

273.21 Voluntary reorganization.

1. Two or more area education agencies may voluntarily reorganize under this subchapter if the area education agencies are contiguous, a majority of the members of each of the affected boards approve the reorganization, and the reorganization plan submitted to the state board pursuant to subsection 3 is approved by the state board.
2. If twenty percent or more of the school districts within an affected area education agency file a petition by December 1 with the affected area education agency board to consider reorganization, the affected board shall consider the request and vote on the petition. If a majority of the affected board members vote to study the reorganization of the affected area education agency, the affected board shall immediately begin the study to consider reorganization effective by July 1 of the next year.
3. The affected boards contemplating a voluntary reorganization shall do the following:
 - a. Develop detailed studies of the facilities, property, services, staffing necessities, equipment, programs, and other capabilities available in each of the affected area education agencies for the purpose of providing for the reorganization of the area education agencies in order to effect more economical operation and the attainment of higher standards of educational services for the schools.
 - b. Survey the school districts within the affected area education agencies to determine the districts' current and future programs and services, professional development, and technology needs.
 - c. Consult with the officials of school districts within the affected area and other citizens and periodically hold public hearings during the development of a plan for reorganization, as well as a public hearing on the final plan to be submitted to the department.
 - d. Consult with the director of the department of education in the development of surveys and plans. The director of the department of education shall provide assistance and advice to the affected area education agency boards as requested.
 - e. Develop a reorganization plan that demonstrates improved efficiency and effectiveness of programs to meet accreditation standards, includes a preliminary budget for reorganized areas, documents public comment from the public hearings held pursuant to paragraph "c", and provides for a board of directors, and the number of members that the board shall consist of, in accordance with section 273.8.
 - f. Set forth the assets and liabilities of the affected area education agencies, which shall become the responsibility of the board of directors of the newly formed area education agency on the effective date of the reorganization.
 - g. Transmit the completed plan to the state board by July 15. Plans received by the state board after July 15 shall be considered for area education agency reorganization taking effect no sooner than July 1 after the next succeeding fiscal year.
4. The state board shall review the reorganization plan and shall, prior to September 30, either approve the plan as submitted, approve the plan contingent upon compliance with the state board's recommendations, or disapprove the plan. A contingently approved plan shall be resubmitted with modifications to the department not later than October 30. An approved plan shall take effect on July 1 of the fiscal year following the date of approval by the state board.