

## **PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

**GOAL PS-I: COORDINATE AND MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION SYSTEM.** Collaborate and coordinate with the School Board of Walton County (School Board) to ensure high quality public school facilities which meet the needs of Walton County's existing and future population.

**Objective PS-1.1: Coordination and Consistency**

Walton County shall implement and maintain mechanisms designed to closely coordinate with the School Board in order to provide consistency between Walton County's comprehensive plan and public school facilities programs, such as:

1. Greater efficiency for the School Board and Walton County by the placement of schools to take advantage of existing and planned roads, water, sewer, parks, and drainage systems;
2. Improved student access and safety by coordinating the construction of new and expanded schools with road and sidewalk construction programs;
3. The location and design of schools with parks, ball fields, libraries, and other community facilities to take advantage of shared use opportunities; and
4. The expansion and rehabilitation of existing schools so as to support neighborhoods.

**Policy PS-1.1.1:** Manage the timing of new development to coordinate with adequate school capacity. Where capacity will not be available to serve students from the property seeking a change, Walton County may use the lack of school capacity as a basis for denial of residential development order applications.

**Policy PS-1.1.2:** In cooperation with the School Board and the municipalities (Paxton, DeFuniak Springs, and Freeport), Walton County will implement the Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning for Walton County of Walton, Florida between Walton County, all legislative bodies of the municipalities, as required by Section 1013.33, Florida Statutes, includes procedures for:

1. Joint meetings;
2. Student enrollment and population projections;
3. Coordinating and sharing of information;
4. School site analysis;
5. Supporting infrastructure;
6. Comprehensive plan amendments, rezonings, and development approvals;
7. Education Plant Survey and Five-Year District Facilities Work program;
8. Co-location and shared use;
9. Implementation of school concurrency, including levels of service standards, concurrency service areas, and proportionate-share mitigation;
10. Oversight process; and,
11. Resolution of disputes.

**Policy PS-1.1.3:** Walton County shall include a representative of the school district, appointed by the School Board, as a nonvoting member of the local planning agency, as required by Section 163.3 174, Florida Statutes.

**Policy PS-1.1.4:** Walton County shall coordinate with the School Board and all applicable municipalities regarding annual review of school enrollment protections, and procedures for annual update and review of school board and local government plans consistent with policies under Objectives IC-1.1 and IC-1.2.

**Objective PS-I.2: Enhance Community Design**  
**Enhance community/neighborhood design through effective school facility design and siting standards. Encourage the siting of school facilities so they serve as community focal points and so that they are compatible with surrounding land uses.**

**Policy PS-1.2.1:** Walton County will continue to coordinate with the School Board to assure that proposed public school facility sites are consistent with the land use categories and policies of Walton County Comprehensive Plan, pursuant to the Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning.

**Policy PS-1.2.2:** Consistent with the Walton County Future Land Use Element, “future schools shall be an allowable use in all land use categories but the Industrial, Private Conservation, and Conservation land use categories. The Land Development Code may include standards for schools, consistent with the local government comprehensive plan.

**Policy PS-1.2.3:** Consistent with the Walton County Future Land Use Element, “public schools are to be located in agricultural land use categories when no feasible site exists in nonagricultural categories, due to prohibitive land costs or location of available sites, and when necessary to service student populations in rural areas that are mainly located in agricultural areas. If no feasible site exists in nonagricultural categories, then a public school should be located in a portion of the agricultural FLUM category that is as close as possible to urban residential areas, and the land use on the site should be changed subsequently to an “Institutional” or other appropriate FLUM category. The local comprehensive plan intends for future schools to be sited as closely to urban residential areas as practical, preferably within walking and/or bicycle distance of the primary residential areas to be served. Public schools are to be located in agricultural land use categories only when no feasible site exists in nonagricultural categories, or when necessary to serve student populations in rural areas mainly located in agricultural areas.”

**Policy PS-1.2.4:** Consistent with the Walton County Future Land Use Element, “when considering the acquisition and establishment of public facilities such parks, libraries, and communities centers, then County shall, to the greatest extent possible,

select a location and/or design the facility in such a way that collocation of the facility with a public school is either achieved with an existing public school, or that the facility can be retrofitted for collation with a future public school.”

**Policy PS-1.2.5:** Consistent with Section 163.3177, Florida Statutes, Walton County will include sufficient allowable land use designations for schools approximate to residential development to meet the projected needs for schools.

**Policy PS-1.2.6:** All public schools shall provide bicycle and pedestrian access consistent Florida Statutes. Bicycle access to public schools should be incorporated in Walton Countywide bicycle plan. Parking at public schools will be provided consistent to applicable Land Development Regulations.

**Policy PS-1.2.7:** The policy of Walton County is to reduce hazardous walking conditions consistent with Florida’s safe ways to school program. Walton County, in coordination with the School Board, shall implement the following strategies:

1. New developments adjacent to school properties shall be required to provide a right-of-way and a direct access path for pedestrian travel to existing and planned school sites, and shall connect to the neighborhood’s existing pedestrian network
2. For new development and redevelopment within 2 miles of an existing or planned school, Walton County shall require sidewalks (complete, unobstructed, continuous with a minimum width of 5 feet) along the corridor that directly serves the school, or qualifies as an acceptable designed walk or bicycle route to the school
3. In order to ensure continuous pedestrian access to public schools, priority will be given to cases of hazardous walking conditions pursuant to Section 1006.23, Florida Statutes, and specific provisions for constructing such facilities will be included in the schedule of capital improvements adopted each fiscal year
4. Evaluate school zones to consider safe crossing of children along major roadways, including prioritized areas for sidewalk improvements including: schools with a high number of pedestrian and bicycle injuries or fatalities, schools requiring courtesy busing for hazardous walking conditions, schools with significant walking populations, but poor pedestrian and bicycle access, and needed safety improvements; and
5. Coordination with the MPO Long Range Transportation Plans to ensure funding for access to school including: development of sidewalk inventories and list of priority multi-modal projects, coordinated with the School Board recommendations are addressed.

**Policy PS-1.2.8:** Walton County and School Board will jointly determine the need for and timing of on-site and off-site improvements (including water, sewer, roads and drainage) necessary to support each new school or the proposed renovation, expansion or closure of an existing school, and will enter into a written agreement as to the timing,

location, and the party or parties responsible for constructing, operating and maintaining the required improvements.

**Policy PS-1.2.9:** Walton County and the School Board will work to find opportunities to collaborate on transit and bus routes to better serve citizens and students.

**Objective PS-1.3: Sustainable Design**  
**Encourage sustainable design and development for educational facilities.**

**Policy PS-1.3.1:** Coordinate with the School Board to continue to permit the shared-use and co-location of school sites and County facilities with similar facility needs, according to the Interlocal Agreement for Public School Facility Planning for Walton County of Walton, Florida, as it may be amended. Coordinate in the location, phasing, and design of future school sites to enhance the potential of schools as recreation areas.

**Policy PS-1.3.2:** Encourage the School Board to use sustainable design and performance standards, such as using energy efficient and recycled materials, to reduce lifetime costs.

**Policy PS-1.3.3:** Walton County will continue to coordinate efforts to build new school facilities, and facility rehabilitation and expansions, to be designed to serve as and provide emergency shelters as required by Section 163.3177, Florida Statutes. Walton County will continue to fulfill the requirements of Section 1013.372, Florida Statutes, such that as appropriate new educational facilities will serve as public shelters for emergency management purposes and shall coordinate with the School Board regarding emergency preparedness issues and plans.

**Objective PS-1.4: School Capacity**

**It is the objective of Walton County to coordinate petitions for changes to future land use, zoning, subdivision and site plans for residential development with adequate school capacity. This goal will be accomplished recognizing the School Board's statutory and constitutional responsibility to provide a uniform system of free and adequate public schools, and Walton County's authority for land use, including the authority to approve or deny petitions for comprehensive plan amendments, re-zonings or final subdivision and site plans that generate students and impact the Walton County school system.**

**Manage the timing of comprehensive plan amendments and other land use decisions to coordinate with adequate school capacity.**

**Policy PS-1.4.1:** Walton County shall coordinate anticipated students growth based on future land use map projections of housing units with the School Board's long range facilities needs over the 5-year, 10-year and 20-year periods.

**Policy PS-1.4.2:** Walton County shall take into consideration the School Board comments and findings on the availability of adequate school capacity when considering

the decision to approve comprehensive plan amendment and other land use decisions as provided for in Section 163.3177(6)(a), Florida Statutes.

**Policy PS-1.4.3:** Walton County shall give priority consideration to petitions for land uses, zoning and final subdivision and site plans for residential development in areas with adequate school capacity or where school sites adequate to serve potential growth have been donated to or set aside for purchase by the School Board at raw land (pre-development approval) prices reflected in written agreement approved by the Walton County School Board.

**Policy PS-1.4.4:** Where capacity will not be available to serve students from the property seeking a land use change, Walton County will coordinate with the School Board to ensure adequate capacity is planned and funded. Where feasible, in conjunction with the plan amendment early dedications of school sites shall be encouraged. To ensure adequate capacity is planned and funded, the School Board's long range facilities plans over the 5-year, 10-year and 20-year periods shall be amended to reflect the needs created by the land use plan amendment.

**Policy PS-1.4.5:** In reviewing petitions for future land use, rezoning, or final subdivision and site plans for residential development, which may affect student enrollment or school facilities, Walton County will consider the following issues:

1. Providing school sites and facilities within planned neighborhoods;
2. Insuring the compatibility of land uses adjacent to existing schools and reserved school sites;
3. The co-location of parks, recreation and community facilities with school sites (consistent with Policy R-6.1 .5 of the Walton County Future Land Use Element);
4. The linkage of schools, parks, libraries and other public facilities with bikeways, trails, and sidewalks;
5. Insuring the development of traffic circulation plans to serve schools and the surrounding neighborhood;
6. Providing off-site signalization, signage, access improvements and sidewalks to serve all schools;
7. The inclusion of school bus stops and turnarounds in new developments
8. Encouraging the private sector to identify and implement creative solutions to developing adequate school facilities in residential developments;
9. School Board staff comments and findings of available school capacity for comprehensive plan amendments and other land-use decisions;
10. Available school capacity or planned improvements to increase school capacity; and,
11. Whether the proposed location is consistent with school design and planning policies.

**Objective PS-1.5: Implement School Concurrency**

**Manage the timing of residential subdivision approvals, site plans or their functional equivalent to ensure adequate school capacity is available consistent with adopted level of service standards for public school concurrency.**

**Policy PS-1.5.1:** Consistent with the Interlocal Agreement, the County and the School Board agree to the following standards for school concurrency in Walton County:

1. **Level of Service Standard:** Consistent with the Interlocal Agreement, the uniform, district-wide level-of service standards are initially set as follows, and are hereby adopted in Walton County’s Public School Facilities Elements and Capital Improvements Element:

**TYPE OF SCHOOL LEVEL OF SERVICE**

Elementary 100% of permanent FISH capacity Middle 100% of permanent FISH capacity K-8 100% of permanent FISH capacity High 100% of permanent FISH capacity Special purpose 100% of permanent FISH capacity Combination Schools 100% of permanent FISH capacity for each level:

Potential amendments to the level of service standards shall be considered at least annually at the staff working group meeting to take place no later than April 15 of each year. If an amendment is proposed by the School Board, it shall be accomplished by the execution of an amendment to the Interlocal Agreement by all parties and the adoption of amendments to the comprehensive plans. The amended level of service shall not be effective until all plan amendments are effective and the amended Interlocal Agreement is fully executed. No level of service shall be amended without a showing that the amended level of service is financially feasible, supported by adequate data and analysis, and can be achieved and maintained within the period covered by the first five-years of the Capital Facilities Plan. After the first 5-year schedule of capital improvements, capacity shall be maintained within each year of subsequent 5-year schedules of capital improvements. All LOS standards shall be met by the beginning of the 2011/2012 school year.

2. **Concurrency Service Areas:** The concurrency service areas shall be as shown in Map PSFE 6. Level of service standards in CSA South B shall be met through excess capacity in CSA South or CSA Central, depending upon available capacity, student travel time, and student preference. Level of service standards in CSA North B shall be met through excess capacity in CSA Central or CSA North, depending upon available capacity, student travel time, and student preference. Potential amendments to the concurrency service areas shall be considered annually at the staff working group meeting to take place each year no later than April 15. If an amendment is proposed by the School Board, it shall be accomplished by the execution of an amendment to the Interlocal Agreement

by all parties and the adoption of amendments to the comprehensive plan. The amended concurrency service area shall not be effective until all plan amendments and the amended Interlocal Agreement are fully executed. No concurrency service area shall be amended without a showing that the amended concurrency service area boundaries are financially feasible.

3. **Maximizing Concurrency Service Areas:** Concurrency service areas shall maximize capacity utilization, taking into account transportation costs, limiting maximum student travel times, the effect of court-approved desegregation plans, achieving social-economic, racial and cultural diversity objectives, and other relevant factors as determined by the School Board's policy on maximization of capacity. Other considerations for amending concurrency service areas may include safe access (including factors such as the presence of sidewalks, bicycle paths, turn lanes and signalization, general walkability), diversity and geographic or man-made constraints to travel. The types of adjustments to school operations that will be considered in Walton County shall be determined by the School Board's policies on maximization of capacity.

4. **Student Generation Rates:** Consistent with the Interlocal Agreement, the School Board staff, working with Walton County staff and Municipal staffs, will develop and apply student generation multipliers for residential units by type and projected price for schools of each type, considering past trends in student enrollment in order to project school enrollment. The student generation rates shall be determined by the School Board in accordance with professionally accepted methodologies, shall be updated at least every two years and shall be adopted into Walton County comprehensive plan.

5. **School Capacity and Enrollment:** The Department of Education permanent Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) capacity is adopted as the uniform methodology to determine the capacity of each school. Relocatables are not considered permanent capacity. School enrollment shall be based on the annual enrollment of each school based on actual counts reported to the Department of Education in October of each year.

6. **Concurrency Availability Standard:** Walton County shall amend the concurrency management systems in its land development regulations to require that all new residential units be reviewed for school concurrency at the time of residential development order application and approval. The County shall not deny a residential development order application due to a failure to achieve and maintain the adopted level of service for public school capacity where:

- a) Adequate school facilities will be in place or under actual construction within three years after the issuance of the final subdivision or site plan; or,
- b) Adequate school facilities are available in an adjacent concurrency service area and the impacts of development can be shifted to that area; or,

- c) The developer executes a legally binding commitment to provide mitigation proportionate to the demand for public school facilities to be created by the actual development of the property subject to the final subdivision or site plan (or functional equivalent) as provided in the Interlocal Agreement.

In evaluating a subdivision plat or site plan for concurrency, any relevant programmed improvements in the current year and years 2 or 3 of the 5-year schedule of improvements shall be considered available capacity for the project and factored into the level of service analysis. Any relevant programmed improvements in years 4 or 5 of the 5-year schedule of improvements shall not be considered available capacity for the project unless funding for the improvement is assured through School Board funding to accelerate the project, through proportionate share mitigation, or some other means of assuring adequate capacity will be available within 3 years. Relocatable classrooms may provide temporary capacity while funded schools or school expansions are being constructed.

**7. Subdivision and Site Plan Standards:** In the event that the School Board comments that there is not sufficient capacity in the affected concurrency service area to address the impacts of a proposed development, the following standards shall apply. Either

- (i) the site plan or final subdivision must provide capacity enhancement sufficient to meet its impacts through proportionate share mitigation; or
- (ii) the site plan or final subdivision must be delayed to a date when capacity enhancement and level of service can be assured; or
- (iii) a condition of approval of the site plan or final subdivision shall be that the project's development plan and/or building permits shall be delayed to a date when capacity enhancement and level of service can be assured. The amount of mitigation required shall be determined by the Department of Education's most current cost per student station applicable to Walton County.

**Policy PS-1.5.2:** Options for providing proportionate share mitigation for any approval of additional residential dwelling units that triggers a failure of level of service for public school capacity shall include the following:

1. Contribution of, or payment for, acquisition of new or expanded school sites;
2. Construction or expansion of permanent school facilities;
3. The creation of mitigation banking within designated areas based on the construction of a public school facility in exchange for the right to sell capacity credits. Capacity credits shall be sold only to developments within the same concurrency service area or an adjacent concurrency service area; and,
4. Educational Facility Benefit Districts.

Mitigation shall be directed to projects on the School Board's Five-Year Capital Facilities Plan that the School Board agrees will satisfy the demand created by that development approval, and shall be assured by a legally binding development agreement between the School Board, Walton County, and the applicant executed prior to the issuance of the final subdivision, site plan or functional equivalent. If the school agrees to the mitigation, the school board must commit in the agreement to placing the improvement required for mitigation on its Five-Year Capital Facilities Plan. This development agreement shall include the landowner's commitment to continuing renewal of the development agreement upon its expiration.

**Policy PS-1.5.3:** The amount of mitigation required shall be determined by calculating the number of student stations for each school type for which there is not sufficient capacity using the student generation rates applicable to a particular type of development and multiplying by the local costs per student station for each school type applicable to Walton County, as determined by the School Board based on the Department of Education's costs, in addition to any land costs for new or expanded school sites, if applicable.

**Policy P.S.-1.5.4:** If a developer proposes to establish a charter school as a mitigation option, then the charter school's facilities must be constructed in accordance with Florida Department of Education requirements.

**Objective PS-1.6: Funding**

**Investigate the possible use of school impact fees as a way to realize the cost of new development and its impact on land use in regards to the local school system service provision.**

**Policy PS-I.6.I:** Make decision regarding the use and amount (if applicable) of school impact fees.

**Objective PS-I.7: Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Walton County shall strive to continually monitor and evaluate the Public Schools Facilities Element in order to assure the best practices of the joint planning processes and procedures for coordination of planning and decision-making.**

**Policy PS-I.7.I:** Walton County and the Walton County School Board will coordinate during updates or amendments to the Walton County's Comprehensive Plan and updates or amendments for long-range plans for School Board facilities.

**Policy PS-I.7.2:** Consistent with Section 163.3177(12)(g), Florida Statutes, the Public School Facilities Element shall include future conditions maps showing existing and anticipated schools over the five-year and long-term planning periods. The maps of necessity may be general over the long-term planning period and do not prescribe a land use on a particular parcel of land.

Figure 1

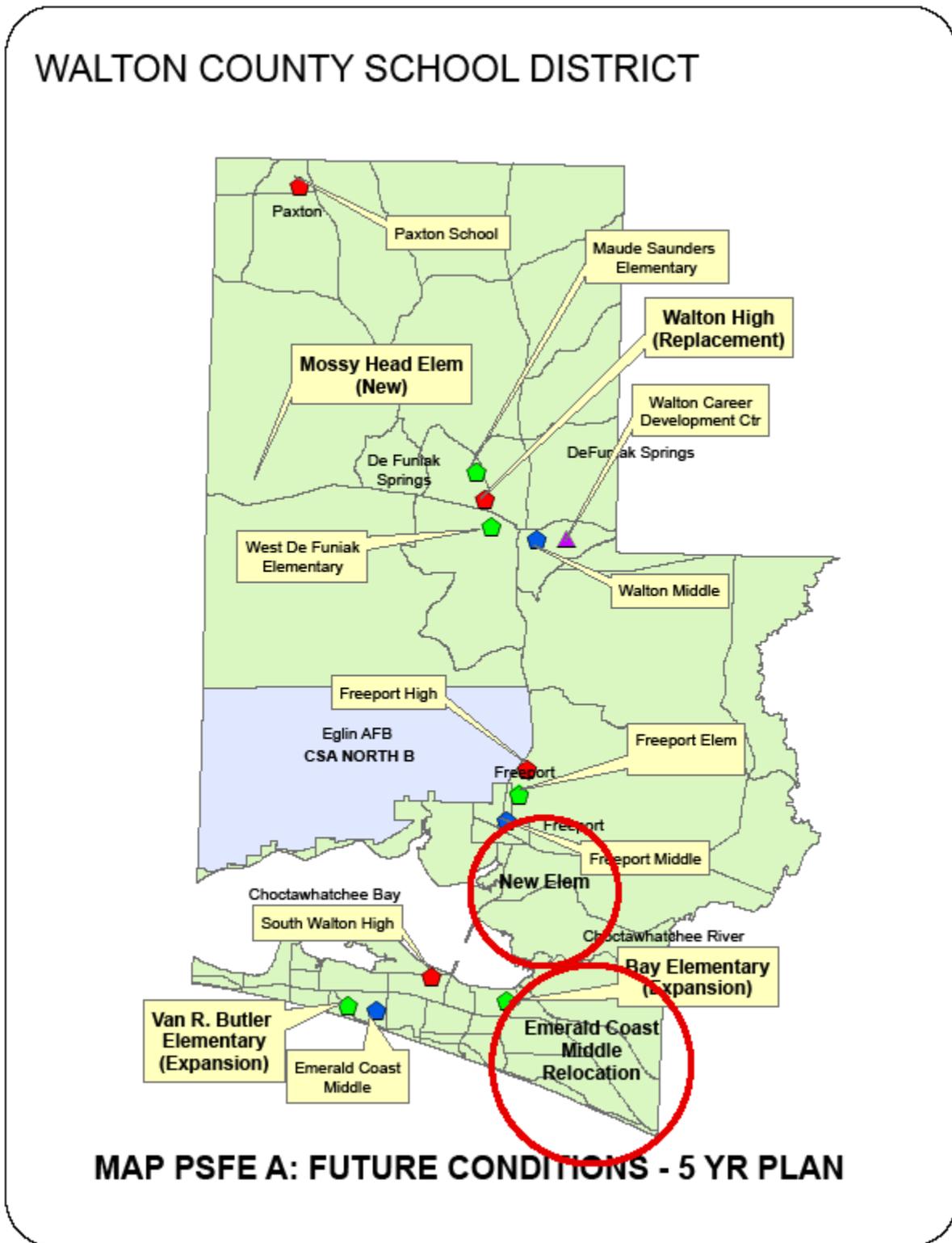


Figure 2

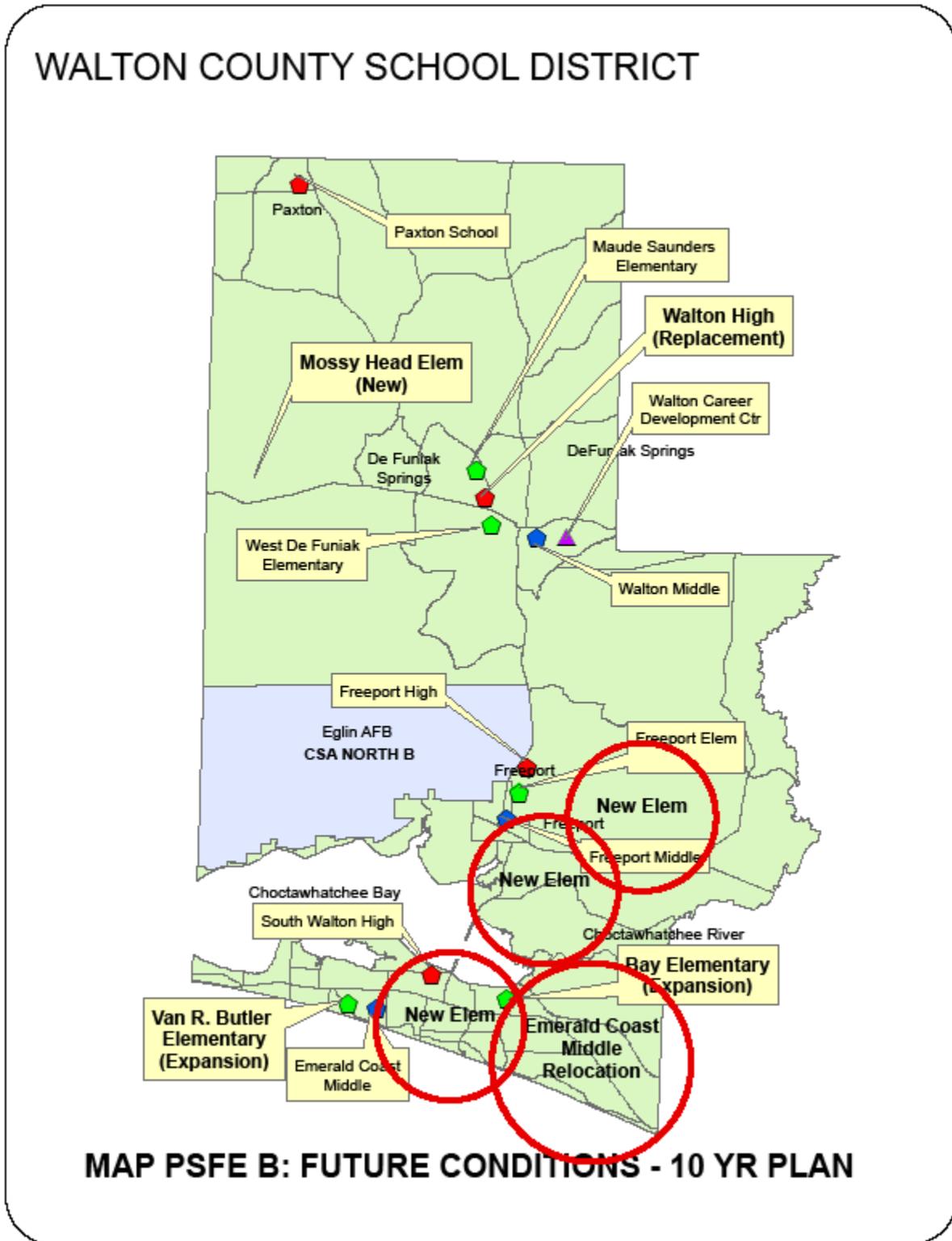


Figure 3

