

Belmont Public Schools
Facility Change Guiding Principles
(Version 1, 5/2/2013)

Any significant change of facilities that are controlled by the Belmont School Department should be congruent with the long-term plans of the Department, and in any case should not create an obstacle with respect to those plans. Any decision about a facility change should consider the impact on the flexibility of the Department with respect to options for future development of the system as a whole.

In general, any change of facilities should allow the Department to maintain service comparable to, or enhanced relative to, the current service, with regard to, but not limited to:

- furthering the educational objectives of the system
- compliance with state, federal, and other laws and regulations
- safety of the facility
- accessibility for emergency responders, maintenance staff, facility users
- the provision of relevant equipment, services, and facilities
- program costs
- maintenance costs
- other recurring costs
- maintenance of the same or greater effective usable space
- control of programming by the School Department
- impact on services indirectly related to the facility (e.g., impact on adjacent campus use, effect elsewhere on the campus or in the system, etc.)
- minimizing the displacement of non-school programs who use the facility.

Notwithstanding the above, a temporary reduction of services may be necessary during the process of transition; best efforts should be taken to minimize downtime during construction.

In addition to these considerations, if a request to transfer control of land comes from agents beyond the School Department (e.g., for the schools to release control of some parcel, either on its own or as part of a "land swap"), additional considerations would apply:

- The costs for the transition should not fall on the School Department, either capital outlay or one-time or ongoing operational costs incurred as a result of the transition.
- If land is exchanged and the use of the new parcel is shared by multiple agencies, the School Department should retain full control of the new parcel, and not merely "program input" to some other controlling agency.
- The transfer of land should satisfy a vital community need, to a degree not available without the transfer, in the assessment of the School Committee.