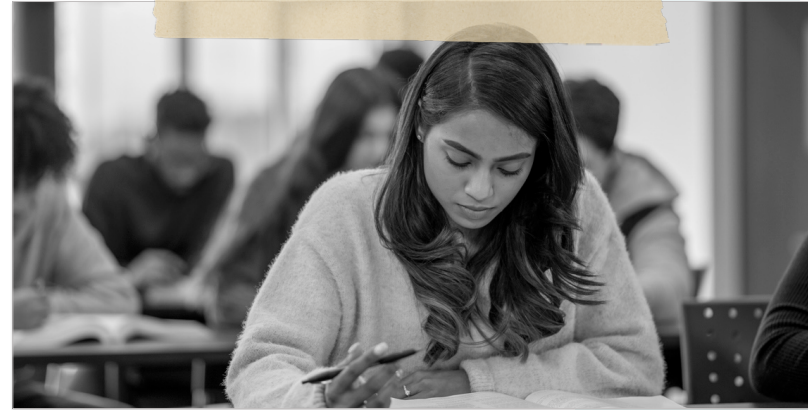
1. Make enrollment and demographic projections.
2. Assess the fiscal effects of declining enrollment.

## Component B: Budgeting

3. Align district initiatives with budgeting.
4. Protect and increase revenues.
5. Audit and reduce current spending.

## Component C: Staffing, Schedules, and Instructional Models

6. Plan for redesign.
7. Implement flexible scheduling and staffing structures.
8. Adopt innovative instructional models.



## Component D: School Closure, Consolidation, and Welcoming Schools

9. Use engaged, equitable approaches to school closures.
10. Support welcoming schools.

## Component E: Partnerships and Facilities

11. Partner with external organizations.
12. Leverage underutilized facilities and district property.

## Sources

## Acknowledgments

## About the Authors

## About Bellwether

# Overview: About This Toolkit

**Declining enrollment may require district leaders to adjust their budgets and the distribution of resources. This process is not easy, but it can result in stronger schools.**

Like most states, California's K-12 enrollment is projected to decline for the next two decades, driven by falling birth rates, reduced immigration, and out-of-state migration. With fewer students, districts receive fewer state dollars and may be forced to make tough decisions, including reductions to programs, staff, and/or schools.

However, budget realignment does not have to lead to fewer opportunities for students. In fact, whether intentional or not, budget realignment almost always results in changed programs, schools, or systems. District leaders have a choice: proactively shape these changes or reactively respond to declining enrollment.

**That's where this toolkit comes in.** This toolkit aims to support district leaders in proactively responding to declining enrollment. It provides practical tools, resources, and guidance on redesigning school systems in a resource-constrained environment, drawing on research and examples of redesign efforts aligned with the science on how students learn and develop.

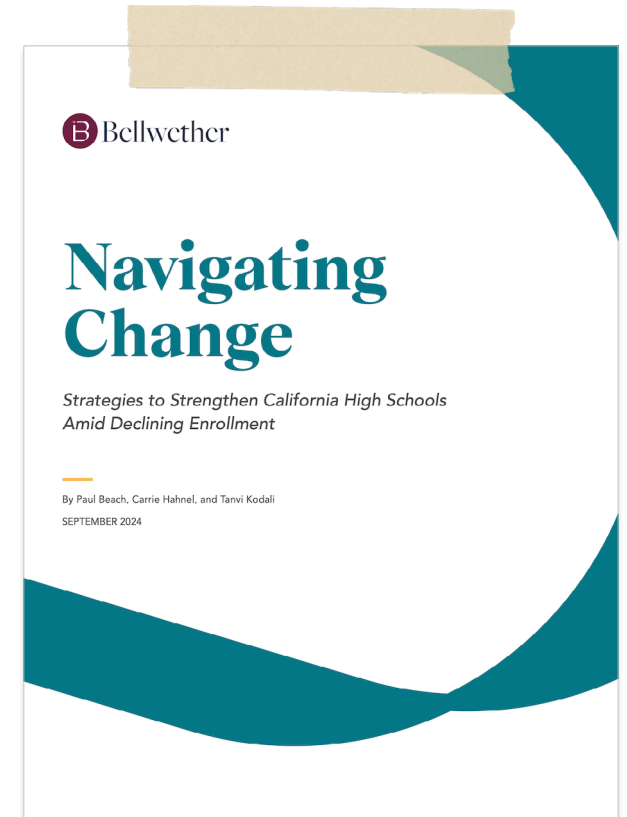
# Audience for This Toolkit

Although designed for K-12 district leaders and stakeholders in California, this toolkit may be useful for leaders combatting declining enrollment in other states. During the next decade, 40 states and the District of Columbia are expected to see enrollment declines.

## The Research Base

This toolkit builds, in part, on Bellwether's Navigating Change: Strategies to Strengthen California High Schools Amid Declining Enrollment report, which lays out a vision for how districts can produce stronger school systems as they confront declining enrollment.

It also offers strategies that can lead to more learning opportunities for students while also achieving cost savings or generating revenue to alleviate budget pressures. These strategies are informed by interviews and listening sessions with students, families, teachers, district leaders, technical assistance providers, researchers, and other experts, as well as a deep review of the research on school and system design models aligned with the science on learning and development.



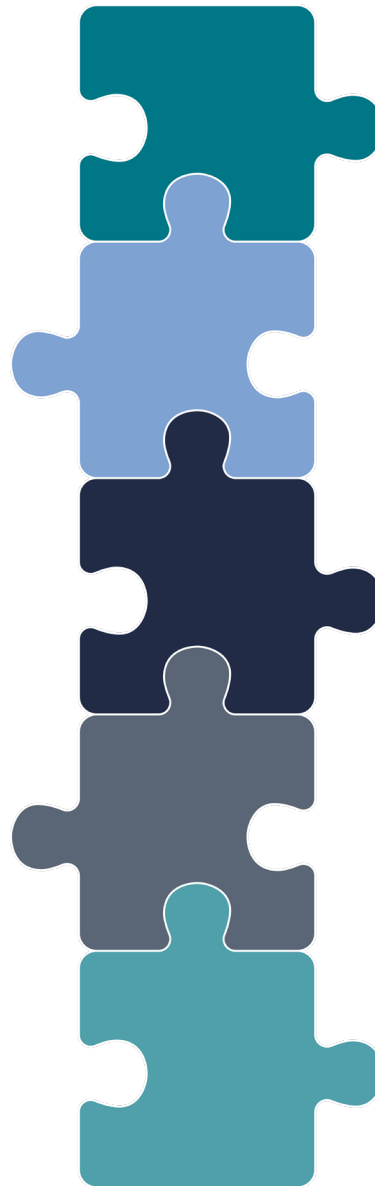


# How This Toolkit Is Organized\*

**This toolkit is organized into five components, each with two to three chapters.** Each of the 12 chapters include some or all of the following:

- An overview and to-do list.
- A description of existing resources.
- Tools to support district planning.
- District examples.
- Tips on engaging key stakeholder groups, including communities, labor partners, and governing boards.

To support district leaders, this toolkit includes more than 100 resources in one accessible location, including research reports, guidance documents, and district examples from California. Bellwether's goal is to provide easy, centralized access to these resources, not necessarily to define best practices. District leaders and stakeholders should review and adapt this toolkit's resources to their specific contexts.



## **Component A: Enrollment Decline Analysis**

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# Defining School and System Redesign

Many districts are pursuing goals to improve student experiences, engagement, motivation, and attendance in the service of better outcomes. These goals vary in scope, ambition, and approach. All approaches — big and small — require some degree of school and system redesign. **School and system redesign** encompasses any effort to:

- Alter the identity, culture, or structure of a school.
- Change when, how, or where teaching and learning occur.
- Redefine the physical and partnership boundaries among schools, communities, businesses and industry, other state agencies, and postsecondary institutions.



## The Connection Between Budgeting and School Redesign

Each chapter in this toolkit explicitly describes how specific efforts to realign district budgets in response to declining enrollment relate to school and system redesign.

The structure of the toolkit is also designed to show that in some cases, planning and budget realignment can unlock opportunities for system and school redesign. In other cases, however, system and school redesign may require further budget adjustments.

# The Human Side of Enrollment Decline

**Declining enrollment often requires district leaders to make tough decisions, including decisions that can cause emotional distress for students, families, educators, community members, and leaders.**

While this toolkit aims to provide actionable, practical tools that district leaders can use in times of declining enrollment, it is important to acknowledge the emotional toll these changes and decisions can have on an entire school community.

To mitigate the potential negative impacts of declining enrollment, district leaders can incorporate strategies such as on-site counseling, community town halls, alumni supports, and resilience workshops. The following resources can be a starting place for district leaders as they seek to address the emotional realities of enrollment decline:

## Center for Community Resilience

The George Washington University

## Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Families and the Community as Partners in Education

U.S. Department of Education

## Trauma-Informed, Resilience-Oriented Schools Toolkit

National Center for School Safety

# Contents

## Overview

About This Toolkit  
Audience for This Toolkit  
How This Toolkit Is Organized  
Defining School and System Redesign  
The Human Side of Enrollment Decline

## Component A: Enrollment Decline Analysis

1. Make enrollment and demographic projections.
2. Assess the fiscal effects of declining enrollment.

## Component B: Budgeting

3. Align district initiatives with budgeting.
4. Protect and increase revenues.
5. Audit and reduce current spending.

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9. Use engaged, equitable approaches to school closures.
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## Component E: Partnerships and Facilities

11. Partner with external organizations.
12. Leverage underutilized facilities and district property.

## Sources

## Acknowledgments

## About the Authors

## About Bellwether

# Component A: Enrollment Decline Analysis



This component focuses on the critical planning steps that lay the foundation for a district's response to enrollment decline.

DISTRICT LEADERS MUST	WHY THIS MATTERS FOR SCHOOL AND SYSTEM REDESIGN
<b>Make enrollment and demographic projections.</b>	Understanding shifts in population, program density, and student demographics helps districts anticipate needs and design schools that are equitable, sustainable, and responsive. School redesign often involves significant changes to facilities, staffing, and programs, which must align with current and projected enrollment.
<b>Assess the fiscal effects of declining enrollment.</b>	Knowing how declining enrollment will affect the budget is critical for responsibly designing sustainable, high-performing schools. District leaders and community partners must have a clear-eyed view of their finances and collaboratively work to craft school models and learning opportunities that are both responsive to student needs and sustainable with available resources.

# Enrollment and demographic projections are critical to understanding how the district will change.

Declining enrollment in K-12 public schools is a nationwide trend. In California, the state served 6.3 million public school students at its peak in the school year (SY) 2004-05, but the state is projected to enroll fewer than 5 million students by SY38-39. To plan effectively, district leaders must know how enrollment and demographic changes will affect their districts over the next 5-10 years.

This section offers guidance on what data districts should analyze and share with their stakeholders, points to resources that can help districts project enrollment, and shares examples of how other districts have analyzed data and shared these insights with their governing boards and broader communities.

Projections should not only focus on shifts in enrollment but also include detailed data and insights on how the demographics of students may evolve as enrollment declines. This more nuanced understanding should inform both budget realignment and any subsequent school or system redesign efforts, ensuring that the district's approach is tailored to meet the evolving needs and interests of students.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ☐ How does the district project enrollment at the school level?
- ☐ What are the patterns of enrollment growth or decline districtwide and in specific schools, neighborhoods, or grade levels over the next 5-10 years?
- ☐ How are the district's demographics of student populations (e.g., race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English learners [ELs], students with disabilities) changing over time?
- ☐ How are the changing needs and interests of the district's students likely to evolve as enrollment declines?
- ☐ What types of school or system redesign will best support the district's future enrollment patterns and the needs and interests of students?

### District leaders should also:

- ☐ Agendize a board discussion about enrollment changes at least annually.
- ☐ Develop a consistent reporting structure to track enrollment changes over time, contracting with an analytic partner if necessary.
- ☐ Engage with the community to understand the evolving needs and interests of students.

# Use this checklist when developing an enrollment projection, analysis, report, or presentation for your community.

Districts should be able to share the following information with their stakeholder groups:

- ☐ Historical (5-10 year) and projected (5-10 year) enrollment, by school site and grade level span.
- ☐ Comparison of actual to projected enrollment over time, by school site and grade level span.
- ☐ Historical changes in student characteristics, including race/ethnicity, EL status, languages spoken at home, special education needs, and economic disadvantage.
- ☐ Projected changes in the needs and interests of students as enrollment declines.
- ☐ Projected effect of enrollment on facility utilization (i.e., capacity of each school relative to enrollment) at all school sites.
- ☐ Comparison of district enrollment projections with county and statewide trends.
- ☐ Major county-level or regional factors affecting enrollment shifts (e.g., birth rates, immigration, out-migration).
- ☐ Effect of housing patterns, including changes in housing development, on enrollment trends.
- ☐ Feeder patterns and the time it takes for students to get to school.
- ☐ Retention of students as they progress through grade levels.
- ☐ Rates of participation in the public school system for families in the district catchment area (also referred to as an attendance area), including rates of opt-out for home-school and private school, to the extent those data are obtainable.



# Using free data tools — or partnering with a paid service — can help districts understand detailed enrollment patterns.

## RESOURCES

### California Department of Finance

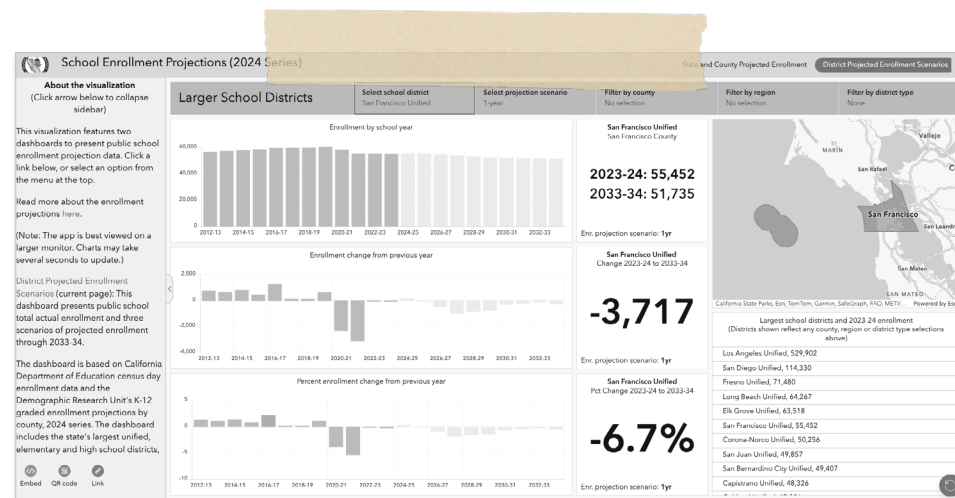
The department's [Demographic Research Unit \(DRU\) Data Hub](#) allows districts to see detailed enrollment projections for the next decade.

### FLO Analytics

Used by K-12 school systems including San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), [FLO Analytics](#) offers clients data analysis and forecasting tools to help school districts understand their enrollment now and in the future.

### Allovue, a PowerSchool Company

[Allocate](#) is a tool offered by Allovue to help districts model enrollment and funding [projections](#) and make decisions about budgeting for equity.



The [DRU Data Hub](#) offers rich data at the district and county levels, with enrollment projections to SY33-34.

## DISTRICT EXAMPLES

SFUSD outsources its forecasting to FLO Analytics. The latest SY23-24 to SY32-33 report offers enrollment trends, as well as population and housing trends and mapping.

Since 2005, FUHSD has contracted with Enrollment Projection Consultants to conduct enrollment projections each year.

CUSD uses the services of King Consulting to gather data on projected enrollment, both by district and by school, as well as demographic mapping across the district.

[illegible]

This 2024 FUHSD Board of Trustees presentation shows how the district communicates report findings to its community.

# Engaging stakeholders can strengthen community understanding of declining enrollment.

Enrollment declines over time, and corresponding budget adjustments are likely to be incremental. Engage stakeholder groups early and often to understand how enrollment is changing and what that will mean for the district's future.

Stakeholder	Practices	Resources
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide public-facing communications around enrollment projections, led by district leaders, not just consultants.</li> <li>• Share this information early and often to build understanding, ease anxieties, and help shore up support for new policies triggered by enrollment changes.</li> <li>• Assume stakeholders have limited information, and clarify the basics.</li> <li>• Engage students and families to understand how the needs and interests of students will evolve — and explicitly tie those engagement efforts to early redesign planning for stakeholders.</li> </ul>	Hacienda La Puente Unified School District community <a href="#">presentation</a> in Los Angeles County
Governing Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present clear, data-driven analyses that highlight trends and their implications for the district's priorities and resource allocation.</li> <li>• Allow for regular updates and opportunities for board members to ask questions, and provide input to foster collaboration and shared accountability for long-term planning.</li> <li>• Describe how the district will proactively consider redesign options as it addresses declining enrollment.</li> </ul>	FUHSD Board of Trustees <a href="#">presentation</a>
Labor Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present data that illustrates how changes in enrollment and demographics could impact staffing levels, working conditions, and resource allocation.</li> <li>• Frame these conversations around shared goals, such as maintaining equitable student support and protecting staff stability.</li> </ul>	The California Labor Management Initiative <a href="#">guidebook</a> on building strong partnerships between labor unions and schools

# Declining enrollment reduces total district revenue.

Changes in enrollment directly affect district funding, as California districts, charter schools, and county offices of education receive state dollars based on their average daily attendance (ADA). If a district's enrollment declines, its total state revenues decline.

Districts can rarely reduce expenses at the same rate as they experience revenue reductions. First, districts have many fixed costs, including administrative staff salaries, operational expenses, and infrastructure investments. Second, districts often cannot reduce teaching positions at the same rate they lose students because of class size requirements, building constraints, and a desire to maintain a range of course offerings. Third, many costs are rising, including utilities, health care benefits, teacher salaries, and more.

Understanding the fiscal implications of enrollment change is critical to the ability to plan for and adjust budgets to maintain fiscal solvency. Often, declining enrollment prompts budget realignments to ensure the number of staff, schools, and programs are aligned with enrollment. But it can also prompt districts to investigate how they are allocating resources and how shifts in those allocations might impact student experiences and outcomes.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ❑ How will projected changes in enrollment affect revenues and the district's budget over the next five years?
- ❑ At what point might the district face a deficit, and what staffing and other spending assumptions must change to close that gap?
- ❑ What cost increases can be anticipated in a district's capital (e.g., a building needs a new library) and staffing plans (e.g., a transition to a new contract with a librarian)?

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Create regular space in board meetings to discuss fiscal changes and potential responses.
- ❑ Generate transparent criteria that trigger budget realignment processes.
- ❑ Collect regular feedback from community members about which programs and services they most value; these data — collected over time — should inform any eventual budget realignment conversations.
- ❑ Use the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) Fiscal Health Risk Analysis (FHRA) free tool, or a similar tool, to understand how changes in enrollment will affect the district's fiscal health and risk of insolvency.

# FCMAT's free fiscal analysis tool can help California districts understand their risk of insolvency in the coming years.

Declining enrollment affects the fiscal health of districts and schools. Understanding the fiscal impact of enrollment changes in the coming years is essential for effective planning, maintaining fiscal solvency, and supporting school redesign efforts. FCMAT's free FHRA tool allows local education agencies in California to assess the fiscal health and risk of insolvency in the current and two subsequent fiscal years.



Access the tool [here](#).

See district-specific reports [here](#).

# Berryessa Union School District (BUSD) in San Jose transparently communicated the fiscal effects of declining enrollment.

## Timeline of BUSD Budget Realignment

- June 2021:** The BUSD Board of Trustees adopts a resolution committing to identify \$6 million in districtwide reductions for SY22-23 and SY23-24.
- May 2022:** BUSD creates a Budget Stabilization Committee to address long-standing structural deficits. The committee includes parents, administrators, and labor partner leaders.
- December 2023:** The Budget Stabilization Committee makes five recommendations: rent out unused space; sell district property; consolidate schools; reduce staff; and offer early retirement. The Board of Trustees votes to establish a School Consolidation Advisory Committee to review school sites for closure.
- December 2024:** The Board of Trustees votes 4-1 to close three elementary schools, as recommended by the consolidation committee.

*“Our communications planning was incredibly intentional ... There was an entire plan put in place for educating our community about our budget and school consolidation process.”*

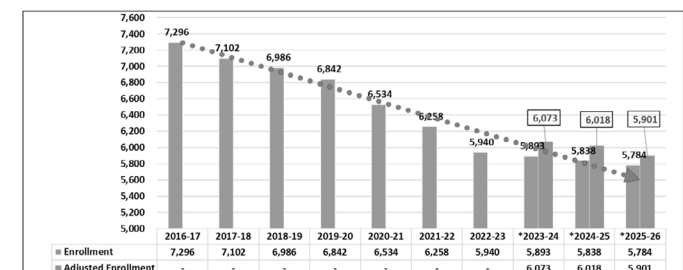
—ROXANE FUENTES, SUPERINTENDENT, BERRYESSA UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Key Lessons From BUSD

- Show the connections between declining enrollment data and budgets.
- Involve key stakeholder groups throughout the process to build consensus along the way.
- Public-facing communication matters. BUSD intentionally shared key updates with the community.
- Consistent transparency builds trust. By making all the meetings and materials publicly accessible — following the rules of the Brown Act — BUSD showed a commitment to transparency.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment has been at a steady decline from 2016-17 to what is currently projected for the 2025-26 school year. The graph below illustrates that since 2016-17 the district has lost a total of 1,356 students or 18%. This loss equates to a decrease of approximately \$14.916m in the Unrestricted General Fund.



# Contents

## Overview

- About This Toolkit
- Audience for This Toolkit
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- Defining School and System Redesign
- The Human Side of Enrollment Decline

## Component A: Enrollment Decline Analysis

1. Make enrollment and demographic projections.
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3. Align district initiatives with budgeting.
4. Protect and increase revenues.
5. Audit and reduce current spending.

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8. Adopt innovative instructional models.



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10. Support welcoming schools.

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11. Partner with external organizations.
12. Leverage underutilized facilities and district property.

## Sources

## Acknowledgments

## About the Authors

## About Bellwether





# Component B: Budgeting

This component focuses on strategies critical to right-sizing budgets and ensuring alignment with the district's goals during times of declining enrollment.

DISTRICT LEADERS MUST	WHY THIS MATTERS FOR SCHOOL AND SYSTEM REDESIGN
<b>Align district initiatives with budgeting.</b>	School redesign efforts may stem from any number of departments or initiatives, but they are often siloed from annual budget cycles. To ensure the district's budget is well aligned with plans for the configuration of schools and the delivery of teaching and learning, budget officers can closely collaborate with leaders charged with redesign efforts, including those responsible for instructional planning, strategic initiatives, and facilities planning.
<b>Protect and increase revenues.</b>	Sustainable funding is essential for maintaining diverse learning opportunities that meet student and family needs. By codeveloping visions for school design with the community, districts can build support for securing new revenues, especially if those new revenue sources are directly tied to redesign efforts.
<b>Audit and reduce current spending.</b>	As district leaders seek to reduce spending, they should focus on adjustments that align with district priorities and student needs. By reducing spending on nonessential or ineffective services and investing in what works, districts can balance goals for fiscal sustainability and student learning.

# Aligning budgets to district priorities requires integration among departments, staff, and annual plans.

School and system redesign efforts may stem from any number of departments or initiatives. The facilities master plan may call for consolidations and new grade level span configurations. School improvement plans may include efforts to overhaul schedules and instructional delivery models. A special projects team may be charged with building partnerships between high schools and postsecondary institutions. These types of redesign initiatives should be integrated with the budget, rather than siloed off from the annual budgeting process.

By engaging in “strategic budgeting,” districts can ensure their budgets are well aligned with academic priorities and strategic objectives — which may include new visions for the configuration of schools and the delivery of teaching and learning. Strategic budgeting requires close collaboration among budget officers and those leading district redesign efforts.

This chapter includes resources for strategic budgeting and strengthening coherence between budgeting and other essential services.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ❑ Does every leader in the district’s cabinet understand the implications of school and system redesign initiatives for their department or division?
- ❑ How can the district promote coherence between priorities and plans identified in the Local Control and Accountability Plan, facilities master plan, Expanding Learning Opportunities Program plans, and other regular plans?
- ❑ How can the district build strong and positive relationships among staff in different district departments?

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Ensure cabinet meeting agendas include space to discuss the implications of school and system redesign initiatives for other departments or divisions.
- ❑ Build approval processes and tools that require schools and departments to align their annual budget with district redesign initiatives.
- ❑ Structure decision-making processes and updates in a cross-departmental way, driven by a cross-functional leader.
- ❑ Provide clear, concise, and accessible ways for students, families, and communities to see how budget decisions align with district initiatives.

# Strategic resourcing and coherence are helpful concepts for aligning district initiatives with budgeting.

Below are just a few examples of the many frameworks that exist to support **strategic resourcing** (the process of aligning a district's financial operations with instructional goals) and **coherence** (ensuring a district's systems and structures are all aligned toward a shared vision for teaching and learning).

## RESOURCES

### Harvard Public Education Leadership Project

The Harvard Public Education Leadership Project's [Coherence Framework](#) includes materials and research to support school leaders interested in: (a) culture, (b) systems and structures, (c) resources, (d) stakeholder groups' relationships, and (e) environment. The resources component includes several critical questions district leaders should ask themselves to bring the district's vision for teaching and learning into alignment with resource allocation.

### Education First

The [Coherence Toolkit](#) from the Coherence Lab — an initiative from Education First — includes self-assessments and other resources designed to: (a) build focus and coordination, (b) cultivate trusting relationships, (c) change behaviors at scale, and (d) develop equitable ways of thinking and working. "[From Chaos to Coherence: Delivering on the Promise of High School Transformation](#)" from Education First applies the Coherence Lab's framework in the California context. To learn more, [watch](#) a video of the session.

### EdWeek Research Center

EdWeek Research Center's report "[Strategic Resourcing for K-12 Education](#)" provides an overview of strategic resourcing and strategies related to staffing and scheduling, professional learning, and procurement, among others.

# Districts can find ways to maximize revenue, even while adjusting to new budget conditions.

Protecting and increasing revenue streams can help to maintain high-quality education and equitable learning opportunities for all students, especially in districts facing declining enrollment. New and alternative revenue streams can also enable districts to make the up-front investments often required during a school redesign process (e.g., new staff training).

Revenue protection generally requires a multipronged approach. Strengthening community support for local tax initiatives, for example, can ensure a more reliable funding base, while improving attendance can maximize state funding.

This chapter provides potential approaches to protecting existing revenue and finding new revenue streams, which can enable a district to strengthen its schools, even in times of enrollment decline.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ❑ Which of the three potential new revenue sources laid out in this chapter are possible given the specific context of the district? What is politically feasible?
- ❑ How might changes at the federal level around special populations (e.g., immigrants, students with disabilities) affect the ability of the district to maximize revenue?
- ❑ Where might new revenue for the district be directed (e.g., to allow for existing programs to continue, to hire new staff)?

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Decide on strategies for responding to government-enforced immigration actions or other uncertainties that could affect attendance and enrollment.
- ❑ For California districts, create and enact strong [California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System](#) (CALPADS) data quality control procedures.
- ❑ Strategize around ensuring that all eligible households submit applications for free and reduced-price (F/RP) meals.
- ❑ Assess the potential for the community to pass a new parcel tax or general obligation bond.

# Districts can secure additional revenues through loans, facilities rentals, and more.

Below are three possible strategies that are not exhaustive of all possible new revenue sources.

Strategy	Description	Resources
<b>Secure New Local, State, and Federal Revenues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the potential for the district's community to pass a new or additional parcel tax or general obligation bond.</li> <li>For California districts, ensure the district is fully leveraging state funding available through categorical grant programs like the <a href="#">California Community Schools Partnership Program</a> and <a href="#">Golden State Pathways Program</a>, among others.</li> <li>Ensure the district is fully leveraging federal funding through programs like <a href="#">E-Rate</a> and <a href="#">Medicaid</a> reimbursement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ed100's "Parcel Taxes and Bonds Demystified" <a href="#">blog</a></li> <li>Examples of passed parcel taxes in <a href="#">Alameda</a> Unified School District (AUSD), <a href="#">Tahoe-Truckee</a> Unified School District, and <a href="#">Palo Alto</a> Unified School District</li> <li>Public Policy Institute of California's <a href="#">report</a> on parcel taxes</li> </ul>
<b>Maintain and Improve Attendance and Retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protect funding by recruiting and retaining students.</li> <li>Improve attendance to bolster funding (consider community-led initiatives).</li> <li>Decide on strategies for responding to government-enforced immigration actions that could affect attendance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance Works' <a href="#">free tool</a> on school-level chronic absenteeism data</li> <li>The California School Boards Association's <a href="#">brief</a> on leveraging absenteeism data</li> <li>The California School Boards Association's latest <a href="#">legal guidance</a> on immigration</li> <li>The California attorney general's <a href="#">guidance</a> on immigration and K-12 schools</li> <li>Fresno Unified School District's <a href="#">immigration resources</a></li> <li>Stanford University's <a href="#">resources</a> on increasing student engagement</li> </ul>
<b>Maximize Local Control Funding Formula Revenues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase supplemental funding by ensuring all eligible households <a href="#">apply for F/RP meals</a>.</li> <li>For California districts, maintain strong CALPADS data quality control procedures to ensure accuracy of enrollment and demographic information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Research and Action Center's "Strategies to Increase Applications for School Meals" <a href="#">guide</a></li> <li>FCMAT's <a href="#">resource</a> "Maximizing Local Control Funding Formula Revenue"</li> </ul>

# Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) passed parcel taxes to bolster its revenues.

## THE CHALLENGE

In the wake of the Great Recession, AUSD experienced a 20% reduction in state revenues.

## THE SOLUTION

To balance its budget, the district cut \$7 million in SY10-11 and asked voters to approve a carefully structured parcel tax that delineated the exact allocations of the tax to help it weather the storm. Those allocations included protecting class sizes, high school athletics, and enrichment programs, as well as avoiding school closures. The campaign committee, in turn, crafted a cohesive message to build public support explaining the structure.

## THE RESULT

Approved by voters in 2011, Measure A helped AUSD avoid layoffs, furloughs, pay cuts, and other reductions, common in other districts at the time. The 2016 Measure B1 extended Measure A, and then in 2020 the community approved a different Measure A specifically designed to provide a salary increase to all AUSD employees. Both taxes were consolidated and renewed in 2024 under Measure E. Together, these taxes provide \$24 million annually, about 20% of AUSD's revenues.

## Key Lessons From AUSD

### Build Broad Community Support

The parcel tax ballot measures have consistently garnered support from teachers unions and other labor groups, the local business community, educators, families, and city leaders. Representatives from each of these groups have helped campaign and serve as ambassadors to the AUSD community.

### Name the Stakes

The 2011 Measure A made it clear that without voter support, AUSD would have to increase class sizes and consolidate schools. At a time when the Great Recession had wreaked havoc on local agencies, this message resonated. The 2020 Measure A campaign convinced voters that higher teacher salaries were necessary to recruit and retain high-quality educators. Amid soaring housing costs, voters agreed that teachers needed to be able to afford to live in the communities they serve. To share these messages, the campaign engaged PTAs, news media, city leaders, business leaders, and a deep bench of volunteers.

### Guarantee Oversight

To ensure the funds are used according to the will of the voters, the measures have established a community oversight committee. This body reviews spending and helps ensure accountability.

# Auditing current spending can help districts prioritize future resource allocation decisions.

Amid declining enrollment and shrinking budgets, auditing and reducing spending are critical steps for districts to ensure that resources are directed toward activities that have the greatest impact on student outcomes.

This chapter focuses on practical strategies for identifying and eliminating inefficiencies, reallocating funds toward strategic priorities, and making thoughtful trade-offs that align with the district's goals. From auditing the use of products to reexamining class sizes, districts may uncover opportunities to streamline without compromising educational quality and equity. In fact, districts may find opportunities to redesign existing services to better align with current student needs.

To support these budgeting efforts, this chapter introduces public-use tools designed to help district leaders evaluate their current spending and weigh trade-offs of potential cuts and changes.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ☐ Which areas of district spending are essential or nonnegotiable? Which areas of spending are nonessential and open to changes or reductions? Does the district have a current strategic plan to help identify the nonnegotiables?
- ☐ Which nonessential areas of district spending have the highest impact on students (e.g., extracurriculars)?
- ☐ What new offerings are needed in the district to increase impact for students?
- ☐ What existing services do the district's students and families use the most? Is there recent representative family feedback that shows what services they value and want to preserve?

### District leaders should also:

- ☐ Use a budget tool or structured process to evaluate the current state of spending within the district.
- ☐ Conduct an audit of product use, facilities, and vendor contracts and share findings with the district's board. Renegotiate or rebid on vendor contracts based on audit findings.
- ☐ Survey students, families, and instructional staff to determine which current district offerings they find most valuable.



# Reducing and adjusting spending requires a multipronged assessment and approach.

Looking for efficiencies? Evaluate spending in the following areas:

## Administrative Staff and Central Office

- ❑ Review the district's current spending on administrative staff and compare with national and state averages. Is the district's spending on administrative staff comparable? If not, where might strategic changes be possible? (Note: Blanket cuts to administrative staff, including central office, are not recommended; instead, consider alignment with strategic priorities.)

## Vendor Contracts

- ❑ Conduct a thorough review of existing vendor contracts. Are they serving students in the district? Are the contracts up to date and effectively written?

## Facilities Use and Condition

- ❑ Conduct a facilities audit to help the district understand what buildings and equipment are available.
- ❑ Once an audit is conducted, redistribute resources based on its findings.
- ❑ Consider how the asset management system is cataloging items and sending them to under-resourced schools within the district before purchasing new items.
- ❑ Use findings from the statutorily required facilities inspection, which shows which buildings are in "good repair," to complement the facilities audit.

## Unnecessarily Expensive Benefit Costs

- ❑ Determine how much money the district spends on benefits, including other postemployment benefits, and compare those rates and trends to peer and neighboring districts. This is important because health care benefits are critical to attracting, retaining, and supporting educators and staff. They can also be one of the district's most expensive line items, especially if those benefits extend postretirement.
- ❑ Ask insurers to rebid to determine whether cost savings are possible, especially if the district is an outlier.

## Product and Instructional Materials Use

- ❑ Conduct an audit of current product and instructional materials use in the district.
- ❑ Review how licenses, especially for educational technologies, are negotiated. Consider centralizing this to ensure licenses do not go unused.

## Class Size

- ❑ Study class sizes by school and grade level and determine where larger class sizes may allow for investments on other priorities that can improve student achievement, such as teacher training or high-dosage tutoring. This is important because while smaller classes can make a difference for younger and historically marginalized students, class-size reduction may not be the most cost-effective way to improve student outcomes.

# Reducing and adjusting nonessential spending requires auditing existing expenditures and assessing trade-offs.

## RESOURCES

### Education Resource Strategies

Budget Hold 'Em is a unique tool that can help districts explore options for making investments and securing savings through policy and budgeting options.

### The Center for Outcomes Based Contracting

The Center's OBC District Toolkit offers resources for embedding outcomes-based contracting into district-school-vendor partnerships.

### Edunomics

Edunomics' The Grid is a tool to help district leaders weigh potential investments and consider risks, evaluation measures, and desired results of strategic investments.



# Contents

## Overview

About This Toolkit  
Audience for This Toolkit  
How This Toolkit Is Organized  
Defining School and System Redesign  
The Human Side of Enrollment Decline

## Component A: Enrollment Decline Analysis

1. Make enrollment and demographic projections.
2. Assess the fiscal effects of declining enrollment.

## Component B: Budgeting

3. Align district initiatives with budgeting.
4. Protect and increase revenues.
5. Audit and reduce current spending.

## Component C: Staffing, Schedules, and Instructional Models

6. Plan for redesign.
7. Implement flexible scheduling and staffing structures.
8. Adopt innovative instructional models.



## Component D: School Closure, Consolidation, and Welcoming Schools

9. Use engaged, equitable approaches to school closures.
10. Support welcoming schools.

## Component E: Partnerships and Facilities

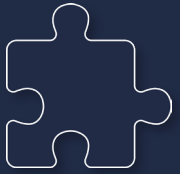
11. Partner with external organizations.
12. Leverage underutilized facilities and district property.

## Sources

## Acknowledgments

## About the Authors

## About Bellwether



# Component C: Staffing, Schedules, and Instructional Models

This component focuses on planning for redesign, including innovative, alternative models for structuring schools and instruction that can help a district realize cost savings and improve student outcomes.

DISTRICT LEADERS MUST	WHY THIS MATTERS FOR SCHOOL AND SYSTEM REDESIGN
<b>Plan for redesign.</b>	During periods of budget realignment, every decision related to planning and implementation should serve the district's goals for teaching and learning and should support progress toward its vision for school design.
<b>Implement flexible scheduling and staffing structures.</b>	Adjusting the academic calendar or master schedule is an essential tool for redesign. Creative and strategic staffing structures can help foster personalized, competency-based, and college- and career-connected education while also effectively leveraging staff expertise.
<b>Adopt innovative instructional models.</b>	Innovative instructional models, such as dual enrollment, specialty courses offered at hub locations, and work-based learning, provide an opportunity for districts to change when, how, or where teaching and learning occur.

# Redesign planning is often a multiyear effort that includes stakeholder engagement, site visits, and expert facilitation.

Many districts are facing calls to redesign schools. School redesign encompasses any effort to:

- Alter the identity, culture, or structure of a school.
- Change when, how, or where teaching and learning occur.
- Redefine the physical and partnership boundaries among schools, communities, businesses and industry, other state agencies, and postsecondary institutions.

As districts reorganize or downsize in response to declining enrollment, they have an opportunity to accelerate redesign efforts that align with the science on learning and development. Successful redesign efforts include:

- Careful planning, often over multiple years.
- Significant engagement with students, families, teachers, staff, administrators, and the broader community.
- Facilitation support provided by experts in school redesign.
- Visits to schools that can provide inspiration and a road map for redesign.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ☐ What are the district's current school- and system-level redesign initiatives, and how might declining enrollment threaten progress on those initiatives?
- ☐ How might budget realignment and the downsizing of programs, staff, or schools present an opportunity to accelerate the district's redesign initiatives?

### District leaders should also:

- ☐ Gather input from students and families on their goals and desires for schooling, including how it is designed.
- ☐ Engage staff in conversations about how research on the science on learning and development can inform new models for teaching and learning.
- ☐ Consult with experts in school redesign to facilitate the process.
- ☐ Visit schools with structures and practices aligned to the district's vision for teaching and learning — and bring staff, families, and other key stakeholders along.
- ☐ Discuss with district board members and other key stakeholders why redesign is needed.

# School redesign planning efforts should be guided by the science on how adolescents learn and develop.

## RESOURCES

Advances in neuroscience, psychology, education, and other fields are contributing to a growing understanding of and frameworks for how adolescents learn and develop, including:

### **The Aspen Institute's National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development**

[Consensus statements](#) of evidence and other [reports](#)

### **The University of Chicago's Consortium on School Research**

[Concept paper](#) for research and practice

### **UCLA's Center for the Developing Adolescent**

[Frameworks](#) and [research reports](#)

### **The University of Southern California Center for Affective Neuroscience, Development, Learning and Education**

[Books](#) and other [resources](#)

The Learning Policy Institute (LPI) has translated evidence on how adolescents learn and develop into a set of [design principles](#) for school redesign:

- Positive Developmental Relationships
- Safe, Inclusive School Climate
- Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Teaching
- Deeper Learning Curriculum
- Student-Centered Pedagogy
- Authentic Assessment
- Well-Prepared and Well-Supported Teachers
- Authentic Family Engagement
- Community Connections and Integrated Student Supports
- Shared Decision-Making and Leadership

LPI's [redesign resources](#) provide guidance on implementing these features, including practical strategies such as establishing smaller learning communities, adopting project-based learning, and integrating social and emotional learning practices. To learn more, [watch](#) LPI's webinar series on redesigning high schools.

# Models like small learning communities can help districts implement school redesign principles.

Scheduling Approach	Description	What the Evidence Says	Resources
Small Learning Communities	A small school or a grouping of fewer than 500 <u>students</u> within a school.	<u>Research</u> points to a myriad of benefits for students who participate in small learning communities, including “better attendance, greater participation in extracurricular activities, stronger academic achievement, higher grades, fewer failed courses, fewer behavioral incidents, less violence and vandalism, lower dropout rates, and higher graduation rates.”	LPI’s <u>sample budget</u> for a school with small learning communities  Education Resource Strategies’ <u>blog</u> on making small schools work
Advisory Models	A <u>distributed counseling</u> approach that establishes continual <u>guidance and support</u> systems for students.	Research <u>remains limited</u> and usually takes the form of <u>single case studies</u> , but some evidence points to advisories as a way to increase <u>personalization</u> between teachers and students.	Education Resource Strategies’ <u>guide</u> to resource implications for advisory programs
Project-Based Learning	An <u>instructional approach</u> in which students explore real-world problems and challenges through extended projects; often requires a flexible scheduling model, such as block scheduling.	Research suggests that project-based learning can <u>improve student learning</u> in social studies and science, increase <u>contributions</u> to local communities, and <u>improve equity</u> .	Columbia University’s Center for Teaching and Learning’s <u>guide</u> to getting started with project-based learning



# Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD) aligned school consolidation with its school redesign goals. (1/2)

## Background and Context

Enrollment has been declining in AUHSD since SY08-09. In the last 10 years alone (since SY14-15), the district has lost 4,464 students and is projected to lose approximately 5,000 more by SY33-34. To address declining enrollment, AUHSD will consolidate Orangeview Junior High School with Western High School, creating one school serving Grades 7-12 starting in SY25-26.

The consolidation process, however, began nearly three years earlier when the district hired Eric Hall & Associates to conduct an enrollment capacity analysis in partnership with a school efficiency committee made up of administrators, principals, teachers, staff, and parents. The committee met eight times from December 2022 to April 2023 and ultimately recommended in August 2023 that the district consolidate Orangeview Junior High School with Western High School, a recommendation the district's board approved. As part of the consolidation process, the district will repurpose one former school building in SY26-27 for a yet-to-be determined use. Eric Hall & Associates estimates AUHSD will save \$1 million annually.

## Aligning Consolidation With Redesign Efforts

After board approval, AUHSD began a two-year process of planning for and implementing the consolidation. In an interview, a former district leader who now consults with AUHSD said that planning efforts first focused on ensuring the consolidation process was aligned with the district's goals for school redesign, including:

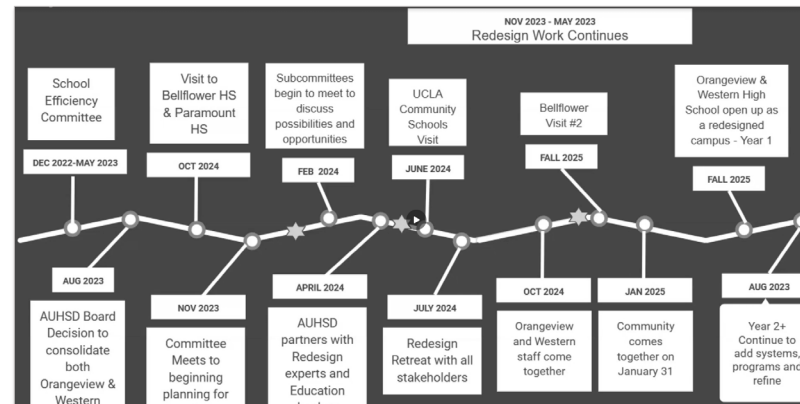
- The cabinet superintendent laying out a clear vision for school redesign.
- Providing the school redesign committee with a set of nonnegotiable redesign components but allowing for flexibility on all other elements of redesign.
- Laying out a long-term (in this case, two-year) timeline for school consolidation, including when and how to engage key stakeholders in the redesign effort.
- In cabinet meetings, discussing the implications of consolidation for each office and division in the district to promote coherence.

*(Continued on next page to show how this process led to a set of redesigned school structures that align with science on how adolescents learn and develop.)*

## Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD) aligned school consolidation with its school redesign goals. (2/2)

Soon after making the decision to consolidate Orangeview Junior High School and Western High School, the district formed a redesign committee that:

- Partnered with experts in redesign, including Linda Darling-Hammond (LPI), David Brazer (Stanford University), and Barnett Berry (University of South Carolina).
- Hosted a retreat to kick off the school redesign process.
- Visited several schools to learn more about different school designs.
- Provided routine redesign updates to the broader school community.
- Conducted a schoolwide “Visioning Day,” facilitated by a third-party consulting firm.



AUHSD's timeline provides an overview of the district's redesign process.

The redesign process has resulted in four evidence-based practices that the new school will adhere to when it opens in SY25-26:

- Small learning communities via a “house system.”
- Advisory periods for students every day of the week.
- KidTalk, a once-weekly period in which teachers in the same “house” discuss how to support specific students.
- Multilayered, integrated collaboration for teachers.

To implement these evidence-based practices, the new school will use a block schedule that creates dedicated time for advisories and teacher collaboration.

# Staffing and scheduling decisions are central to any efforts to realign budgets and strengthen school systems.

## Staffing

As districts grapple with declining enrollment that leads to budget constraints, and look to strengthen their systems for students, staffing models become a critical lever for aligning resources with evolving student needs. This chapter invites district leaders to reimagine how they deploy human capital by exploring innovative staffing models that prioritize flexibility, equity, and student outcomes.

Selection of alternative staffing models requires balancing many considerations, including fiscal constraints, the need to improve student learning, and the need to support teacher and staff workloads and well-being. By using data, engaging stakeholders, and evaluating trade-offs, districts can identify models that optimize their workforce while fostering an environment in which both educators and students can thrive.

## Scheduling

Innovative scheduling models can offer districts a powerful tool to maximize resources while addressing changing enrollment and student needs. Adjustments to the traditional school calendar and school day may help districts achieve cost savings while also creating more effective and sustainable learning environments. These approaches also offer opportunities to rethink how time is allocated to teacher collaboration and student well-being. They may also positively impact educator recruitment and retention.

This chapter encourages district leaders to weigh the potential benefits of alternative scheduling and staffing models against key logistical, financial, and academic considerations.



# Changing staffing and scheduling structures requires thoughtful, inclusive processes.

## TO-DO LIST: STAFFING

### District leaders could ask:

- ❑ How can the district design staffing models to be flexible and scalable as enrollment fluctuates?
- ❑ Under the district's collective bargaining agreement, what changes can be made to staffing? What changes will need to be renegotiated?
- ❑ What opportunities exist to redeploy district staff or use nontraditional roles to reduce costs while maintaining or increasing quality?
- ❑ What are the district's primary instructional goals and priorities? How do staffing models currently support or hinder district goals?

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Consider the pros and cons for each alternative staffing model in the context of the district's needs and priorities.
- ❑ Begin a conversation with labor leaders and then district board members about potential reasoning for staffing structure changes and implications.
- ❑ Elicit input from educators and labor partners in the district — how might a staffing structure change impact their day-to-day work?
- ❑ Visit schools with structures and practices aligned to the district's vision for teaching and learning — and bring staff, families, and other key stakeholders along.
- ❑ Discuss with district board members and other key stakeholders why redesign is needed.

## TO-DO LIST: SCHEDULING

### District leaders could ask:

- ❑ How does each alternative scheduling model align with the district's educational goals and priorities, particularly in the context of declining enrollment?
- ❑ How will the district involve key stakeholders — educators, staff, students, families, and community members — in evaluating or designing a new scheduling model?
- ❑ How might alternative scheduling models impact different student populations and access to high-quality learning?

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Review the strengths and weaknesses of the district's current scheduling model.
- ❑ Identify key goals for adopting a new schedule (e.g., achieving efficiency, creating more time for collaboration, relationship-building, deeper learning).
- ❑ Start a conversation with the school board about potential scheduling changes, allowing for an open discussion on possible opportunities, particularly around cost savings, and drawbacks. Consider the potential consequences of a scheduling change, including changes to bus schedules, extracurricular activities, staff schedules, and more.

# Districts can play a key role in guiding their schools in the process of selecting staffing or scheduling models.

To support schools in their decision-making processes, districts can consider:

- ❑ Allowing schools greater flexibility in choosing how they allocate staffing resources, which could include adopting school-site budgeting practices.
- ❑ Sharing exemplar school-level budgets that could allow for alternative staffing structures, such as multiclassroom leader models, team teaching, or blended learning.
- ❑ Offering professional development opportunities for school leaders to learn about alternative staffing models.
- ❑ Supplying sample contract language for schools interested in considering alternative staffing models.
- ❑ Building curricular and assessment materials that enable team teaching models.
- ❑ Providing model schedules that align with alternative staffing models.
- ❑ Shifting norms in responsibilities for certain roles that align with the current needs of students and families.
- ❑ Organizing site visits to schools using different staffing or scheduling models.

# These alternative staffing models can offer opportunities for enhanced student achievement and budget savings.

Staffing Model	Description	What the Evidence Says	Connection to Declining Enrollment	Resources
<b>Multiclassroom Leader</b>	A highly effective teacher leads multiple classrooms, coaching and supporting other teachers to improve instructional practices and student outcomes.	The Opportunity Culture model, a form of multiclassroom leader staffing, has led to improved <u>student outcomes and increased teacher satisfaction</u> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows for greater reach, with more students served.</li> </ul>	The <u>Opportunity Culture model</u> , in districts across the country
<b>Team Teaching Model</b>	Teachers work in collaborative teams to deliver instruction, share responsibilities, and provide support across grade levels or subject areas.	Early <u>evidence</u> indicates that Arizona State University's Next Education Workforce models — team teaching models — led to improved algebra and reading outcomes for students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows for financially sustainable <u>staffing models</u>.</li> </ul>	<u>Westwood High School</u> in Mesa, Arizona; case study on team teaching models from the <u>Center on Reinventing Public Education</u>
<b>Blended Learning Models</b>	Teachers leverage technology to deliver instruction in combination with in-person teaching. Students rotate between independent online learning and face-to-face instruction.	Overall, research is fairly limited on the effectiveness of blended learning models at the K-12 level. However, a <u>program evaluation</u> of Modern Classrooms, which leverages blended learning, found higher engagement among students and stronger teacher-student relationships. Additionally, an Institute of Education Sciences <u>summary</u> of existing research found positive effects for some blended learning models that offered differentiated learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduces direct instructional time for teachers.</li> <li>Allows flexibility in staffing.</li> <li>Leverages broader talent pools outside of the limited geography of a school.</li> </ul>	<u>Math Innovation Zones</u> in Texas

# Innovative scheduling models offer trade-offs in terms of cost savings and student achievement.

Scheduling Model	Description	What the Evidence Says	Potential Cost Implications	Resources
<b>Year-Round Schooling</b>	An educational system in which the traditional multimonth summer break is replaced by shorter, more frequent breaks distributed throughout the year.	A 2019 <a href="#">meta-analysis</a> that examined 30 studies found that single-track year-round schedules improved students' math and reading scores to a degree that matched average estimates of summer learning losses.	There are potential savings around ADA revenue generated, shared materials, and benefits, as detailed by the <a href="#">California Department of Education</a> . However, depending on a school's location, districts may incur <a href="#">higher heating and/or cooling costs</a> during winter and summer months.	Irvine Unified School District's <a href="#">year-round school calendar</a>
<b>Four-Day School Week</b>	An alternative scheduling model in which schools operate for four days a week instead of the traditional five-day week.	Results are mixed. For example, research on the four-day school week has produced positive effects (in <a href="#">Colorado</a> ) and negative effects (in <a href="#">Oregon</a> ) on students' math and reading achievement. A study in <a href="#">Oklahoma</a> found that the four-day school week had no effect on students' ACT scores.	An analysis conducted by the Education Commission of the States <a href="#">estimates</a> that districts save between 0.4% and 2.5% of their total budget by switching to a four-day school week.	<a href="#">Village Tech Schools</a> , a public charter school system in the greater Dallas-Fort Worth area of Texas
<b>Block Scheduling</b>	A scheduling approach in which students have fewer classes each day but for longer periods, allowing for innovative use of time, such as incorporation of internships.	Most research around block scheduling was conducted more than two decades ago, and <a href="#">results</a> were mixed. However, <a href="#">some evidence</a> suggests students of color benefit more than their white peers from block scheduling. Research also points to <a href="#">improved school climate</a> .	Block scheduling is generally found to <a href="#">increase costs</a> due to staffing needs. However, it can be done in a more cost-neutral way if there are consistent cycles of rotation for specialists.	LPI's sample <a href="#">block schedules</a>



# Ensuring stakeholders know the rationale and objectives of staffing and scheduling changes can help build consensus.

Stakeholder	Practices	Resources
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicit input from families and community members through surveys, town halls, and advisory committees to understand their needs and concerns regarding schedule changes and staff roles.</li> <li>Emphasize how changes to staffing and scheduling could improve student experiences and outcomes.</li> </ul>	University of California, Berkeley's <a href="#">Master Schedule Guide</a> has a wealth of resources, including how to communicate a <a href="#">bell schedule change</a>
Governing Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide clear data on the financial trade-offs, potential cost savings, and impact on student outcomes of alternative models, ensuring alignment with budget realities.</li> <li>Assess whether proposed changes align with state and federal regulations, funding requirements, and district policies.</li> <li>Keep the district's board informed and engaged around key decision points while demonstrating how stakeholder feedback is incorporated into final decisions.</li> </ul>	The University of California, Berkeley Master Schedule Guide referred to above also has resources on how to <a href="#">build consensus</a> around master schedules and other board-relevant materials
Labor Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage educators and labor leaders early in discussions about staffing and scheduling changes to surface concerns, collaboratively problem-solve, and foster trust.</li> <li>Work collaboratively with labor partners to explore creative solutions that align district goals with workforce needs.</li> <li>Consider piloting new staffing or scheduling models with one school before negotiating a districtwide change.</li> </ul>	The Californians Dedicated to Education (CDE) Foundation offers <a href="#">case studies</a> on effective labor-management collaboration



# Adopting innovative instructional models can redefine when, how, or where teaching and learning occur.

To meet the diverse needs of students and optimize resources in the face of declining enrollment, districts can benefit from adopting flexible course delivery models — approaches to providing instruction to students in innovative, often technology-involved ways. These models not only offer students access to broader learning opportunities but also help districts manage costs and maximize the use of staff and facilities. By rethinking when, how, or where courses are delivered, districts can align education delivery with workforce demands, college readiness goals, and community priorities.

This chapter explores four innovative approaches to flexible course delivery: expanding dual enrollment offerings, establishing hub locations, increasing access to work-based learning opportunities, and capitalizing on virtual learning options. By adopting these models, districts can create more personalized, efficient, and future-focused learning experiences for students.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ❑ Does the district currently utilize any flexible course delivery models? If so, what have been the outcomes or lessons learned from those approaches?
- ❑ Do neighboring districts engage in flexible course delivery models? Are there opportunities to partner?
- ❑ Are there student groups in the district that might disproportionately benefit or face challenges from a move to a more flexible course delivery model? If so, how can the district offer support to students who might face challenges?

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Conduct a landscape scan of current flexible course delivery options in the district, as well as participation by demographics.
- ❑ Support schools in analyzing their master schedules to understand whether there is flexible time to incorporate new opportunities (e.g., apprenticeships).
- ❑ Survey students and school leaders about what courses or work-based learning opportunities they are currently engaged in, as well as what they would be interested in.

# District leaders should consider several different types of flexible course delivery models during budget realignment.

Model	Resources
Dual Enrollment	Expand dual enrollment offerings to allow for cost sharing with colleges and increase opportunities for students. The California College and Career Access Pathways dual enrollment program can <u>expand opportunities</u> for students and perhaps even lead to <u>district cost savings</u> . Districts receive ADA funding if students attend school for at least 240 minutes each day. This means students may have time in their schedules to take a dual enrollment course. When these courses are taught by professors from local colleges, districts may be able to save on additional staff or instructional time.
Hub Locations	Offer specialty courses at hub locations within the district. Instead of offering every course at every school — especially specialty courses that may have low enrollment — districts can allow students to take those courses at a <u>hub location</u> . By consolidating low-enrollment or specialized courses into central locations, districts can reduce duplication and use resources more efficiently while still providing important and specialized opportunities to students. These hubs can also expand to include services like <u>tutoring</u> .
Work-Based Learning	Expand access to work-based learning opportunities, which can free up time for teachers to focus on core classes. Work-based learning <u>opportunities</u> such as internships help students gain important skills and work experience while in high school. Through partnerships with local businesses, nonprofits, and community colleges, schools can offer students real-world experiences — experiences that can <u>free up time</u> for teachers to lesson plan or offer other core courses.
Online and Hybrid Learning	Capitalize on new technologies to offer courses and services virtually. By offering online and hybrid learning options, districts can serve more students, provide specialized courses that may not be feasible in person, and optimize staffing and facility use. New <u>evidence</u> indicates that virtual tutoring can offer similar outcomes for students as in-person tutoring while also lowering costs.

# The Career Ladders Project offers a tool for working out the complexities of dual enrollment scheduling.

## RESOURCES

### Career Ladders Project

Career Ladders Project's dual enrollment [scheduling tool](#) can help high schools and colleges create schedules that meet the needs of both K-12 districts and postsecondary institutions.

THURSDAYS						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as Mondays						
Period	Start Time	End Time	HS Class Period Instructional Minutes		HS Passing Period Instructional Minutes	
0- Before School	7:00 AM	8:25 AM	1:25	Non-Instructional Time		Non-Instructional Time
1	8:30 AM	9:28 AM	0:58	HS Instructional Minutes	0:05	Non-Instructional Time
2	9:33 AM	10:35 AM	1:02	Dual Enrollment	0:00	Non-Instructional Time
Break	10:35 AM	10:45 AM	0:10	Non-Instructional Time	0:05	Non-Instructional Time
3	10:50 AM	11:48 AM	0:58	HS Instructional Minutes	0:05	HS Instructional Minutes
4	11:53 AM	12:51 PM	0:58	HS Instructional Minutes	0:05	HS Instructional Minutes
Lunch	12:56 PM	1:23 PM	0:27	Non-Instructional Time	0:05	Non-Instructional Time
5	1:28 PM	2:26 PM	0:58	HS Instructional Minutes	0:05	HS Instructional Minutes
6	2:31 PM	3:29 PM	0:58	HS Instructional Minutes		Non-Instructional Time
7			0:00			
7/8- After School	3:35 PM	5:00 PM	1:25	Non-Instructional Time		Non-Instructional Time
Total HS Class Period Instructional Minutes					290	
Total HS Passing Period Instructional Minutes					15	
Total HS Instructional Minutes					305	

# SFUSD's Mission Bay Hub brings together students from five high schools.

In SY23-24, SFUSD completed its pilot for the Mission Bay Hub, a learning center focused on health, life sciences, and other STEM-aligned fields. Currently, students in Grades 11-12 from five partner SFUSD schools can attend courses to earn credit in English, biological sciences, and electives. The half-day programming centers on a project-based learning model and provides students with access to state-of-the-art facilities and equipment as well as STEM professionals and university students that are steps away.

Mission Bay Hub's schedule — arranged into half-day cohorts — allows students' assigned high schools to still receive full funding, as students spend half of the day at their assigned high school.

2024-25 Bell Schedule		
	Mon./Tues./Thurs./Fri.	Wed.
Morning Cohort	9:00 - 11:30 am	9:00 - 10:45 am
Afternoon Cohort	1:30 - 4:00 pm	1:00 - 2:45 pm

# Contents

## Overview

About This Toolkit  
Audience for This Toolkit  
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10. Support welcoming schools.

## Component E: Partnerships and Facilities

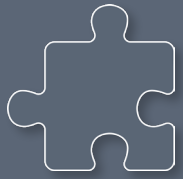
11. Partner with external organizations.
12. Leverage underutilized facilities and district property.

## Sources

## Acknowledgments

## About the Authors

## About Bellwether



# Component D: School Closure, Consolidation, and Welcoming Schools

This component focuses on strategies for centering students and communities during school closure and consolidation processes and any subsequent redesign efforts.

DISTRICT LEADERS MUST	WHY THIS MATTERS FOR SCHOOL AND SYSTEM REDESIGN
<b>Use engaged, equitable approaches to school closures.</b>	When schools close, students are directed to and integrated into new sites. If thoughtfully done, the consolidation process presents an opportunity to redesign schools, shape school cultures, and improve student services and programming.
<b>Support welcoming schools.</b>	Welcoming schools — schools that receive students from sites that have closed — provide a unique opportunity for proactive school redesign. In most cases, welcoming schools undergo some degree of transformation, including changes to school cultures, structures, and routines. When these efforts are well planned and intentionally designed, they can support smooth transitions and a positive experience for students, educators, and families.

# School closure and consolidation efforts require thoughtful, engaged leadership and a focus on equity.

In times of declining enrollment, districts often face tough decisions around school closure and consolidation. But there are opportunities in these difficult processes, too. Whether stated explicitly or not, school closure and consolidation prompt redesign decisions and offer an opportunity for district leaders to rethink how their portfolio of schools supports students and families.

This chapter describes different approaches to school closure and strategies for prioritizing equity when engaging in a school closure and consolidation process. By centering student needs — and by engaging openly and honestly with key stakeholders — district leaders can leverage the school closure and consolidation process to better align the district’s resources and offerings with its goals for teaching and learning.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ☐ How might a school’s history and its role within the community influence the local response to decisions about closing or consolidation?
- ☐ How can the district ensure an open, collaborative process for closure that elicits and is responsive to community feedback?
- ☐ How can the district minimize the risk that closures will harm student learning and relationships?
- ☐ How can the district minimize the risk that closures will drive families to leave the district?
- ☐ How can the district present a long-term vision for its school portfolio to the community in a way that builds confidence in the district’s future?

# The school closure process can be long and complex, with many stakeholders involved.

Every school closure process is different. Districts that have made closure decisions have found value in some or all of the following activities:

## TO-DO LIST: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Establish a school closure advisory committee made up of key stakeholders, including labor partners and families, and host open committee meetings following [Brown Act](#) rules.
- ❑ Host accessible town halls and meetings across the district, leveraging existing family and community engagement structures and partnerships.
- ❑ Conduct community surveys.
- ❑ Contract with a communications firm to ensure smooth, transparent information dissemination throughout the process.
- ❑ Provide advising sessions for families displaced by closures.

## TO-DO LIST: ANALYSIS AND PLANNING

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Review the California Department of Education's "[Best Practices Guide for Potential School Closure](#)" and the California attorney general's [guidance](#).
- ❑ Develop school closure criteria and metrics, engaging with data around school performance, student achievement, ADA, demographics, fiscal health, and other key factors.
- ❑ Conduct a facilities audit to understand current usage of district property, including classrooms.
- ❑ Identify which school sites host high-priority programs, such as special education services and dual-language programs.
- ❑ Conduct an [equity impact analysis](#).
- ❑ Conduct a [boundary study](#), which reviews student assignment policies and feeder patterns, analyzes how siblings will be affected by closures and consolidations, and considers concerns about student safety.
- ❑ Map out transportation routes and evaluate the fiscal impact of various route options.



# Evidence indicates that school closures benefit schools financially but have mixed results for student outcomes.

## Financial Impacts

Over the long term, budget savings can be realized. Closures can:

- Reduce labor costs.
- Lead to a more efficient deployment of personnel.
- Achieve economies of scale.
- Reduce facility costs.

Edunomics Lab estimates that when a district has underenrolled schools, closing one out of every 15 schools saves about 4% of a district's budget, mainly in labor costs. In the short term, districts often overestimate cost savings because:

- Closures must be accompanied by reductions in force to achieve savings.
- There are one-time costs.
- There are ongoing costs that come with managing surplus property.

## Academic Achievement

- Many studies find short-term negative effects for displaced students, but these outcomes typically improve after one to three years.
- Some studies find short-term negative effects for students in welcoming schools, especially when there are large numbers of displaced students.
- Other studies have found both short- and long-term benefits. Positive impacts are almost always the result of relocating students to higher-performing schools.

## High School and College Outcomes

A few studies find long-term negative effects for displaced high school students, including a Milwaukee study that found lower high school graduation and college attendance rates, and a New York City study that found a negative impact on the type of diploma received. The latter study, however, found positive benefits for future New York City students.

## Student Well-Being

Closures can also negatively impact other harder-to-measure things such as students' social-emotional well-being, relationships, and community trust.

# Districts should consider how closures will impact the most marginalized students and mitigate impacts.

Key considerations for equity include:

## Inclusive Decision-Making

- ❑ Engage a diverse group of stakeholders, including students, families, and community members, to ensure that multiple perspectives inform the school closure process.

## Transparent Communication

- ❑ Maintain open lines of communication throughout the school closure process to build trust and facilitate community buy-in.

## Equity Impact Assessments

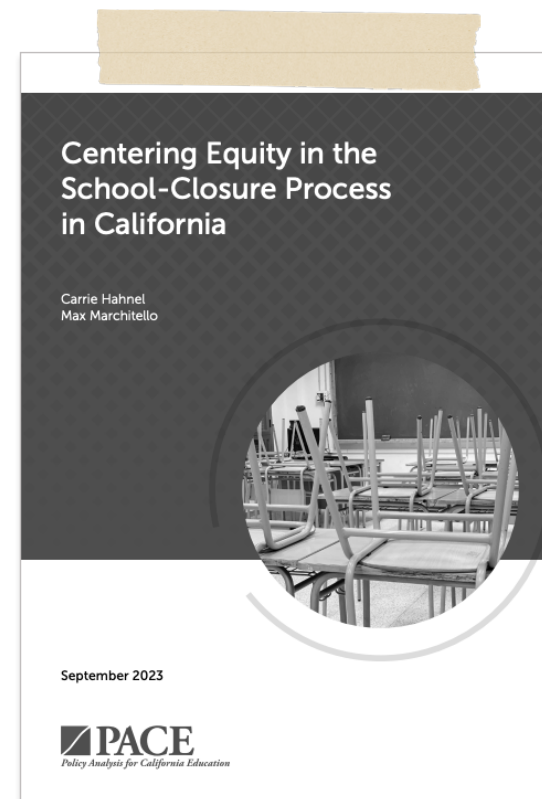
- ❑ Conduct thorough analyses to understand how proposed closures may affect different student groups, with the aim of preventing the exacerbation of existing disparities.
- ❑ Review provisions of California law ([Assembly Bill 1912](#)) requiring that districts in financial distress conduct an equity impact analysis.

## Support for Displaced Students

- ❑ Develop comprehensive plans to assist students transitioning to new schools, ensuring they have access to quality education and necessary resources. (For more, visit this toolkit's [welcoming schools](#) chapter.)

## Long-Term Strategic Planning

- ❑ Address underlying factors contributing to declining enrollment, such as housing policies and community investment, to create sustainable solutions beyond immediate closures.



Access the report [here](#).

## Santa Rosa City Schools prioritized community engagement in its school closure process.

Facing a large deficit and a need to balance its budget, Santa Rosa City Schools considered school mergers during SY24-25. The district established an advisory committee to weigh in on potential mergers. It also hosted a series of public town halls, presenting potential scenarios to stakeholders and soliciting input. These town hall presentations offer an example of how districts can engage the community in thoughtful, inclusive dialogue.

### Meeting Norms ~ Normas de la junta:

- *Stay mentally and physically present.*
  - *Contribute to meeting goals by staying on topic.*
  - *Share the space, let everyone participate.*
  - *Listen with an open mind to understand, even if you disagree.*
  - *Expect and accept non-closure.*
  - *Be curious and open to new ideas.*
  - *Remain mindful that any language should be appropriate for children.*
  - *Attack the problem, not the person.*
- 
- Manténgase presente física y mentalmente.
  - Contribuya a la consecución de los objetivos manteniéndose centrado en el tema.
  - Comparta el espacio, permita que todos participen.
  - Escuche con la mente abierta para comprender, incluso si no está de acuerdo.
  - Espere y acepte que no haya cierres emocionales.
  - Sea curioso y esté abierto a nuevas ideas.
  - Recuerde que cualquier lenguaje debe ser apropiado para los niños.
  - Ataque el problema, no a la persona.

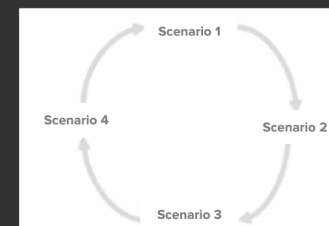


### Gallery Walk

*Walk and review the information placed in the various scenarios – as you prepare to place your dot in your preferred scenario.*

### Paseo por la galería

**Camine y revise la información proveída sobre los diferentes escenarios, mientras preparándose para poner un punto en su escenario preferido.**



Grounding in meeting norms — and being cognizant of potential language barriers — can help set the tone of a meeting.

Engaging attendees in participatory activities, such as a gallery walk, can increase a sense of buy-in among stakeholders.

## Napa Valley Unified School District's (NVUSD) closure process was guided by an informed board.

In 2019, NVUSD faced declining enrollment and intensifying budget struggles. Recognizing that this situation was unsustainable, the district's board overwhelmingly voted to close Mt. George Elementary School and Yountville Elementary School in October 2019. In April 2021, NVUSD's board voted to close Harvest Middle School and convert River Middle School into Unidos Middle School as a Spanish language and arts immersion campus.

A case study on this closure process by the California Collaborative on District Reform found that the district's extensive research on options for closures facilitated productive conversations with the school board and the community. The entire process was strengthened by a community committee that reviewed NVUSD closure options as well.

*"I am not afraid to have any conversation [about controversial votes]. I don't have a conversation unless I understand the information. I am more than willing to say, 'I don't know,' but it is rare that I feel that I have not been given enough data or an opportunity to ask all the questions predicated on that data before I go public."*

—ROBIN JANKIEWICZ, BOARD MEMBER, NAPA VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Key Lessons From NVUSD

- Engage in conversations with district leadership to understand the data and options for moving forward.
- Offer opportunities for one-on-one conversations with community stakeholders about closure decisions.
- Connect current decisions to the broader welfare of the students within the district.
- Prioritize the long-term sustainability of the district and have the fortitude to make tough decisions.



# Laying the groundwork for school closures years before they happen helps avoid “surprises.”

Clear, transparent, and ongoing communications with the community can help build understanding around a district’s closure process. While this engagement may prompt questions or even resistance, on balance, it is an important step in surfacing community perspectives and fostering trust.

Stakeholder	Practices	Resources
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Well in advance of any closures, offer town halls or similar community-facing events to share data on why school closures might be needed.</li> <li>Frame messaging around producing better-resourced learning environments, not budget cutting (i.e., when a district has too many schools for the number of students, the learning and working environments suffer, making it harder to deliver on educational goals).</li> <li>Create multiple ways for families to provide ongoing input and stay informed about changes to schools, staffing, and schedules.</li> </ul>	The Center on Reinventing Public Education offers <a href="#">lessons learned</a> from past closure processes, particularly related to external communications
Governing Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present clear, data-informed options for moving forward with school closures and consolidations.</li> <li>Actively engage with district board members to ensure they are well-informed about the need for closures and the process for decision-making.</li> </ul>	Consider best practices from the California School Boards Association’s <a href="#">article</a> on school closures
Labor Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly communicate how closures and consolidations impact staffing, including potential reassignments, layoffs, or new roles.</li> <li>Address concerns about changes to class size, schedules, and planning time, ensuring that teacher and staff well-being and fair workloads remain a priority.</li> <li>Work closely with labor partners to align staffing changes with collective bargaining agreements and to codevelop solutions that balance fiscal realities with educator and staff needs.</li> </ul>	Review BUSD’s <a href="#">presentation</a> on collective bargaining, with references to declining enrollment

# Welcoming schools play a critical role in the postbudget realignment transition for students, staff, and communities.

When school closures happen, students are usually sent to other schools, also known as “welcoming schools.”

For the students, families, and staff involved, this transition can be a challenging and emotional process. Welcoming schools play a critical role in helping students feel supported, connected, and valued as they adjust to their new environment. How districts prepare and equip these schools can significantly impact the extent to which the transition fosters resilience and a sense of belonging among relocated students. District leaders should also plan for some level of school redesign in welcoming schools, whether it is building new structures or helping school communities form a new school identity and culture.

This chapter explores strategies for creating welcoming schools that prioritize student well-being and academic continuity.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ☐ What level of school redesign will be needed in the district’s welcoming school(s)?
- ☐ How does a welcoming school create a new school culture that is inclusive of the district’s closing school(s)?
- ☐ What actions can the district take to help preserve artifacts from the closing school(s) and incorporate them into the welcoming school(s)?

### District leaders should also:

- ☐ Begin planning for postclosure — and support for welcoming schools — early in the school closure and consolidation processes.
- ☐ Facilitate partnerships between leaders at both the closing and welcoming school(s) to build a smooth transition and to explicitly plan for school redesign.
- ☐ Find opportunities for continuity in programming, staff, or partnerships for students moving from a closing school to a welcoming school.
- ☐ Consider allocating time for school leaders to dedicate to the closure and welcoming processes.
- ☐ Intentionally communicate to families and engage with them on the process of the changes (e.g., is it a merger?).

# There are several ways that district leaders can support schools as they welcome new students, families, and staff.

Welcoming schools can:

- ❑ Create student ambassadors and structures to welcome new students.
- ❑ Provide extra support to incoming teachers and teachers at the welcoming school, which can include the creation of transition coordinators to lead this work.
- ❑ Provide ample time for leaders in welcoming schools to plan for school redesign.
- ❑ Create opportunities for families of incoming students to feel welcomed and integrated into the school (e.g., a “welcome week” that is focused on relationship-building), led by distributed leadership (e.g., the PTA).
- ❑ Consider how to maintain traditions and programs of closed schools (e.g., mascots, trophy cases, historic artifacts, artwork, after-school programs, and courses of study) and integrate them into the welcoming schools.
- ❑ Provide incoming students with additional social and emotional supports and interventions, acknowledging the trauma school transitions can cause.
- ❑ Make community-directed investments to enhance the learning environment (e.g., new technology, programs).

## The Role of the District

Districts could consider, when possible, providing extra support to welcoming schools so that they can best serve the new students, families, and teachers.

As noted in a PACE report, “Districts should provide additional resources to receiving schools so that they can hire tutors, counselors, paraprofessionals, and other support staff and provide academic, social, and emotional supports for students.”

Districts could also allocate money to a Welcoming Schools Support Fund, which can support some of the activities described for schools in this chapter.



# Azusa Unified School District (Azusa USD) centered student voice in reorganization efforts.

In 2019, Azusa USD, in the greater Los Angeles region, underwent a large reorganization. At the high school level, Gladstone High School became a middle school, and students who would have attended Gladstone High School moved to Azusa High School.

To improve transparency and trust, the district established a committee — composed of 50% parents and 50% staff — to advise on the school reorganization process. The district was pleased, however, when many of the merger efforts around student continuity and belonging were led by the students themselves.

*“The bands started playing and competing together even before the merger. Sports teams started practicing together. ... Leading up to the merger, there was a lot of footwork done. A lot of this was coming from the minds of the youth.”*

—ARTURO ORTEGA, SUPERINTENDENT, AZUSA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Key Lessons From Azusa USD

- Engage students in the unification process and empower them to be mentors and peer leaders.
- Be mindful of the importance of traditions and symbols — from mascots to school colors.
- Partner with external organizations that can facilitate conversations around integration and inclusion.





# Contents

## Overview

- About This Toolkit
- Audience for This Toolkit
- How This Toolkit Is Organized
- Defining School and System Redesign
- The Human Side of Enrollment Decline

## Component A: Enrollment Decline Analysis

1. Make enrollment and demographic projections.
2. Assess the fiscal effects of declining enrollment.

## Component B: Budgeting

3. Align district initiatives with budgeting.
4. Protect and increase revenues.
5. Audit and reduce current spending.

## Component C: Staffing, Schedules, and Instructional Models

6. Plan for redesign.
7. Implement flexible scheduling and staffing structures.
8. Adopt innovative instructional models.



## Component D: School Closure, Consolidation, and Welcoming Schools

9. Use engaged, equitable approaches to school closures.
10. Support welcoming schools.

## Component E: Partnerships and Facilities

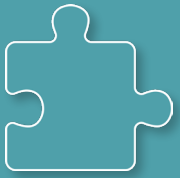
11. Partner with external organizations.
12. Leverage underutilized facilities and district property.

## Sources

## Acknowledgments

## About the Authors

## About Bellwether



# Component E: Partnerships and Facilities

This component focuses on ways in which districts can take advantage of partnerships with external organizations and underutilized facilities to potentially realize new revenue and expand service offerings for students.

DISTRICT LEADERS MUST	WHY THIS MATTERS FOR SCHOOL AND SYSTEM REDESIGN
<b>Partner with external organizations.</b>	External organizations can provide resources, expertise, and innovative solutions that schools may not otherwise have. These partners can offer financial support, professional development for educators, and access to specialized programs that align with redesign goals, such as career and technical education, social-emotional learning initiatives, or technology integration.
<b>Leverage underutilized facilities and district property.</b>	When districts leverage vacant or underutilized facilities to provide child care, elder care, adult education, housing, expanded learning opportunities, or other critical services, they can redefine the boundaries between schools and the broader community.

# Partnering with external organizations can enhance redesign efforts and expand services.

Partnerships with external organizations can provide districts with the resources, expertise, and support needed to enhance student outcomes and achieve strategic goals, especially in budget-constrained environments. Collaborations with nonprofits, businesses, postsecondary institutions, and community organizations can amplify district efforts by introducing new programs, expanding capacity, and offering specialized services that may be difficult to provide otherwise.

These partnerships often bring fresh perspectives and innovative solutions that address pressing issues, from supporting mental health to enhancing career readiness. Organizations' offerings can also align with redesign goals, such as career and technical education, social-emotional learning initiatives, and/or technology integration.

This chapter offers resources for districts to draw upon when thinking about building new partnerships with external organizations.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ❑ What existing partnerships does the district have with external organizations? Are those partnerships effective? Are they achieving their intended goals?
- ❑ In what areas might the district benefit from additional partnerships with external organizations (e.g., mental health support, extracurriculars)?
- ❑ What services does the district currently fund that could instead be provided and funded by a different agency or partner to increase quality, efficiency, and/or effectiveness?

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Catalog existing partnerships to understand where there are gaps — or duplication.
- ❑ Conduct a needs assessment to understand where services are missing or under-resourced.
- ❑ Engage in a transparent, competitive procurement process to contract with a pool of partners that align with the district's goals.
- ❑ Set key principles for engagement with external organizations. What are the goals for engagement? What is nonnegotiable?
- ❑ Engage with the school community to gather preferences for what services they would like to see offered by external partners.

# Partnerships with external organizations can help schools leverage community resources to better serve students.

Partnerships require deep consideration and strategic planning, and the tools below can guide that process.

## RESOURCES

### American Institutes for Research (AIR)

The [fourth edition](#) of AIR's "Guide to Working with External Providers" offers useful tools to districts to help them consider, select, negotiate, and continue partnerships.

### Community Schools Learning Exchange (CSLX)

[CSLX](#), an organization that works directly with on-the-ground entities like districts to build community school strategies, developed a [case study](#) of Kern County in California, a rural district outside of Bakersfield that uses cross-district partnerships and a community schools model to enhance the services and offerings for students.

### MDRC

MDRC's [practitioner brief](#) offers strategies around school-community partnerships to help meet students' social and emotional learning needs.

### National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

This [guide](#) outlines considerations and approaches to school-business partnerships that can help with youth skill development.

# Inglewood Unified School District (IUSD) partnered with the city library to expand services.

IUSD has experienced steep enrollment declines — from about 18,000 students in 2002 to around 7,000 students in 2024. The declines have led to school closures and consolidations. Despite this, the district has sought ways to improve services and opportunities for students, such as the partnership with the Inglewood Public Library. The library is undergoing a \$61 million renovation and will be connected to Inglewood High School via a bridge for safety and ease of access. Study rooms and other spaces designed for students are included in the renovation.

The district has included information about this new collaboration within its school closure materials, indicating a connection between the decision to close schools and the ability to improve services for students. The collaboration also realizes millions of dollars in cost savings for IUSD, as the redone high school will not need a new library built.

***“There are a lot of folks who want to help, there are incredible partnerships. It’s about finding them.”***

—JAMES MORRIS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR, INGLEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Key Lessons From IUSD

- Look for opportunities to partner with existing community organizations and structures.
- Consider student experience. How might the partnership prioritize space for students to study, for example?
- Communicate new partnerships to students and families as part of an overall strategy around school closures, where applicable.



# Leveraging underutilized facilities and district property can create opportunities for students and communities.

As enrollment declines, many districts find themselves with underutilized properties that represent untapped potential. Instead of allowing these assets to drain resources, districts can repurpose them to generate revenue, expand services, or meet broader community needs. From leasing unused space to community organizations to transforming facilities into hubs for adult education, child care, or workforce training, creative use of district property can provide financial relief while strengthening ties with the local community and redefining boundaries between the school and the community.

This chapter explores options for generating revenue through facility and property use, highlighting innovative approaches that benefit both districts and communities. It also outlines key considerations for district leaders, ensuring that repurposing efforts align with educational goals, fiscal sustainability, and community needs.

## TO-DO LIST

### District leaders could ask:

- ❑ Has the district conducted a facilities audit in recent years to identify surplus or underutilized property? If so, what were the findings? If not, could a facilities audit be conducted in the near future?
- ❑ Are there community needs that could be addressed by strategically repurposing district property (e.g., a need for a new early childhood learning center)?
- ❑ If high cost of living contributes to staff turnover, could the district build staff housing on surplus property?

### District leaders should also:

- ❑ Conduct a facilities audit to understand where there may be underutilized property.
- ❑ Engage in conversations with community stakeholders to understand unmet community needs (e.g., child care, elder care, mental health services).
- ❑ Engage city planners, especially around key zoning laws, when considering workforce housing.

# Underutilized facilities and district property represent new potential revenue streams for budget-strapped districts.

Districts have opportunities to generate revenue from facilities and property.

## Early Childhood Education

Lease district facilities to early childhood education providers. For example, in Oakland, Kaiser Elementary School closed in 2019, merging with Sankofa Elementary School (now renamed Sankofa United Elementary School). But in 2022, the old site of Kaiser became the Kaiser Early Childhood Center, hosting services for children up to age 5.

## Workforce Housing

Build workforce housing on district-owned lands to create long-term opportunities for revenue generation and reduce staff turnover due to high costs of living. See the next page for examples of districts that have successfully built workforce housing.

## Community Partnerships

Lease space to local agencies and organizations to increase access to community services while generating revenue.

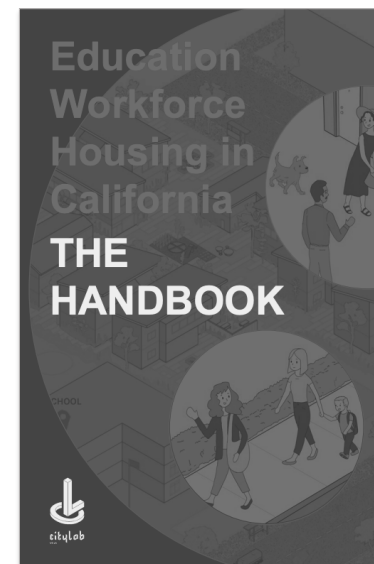
Key implementation considerations and resources include:

## Inclusive Processes

California Education Code suggests that districts partner with district advisory committees, known as 7-11 committees, when seeking to repurpose underutilized space. Additionally, district leaders should consider seeking input from key stakeholders, including community members, to ensure that the use of the space reflects district goals and community needs.

## Up-Front Time and Costs

Workforce housing will require significant time and capacity to plan and build. The University of California, Berkeley's Center for Cities + Schools released a handbook on developing education workforce housing for best practices and more.



Find this handbook and additional Education Workforce Housing resources through the California School Boards Association website.



# Education workforce housing is a growing trend in California for utilizing district property.



## 705 Serramonte

Built by Jefferson Union High School District (JUHSD) in San Mateo County, 705 Serramonte offers 122 affordable units to educators in the district. Of these units, 60% are reserved for teachers and 40% for classified staff. When asked about building the housing, JUHSD Trustee Andrew Lie told the California School Boards Association, “We needed to do something dramatic in order to make sure we can retain staff — and that is when we looked at staff housing.” The district offers resources, such as its initial budget and operations agreement, to others considering building similar housing.



## Sage Park Apartments

Sage Park Apartments were built by Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) in 2015 on underutilized district property. While the apartments offer priority to LAUSD employees within a 3-mile radius, they are publicly available as well — for those earning between 30% and 60% of the area’s median income. Several entities helped finance the project, such as energy credits, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, and a mixture of loans and funding from Wells Fargo Bank, California Community Reinvestment Corporation, and the Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department.



## The Alameda

Opened in 2023, The Alameda is a 100-unit apartment building — 50 units of which are owned by Salinas Union High School District in Monterey County, California. The district hopes that the affordable workforce housing will attract new teachers, given its staff shortage. Of the units, 55% are reserved for teachers and 45% for classified staff. The building was funded by bond funds and certificates of participation. The district’s board met and decided on a range of eligibility guidelines, including a maximum tenancy of five years.



# Contents

## Overview

About This Toolkit  
Audience for This Toolkit  
How This Toolkit Is Organized  
Defining School and System Redesign  
The Human Side of Enrollment Decline

## Component A: Enrollment Decline Analysis

1. Make enrollment and demographic projections.
2. Assess the fiscal effects of declining enrollment.

## Component B: Budgeting

3. Align district initiatives with budgeting.
4. Protect and increase revenues.
5. Audit and reduce current spending.

## Component C: Staffing, Schedules, and Instructional Models

6. Plan for redesign.
7. Implement flexible scheduling and staffing structures.
8. Adopt innovative instructional models.



## Component D: School Closure, Consolidation, and Welcoming Schools

9. Use engaged, equitable approaches to school closures.
10. Support welcoming schools.

## Component E: Partnerships and Facilities

11. Partner with external organizations.
12. Leverage underutilized facilities and district property.

## Sources

### Acknowledgments

### About the Authors

### About Bellwether

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## PAGE 3

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# Contents

## Overview

About This Toolkit  
Audience for This Toolkit  
How This Toolkit Is Organized  
Defining School and System Redesign  
The Human Side of Enrollment Decline

## Component A: Enrollment Decline Analysis

1. Make enrollment and demographic projections.
2. Assess the fiscal effects of declining enrollment.

## Component B: Budgeting

3. Align district initiatives with budgeting.
4. Protect and increase revenues.
5. Audit and reduce current spending.

## Component C: Staffing, Schedules, and Instructional Models

6. Plan for redesign.
7. Implement flexible scheduling and staffing structures.
8. Adopt innovative instructional models.



## Component D: School Closure, Consolidation, and Welcoming Schools

9. Use engaged, equitable approaches to school closures.
10. Support welcoming schools.

## Component E: Partnerships and Facilities

11. Partner with external organizations.
12. Leverage underutilized facilities and district property.

## Sources

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## About Bellwether

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## About Bellwether

Bellwether is a national nonprofit that exists to transform education to ensure systemically marginalized young people achieve outcomes that lead to fulfilling lives and flourishing communities. Founded in 2010, we work hand in hand with education leaders and organizations to accelerate their impact, inform and influence policy and program design, and share what we learn along the way. For more, visit [bellwether.org](https://bellwether.org).



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