

Informational Session #4

What If We Do Nothing?

K–12 implications of maintaining current boundaries, program locations, and the same number of schools

Boundary & Enrollment Realignment

October 21, 2026



 Lake Washington
School District



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Extraordinary Futures Start Today

Exceptional experiences for each learner.

THE QUESTION BEFORE US

How do we ensure strong programs, equitable student opportunities, sustainable staffing, and excellent schools across the district while serving fewer students?

(1) The Phase I Evaluation Report documents the recommendation for action.

(2) Today's presentation captures some of the potential implications of inaction.

(3) There are 100's if not 1,000's of interconnected components of the system that make up the web of services and supports aimed at supporting excellence for each student in Lake Washington School District.

What do we mean by “doing nothing”?

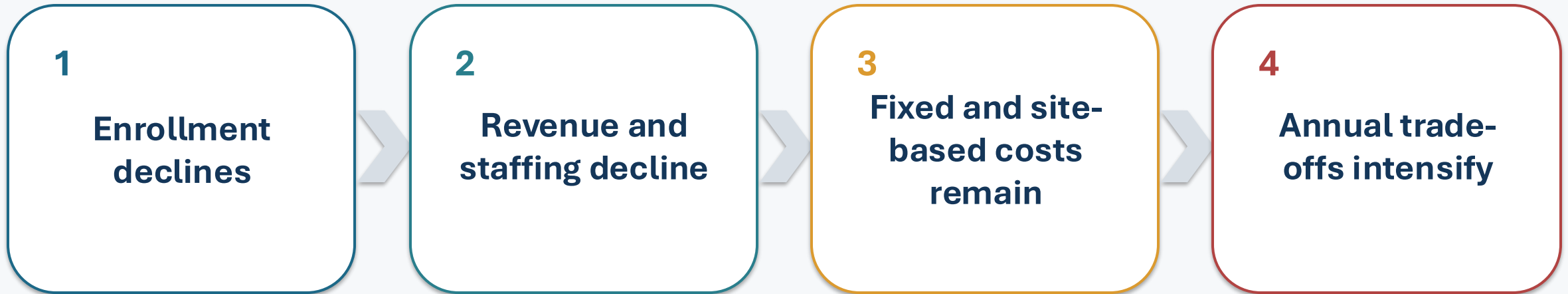
For this discussion, inaction means

Maintaining current attendance boundaries, program locations, and the same number of schools without a coordinated systemwide response to projected enrollment changes.

Inaction does not mean no change

Staffing, programs, class configurations, course sections, revenue, services, facility use, and operating conditions remain unchanged.

Inaction is a decision – it chooses a different set of challenges.



SECTION

01

ENROLLMENT

SECTION 01

Enrollment Outlook

How projected enrollment changes shape the systemwide challenge.

Enrollment decline becomes a K-12 issue

Smaller elementary cohorts are moving into middle and high school.



2025

30,155

Baseline



2028

28,847

1,308 fewer



2030

27,803

2,352 fewer



2035

25,704

4,451 fewer

Elementary

-3,800

Elementary students between 2019 and 2035
-24.7%

Middle

-1,644

Middle school students between 2024 and 2035
-22.3%

High

-1,512

High school students between 2027 and 2035
-16.3%

Projected capacity utilization is uneven

The District target is approximately 80–90% of permanent capacity.

Learning area	Elementary	Middle school	High school
Juanita	86%	69%	86%
Lake Washington	90%	74%	93%
Redmond	65%	60%	74%
Eastlake	72%	64%	64%

What this means

Middle schools are projected below target in every learning area.

Redmond and Eastlake show substantial excess capacity across grade spans.

Boundaries can rebalance nearby schools, but not eliminate learning-area excess capacity.

31,907 available permanent seats

SECTION

02

DECISION LENS

SECTION 02

Decision Points

Boundary inaction and school-footprint inaction are different

Each decision preserves something different and leaves a different problem unresolved.

No boundary changes

Preserves current assignments and feeder relationships.

Enrollment differences among neighboring schools continue.

Capacity utilization differences at various sites.

Program and staffing differences.

Boundary changes only

Can improve balance and grade-level or course-section viability.

The same number of school sites remains open.

Systemwide excess capacity.

Program and staffing changes.

No consolidation or closure

Preserves every current school community and avoids an immediate transition.

Resources continue to be distributed across the same number of campuses as enrollment declines.

Systemwide excess capacity.

Program and staffing changes.

In every case, revenue declines disproportionately to fixed site costs.

SECTION

03

SYSTEM VIEW

SECTION 03

One School Modeled, Then the System Implications

Then scale the model to understand systemwide implications.

Fewer students do not reduce every school cost proportionally

Boundary changes may redistribute students, but fixed site costs remain when the same number of schools stays open.

\$1.56M–\$2.15M

Estimated fixed annual cost
per elementary school

\$2.1M

Estimated fixed annual cost
per middle school

\$5.2M

Estimated fixed annual cost
per high school

Costs that do not move directly with enrollment

Administration, office support, library services, custodial services, utilities, student support, and other site-based functions.

The planning implication

When enrollment declines and the number of sites remains constant, fixed costs are spread across fewer students.

Realities of staffing schools.

The state funds per student. A building needs whole positions regardless of enrollment.

State funding, per student

For roughly every 400 elementary students, the prototypical model generates about 1.25 principal, 2.0 office staff, 1.7 custodians, 0.5 counselor, 0.7 teacher-librarian, and teachers at the funded ratio. Fewer students, fewer fractions of each.

Building needs, regardless

A whole principal. A whole office. Full custodial coverage. Heat, light, insurance, security, technology, maintenance, and a roof on a replacement cycle. None of these shrink when a cohort leaves.

Two gaps

1 The salary gap. The state allocation for a position is below what LWSD actually pays. The District covers it for every position in every building, at any enrollment.

2 The fractional gap. Enrollment earns part of a position; the building needs a whole one. This gap grows every time a cohort leaves.

What this means

Each building draws a local backfill. As enrollment falls, the fractional gap widens while the building's needs stay the same, so the backfill grows. Funds used for targeted, necessary, or desired services are redirected to backfill.

What this does not mean

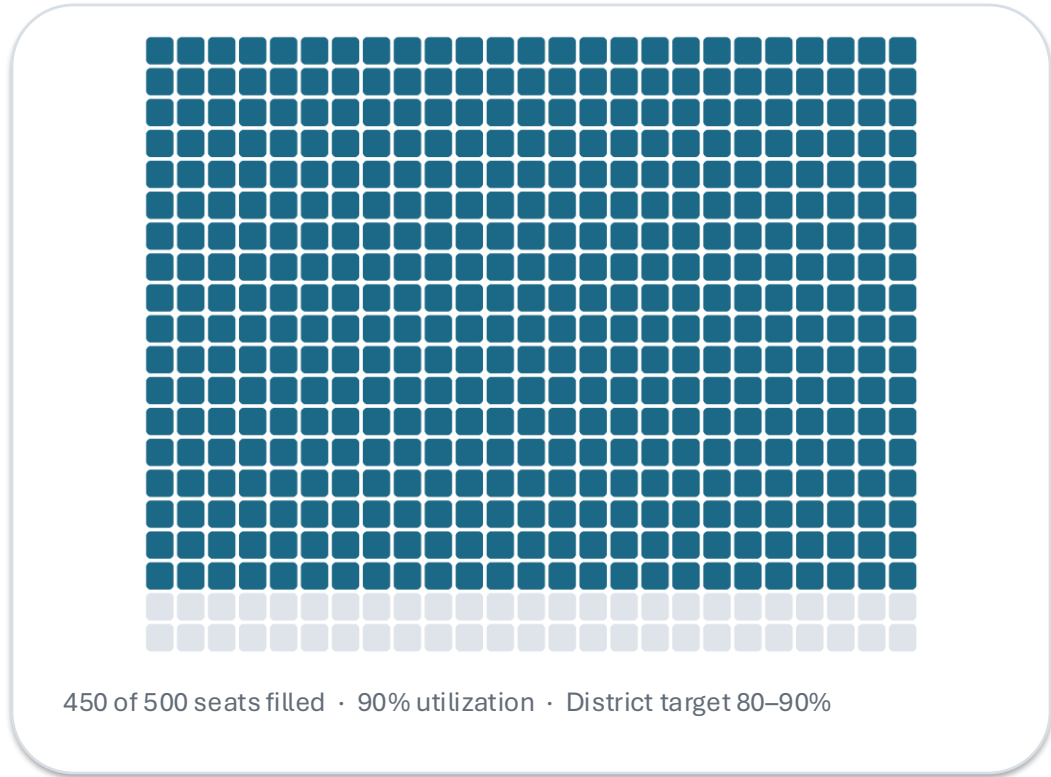
It does not mean any particular school is unaffordable, and it does not set a number of closures. It explains why fewer students does not mean proportionally lower cost, and where the difference is paid from.

The levy does not close the gap

Levy authority is capped per student, and LWSD is at the cap. Each student decline takes levy authority with them. Costs rise, the backfill per building grows, and the levy that covers both is held back by the same decline.

One elementary school at 450 students

A 500-seat building. Every square is a seat the District heats, cleans, insures, and staffs. Filled squares are students.



Classrooms by grade

75 students per grade. Four classes of about 19 in K–3 and three classes of 25 in grades 4–5. Full grade-level teams at every grade, with colleagues to plan, work and collaborate with.

50
Empty seats, still heated and cleaned

0.9 FTE
Positions needed that enrollment does not earn

\$3,467–\$4,778
Fixed building cost per student, per year

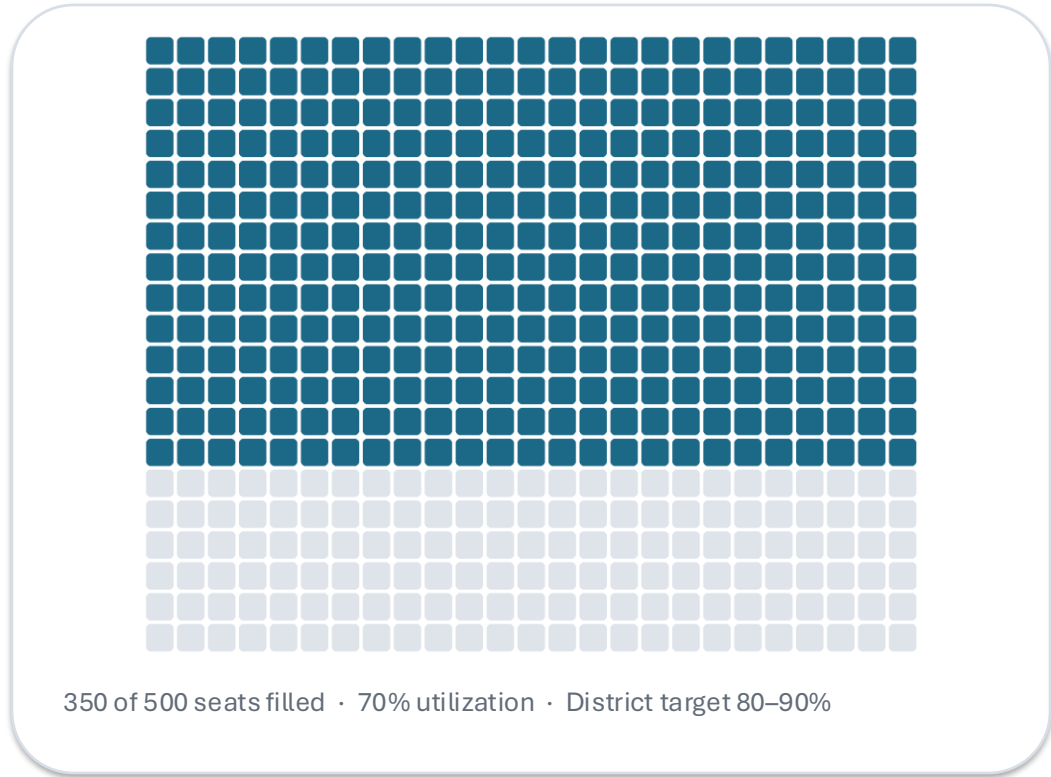
Positions the building needs vs. positions enrollment earns			
Role	Needs	Earns	Gap
Administration (principal, AP)	1.5	1.41	-0.09
Office staff	2.0	2.26	0
Custodial	2.0	1.86	-0.14
Counselor	1.0	0.55	-0.45
Teacher-librarian	1.0	0.75	-0.25

Needs: LWSD staffing model (administration 2.0 above 500 students or above 25% free and reduced; 1.5 at 350 to 500; 1.0 below 350, to confirm). Earns: state prototypical allocations per 400 students.

At 90% utilization the building is right-sized. Enrollment earns close to what the building needs, and the fixed cost is spread across a nearly full house.

One elementary school at 350 students

A 500-seat building. Every square is a seat the District heats, cleans, insures, and staffs. Filled squares are students.



Classrooms by grade

About 58 students per grade. Three classes of about 19 in K–3. In grades 4–5, two classes of 29 or three classes of 19: staffed above ratio to keep classes workable.

150

Empty seats, still heated and cleaned

2.2 FTE

Positions needed that enrollment does not earn

\$4,457–\$6,143

Fixed building cost per student, per year

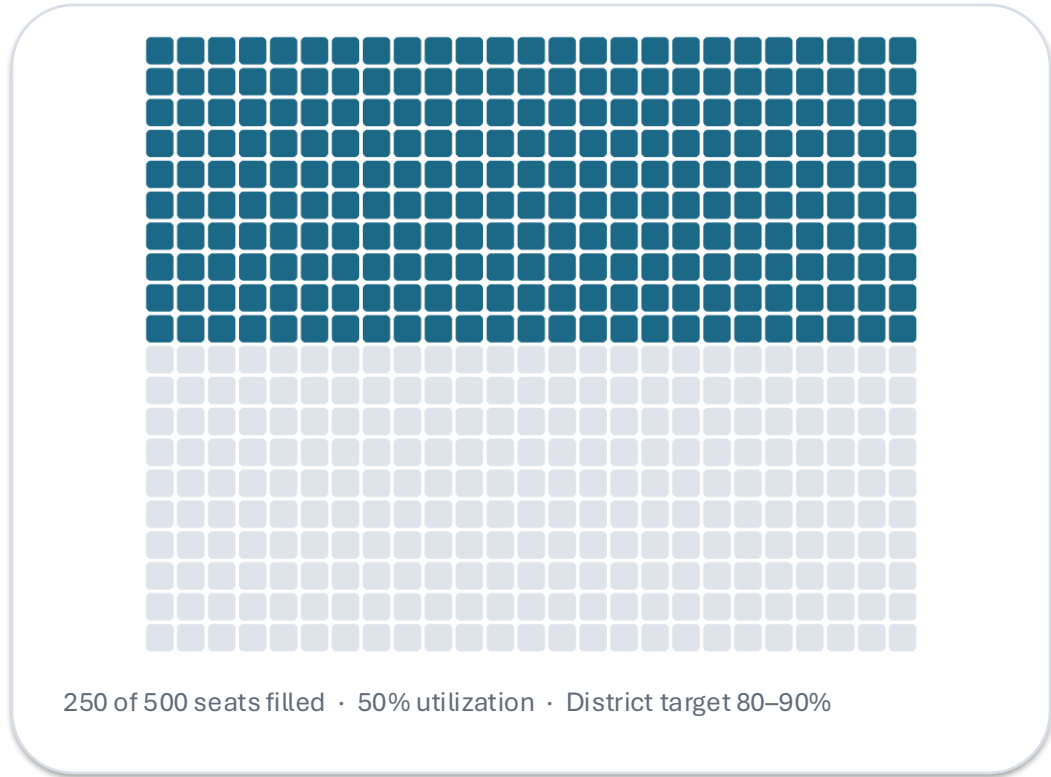
Positions the building needs vs. positions enrollment earns			
Role	Needs	Earns	Gap
Administration (principal, AP)	1.5	1.10	–0.40
Office staff	2.0	1.76	–0.24
Custodial	2.0	1.45	–0.55
Counselor	1.0	0.43	–0.57
Teacher-librarian	1.0	0.58	–0.42

Needs: LWSD staffing model (administration 2.0 above 500 students or above 25% free and reduced; 1.5 at 350 to 500; 1.0 below 350, to confirm). Earns: state prototypical allocations per 400 students.

The building costs the same to run. The District’s model provides to 1.5 administrators, enrollment earns a fraction of each remaining position, and every student carries a larger share of fixed cost.

One elementary school at 250 students

A 500-seat building. Every square is a seat the District heats, cleans, insures, and staffs. Filled squares are students.



Classrooms by grade

About 42 students per grade. Two classes of 21 at every grade, well below the funded ratio in grades 4–5, or combination classes across grades. Grade-level teams of two, reducing planning, collaboration and professional opportunities.

250

Empty seats, still heated and cleaned

3.2 FTE

Positions needed that enrollment does not earn

\$6,240–\$8,600

Fixed building cost per student, per year

Positions the building needs vs. positions enrollment earns			
Role	Needs	Earns	Gap
Administration (principal, AP)	1.0	0.78	-0.22
Office staff	2.0	1.26	-0.74
Custodial	2.0	1.04	-0.96
Counselor	1.0	0.31	-0.69
Teacher-librarian	1.0	0.41	-0.59

Needs: LWSD staffing model (administration 2.0 above 500 students or above 25% free and reduced; 1.5 at 350 to 500; 1.0 below 350, to confirm). Earns: state prototypical allocations per 400 students.

Half the seats are empty and no change in fixed costs.

Enrollment earns about 3.2 fewer positions than the building needs. The District covers the gap from the same local dollars that fund programs at every other school.

The cost of inaction has already started accruing

2,300 (-\$27M)

Fewer elementary students in five years, roughly the enrollment of five elementary schools. A measure of the decline, not a number of closures.

Same

Number of schools open, each with a whole principal, a whole office, full custodial coverage, and its own utilities and maintenance.

\$1.56M–\$2.15M

Fixed cost per elementary building, per year, that enrollment no longer supports. The unit does not change with the number of schools.

Proportional Comparison: What one building's fixed cost buys, each year

- Reduction of Kindergarten staffing ratio by .5 at all schools.
- About one-fifth of the athletics and activities budget.
- A full year of the additional secondary course offerings investment for two buildings.

Where it is being paid today

- The 29 attendance-area elementary schools staffed \$4.9M above strict ratio, projected to \$11M+.
- Local levy dollars sustaining sites rather than the programs they were intended to fund.
- Reductions absorbed elsewhere, a little at a time, with no decision ever made.
- The dollars covering this come from a levy whose capacity is itself impacted by declining enrollment.

Five categories of impact

These categories separate student outcomes, service delivery, resources, and system configuration.

1

Educational Programs and Student Opportunity

2

Equitable Student Supports

3

Staffing and Service Delivery

4

Financial and Operational Sustainability

5

Facilities, Capacity, and System Balance

CATEGORY

1

FIVE CATEGORIES
OF IMPACT

CATEGORY 1

Educational Programs and Student Opportunity

Potential implications of maintaining the current system configuration

Educational programs and student opportunity

The consequences differ at elementary and secondary levels.

Elementary

- Increased staffing ratios leading to increased class size
- More split-grade classrooms
- Less flexibility to form balanced classes
- Potential relocation or consolidation of specialized programs and services

Middle school

- Increased staffing ratios leading to increased class size
- Pressure on electives, music, athletics, and activities
- Greater schedule constraints
- More supplemental staffing needed to preserve breadth

High school

- Increased staffing ratios leading to increased class size and less class offerings
- Smaller and more costly specialized sections
- Greater schedule constraints and conflicts
- Changes in Athletics & Activities
- Pressure to prioritize core graduation requirements

Elementary class configuration becomes less flexible

Students arrive in grade-level cohorts, but teachers are assigned in whole or partial positions.

CURRENT AVERAGE CLASS SIZE

18.7

KINDERGARTEN
class size

19.6

GRADE 1
class size

21.6

GRADES 2-3
class size

26.2

GRADES 4-5
class size

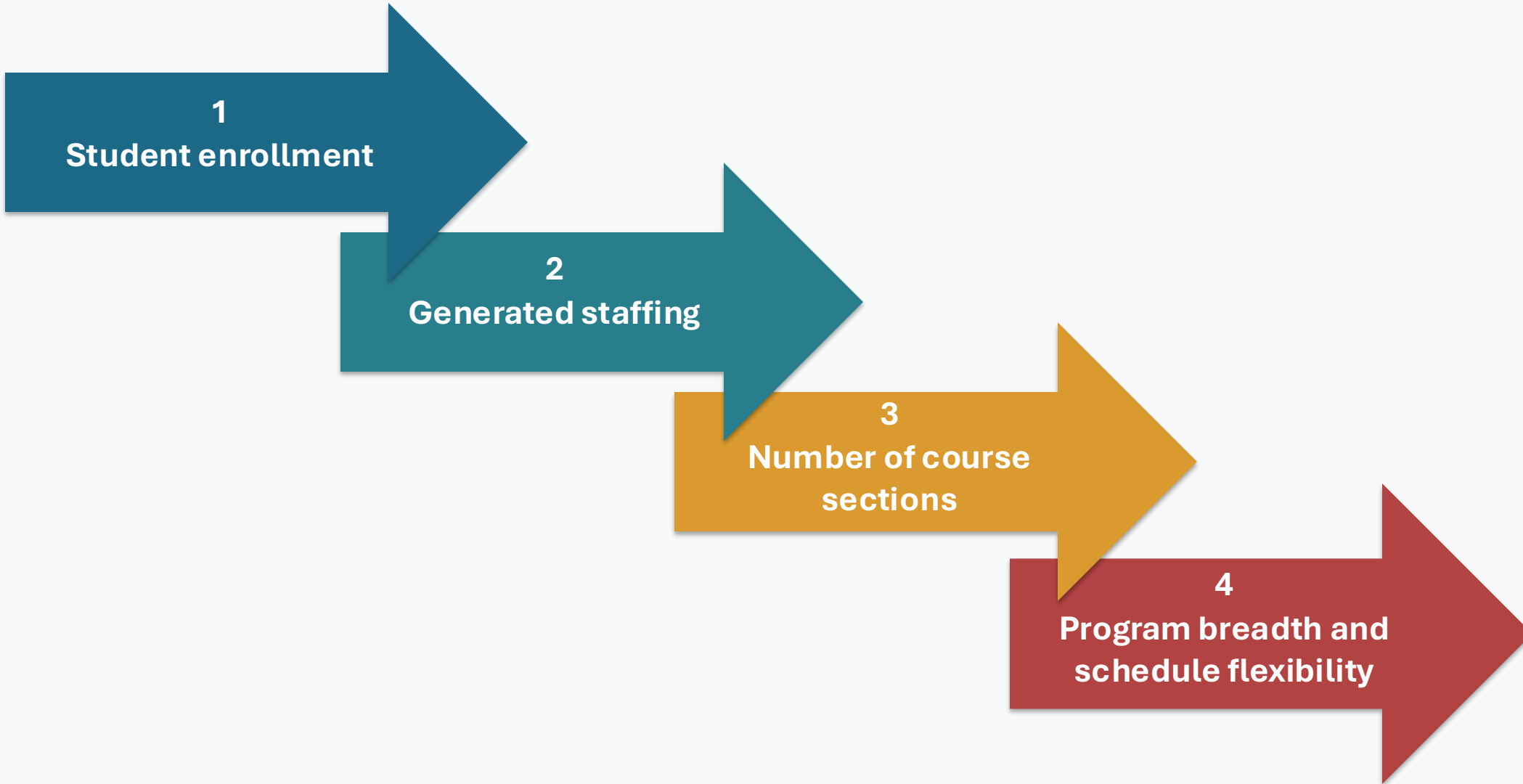
STAFFING ABOVE RATIO

24 FTE

above the strict
staffing ratio

Grade-level cohorts and whole or partial
staffing positions do not align neatly.

Enrollment determines which secondary course can run



Current secondary reinvestments protect student opportunity

These investments supplement what enrollment-generated staffing alone would provide.

13.2 FTE

Added in 2025–26 to support additional secondary course offerings

Course offerings

3.0 FTE for each comprehensive high school; 0.6 for ICS; 0.6 for STEM

Access and participation

High school activity buses

Instructional Department supports

High school department-chair enhancements

Student support

1.0 FTE for central counseling support

Middle school programs

Music tutors and activity/athletic coordinators

As enrollment and revenue decline, what level of supplemental investment can the District sustain?

Athletics and extracurricular activities face funding pressure

The state provides no funding for extracurricular activities and athletics.

\$9.4M

Average annual cost over four years for athletics and extracurricular activities

Reality:

- Higher per-student cost for some offerings
- Similar costs to run programs regardless of student enrollment and participation

Decision Points:

- Reduced breadth or frequency of offerings
- Choices among programs valued by students and families
- Provide opportunities such as JV or C teams

CATEGORY

2

FIVE CATEGORIES
OF IMPACT

CATEGORY 2

Equitable Student Supports

Potential implications of maintaining the current system configuration

Equitable student supports

Inaction may make consistent service delivery harder as staffing becomes more fractional and resources are spread across more sites.

Differentiated instruction

Reduced capacity to provide differentiated supports consistently.

Inclusive services

Fractional staffing may make it harder to schedule services around student needs.

Specialist collaboration

Less shared planning time among general education, multilingual learning, and special education staff.

Intervention and enrichment

Less flexibility to organize timely, targeted supports.

Family support

Reduced staffing may affect the timeliness and consistency of school and central-office response.

Comparable access

Different school sizes may require different levels of supplementation to sustain similar services.

Equity must be evaluated across every scenario, including inaction.

CATEGORY

3

FIVE CATEGORIES
OF IMPACT

CATEGORY 3

Staffing and Service Delivery

Potential implications of maintaining the current system configuration

Staffing and service delivery

Enrollment-generated positions become smaller and more difficult to schedule across independently staffed schools.

Staff assignments

- More fractional positions
- More staff shared among buildings
- Increased travel and schedule complexity
- More annual reassignments as enrollment changes

Collaboration

- Less common planning time
- Reduced ability to form stable educator teams
- More difficult coordination across general education and specialists

Administrative capacity

- Continued pressure on school and central-office support
- Less flexibility to respond to complex needs
- Potential effects on service timeliness and consistency

CATEGORY

4

FIVE CATEGORIES
OF IMPACT

CATEGORY 4

Financial and Operational Sustainability

Potential implications of maintaining the current system configuration

Increasing class-size ratios is one way to reduce staffing costs to respond to a system decisions not to take action.

Elementary effect

K-3 Class Sizes limited adjustments available as need to comply with state requirements.

4th-5th Grade Class Sizes would be increased to an average range of 29-35 students per class.

Middle school effect

6th-8th Grade Class Sizes would be increased to an average of 32-37 students per class.

High school effect

9th – 12th Grade Class Sizes would be increased to an average of 34-39 students per class.

Local levy resources sustain programs beyond state funding

If more local resources are needed to maintain the current footprint, less flexibility remains for these programs.

Staffing for programs	\$83.6M
Social-emotional learning, safety and security	\$17.5M
Professional learning	\$18.8M
Athletics and extracurricular activities	\$9.4M
Additional course offerings	\$4.9M
Early learning	\$0.8M

Key question

How much local capacity remains for programs if more is needed to sustain sites?

CATEGORY

5

FIVE CATEGORIES
OF IMPACT

CATEGORY 5

Facilities, Capacity, and System Balance

Potential implications of maintaining the current system configuration

Facilities, portables, and program placement

Maintaining current sites does not resolve how available space should be used.

31,907

Available permanent capacity
across K–12

157

Portable classrooms across the
District

80–90%

Target permanent-capacity
utilization

Retain portables

Operating and maintenance costs
continue even where permanent
capacity is available.

Repurpose space

Available rooms can support
programs and operations, but
repurposing does not automatically
reduce fixed school costs.

Align capital planning

Modernization can continue while
project scope, timing, and capacity
are aligned to projected enrollment.

Reduced central-office support shifts work closer to schools

The effects would extend across staff, students, families, and community partnerships.

Some work goes away while other work shifts.

With substantially less central capacity, more coordination, problem-solving, and specialized work would be carried by schools and the people they serve.

STAFF

More operational and coordination work would shift to principals and school-based staff, reducing time for instruction, coaching, and direct support.

STUDENTS

Access to specialized services, coordinated interventions, and consistent implementation could vary more across schools.

FAMILIES

Answers and resolution of complex needs could take longer and involve more handoffs.

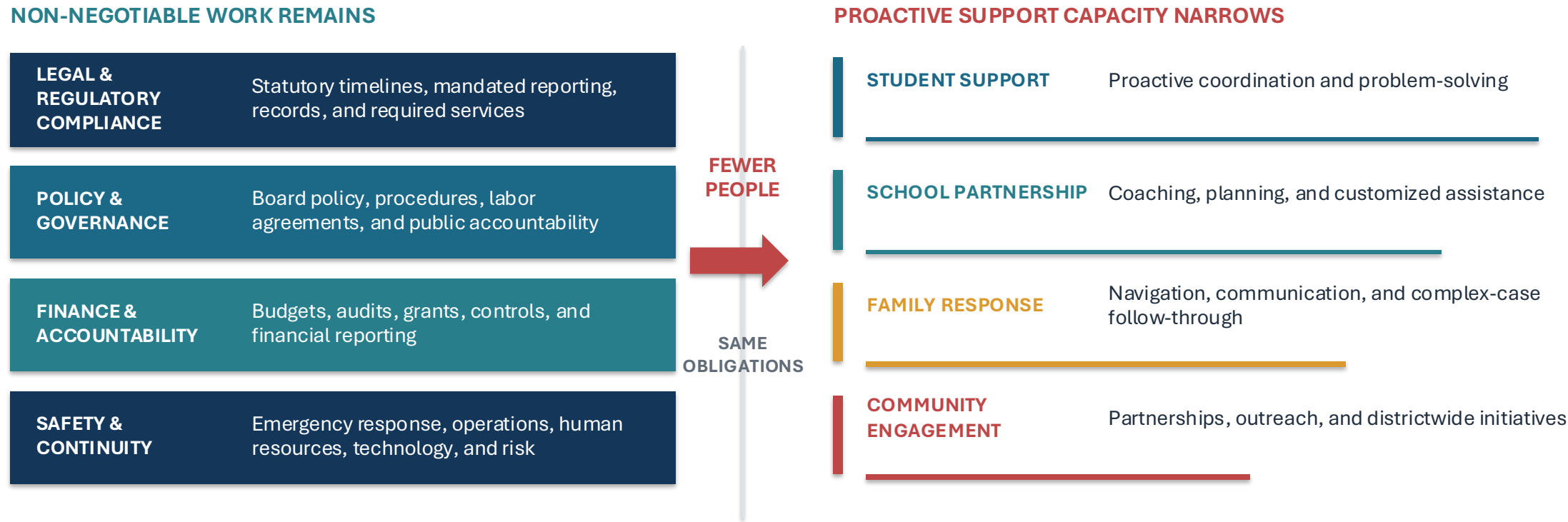
COMMUNITY

Partnerships, communications, emergency coordination, and districtwide initiatives would operate with less capacity.

Reducing central support requires decisions about which work will be discontinued and which responsibilities will shift to schools.

Required work absorbs a larger share of a smaller team

Compliance, policy, and core operations continue—even as capacity for proactive support declines.



The center of gravity shifts from proactive partnership toward minimum-required compliance and policy work.

Summary

Several thresholds are already crossed and only worsen over time

Monitoring with defined thresholds is intentional; waiting without triggers is not. Where the District stands against each one today.

1

Enrollment

About 2,300 fewer elementary students in five years; 4,451 fewer K–12 projected by 2035

2

Utilization Projections

Middle schools below target in every learning area; Redmond and Eastlake below at every span

3

Elementary viability

24 FTE above strict ratio to keep elementary grade configurations workable

4

Secondary Reinvestment

13.2 FTE added in 2025–26 to sustain secondary course offerings

5

Staffing

\$4.9M above ratio today; future modeling approximates \$11M+

6

Program access

Supplementation already differs by school size to keep services comparable

7

Financial exposure

Fixed site costs unchanged at every school while per-student revenue declines

8

Forecast change

Enrollment has declined since 2019–20 after a decade of rapid growth

Our commitment is not to preserve a particular organizational structure, but to ensure that every student experiences a high-quality education that prepares them for an extraordinary future. As enrollment changes, our responsibility is to thoughtfully align our resources, programs, staff, and facilities so that we can continue to provide exceptional experiences for each learner.

We know that students do not all begin from the same place or require the same supports to achieve excellence. Preserving equitable opportunities means ensuring that every student has access to the services, relationships, programs, and learning environments they need to be successful. The question before us is how we best organize our system so that every student can thrive, both today and in the future.

Town Hall Informational Series

30-minute information sessions

	Session #	Subject	Date	Time
☒	Session #1	School District Enrollment	September 29	6 p.m.
☒	Session #2	School District Budget	October 7	12 p.m.
☒	Session #3	School Capacity & LWSD School Construction Projects	October 14	12 p.m.
☒	Session #4	Implications for Doing Nothing	October 21	12 p.m.
	Session #5	Decision Making Process	October 28	12 p.m.
	Session #6	Supporting Students During Change	November 4	12 p.m.
	Session #7	Choice Schools & Specialized Programs	November 9	12 p.m.
	Session #8	Frequently Asked Questions	November 18	12 p.m.



ONLINE INFORMATION
SESSIONS

BOUNDARY & ENROLLMENT
REALIGNMENT PROCESS

Each Information Session will be 30 minutes.
Sessions will be recorded and posted on the Realignment website.

Session #1:
School District Enrollment
October 12
5 p.m.
[JOIN HERE](#)

Session #2:
School District Budget
October 21
12 p.m.
[JOIN HERE](#)

Session #3:
School Capacity & School
Construction Projects
October 28
12 p.m.
[JOIN HERE](#)

Session #4:
Implications for
Doing Nothing
November 4
12 p.m.
[JOIN HERE](#)

Session #5:
Decision Making Process
November 9
12 p.m.
[JOIN HERE](#)

Session #6:
Supporting Students
During Change
November 18
12 p.m.
[JOIN HERE](#)

Session #7:
Choice Schools &
Specialized Programs
November 25
12 p.m.
[JOIN HERE](#)

Session #8:
Frequently Asked
Questions
December 2
12 p.m.
[JOIN HERE](#)

Have a question? Submit it here:
<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/z/816hNM54R>
For more information, visit:
www.lwsd.org/realignment



LAKE WASHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

INFORMATIONAL SESSION #4

Thank you for your engagement in this important conversation.



THANK YOU LWSD STAFF, FAMILIES, COMMUNITY AND STUDENTS