

To: State Budget Committee
From: Indiana Schools for the Deaf and the Blind and Visually Impaired Task Force
Date: 11/25/2019
Re: 2019 Interim Report pursuant to HEA 1443-2019

Based upon information made available to and reviewed by the taskforce, the taskforce's initial recommendation for the 2019 interim is to continue to explore the possibility and benefits of co-locating only the physical facilities of the Indiana Schools for the Deaf and the Blind and Visually Impaired onto the same location in the state but no more than 10 miles beyond the Interstate 465 highway.

The taskforce finds that the size of the existing campuses, the condition of the physical facilities, and the financial investment needed to maintain and restore the existing campuses to a status quo condition create inefficiencies that detract from the ability of each school to focus resources on students and staff. The taskforce believes that cost efficiencies realized from modern facilities located on a sufficiently-sized campus will allow the schools to better serve their students by devoting more of each school's resources to activities that improve student achievement and promote positive outcomes.

Once co-located each school would continue to maintain its own governance and separate educational programming. The taskforce finds that it is important to preserve the culture, heritage, and individual identities of each school. State funding and resources should continue to be provided to operate the schools' current locations until the co-located buildings can be occupied.

The taskforce recognizes that the advisory committee created in HEA 1443-2019 has assisted with the duties assigned to the taskforce in HEA 1443-2019. This initial 2019 interim recommendation will continue to be reviewed during the 2020 interim by the taskforce and advisory committee. Under HEA 1443, during the 2020 interim the taskforce is required to continue its evaluation of this issue and make further recommendations to the state budget committee.