

11/05/2025

“Too Low” Enrollment Discussion Results

What does it look like in your context?

Enrollment Thresholds:

- Need to consistently have multiple sections in each grade level
- When we can't have multiple sections of a grade level

Utilization of Facility Capacity:

- Can't have multiple sections consistently
- Depends on the building (ADA available)
- Fixed costs of running a building- costs per capita go up as enrollment goes down

Class Size and Student-to-Teacher Ratios:

- Less than 13:1 for K-2
- Less than 18:1 for 3-5
- Not a hard line- number because not all buildings have the same student needs (example: IEP, parent involvement, socioeconomics)

Program and Service Sustainability:

- Programming is affected by enrolment numbers both + and –
- Differences in special education programming and the capacities for all
 - Learning center vs. class vs. SEB
- Smaller enrollments and smaller staffs lead to less offerings of special programs and smaller groups to participate (example: aim, SPED, clubs, etc.)

Risks and Liability Threshold:

- Staff burnout
- Not able to keep up with repairs on underutilized spaces
- The ability to monitor spaces for safety/ supervision
- The cost of maintaining the building regardless of enrollment
 - Are we spending taxpayer money appropriately while utilizing all spaces effectively
- Risk that demographic projections are not accurate
- Development based on the city's comprehensive plan may not reflect what actual development occurs in the future

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What challenges arise when enrollment becomes too low?

Educational Quality:

- Experiences different for students with different SES
- Title I buildings
- Diversity of thought is not as high with fewer students
- Effected by SES
- Diversity in student co-lab and views

Staffing:

- No new teacher hired
- Decreased voices to collaborate with
- Traveling staff increases
- Teachers are required to change grades or schools more often
- Larger class sizes while teachers are traveling to their other building
- Elective teachers are traveling causing “core” classes to be longer

Facilities and Operations:

- Fixed costs+ waste of district dollars
- The upgrades slow down. Lower enrollment puts them on the lower rungs for improvements
- Have to have a certain amount of staff to serve the students- low enrollment schools cost us money to separate- can't break even

Community:

- Lack of community/business partners
- PTA low volunteerism and scouts interest and volunteers decreases the community within the school
- Boundary changes -> with low enrollment will these changes happen?

Risk and Liability:

- Lack of supervision (security, bus hires, etc.)
- Adequate supervision with limited staff become more difficult
- Lower enrollment with fewer extracurriculars offered makes a school look less appealing when people are moving into our community
- Increased student visibility can lead to increased scrutiny of individual students and staff. Issues and confidential matters can be harder to obtain