

EDUCATION

Community Vision 2028

“We enjoy a stable economy that provides an affordable community for an economically diverse population. Through the minimal and wise use of resources, we have an economy that can be sustained over time and that produces well-paying jobs for our residents. We have a comprehensive educational system that strengthens our workforce and ability to diversify our economic base. We need to plan long range, with a consistency of approach and application. A view to our future must drive our decisions.”
—Kezziah Watkins Report

Overview

The provision of adequate educational facilities and programs is essential to the quality of life in The County. Residents are served by six public school districts with two districts serving both Kootenai and neighboring counties. Five public institutions of higher education currently have a presence in the County.



Lake City High School

The following information has been taken from the Idaho State Department of Education 2007 End-of-the-Year Report.

Facilities and Enrollment

Coeur d’Alene School District 271 is the largest local district, with a total enrollment of 10,646 students. Two high schools (Coeur d’Alene High School with 1,564 students; and Lake City High School, with 1,545 students) are projected to meet the enrollment needs of high school students for at least 15 years. Three middle schools (Canfield Middle School, with 778 students; Lakes Middle School, with 606

students; and Woodland Middle School with 791 students) are adequately meeting student population needs. The 10 elementary schools are: Atlas Elementary School (530 students), Borah Elementary School (389), Bryan Elementary School (365), Dalton Elementary School (398), Fernan Elementary School (501), Hayden Meadows Elementary School (614), Ramsey Elementary School (562), Skyway Elementary School (611), Sorensen Elementary School (219), and Winton Elementary School (284). The district is currently projecting the need to build an elementary school to the north as growth demands. Two alternative schools are present in the district. The Bridge Academy serves 176 students in grades 9–12, while Project C.D.A. serves 197 students in grades 7–12. The Coeur d’Alene Charter Academy, with an enrollment of 467 students in grades 6–12, is the only charter school in The County.

Post Falls School District 273 is the second-largest district, with a total enrollment of 5,290 students. Post Falls High School (1,457 students) completed an eight-classroom addition in August 2007. Two middle schools, Post Falls Middle School (749) and River City Middle School (492) are adequately serving the middle school population. Frederick Post Kinder Center, grades Pre–K, has an enrollment of 396 students. The four elementary schools are: Mullan Trail Elementary School (423), Ponderosa Elementary School (488), Prairie View Elementary School (606), and Seltice Elementary School (603). A ground-breaking ceremony for West Ridge Elementary School was held on May 22, 2007. The land for this project was donated by a developer, and the school will make accommodations to ensure a seamless blend into the neighborhood. Special attention has been given to coordinate the West Ridge playground and parking lot with a proposed adjacent city park. West Ridge Elementary School is slated to open for the 2008–2009 school year. New Vision School is an alternative school serving 76 students in grades 9–12. The district is focused on acquiring a site for a future high school, which requires a minimum of 40 acres. It is currently looking at the possibility of expanding a current site, or sites, to a size large enough to construct a

high school. One unused 10-acre elementary site is in its possession, and there are discussions related to acquiring two more. The district owns a 20-acre middle school site as well.

Lakeland School District 274 has a total enrollment of 4,485 students. Two high schools, Lakeland Senior High School (602 students) and Timberlake Senior High School (528), currently serve the population adequately. Lakeland Junior High School (670 students in grades 7–9) and Timberlake Junior High School (289 students in grades 7–8) are adequately meeting population demands. The six elementary schools are: Betty Kiefer Elementary School (521), Garwood Elementary School (520), John Brown Elementary School (495), Spirit Lake Elementary School (369), Athol Elementary and Twin Lakes Elementary School (315). An alternative school, Mountain View High School, serves 96 students in grades 9–12. In addition, the district owns 13 school sites (three of which are not developed) totaling approximately 179.5 acres of property.

Kootenai School District 274 has a total enrollment of 262 students. Kootenai Junior-Senior High School has 136 students in grades 7–12. Harrison Elementary School has 126 students in grades K–6. The district currently has no expansion plans.

Plummer/Worley Joint District 44 was created from the consolidation of the Worley and Western Benewah school districts in 1990. Kootenai County students attend elementary school in Worley and are bused to middle school and high school in Plummer. Total enrollment of the district is 478 students. Lakeside High School has an enrollment of 141 students in grades 9–12. Lakeside Middle School has an enrollment of 117 students in grades 6–8. Lakeside Elementary School has an enrollment of 220 students in grades PreK–5. The district currently has no expansion plans. The Coeur d’Alene Tribe Department of Education is working to align the Plummer/Worley School District’s high school vocational courses technology; food science and nutrition; apparel design; housing, interiors, and furnishing; family living; welding; small engines; and greenhouse nursery with North Idaho College

(NIC) courses as a way for high school students to earn college credit. Also, the Tribe continues to work with NIC in offering dual enrollment courses and interactive video conference classes at the high school and at the Coeur d’Alene Tribe Department of Education.

Kellogg Joint School District 391 is in Shoshone County but serves 107 Kootenai County students. Sixty of those students in grades K–5 attend Canyon Elementary School in Cataldo. These students are then bused to middle and high schools in Kellogg. There are no plans to change this arrangement.

Finances

The General Maintenance and Operation (M&O) Fund includes the majority of revenues and expenditures of a school district. This fund accounts for the financial operation of the district’s instructional programs supported by local tax revenues and state foundation support appropriations. All other funds account for the revenues and expenditures of specific types of activities (e.g., special state and federal programs, retirement of debt, and capital projects). The complete financial report of every district in Idaho is available on the State Department of Education website at www.sde.idaho.gov. The County school districts have been successful in updating and building new schools through the passage of levies and bonds to keep pace with enrollment demands.

Transportation

School district transportation programs vary greatly in the number and percentage of students bused, the cost, and the distance traveled. Districts are very aware of keeping travel time and bus transfer routes to a minimum. Maximum travel time one-way ranges from 45 minutes to 2 ¼ hours, including wait time and transfers; however, the majority of students spend less than one hour traveling to school. Transportation concerns play a large role in the planning of new schools.

Private Education

Complete and accurate data is difficult to collect with regard to private schools. Only those

non-public schools wishing to provide information to the Idaho State Department of Education are included in the annual report. Accreditation status is not necessarily reported. Nine non-public schools, including preschool through 12th grade schools, chose to be listed in the 2007–2008 Idaho State Department Education Directory. It is believed that this number is significantly lower than the actual number of fully operational non-public schools in the County.

Home Schooling

Idaho does not regulate or monitor home school education. Most home school parents/students form local support networks. Home school individuals or groups can access local, state, and federal resources by contacting their local school districts for more information. Complete and accurate home school data cannot be collected.

Higher Education

The next few years are certain to bring about substantial change in the higher education arena in the County. North Idaho College, Lewis-Clark State College, University of Idaho, Boise State University and Idaho State University currently operate local programs. The proposal to create a university-college complex in Coeur d'Alene through co-location of NIC, LCSC, UI, and ISU has substantial potential for the colleges, county, and the region. But if, when, and how it will happen, who will be involved, how it will evolve, and where the funding will come from, remain uncertain. NIC's aim to acquire additional land for long-term needs of the college, area high schools, and the region is very much on the minds of college officials. Regional business and industry continue to push for more professional/technical programming. NIC's Workforce Training programs, primarily short-term and noncredit, have been the salvation of many citizens, businesses, and organizations. The dual credit program and tech-prep, wherein qualified high school students get a head start by taking classes that generate both high school and NIC credits, have been growing rapidly in recent years. Distance education taking higher education coursework via computer or other alternative

methods than the traditional classroom/lecture format continues to grow.

Summary

The majority of concerns affecting school districts and higher education reflect impacts from growth and development. Good communication between school districts and the County in the subdivision process is one way of ensuring that school districts anticipate growth and plan their needs in advance of demand.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The goals and policies in this chapter are intended to articulate the community vision toward the region's educational system and not to be regulatory but, provide specific guidance for the adoption and implementation of development regulations which will ensure conformity with The Plan.

GOAL 1: Support school districts in the establishment of future school sites to ensure adequate education facilities and transportation needs are addressed.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

E-1 A. Promote cooperation and communication with state, county, and municipal governments to coordinate efforts with local school districts to assess and address future needs for education facilities, including preferred locations and transportation requirements through the long-range planning process.

E-1 B. Prepare and provide relevant information on proposed residential development applications with the appropriate impacted local school districts.

E-1 C. Develop regulations which require residential land use applications to address mitigation of impacts on public school facilities and services.

GOAL 2: Raise educational attainment in The County so as to increase per capita income and corresponding housing affordability.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

- E-2 A. Encourage development of a centrally located professional/technical education campus.
- E-2 B. Encourage educational entities to coordinate long range planning efforts for all levels of schooling, in order to communicate desired future school acquisition sites to the County for use in evaluating development applications.
- E-2 C. Cooperate with education providers and employers in developing facilities and programs meeting a continuum of educational needs at the K–12, college and continuing professional/technical education levels.

GOAL 3: Allow alternatives to traditional large scale public schools in order to increase land use mix and reduce transportation trips and sprawl.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

- E-3 A. Consider allowing small schools as a permitted use in all land use designations.
- E-3 B. Develop regulations which encourage land dedications from large development applicants to educational land trusts, which may benefit smaller alternative, nonprofit schools as well as public school districts.

GOAL 4: Encourage early coordination between affected school districts and development applicants.

Policies and Implementation Strategies

- E-4 A. Develop regulations which require applicants for large-scale developments to consult with local public school district officials at the pre-application stage to avoid future problems and conflicts for students and their parents as the development is created and sold.