

## Annual Capacity Review 22-23 FAQ: Midtown/Washington Clusters

### Enrollment Projections, Capacity, and Utilization

Q1: What are current real-time numbers, projected numbers, and capacities for all the schools that are involved?

*A1: Please refer to Table 14 (pages 12 through 14) of the 2022-23 Annual Review Report (<http://tinyAPS.com/?AnnualReviewReport> for current and projected enrollments of all zoned schools and Tables 16 through 18 (pages 14 through 17) for capacity. Pages 6 through 9 show projections as compared with capacity to generate projected utilization.*

Q2: How does APS define “core” in high schools as many classes are required for graduation with pathway completion, IB, AP dual enrollment. How does the definition of “core classes” change in elementary, middle, and high school utilization for APS models?

*A2: The operational definition of a core classroom is a classroom that meets State-defined square footage minimums (750 sf for K-3, 660 sf for 4-8, 600 sf for 9-12), which can accommodate a class size of 21 (ES), 24 (MS), or 25 (HS) for instruction, and is not dedicated to a specific use (art, gym, music, lab equipment, special education, etc.) This definition is applied to all instructional facilities. The types of non-core uses vary based on level (for example, CTAE classes are not offered at the elementary level).*

Q3: Reducing Midtown to 90% capacity seems like a stopgap measure at best. Why not aim for more equality of utilization, more like 78% for each of these two schools?

*A3: 90% would be the threshold at which the school is not overcrowded but will not be eligible to accept administrative transfers and risk becoming overcrowded again more quickly. Reaching a utilization rate of 78% at Midtown High School would require rezoning-out about 500 students.*

Q4: Are the projections solely based on students currently enrolled in the feeder schools? Or some other metric or combination?

*A4: Enrollment projections take into account how many students from feeder schools enroll at the next-level school in the cluster, as well as historic trends for enrollment in neighborhood middle and high schools from charter schools.*

Q5: What are the projections beyond the 2025-26 school year? Looking through some of the capacity data, it seems that some of the elementary schools are coming in below their capacity and class size is trending downward. One would think that would make its way to the middle and high school as well.

*A5: Projections through School Year 2027-28 are shown in Table 14 (pages 12 through 14) of the 2022-23 Annual Review Report (<http://tinyAPS.com/?AnnualReviewReport>).*

Q6: Why is Washington so “underutilized”?

*A6: As of October 2022, Washington High School had 969 high school students living within its attendance zone, of which 74% attended Washington HS, while Midtown’s zone had 1,675 high school students residing within it, of which 94% attended Midtown HS. Washington’s capacity is*

*also slightly higher than Midtown's (1625 students vs. 1525 students). A smaller number of in-zone students, with more of those students opting to attend other APS high schools (12% of in-zone students) and charter schools (15% of in-zone students), in a facility with more capacity, contributes to Washington's lower utilization.*

Q7: Midtown High, per the Feb 2023 Enrollment Utilization Report, shows 94 total spaces and 61 core classes with a class size of 25. Are there options that renovate non-core classes to core classrooms, or adding additional classroom capacity? Even adding 7 core classrooms would yield, hypothetically, a capacity of 1700.

*A7: Yes, Scenario 1 includes reviewing the use of space and shifting some non-core spaces to core uses.*

Q8: At the last meeting, you showed data that Centennial was over-capacity. What are the projections for growth for the kids zoned for Centennial (not charter)?

*A8: Centennial has 288 students that do not live in the zone. Centennial would not have capacity challenges if the school limited its enrollment to in-zone only students. The school, however, is authorized to accept up to 800 students.*

## **Engagement**

Q9: How can we make our voices, as parents and committed family members, heard? How will you better engage community members in the future, especially those who do not have the time or resources to attend meetings at the proposed times?

*A9: Feedback on scenarios is being accepted on a rolling basis via this feedback form: <http://tinyAPS.com/?AnnualReviewFeedback> and parents, family members, and community members can also submit questions and comments via Let's Talk: <http://tinyAPS.com/?LetsTalk>*

Q10: What is the decision timeline?

*A10: The scenarios will be shared in March. A draft recommendation will be presented in April. The community input sessions in March and April will provide feedback to the administration during the development of the Superintendent's recommendation at the May Board meeting. The community will have the opportunity to provide feedback to the Board between its first read in May and their final vote in June.*

## **Board Policy AD**

APS Board Policy AD: <https://bit.ly/3YyZDP8>

## **Scenarios**

Q11: Can you give us some specific examples about what "enhancements" and "innovations" might include? Might this include adding portables? Taking away specials classrooms? Cutting specials programs? Rotating in-person attendance, so only half of students attend on a given day? Are there identified methods of adding capacity?

*A11: As part of the review by the Office of Innovation, Improvement, and Redesign, design teams would identify challenges at each overcrowded school, experience a full-day "ideation*

*experience” and ideate potential solutions, engage in design thinking events and charrettes, and propose solutions based on this process. Some spaces have been identified at Midtown HS that could shift from non-core to core use, and they would be included in this process. Portable classrooms or reduction of curricular offerings will not be included as part of Scenario 1.*

Q12: How was the feedback and creative ideas from last Fall incorporated when developing these two scenarios. How will Scenario 1 - strategies A, B and D be different from the focus groups that occurred in the Fall? What other options has the board considered?

*A12: The community feedback from these meetings was discussed during this annual review process and have informed the scenarios that have been presented this month. Multiple options were considered by an internal working group comprised of principals, associate superintendents, and other APS staff, including staff from the Office of Equity and the Office of Innovation, Improvement, and Redesign.*

Q13: Has APS performed an audit of students’ attendance vs eligibility to attend of each of the schools in question? What is the current process for confirming residency at Midtown? Why is a “residency review” an option and not standard practice? What percentage of students does APS believe are attending a school they are not zoned for? When will the residency review at Midtown be completed? Do we have a date for the Midtown residency review?

*A13: The current process, which is standard practice, includes asking for proof of residency documents (for example, lease, mortgage statement, deed and/or GA Power bill). A deeper review would include additional steps, including authentication of documents, and is part of Scenario 1. There is currently no estimate for the number of students who may not be zoned for or approved to attend Midtown HS but attend the school. Residency review will start in March 2023 and is expected to conclude in June 2023.*

Q14: Are the presentations designed to give the illusion of choice? Scenario 1 in the plans represents things that APS should be doing anyway and therefore are not serious options and should not be presented as such. Can residency review be an option for both scenarios?

*A14: Some elements of Scenario 1 like reviewing residency will proceed even if Scenario 2 is approved by the Board.*

Q15: If a rising 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grader takes the option to stay at Midtown HS, will the younger sibling be able to attend if the older sibling is still at Midtown?

*A15: If capacity exists, siblings of legacy students may be able to attend Midtown HS with their older siblings.*

Q16: Would zoned schools change for elementary school students (including rising 5<sup>th</sup> graders) and middle school students (including rising 8<sup>th</sup> graders)?

*A16: No, elementary and middle school students in the Centennial zone (the only zone being rezoned) would still continue to attend Centennial. Rising ninth graders through rising 12<sup>th</sup> graders living in the Centennial zone would attend Washington HS beginning School Year 2024-25, with rising 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders having the option to remain at Midtown HS (but without APS-provided transportation).*

Q17: Did I understand correctly that Scenario 2 does not even fully address the near-term problem?

*A17: Scenario 2, which involves rezoning, would not go into effect until School Year 2024-25, meaning additional mitigations would be needed for overcrowding next year.*

Q18: Why do you all have to rezone the areas where there are more African Americans in those communities? Why can't you rezone the areas near Midtown? Is this about money or economic gain? Was the decision to move the westernmost section of the Midtown High district to Washington High purely based on geographic proximity to Washington High? These Western neighborhoods also suffer from the highest levels of poverty in the Midtown High district and the proposed Scenario 1 would put already disadvantaged communities at an even higher disadvantage by forcing the students to attend a lower performing school.

*A18: Washington HS's utilization is 51% for this school year (2022-23) and it is less than 3 miles from Centennial Place Academy. While race/ethnicity was not used, other factors such as current utilization, proximity were considered in developing in Scenario 2.*

Q19: Wasn't APS going to consider North Atlanta's capacity such that it should be Scenario 2? Has APS considered rezoning the impacted Centennial Academy neighborhoods to North Atlanta as opposed to Washington? And if they have - can they provide the rationale as to why they have deemed that an insufficient solution? Is there a way to give Centennial cluster students a choice of going to either North Atlanta or Midtown?

*A19: North Atlanta HS is at 95% utilization for this school year (2022-23) and is projected to have an average utilization rate of 91% over the next five years. North Atlanta is not included as part of a rezoning scenario as shifting students to North Atlanta could result in capacity challenges at North Atlanta HS.*

Q20: What would a timeline for building facilities augmentation look like? Why are you not building additional high schools or expanding Midtown? There's plenty of space in the area consumed by needless retail.

*A20: We will leverage the existing capacity in developing options before considering building a new high school or purchasing additional property.*

Q21: Will APS consider additional scenarios to 1 and 2 or are these the only choices?

*Q21: Scenarios 1 and 2 are the only scenarios being considered at this point in the process and moving forward.*

### **Charters and Partners**

Q22: Will Centennial Academy charter only have zoned students going to that school, and have the kids who are not zoned for that school presently go to their zoned school?

*A22: The Board of Education authorized Centennial Academy to enroll up to 800 students. This may be considered during their charter reauthorization next year.*

Q23: Why haven't we heard about Centennial redistricting from Centennial leadership?

*A23: Questions about Centennial Academy's position on rezoning proposals can be directed to the Centennial Academy Board of Directors.*

Q24: Does rezoning include the charter schools that Howell Station is currently eligible for?

*A24: Rezoning would only affect Centennial Academy.*

Q25: Slide 19 [in the March 9 presentation] shows that there are 219 students attending Midtown HS in the Centennial Academy zone. This is misleading in a way that it sounds like there are 219 scholars from a single grade attending Midtown HS from this zone alone. Is that really the case? For example, are you all saying that there are 219 9th graders that currently attend Midtown HS that live within the Centennial Academy zone? Each grade at Centennial only has about 80-100 scholars. That is still a lot but not all of them live within the assigned zone. Please be more transparent on exactly how many incoming scholars living within the attendance zone would be for entering Midtown HS. Showing that it would be 219 or whichever number misrepresents really how many from the Centennial zone would be taking up a seat at Midtown HS. This also misleads other families wanting Centennial out of the Midtown cluster into thinking that our families are the issue for overcrowding the school.

*A25: 219 is the projected number of students (grades 9 through 12) from centennial zone that attend Midtown HS in 2024-25. Currently, there are 205 students from Centennial zone attend Midtown High School.*

### **Equity**

Q26: I'm curious about how the rezoning option would impact the racial/ethnic and socio-economic demographics of the student populations at the two high schools. Where does this leave Midtown in terms of racial demographics - especially Black students? What is the diversity impact of moving Centennial out of Midtown? I understand proximity/walkability AND diversity may not be achievable. Can the diversity impact of both scenarios be shared (high school only)?

*A26: Impacts on student socioeconomic and racial diversity are shown in slides 17 to 19 of the March 9<sup>th</sup> Community Meeting Presentation:  
<http://tinyAPS.com/?MidtownWashingtonPresentationMarch9>*

### **Academics**

Q27: Why isn't school performance/outcomes included in redistricting proposals?

*A27: Equity impacts, including, but not limited to, access to instructional programs is a criterion for redistricting decisions per Board Policy AD (<https://bit.ly/3YyZDP8>).*

### **Vacant Facilities**

Q29: Why isn't Kirkwood's proposal to reopen Coan Middle and Crim High on the list of options for consideration?

*A29: The Coan facility is currently scheduled to undergo an HVAC upgrade and will house Toomer ES as a "swing" or relocation site for 2023-24 SY while the Toomer facility is renovated. East Atlanta Campus (formerly known as Crim High School) is used for the Phoenix Academy program*

*and for APS Nutrition. Use of Coan and Crim was considered but is not one of the proposed scenarios. We will leverage existing capacity at active facilities before considering re-opening a closed facility.*