

Recommendation 18

The General Assembly should identify incentives for districts considering consolidation. Consolidation should be strongly explored by persistently underperforming districts, districts with low student populations, and districts in danger of financial insolvency. Funding inequities that exist between districts must be addressed.

Recommendation 19

Districts should be encouraged to consolidate business functions (i.e. human resources, transportation, facilities management, information technology, etc.) where appropriate.

To foster improved district efficiency and sustainability, and greater opportunities for students, the State shall establish a School District Consolidation Incentive Program. The incentives may include, but not be limited to:

1. Waivers approved by the State Board of Education on accountability reporting requirements.
2. Available funding assistance on district debt retirement, cross-district teacher and employee salary uniformity, and other consolidation implementation costs.
3. Enhanced funding for regional career centers serving consolidated districts and regional partnerships.

The State Superintendent of Education shall work with the local legislative delegations and education communities to explore all possible shared resources, services, and programs to enhance the opportunities for students across district and county lines.