



# Rightsizing FAQs

## What is rightsizing?

Rightsizing is a thorough, strategic process that optimizes the use of school facilities by aligning their capacity with the current and projected student population.

## Why is it needed?

Fort Smith Public Schools has experienced an enrollment decline. As a result of the decline and a shift in population to other areas, the district currently has multiple school buildings that are highly underutilized. By rightsizing underutilized schools, students and educators will have access to more resources and supports, more opportunities to collaborate with others in the district, and enhanced learning opportunities.

## What are additional benefits?

In addition to ensuring students and educators have access to additional resources and collaboration, rightsizing allows the district to more efficiently and effectively utilize taxpayer dollars and invest additional funds in educational options that will impact more students.

## Does rightsizing result in closing schools?

A school is more than just a building; a school is the community that students and teachers build that focuses on learning, collaboration, and success. While rightsizing does result in the closure of underutilized school buildings, students and staff will be moved to other facilities that are utilizing more capacity.

## Will teachers, administrators, and staff lose their jobs as a result of rightsizing?

No! The district is committed to working with employees who will be affected to ensure they have the opportunity to work at another school or facility within the district. In fact, vacant positions will NOT be posted externally until all affected employees have been successfully placed within the district.

## Who is involved in the rightsizing process?

FSPS established a Long-Range Facility Planning Committee in 2023. The committee was tasked with developing a strategic plan for the district's school facilities, with a focus on creating a roadmap to guide the district for the next 5 to 15 years. The committee included a diverse group of individuals, including 13 community members, six administrative staff members, five teachers and principals, one partnership consultant, and one long-range consultant.

## What are the committee's recommendations?

After much research, the committee provided a report to the school board in April 2024 and recommended closing underutilized elementary schools and moving those students to neighboring schools. The board approved the planning committee's plan at the meeting.

## Have some schools already been rightsized?

Yes. The school board previously approved rightsizing Orr Elementary and Trusty Elementary.

## Which schools are being considered next for rightsizing?

After the school board's approval earlier this year, the district began studying the potential of rightsizing Carnall Elementary School and Spradling Elementary School. An expert who studies statistics regarding changes in populations developed three options for rezoning each school.

## What are the next steps for these two schools?

The district has been holding staff and community feedback meetings in communities that would be affected by rightsizing Carnall and Spradling. During these meetings, maps showing current zones, as well as three possible rezoning options, are presented. Attendees have the opportunity to vote on which one they like the best and provide additional feedback for the school board to consider.

## When will this information be presented to the school board?

The district plans to submit all feedback and a rightsizing recommendation regarding Carnall and Spradling to the board at its December meeting. The board will review the information and make a decision regarding next steps at its meeting in January.