

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for the Facilities Master Plan (FMP)

Updated: March 29, 2022

Capacity (The Number of Students a School Can Hold)

- 1. Capacity numbers from APS (Atlanta Public Schools) are often different from what site administrators (e.g., principals) feel are realistic for their properties. Is the assumption that the principals think their schools do not hold as many as calculated? Do principals confirm the number of spaces in their buildings?**

Answer: The objective of calculating capacity was to come up with a formula that could be applied to any facility yet would allow a certain amount of flexibility for the principal based on the available core-classrooms after accounting for all non-core uses. While principals may not have confirmed these calculations, the numbers have built in flexibility for their planned uses.

- 2. What does SSF stand for?**

Answer: SSF stands for [Student Success Funding](#) Formula, which is the funding formula APS uses to share out funds to schools based on the attributes of students (e.g., poverty, students with disabilities, gifted, etc.)

- 3. Where can I find the space calculations for my school?**

Answer: [SSF Capacity Calculations](#), [Capacity Methodology](#), and [Current Capacity \(October SY21-22\)](#)

Enrollment Projections (The Number of Students We Expect in the Future)

- 4. The number of students in elementary schools is going down. How does this compare with census numbers for elementary school kids?**

Answer: The number of births has been declining over the years which has resulted in declining kindergarten enrollment. As the kindergarten classes or groups move through the system over the years, we see enrollments in elementary school going down in those later years. The 2020 census numbers by age groups are not available yet.

- 5. What is the basis for the 48,753-student enrollment number for the 2021-22 school year? The state's FTE (Full Time Equivalent) count (official student count) from October 5, 2021, was higher at 49,994?**

Answer: The basis for the 48,753 number is the kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment, which does not include pre-K enrollment numbers, while the state's FTE count of 49,994 includes pre-K enrollment.

- 6. Do enrollment projections consider anyone moving into a district and not living at a new housing development?**

Answer: Yes, there is a normal amount of moving in/out of the district that is accounted for in the progression rates. Progression rates capture historic student movement in/out of schools.

- 7. Why did the growth projections change SO much? I can understand the temporary drop, but do not understand changes in growth projection. Are you considering big adjustments to cluster boundaries to address enrollments?**

Answer: Projections changed radically because they were projected based on the recent past enrollment, and the recent past enrollment has decreased significantly over the past two years due to COVID-19. Changes to cluster boundaries are among the many scenarios we are considering.

- 8. When the numbers were rerun after COVID, the Mary Lin enrollment projections decreased very significantly (241 students at 10-years). Can you provide some of the reasoning why the numbers were downgraded so much more than the other schools in the cluster?**

Answer: (1) We updated projections based on the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) growth forecast, which is stable or down from where it was before due to the high rate of growth pre 2020 (new development) and we now

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know more about the yield rates from the developments around the Beltline, and they are lower than originally thought. (Note: The “yield rate” is the average number of APS students that are produced by housing units.)

9. What percentage is middle school for Woodson Park?

Answer: In 2026-27 we project that the K-5 Grades will include 538 students and the Middle school grades will include 233 students, or 30% of the total enrollment.

10. Were these underutilized schools really that different in 2019 than today?

Answer: APS enrollment has been down by more than 2000 students since 2019, so there have been changes in underutilization at schools across the district.

Grandfathering

11. Will the rezoning make the out-of-zone transfer students who are already at Hollis go back to their zone school to free up the space for Centennial overflow that was zoned for our area 20 years ago or so?

Answer: No, the out-of-zone transfer students at Hollis would remain there through the highest grade.

12. If grandfathering is considered when would that discussion take place?

Answer: Based on regulation JBCCA-R(2) [View Regulation JBCCA-R\(2\): Student Assignment to Schools - Student Transfers \(eboardsolutions.com\)](#), when attendance zone changes are made, students impacted may be eligible to remain in the school which they currently attend as a transfer, provided that there is permanent classroom space available.

- If space is available, rising 5th, 8th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students may remain at their present school. Transportation will not be provided for rezoned students who elect to remain at the present school.
- If space is available, all students with previously granted transfers may remain at the current school.
- All other grade levels will enroll in the new zoned school.

Students who are allowed to remain at their school may continue to attend that school until the student completes all grades at said school, and all other transfer conditions apply. These students do not automatically progress into the feeder school and must seek another transfer in order to be eligible to do so.

Housing

If the multi-family rental homes increase, won't school tax dollars drop?

Answer: No, this will not have a direct effect on tax collections, as property taxes are collected on multi-family properties including rental homes.

13. Do we have any data about all of the housing units in Atlanta and APS yield?

Answer: The student yield (how many students on average or in each housing unit) of new students from new housing is 0.08 students per new home built (city-wide). In other words, eight new students per 100 new houses built.

14. Is there any consideration for yields changing in the future (i.e., because of rising price points, or more families choose to live in multi-family housing like other cities)?

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Answer: While the student yields used in the analysis vary by school zone and by housing type, they were held constant over the 10-year forecast period for the purpose of this study. Over time, we will track the student yields per cluster and housing type (single family, apartments, etc.) and this will continue to strengthen the future forecasts of student enrollment.

Private Schools

15. At Midtown we have increasing numbers of students entering FROM private schools in 9th grade. How are those numbers captured?

Answer: Private school students or students from charter schools are included in the progression rate based on the historic trend of families choosing private or charter schools.

Triggers

16. What percent over capacity is considered acceptable if any at all, and at what % must action be taken?

Answer: If Utilization is 90% to 105%, we consider the following programmatic or administrative accommodations (processes):

- Elementary Schools:
 - Terminate Administrative Transfers (Attending a school other than your zoned school)
 - Use floating Art & Music teachers (These teachers would not have a dedicated classroom space)
- Middle & High Schools:
 - Terminate Administrative Transfers
 - Floating Teachers
 - Full use of classroom during Planning Period
- If Utilization is over 105%, we consider the following:
 - Modular Classrooms (if site will accommodate), if temporary overcrowding
 - Changing school attendance zones within a cluster to shift enrollment from over-utilized (over-capacity) schools to under-utilized (under-capacity) schools
 - Changing cluster boundaries
 - Addition, renovation, re-activation of schools, new construction (to address longer-term overcrowding)

17. Is there a trigger number for considering consolidation (warning notice) when a school has a low-capacity number? The cost to keep a school open for 30 something % enrollment is not a significant use of resources. Is there a trigger for underutilized schools to take action in the future?

Answer: We are monitoring schools with less than 65% utilization over the next few years as a potential trigger for consolidation (e.g., merging schools), especially for those clusters that have multiple schools with low utilization rates.

18. Do high schools fit clusters enrollment projections, or should also include a % open seats, i.e., larger than expected attendance zones?

Answer: The goal of conducting this work is to make sure that all schools, including high schools, can accommodate expected enrollment in the future. If we redistrict students, the goal is to fill the school to no more than 95% of the capacity.

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Midtown Cluster Scenarios

- 19. Midtown is overcrowded. Why not make all the elementary schools K-6, including Inman, and make Howard 7-9 to relieve the crowding at Midtown? Have different configurations for middle & high school been vetted and/or considered to minimize overcrowding at Midtown High?**

Answer: We proposed traditional grade spans for the schools in the Midtown cluster: K-5 for elementary schools (with an option for a dual campus: K-2, 3-5 in two separate buildings), 6-8 for middle school, and 9-12 for high school. We are proposing to address the overcrowding at Midtown HS by moving the Centennial zone to the Washington Cluster.

- 20. How many students would be in the Dual Campus at Springdale Park ES and how much larger is it than the Dual Campuses in the North Atlanta cluster?**

Answer: Projected enrollment for the 2026-27 school year would be 1,032 at a Springdale Park ES Dual Campus. This is 14% more than Brandon's projected dual campus enrollment of 906. The peak enrollment at Brandon was 1,149 students.

- 21. In the dual campus scenario, would the Inman portables be removed?**

Answer: Yes, the portables would be removed.

- 22. In the Springdale Park ES Dual Campus, what will the student/teacher ratio be?**

Answer: The student/teacher ratio is determined by how the principal allocates their budget. Some principals allocate as much funding as possible to core classroom teachers in order to lower class size, while others invest funds elsewhere for different supports. With either facilities option, the principal will now have the opportunity to make decisions without space being an (issue)constraint.

- 23. What is the utilization rate of Springdale Park ES if Inman Park does not leave Mary Lin? Is there a way to keep Inman Park in Mary Lin and draw the lines differently for the Springdale Park ES zone in Virginia Highlands?**

Answer: In Scenario 1 for Midtown Elementary Schools, if the Inman neighborhood stays at Mary Lin the utilizations across the Cluster would be as follows: Springdale 42%; Inman 69%, Morningside 78%, Mary Lin 82%, Hope Hill 82%. We calculated several different re-zoning scenarios and they ultimately resulted in Morningside, Inman and/or Springdale utilization falling far below the utilization of the other schools' facilities in the cluster.

- 24. Can you provide some details on why the 4/5 Academy option for Inman is no longer under consideration after a significant effort was spent over 2 years by the cluster community to come up with the scenario in the first place?**

Answer: When the district received the latest enrollment projections and delayed the implementation of the new school at Inman, it allowed the district to fold (include or factor in) the Inman decision into the FMP process to provide a more holistic look at district capacity. The consultants have recommended these two scenarios to best address the capacity challenges facing the Midtown Cluster. Further information on this decision can be found here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iDGbq61TjumOhfc93OFgYikNr_Wy9SXb/view

- 25. What community input did they receive on Inman? We spent over 2 years working through options to create this recommendation.**

Answer: This is the beginning of community engagement on these specific scenarios. We spoke to the Midtown CAT (Cluster Advisory Team) on March 9th. We also have an Inman-specific meeting on March 22nd. We will visit GO Team meetings in April for further engagement as well as collect community input through Let's Talk.

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Please provide your feedback throughout this timeframe. Also, if you see lines that don't make sense to divide, please share that feedback as well.

26. Is there flexibility in how the lines are drawn? For example, the opposite side of Monroe goes to a different school, but Piedmont Park may be a more appropriate line.

Answer: These meetings are the forum for sharing these ideas and concerns. The consultant will take all comments into consideration and may adjust the lines to a different boundary if it makes sense to do so.

27. Will a dual Springdale Park ES campus allow for a future Pre-k?

Answer: With the projected lower utilization for either a dual campus or single campus for Springdale Park ES, there would be space for Pre-K at Springdale Park ES. Springdale Park ES would work with the district to determine the feasibility of Pre-K based on existing seats available.

28. Why move 820 students from their school and neighborhoods compared to 261 for Scenario 2 when the capacity projections are the same?

Answer: We are looking for input from the community on these two different scenarios that have slightly different approaches. We welcome the feedback on the scenarios and why you prefer one over the other.

29. Will the gym, cafeteria and/or auditorium at Inman receive upgrades? What great new facilities will the Inman campus offer our Springdale Park ES intermediate grades (3-5)? Science labs? Band room? Auditorium?

Answer: We are not contemplating "new" facilities at Inman. If dual campus is selected, we would review the 3-5 program and what modifications would need to be made, if any. There are no improvements to the gym, cafeteria or auditorium currently planned. Ongoing maintenance, repairs, and school readiness work will continue.

30. Can you explain how the bussing portion of transportation will work for the Springdale Park ES Dual Campus? Staggered start times? Multiple buses?

Answer: There are assigned buses that will service the two buildings for Springdale Park ES and Inman ES. No determination has yet to be made about how the sequence of buses will function nor if a staggered start time is needed. One set of buses will serve general education eligible bus riders for both campuses.

31. What are the financial implications of K-5 vs dual campus for Springdale Park ES?

Answer: Our SSF budget formula is set up to provide funding based on student enrollment and student attributes. Regardless where the student(s) attend school, as long as that student remains in APS, funding will follow the student(s). Neither scenario would provide a negative impact on per pupil funding allocations.

32. Why do the consultants recommend a k-5/dual campus over a 4/5?

Answer: Post-COVID, estimating enrollment projections has a lot of uncertainty. An additional cluster-wide school that becomes overcrowded may require redistricting cluster boundaries (similar to Midtown High); while creating multiple K-5 elementary schools would allow for more flexibility in rezoning to deal with this uncertainty.

33. Will we be back here in 5 years?

Answer: The consultants have suggested that since we are still in the tail-end of the latest COVID wave, we do not know the new norms for student enrollment post-COVID. The future population of Atlanta, driven by affordability of housing, post-COVID patterns, and new housing growth, will determine our need to revisit the

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idea of making shifts in facility usage. APS monitors annual enrollment to keep tabs on localized population and school enrollment trends.

- 34. What are the criteria for deciding between the new K-5 or a Dual Campus? In the last round, APS presented feedback from different departments within APS. Will that happen again? If not, are there other criteria that APS is looking at, in addition to feedback from the community, for making that decision?**

Answer: Internally, APS reviewing the impact these scenarios have on students, schools, and communities. Understanding these impacts will help APS make recommendations for May first read as well as support students impacted by these changes.

- 35. Will a dual Springdale Park ES campus encourage APS to work with the neighborhood to get a protected bike lane connecting The Beltline and 10th Street to the Inman building?**

Answer: Whether Inman is used as a dual campus for Springdale Park ES or a single K-5 campus, it would not have a bearing on this. We would need to initiate discussions with Atlanta DOT on the proposed use of their T-SPLIST dollars or other funds to implement such requested bicycle infrastructure.

- 36. Can APS provide a breakdown of students in the two neighborhoods that are grouped, in the maps, together as "Area A" (239 students from Morningside)? The 239 students seem to come from 3-4 different areas: Ansley Park, Piedmont Heights, an area along Monroe (which considers itself part of Morningside), and an area along Cheshire Bridge (Manchester, which also is part of the Morningside neighborhood association). The families thought that would allow better feedback on the map lines and scenarios.**

Answer:

Neighborhood	Morningside ES Students in 2021-22
Piedmont Heights	104
Ansley Park	51
Sherwood Forest	20
Manchester	26
Monroe Dr (part of Morningside)	12
Midtown	2

Please note these numbers above represent the students in 2021-22 and do not add up to 239, which reflects the students in 2026-27.

- 37. What is the proposed split of Virginia Highlands students in Scenario 1?**

Answer: The proposed split of Virginia Highlands students in Scenario 1 is 139 would go to Inman (2021-22 SY) and 190 would remain at Springdale Park.

- 38. How many school-aged children are in the Emory annexed area? Does APS have that information? It is a large area, and when annexed in the population was 6,000 residents. Families believe there are currently 14 public school students but wonder what the potential is. So they wondered how many school-aged**

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children in Emory are living there but not attending public school, or how many "units" that yield students are in that area? Did the consultant's forecast growth in that area specifically?

Answer: Census 2020 data by age group is not available yet. The 2020 ACS 5-Year estimates, however, for census tracts covering CDC/Emory are as follows:

AGE 5 to 9 years	29
AGE 10 to 14 years	74
AGE 15 to 19 years	2,184

Yes, the ARC growth forecast covers the entire city. The ARC forecast is the foundational data to identify growth used in this study. The students generated from the existing building stock, and projected new development by residential building type, number of units, and expected cost/rent of those units has been considered in the enrollment projections.

39. Are other options being explored to redistrict out of Midtown HS, such as redistricting any of the cluster schools on the North or East sides of the connector?

Answer: North Atlanta HS and Jackson HS do not have the capacity to take in additional students.

Jackson Cluster questions

40. Will Crim and Coan re-open?

Answer: No, we are not proposing reopening those two schools as a new cluster, as there is a surplus of middle and high school capacity in APS, including the clusters next door (Carver and Washington) to the Jackson cluster. We have proposed addressing the Jackson HS and King MS overutilization by proposing to move the Dunbar zone out of the Jackson cluster to either Carver or Washington clusters.

41. Was Toomer moving to Midtown considered? I know that was part of a previous conversation.

Answer: We cannot move a school into the Midtown Cluster as Midtown HS is experiencing overcrowding issues. In fact, we are proposing moving the Centennial attendance area out of Midtown HS.

42. Why weren't other schools considered for rezoning?

Answer: Dunbar was considered because of its unique geographic characteristics, primarily its proximity to Washington HS and distance from Jackson HS, as well as the only elementary attendance area in the Jackson cluster that is west of the downtown connector.

Douglass Cluster Scenarios

43. Is there any consideration of returning Woodson Park back to a K-5 Model as an option?

Answer: Discussions are underway with KIPP –who are under contract to operate the school – to find solutions to relieve expected overcrowding at Woodson Park.

44. When can we anticipate Community Conversations for the Douglass Cluster?

Answer: We are waiting on proposed scenarios from APS and Woodson Park, so we can have an informed conversation with the Douglass Cluster stakeholders this coming Fall (2022).

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45. Are Woodson Park students going to be moved to John Lewis school to balance it out due to its low utilization?

Answer: All current recommendations focus on relieving overcrowded facilities. We are recommending moving students only if the school is overcrowded, not just to balance school populations or increase enrollment at an underutilized facility.

Next Steps

46. Is the April 15th "Final Recommendation" date supposed to provide a final recommendation for both Use of Inman, and final maps? Will the map boundary discussion continue after April 15? How will the Final Recommendation be announced? Will it be announced before the board meeting, or during the May 2 board meeting?

Answer: The Sizemore group will submit their final recommendation to APS on April 15th. The Superintendent will share APS' recommendation before the May 2nd Board Meeting. There will be opportunities for communities to provide feedback following First Read on May 2nd before the Final Vote on June 6th.

Other

47. How will APS address maintaining and improving the facilities that exist and are currently in use?

Answer: Ongoing maintenance, repairs and school readiness work will continue at all facilities.

48. How can APS be better in reacting to and addressing the differences between the projection and reality, including effective communication between departments and what is happening at the schools?

Answer: Operations and Schools must continue to review and refine the formula used to calculate capacity, balancing the need for a formula for all schools and each school's space needs.

49. For South Atlanta, do the numbers include any impact on SPLOST renovations?

Answer: Renovation projects identified in the SPLOST program will not be affected by enrollment.

50. Has there been consideration around making the North Atlanta elementary schools K-6?

Answer: No. K-6 is not part of the normal or preferred grouping of grades. With plenty of capacity at Sutton MS, and North Atlanta High School, there is no sufficient reason to investigate K-6 in the North Atlanta Cluster.

51. What is the best way for us to voice our opinions on our preferences?

Answer: Connect with us via the Let's Talk button on the APS homepage <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/domain/14240> or the Facilities Master Planning Scenarios General Feedback form: <https://forms.gle/UgTf387qJp1YC8AU8>

52. What is the diversity impact of these changes?

Answer: The impact of the racial diversity of the schools from the scenarios are found here: [Scenario Diversity Impact](#)

53. As students move, are teachers relocated or does APS increase hiring?

Answer: Funding for teachers is managed via the Student Success Funding (SSF) model. Based on the budget request submitted by the school principal, staffing allocations will be adjusted accordingly.

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54. How and why were the lines drawn and neighborhoods split the way they were?

Answer: Several factors were considered by the consultants in drawing the proposed attendance area lines: proximity to school facility, using major roads as boundaries where possible, and keeping neighborhoods intact where possible. Sometimes one factor took higher precedence over another, but the consultants tried to balance each factor as they developed the new lines.