



Introduction

On October 18, 2021, Vice Chair Vue asked for a qualitative description of how different levels of building utilization manifest for a school. Using the same utilization definitions as our Use and Utilization Study, the Facilities Department is providing these broad-level descriptions for further understanding of the real world impact of building efficiency.

Underutilized (less than 70% utilized)

Staff/Students: This teaching and learning environment may feel empty. There are significant parts of the building that are empty or used for a fraction of their intended purpose, leading to a perception of lack of vibrancy and life. Core spaces, like gyms and cafeterias, can easily accommodate the needs of the school, possibly even leading to inefficiencies in their use.

Community: The environment has a surplus of space to offer the community or partners, likely more than needed.

Efficient (between 70% - 89% utilized)

Staff/Students: This teaching and learning environment feels balanced and conducive to a positive school experience. Sound levels are appropriate and even inspiring. It feels alive and happy with the right amount of people in spaces, while still having a little extra flexibility in room scheduling and use.

Community: The environment has adequate space for the community and/or partners. There is usually a way to include those seeking space.

Highly Efficient (between 90% - 105% utilized)

Staff/Students: This teaching and learning environment feels balanced and conducive to a positive school experience. Active leadership and management make this utilization operate at a high level without limiting scheduling and flexibility. Core spaces like gyms and cafeterias are sufficient to service the needs of the school, though can frequently be the first spaces that start to encounter limitations (e.g. more than 3 periods of lunch service).

Community: During the school day this environment has less opportunities for community and/or partners in classroom spaces, than an efficient building, particularly at the top end of the utilization range. Again, strategic, and flexible leadership are able to carve out sufficient spaces for the needed programming.

Overcrowded (more than 105% utilized)

Staff/Students: This teaching and learning environment feels somewhat stressful and chaotic. It is difficult to schedule all of the necessary functions each day. Support staff are likely looking for space in corridors or storage closets (which is not recommended).

Community: This environment is not able to offer sufficient community or partner space during the day.