

SCHOOL UTILIZATION RANGES

School Capacity Ranges

Building capacity represents the number of students a permanent structure can accommodate while providing all of the supplemental spaces required to support district adopted instructional programs. The building capacity considers the availability and size of instructional spaces used for special programs, pull-out or intervention programs, and elective programs, along with support spaces, administration spaces, storage spaces, common areas, and egress routes. "Capacity" is the result of calculating a standard square footage per student in "classrooms" after all the supplemental spaces are removed.

Building utilization refers to how many students are in a school compared to its capacity. Each school in the district falls into one of five capacity ranges based on its current student enrollment and building design capacity. Service levels will be determined annually based on the current October Count and a timeline will start based on the information provided in FCA-R.

Service Levels A & B: enrollment at 75%-100% of capacity

This is the ideal range for the number of students a building is expected to serve. Service level B is the benchmark at which the intensity of room use and the building design parameters match. Service level A contains fewer students than the building was designed for and it has flexibility to meet program changes along with "room to grow".

Service Level C (extended utilization): enrollment at 100-125% of capacity

The building contains more students than it was designed for and some areas intended for other purposes (e.g., program rooms) may be used as regular classrooms. Portable buildings may be utilized to house flexible learning areas or additional classrooms. The cafeteria and playgrounds may be scheduled in shifts. Secondary school halls may be crowded between periods. High schools may need to modify schedules but are able to offer a wider variety of courses. The number of students in a class and the quality of educational experiences are minimally affected. Operation is very efficient (fixed costs per student are low). The upper limit of this range varies with the space available on site for the placement of modular classrooms. The capacity of common spaces and ancillary programs may also create upper limits.

Service Level D (over capacity): enrollment over 125% of capacity

No more portable buildings are feasible. Many spaces intended for other uses are being used as classrooms. Some classes may be held in nontraditional locations. Building capacity is increased by scheduling more hours of school (e.g., split sessions, more periods in a high school day, night classes, multi-track year-round use). High schools may have more class offerings. Halls and other common areas (cafeteria, media center, gyms, and restrooms) are overburdened. Operation is generally efficient but maintenance needs rise rapidly. Requires corrective actions that may involve, but are not limited to; site-based space reallocation, program changes, attendance boundary changes, bussing to other schools, modified daily schedules, or off-campus classes in non-school locations. All proposed changes need to be considered with a long-term perspective (e.g., a minimum of five years) and examine financial, educational, and social consequences.

Service Level U (underutilized): enrollment less than 75% of capacity

Attendance is so low that fixed costs (e.g. utilities, support and administrative staff, special teachers) are disproportionately high and must be subsidized, reducing funds available to serve students in other schools. The school may have more combined-grade classes or teachers who are in school only part of the time compared with other schools. Requires initiation of evaluation for closure in accordance with Policy FCA.

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