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MERCER ISLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT
LONG-RANGE FACILITY PLAN

Issue Paper 2: Capacity & Enrollment

16 DECEMBER 2019



ENROLLMENT & CAPACITY

Mercer Island School District currently serves approximately 4,300 students in kindergarten through 12th grade. The success of the district’s educational programs is fostered in part by the ability of each school to house the students, teachers, and spaces needed for effective teaching and learning.

Planning for fluctuations in student enrollment is critical, as the state funding formula for education is allocated, and teachers are assigned, based on the number of students anticipated each year.

DISTRICT CAPACITY

DETERMINING CAPACITY

Existing facility capacity is a planning metric that reflects the number of students that can be accommodated in a particular building. It does not take into account specific variations in classroom sizes and configurations, and also does not signify the maximum number of students that can be accommodated in a school. The number of students actually enrolled at a school may be higher or lower than its capacity.

Facility capacity can be determined in a variety of ways. MISD determines capacity as follows:

Number of general classrooms (elementary schools)
or
Number of teaching stations (middle and high schools)
X
Target number of students per classroom
X
Utilization factor

Number of Classrooms / Teaching Stations

General classrooms at the elementary level include grade-level classrooms, but do not include specialized teaching spaces such as music rooms, gymnasiums, and special education classrooms. At the middle and high school levels, all scheduled teaching stations are included when determining capacity, with the exception of dedicated special education classrooms.

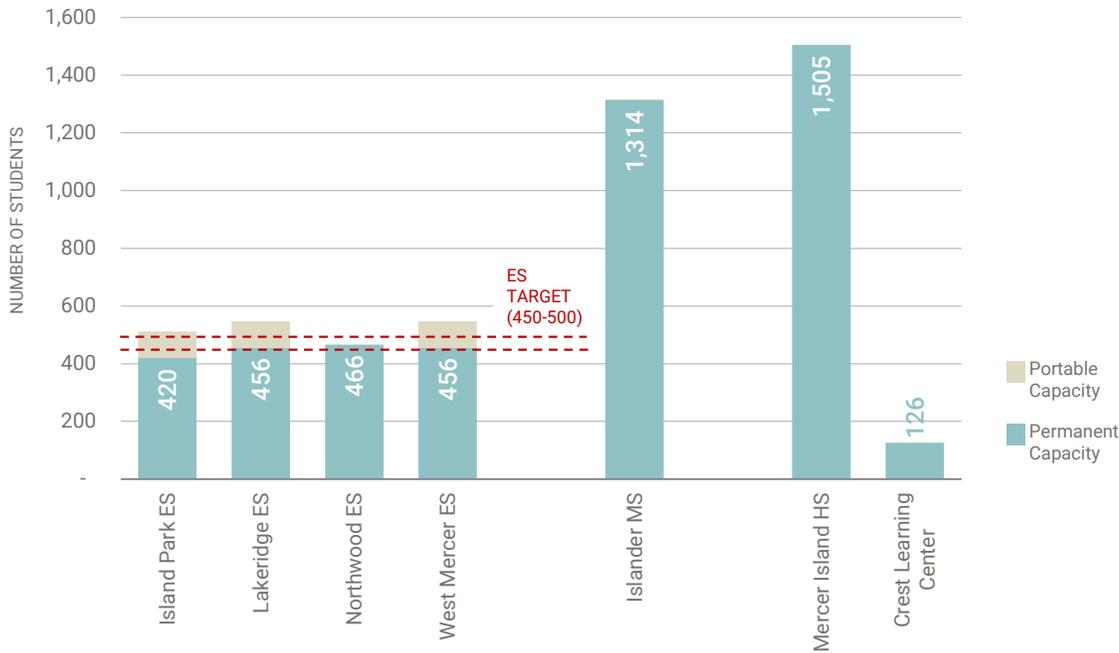
Target Students per Classroom

The target number of students per classroom is a planning parameter that reflects an “ideal” class size target for a given grade level. Actual class sizes vary, and may be larger or smaller than the targets, depending on many operational factors.

For MISD, capacities are based on the following class size targets:

- > Elementary: 24 students per classroom
- > Middle: 26 students per classroom
- > High: 28 students per classroom
- > Special Education: 10 students per classroom

EXISTING DISTRICT CAPACITY (2019)



These capacities reflect the targets included in the district’s Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan 2019-2024, adopted in June 2019. This is a “living document” that is updated annually. Target classroom capacities will continue to be evaluated, and may be revised in the future, based on the findings of this long-range planning process or other developments in the district. They do not represent district policy, actual student count, or an absolute cap.

Utilization Factor

A utilization factor is applied, to reflect for the amount of time the classroom can be used for teaching each day. Target utilization factors vary between districts and grade levels, depending a number of factors, including the number of periods in the school day and whether teachers use their classrooms for planning. It is not possible to achieve 100% utilization because of scheduling conflicts for student programs, the need for specialized rooms for some programs, and the need for teachers to have space to work during planning periods.

Lower utilization factors indicate that classrooms are unused for one or more periods of the day, due to teacher planning time and/or scheduling requirements, which is typical for most middle and high schools. For example, 80 percent utilization reflects classroom usage for four out of five periods a day.

For MISD, the utilization factors used in determining capacity are as follows:

- > Elementary school: 95 percent utilization
- > Middle school: 86 percent utilization
- > High school: 90 percent utilization

These utilization factors are also based on the information in the district’s Six-Year Capital Facilities Plan 2019-2024, and will continue to be evaluated. They are intended to reflect an average “snapshot” of utilization at each level.

The district’s utilization factors are all within the typical ranges for each grade level. The high school has a higher utilization factor than the middle school because teachers have dedicated planning areas at the high

school and therefore do not need to plan in their classrooms. This allows classrooms to be scheduled for more periods per day.

EXISTING FACILITY CAPACITY

Permanent Capacity

The district has a total permanent capacity of 4,743 students in grades K-12.

The existing permanent capacity at the elementary level, which encompasses kindergarten through fifth grade, is 1,798 students. Capacities at each of the district’s four elementary school are within a similar range, with between 420 and 456 each.

The existing permanent capacity at the middle school level, including sixth through eighth grades, is 1,314 students. All district middle school students are housed at Islander Middle School.

The existing permanent capacity at the high school level (grades 9-12) is 1,631 students, including both Mercer Island High School and the alternative high school, Crest Learning Center.

MERCER ISLAND RESIDENT POPULATION FORECASTS, 2019 TO 2030



Mercer Island School District Updated Projections, Educational Data Solutions LLC, December 2019

Portable Capacity

Three elementary schools in the district currently have modular (portable) classrooms on site, including Island Park, Lakeridge, and West Mercer. Each school has four portable classrooms. Because of the temporary nature of modular facilities, portable capacity is typically not considered when determining future capacity need in a long-range facility plan.

All of the district’s elementary schools are either within or very close to the district’s target capacity range.

The district has not established target capacities at the middle school and high school levels. Since there is only one district facility for each of these levels, facilities must be sized to accommodate all district students at those levels.

TARGET FACILITY CAPACITY

Target capacities at various grade levels are based on current thinking regarding the number of students needed to meet the district’s program goals and provide an optimal learning environment. These capacities may vary through the years, as educational program models and funding levels change.

Mercer Island School District has established a target capacity for elementary facilities of between 450 to 500 students per school. It is generally assumed that existing schools that are near the target capacity are best suited to provide the opportunity for full academic programming.

ENROLLMENT FORECASTING

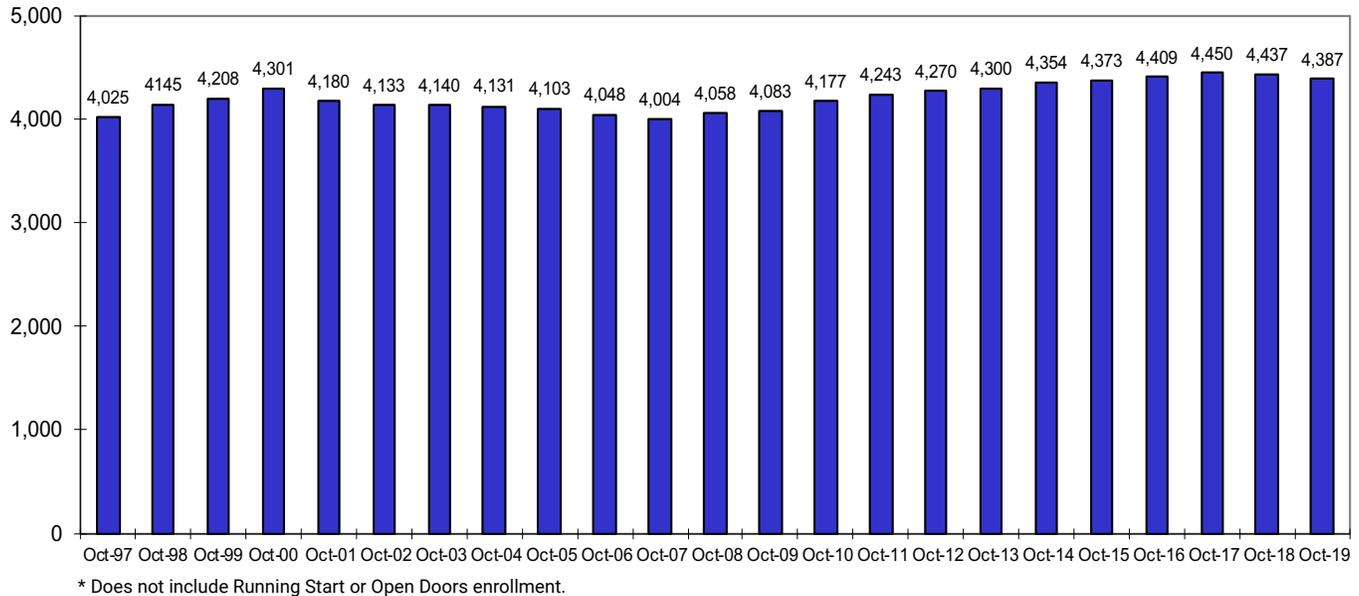
Enrollment forecasts are used, in part, to determine whether the district will need to add or modify facility space to meet school program or configuration needs. Student enrollment forecasts, combined with a methodology for determining student capacity in each school, provide a framework for facility needs to better serve student achievement. As such, student enrollment forecasts comprise an important component of the Long-Range Facility Plan.

ENROLLMENT REPORT

The district received updated student enrollment projections prepared by Educational Data Solutions LLC in December 2019. Enrollment forecasts are typically updated annually to incorporate new enrollment data, as well as newly released birth and housing data.

The 10-year enrollment forecast integrates district enrollment trends with local area population, enrollment, and housing trends. Summary information from the report is included on the following pages.

DISTRICT ENROLLMENT TREND, 1997 TO 2019



Mercer Island School District Updated Projections, Educational Data Solutions LLC, December 2019

POPULATION TRENDS

- > The population of King County grew at a faster pace than expected between 2012 and 2019. Growth slowed between 2017 and 2018, but the estimated net population gain in 2019 was similar to the large gains between 2014 and 2017.
- > Much of this growth has been driven by a strong economy anchored by extensive hiring at Amazon. The company is expected to reach its hiring goal in the Seattle area over the next one to two years. After that, they are expected to maintain current employment levels (based on newspaper reports).
- > The State is predicting that population growth in King County will be more moderate over the next decade, compared to trends over the past decade.
- > Mercer Island is expected to grow at a lower rate than the overall County over the next decade.
- > The Puget Sound Regional Council's land use forecast assumes a growth trend that is similar to the City's comprehensive plan. It assumes greater density is possible, and thus greater population growth.

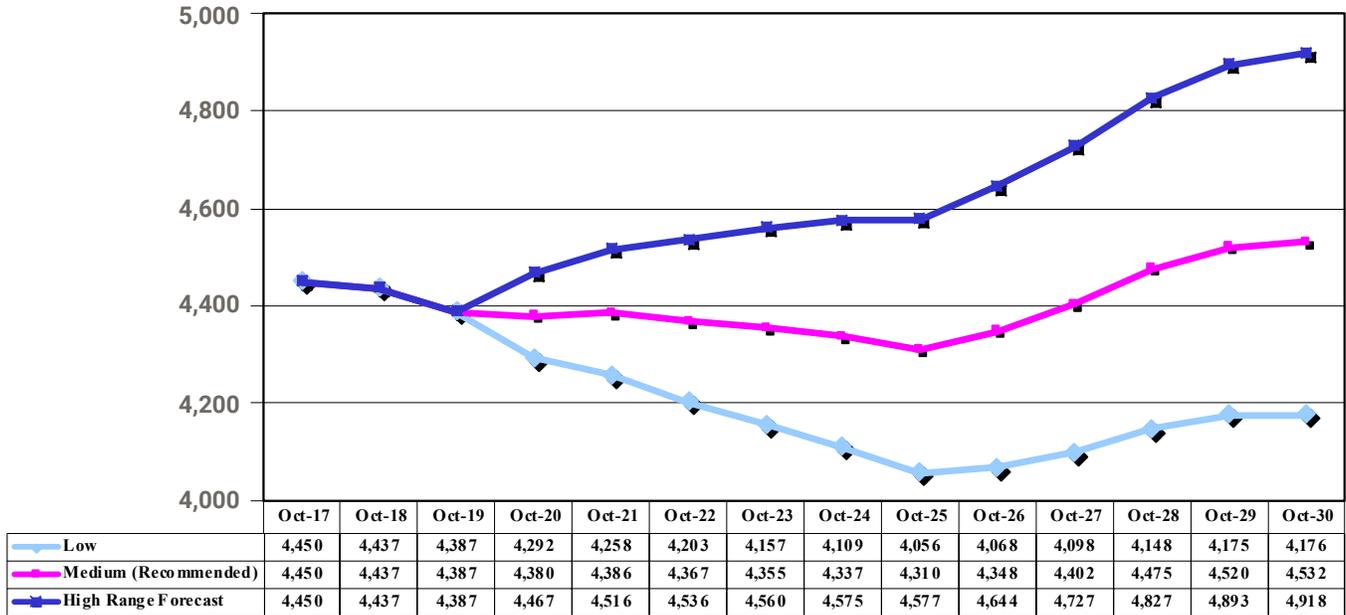
ENROLLMENT TRENDS

- > Enrollment in the Mercer Island School District is tracking below the previous projection, completed in 2017.
- > Enrollment growth in King County has slowed over the past two years. Based on the most current year of enrollment data, K-12 enrollment in the Puget Sound is continuing to increase with more growth migrating to Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish County.
- > Mercer Island's share of the King County K-12 population has declined over the past five years, indicating the District is growing at a slower rate than the rest of the County.
- > Based on the latest birth and population forecasts for King County, we expect K-12 enrollment growth in the County to continue growing over the next decades.
- > Given the latest birth data, less K-12 enrollment growth in King County and Mercer Island is predicted over the next decade than was predicted in 2017.
- > There is no evidence that private schools are having a significant impact on district enrollment, however, data for the 2018-19 school year is not available from the State at this time.

HOUSING TRENDS

- > Home sales in Mercer Island have dropped in 2018 and 2019, compared to the trends between 2013 and 2017.
- > Over 1,100 units were added to the District's housing stock between the 2000 and 2010 census period, while about half as many units have been added between 2010 and 2019.
- > It is predicted that just over 500 additional units will be added to the District's housing stock by 2030. This is much lower than the period between 2000 and 2010, and may result in less enrollment growth and even declines in enrollment in the near-term (2020 to 2025). The bulk of additional housing development is expected to occur between roughly 2023 and 2030.
- > A net gain of housing might occur in cases where an existing single family unit is torn down and replaced with two or more units. Greater density, as well as the development of new land, can result in housing increases.
- > Based on the City comprehensive plan and the PSRC documents, some increase in multi-family housing units is expected,

DISTRICT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS



Mercer Island School District Updated Projections, Educational Data Solutions LLC, December 2019

relative to single family over time. But it is likely that single family units will still make up between 65%-70% of the City’s housing stock.

- > Based on 2010 Census data, there are approximately 42 students for every 100 housing units in the District. This number is higher than Lake Washington, Bellevue, or Seattle. The 2019 estimate for the District has not changed.

PROJECTED DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

The 2019 enrollment forecast presents three forecasts (“Low,” “Middle,” and “High”) for a 10-year horizon from 2019-20 to 2029-30, as shown in the chart above. The middle range forecast is considered the most likely to occur. The low forecast considers the effect of less robust local area population and housing growth than anticipated during the forecast period, and the high forecast assumes stronger than anticipated growth. For the purposes of the long-range facility plan, the middle range forecast is used.

District enrollment projections for the next 10 years indicate an overall increase in student enrollment at the elementary level, and relatively flat enrollment at the

middle and high school levels. As shown in the chart above, it is anticipated that MISD enrollment will flatten out and even decline some between 2020 and 2025, with enrollment growing again in the latter part of the forecast period (2025 to 2030) when more development activity and population growth is expected.

The current district enrollment is 4,387 students. Over the next ten years, total district enrollment is projected to increase by approximately 133 students, resulting in a total of 4,520 total students by 2029-30. This is an overall increase of approximately three percent districtwide.

Elementary Level

At the elementary level, growth is projected to increase by approximately six percent over the next ten years, resulting in a projected K-5 enrollment of 1,842 students. This reflects an anticipated total increase of 104 elementary students. As a districtwide average, this equates to an additional one to two students per classroom.

Enrollment projections have not been provided by school at the elementary level, however it is assumed that the proportion

of students between the district’s four elementary schools will remain relatively constant. This is monitored annually by the district. Enrollment balancing between schools can be achieved through special program assignment or boundary adjustment, in the event that it is needed in the future.

For the purposes of long-range planning, projected elementary enrollment has been allocated to individual schools based on the percentage of current student enrollment distribution.

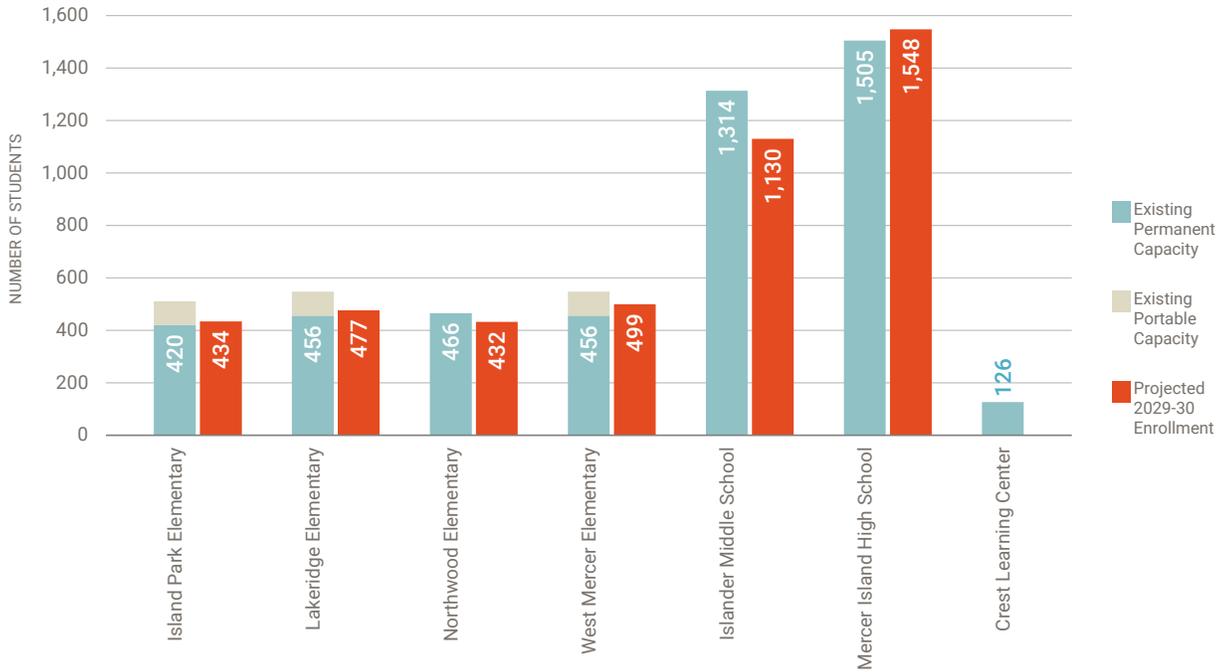
Middle School Level

Middle school enrollment is projected to decrease by 0.8 percent over the next ten years, resulting in a total of 1,130 middle school students districtwide. This reflects an anticipated decrease of nine students.

High School Level

High school enrollment is projected to increase by 2.5 percent over the next ten years, resulting in a total of 1,548 high school students districtwide. This reflects an anticipated increase of 38 students.

EXISTING DISTRICT CAPACITY & PROJECTED ENROLLMENT



Preschool

Preschool enrollment was not included as part of the enrollment forecast. Although there are many thriving and growing private preschools on the Island, their enrollment is not restricted to Mercer Island residents and cannot be easily translated to determine future kindergarten population within the district.

The district has a developmental preschool program, which has a primary focus of providing support to children with a documented disability who reside in the MISD attendance area. In terms of enrollment for this preschool program, it is currently near capacity due to the amount of available space. If preschool enrollment needs increase, the district may consider expanding the preschool program in the future.

Other Program Considerations

Like many school districts, MISD offers programs and special services beyond K-12 general education instruction, to support students whose needs are not met in traditional school settings.

The district currently provides alternative education options and special services such as special education and online learning. The district also provides full-day kindergarten throughout the district and an early learning program at one elementary school.

These programs typically have space and facility requirements that were not anticipated during the design and construction era of the older district facilities. It is clear the increased success and demand for these programs fosters space needs that must be designed and integrated districtwide into the overall program delivery for each school.

EXISTING FACILITY CAPACITY & PROJECTED ENROLLMENT

The chart above and the table on the following page compare existing capacity and projected enrollment for each school in the district. This comparison assumes current school boundaries, programs, and conditions.

Based on this analysis, all of the district’s school facilities have enough existing capacity to accommodate projected enrollments through 2029-30, including both existing permanent and existing portable capacity. At the high school level, projected enrollment can be accommodated at both the MIHS and Crest Learning Center facilities, which together accommodate 1,631 students.

EXISTING DISTRICT CAPACITY & PROJECTED ENROLLMENT

Facility	ENROLLMENT					
	Current Enrollment (2019-20)	Projected Enrollment (2029-30)	Change (Number of Students)	Change (Percent)	Over/Under Permanent Capacity	Over/Under Total Capacity
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL						
Island Park Elementary	410	434	25	6.0%	14	-77
Lakeridge Elementary	450	477	27	6.0%	21	-70
Northwood Elementary	408	432	24	6.0%	-34	-34
West Mercer Elementary	471	499	28	6.0%	43	-48
	1,738	1,842	104		44	-230
MIDDLE SCHOOL						
Islander Middle School	1,139	1,130	-9	-0.8%	-184	-184
	1,139	1,130	-9		-184	-184
HIGH SCHOOL / OTHER						
Mercer Island High School	1,510	1,548	38	2.5%	-83	-83
Crest Learning Center			<i>Crest enrollment is included in MIHS</i>			
Mary Wayte Pool	-	-	-	-	-	-
	1,510	1,548	38		-83	-83