

ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: Examining the Importance of Schools on Neighborhoods,
Community Development and the Housing Market

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“In 1930 there were 262,000 public elementary and secondary schools in the United States; today, there are 99,000 schools. Over the same time period, the number of students rose from 28 million to 50.1 million which means we are accommodating almost twice as many students in almost two-thirds fewer schools.”-National Center for Education Statistics¹

As communities change over time and residents leave rural or inner city areas for the suburbs, the needs of the community and its ability to serve residents changes. Many small neighborhoods once held together by their neighborhood schools are now struggling to stay afloat amongst strict regulations put in place by community leaders and school boards to force the building of large schools on the outskirts of the community. This report reviews the scope and parameter of school districts affected by the aforementioned issues, examines case studies of several towns across the country, examines the issues that lead to school closings, and assesses the effects of such closings on their respective neighborhoods. Finally, it evaluates some of the policies being implemented to correct the problems and suggest new solutions to accompany them.

¹ National Center for Education Statistics, <http://nces.ed.gov/>.