Pleasant Plains Capacity Relief Boundary Study Frequently Asked Questions

The following questions and responses are frequently asked questions from boundary committee meetings, full details of which may be found on the BCPS Web site:
http://www.bcps.org/construction/PleasantPlainsES/PleasantPlainsESStudyFAQ.pdf

What is the objective of the boundary study?

The objective of this boundary study is to provide capacity relief to Pleasant Plains Elementary School. As of September 30, 2019, the school was overcapacity by 135 students, with a utilization of 124.8 percent.

There are several relief strategies that BCPS considers when determining how best to mitigate overcrowding. These strategies range in complexity, timing, and cost to implement. See chart below that outlines the continuum of strategies considered.

Upon review it was determined that all other short- and mid-term relief strategies had been exhausted. The school has implemented all space use compromises and site constraints limit the placement of additional relocatable classrooms. Currently the school has eight relocatable classrooms. Also, when evaluating relief options Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) determined that annexation of a grade to another school was not viable. Thus, a boundary change provided the most viable option for providing temporary relief until a long-term relief strategy such as the development of a countywide multi-year capital improvement plan can be provided.

![Strategies For Providing Relief](image)

Will this boundary change impact capital planning in this area?

One limitation of this study, as expressed in the initial meeting and throughout the process, is that this process will be unable to provide complete, long-term relief to the region. There is an insufficient quantity of seats in this region to address current and future projected enrollment.
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Long-term relief measures are under consideration in developing the Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Plan and Ten-Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to provide additional capacity.

**What is the difference between Headcount and Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment?**

FTE enrollment is an adjustment made to an elementary school’s total headcount enrollment for the purpose of comparing enrollment to a school’s official capacity. FTE enrollment factors 100% of students in Kindergarten through Grade 5, and 50% of students in prekindergarten and preschool because they are half-day programs. No FTE conversion is required at secondary schools.

**What is State Rated Capacity (SRC) and how is it determined?**

SRC is defined by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and is calculated based on the number of teaching stations (classrooms) in the school and their utilization (see COMAR 23.03.02.04). SRC applies to the permanent building only and does not include relocatable units.

At the elementary level, SRC is calculated as follows (see COMAR 23.03.02.04):

- Regular classroom (Grades 1-5) 23 seats
- Self-contained special education classroom 10 seats
- Kindergarten classroom 22 seats
- Prekindergarten classroom 20 seats
- Some spaces where instruction may take place are not included in the SRC, such as: cafeteria, gymnasium and multi-purpose rooms, computer lab, art, vocal music, instrumental music, reading resource, science storage, and preparation rooms.

For complete information please refer to the State of Maryland Public School Construction Program’s [Administrative Procedures Guide: Appendix 102A-State Rated Capacity](#).

**Why does capacity change?**

The capacity of a school may change after a renovation or a change in school program offerings. When a triggering event such as this happens, the SRC is recalculated and submitted for approval to the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP).
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**Why did the State Rated Capacity for Pleasant Plains and Hampton Elementary Schools change?**

In response to State legislation (HB1783), the Office of Strategic Planning (OSP) began a comprehensive review of SRCs across the system in September 2018. The State Department of Planning and Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) requested that Local Education Agencies (LEA) provide current SRC numbers as part of their forthcoming effort to complete a facilities assessment to improve school facilities planning across Maryland.

As this relates to the Pleasant Plains Elementary School Capacity Relief Boundary Study:

**Pleasant Plains Elementary School:** The SRC increase from 509 to 545 reflects the conversion of a special education classroom and computer lab to standard classrooms.

**Hampton Elementary School:** The SRC increase from 648 to 670 reflects the change in the number of kindergarten classrooms previously counted, the addition of prekindergarten, and the conversion of one computer room to a standard classroom.

**What does “utilization” mean?**

Utilization compares the FTE enrollment (elementary) or student headcount enrollment (middle and high) to the school’s SRC. A school with a utilization of 100 percent is enrolled at capacity.

If a school has a utilization rate of 115 percent (enrollment is 15% above its SRC), it is deemed overcrowded by the Baltimore County Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO). For more information, visit the Baltimore County Department of Planning website at: [http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/devrevandlanduse/adequatepublicschoolfacilities.html](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/devrevandlanduse/adequatepublicschoolfacilities.html) or the link at: Link to Baltimore County APFO.

The following color shading scale is used to show the percent of utilization:

| Percent Utilization Shading Key: | 0-60% | 60%-80% | 80%-100% | 100%-115% | 115%-130% | 130%-150% | >150% |

**How does BCPS determine what schools will participate in a boundary study?**

Before undertaking a boundary study, BCPS considers a number of factors which may include, but are not limited to:

- Space utilization within the area; with particular attention to schools that are over or under capacity
- Other short- and mid-term relief strategies that have been implemented
- Planned capital projects for the area

The decision to initiate a study is made by the Superintendent of BCPS in accordance with Rule 1280. For the Pleasant Plains Elementary Capacity Relief Boundary Study, BCPS evaluated the ability of schools in the area to provide capacity relief to Pleasant Plains Elementary School.
As can be seen on the chart below, the utilization at other schools in the area exceed 100 percent utilization. The chart below also provides the current number of relocatable units at each of these schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>SRC</th>
<th>9/30/19 FTE</th>
<th>9/30/19 Utilization</th>
<th>Relocatable Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cromwell Valley ES</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>84.33%</td>
<td>Site Limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halstead Academy</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>98.45%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton ES</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>86.42%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harford Hills ES</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>109.60%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakleigh ES</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>109.94%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine Grove ES</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>120.50%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Plains ES</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>124.77%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodgers Forge ES</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>118.18%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoneleigh ES</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>748</td>
<td>106.86%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timonium ES</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>122.53%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Villa Cresta ES</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>116.95%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Towson ES</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>101.25%</td>
<td>Site Limitations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Why was Cromwell Valley Elementary Regional Magnet School not included in this study?

Cromwell Valley participated in a community boundary study in 2016. The goal of this study was to welcome students from across the region via the magnet application process, as well as from a newly created neighborhood attendance area that is limited in size and safely walkable. The boundary for Cromwell Valley Elementary Regional Magnet School became effective in September 2017.

Approximately 65–70 kindergarten students are accepted into the magnet program each year and it is anticipated that next year the magnet program will be fully enrolled for all grades (this year it has two fifth grade classes, but next year it will have three classes for all grade levels). This implies capacity will reach full enrollment. Additionally, there are site limitations limiting the placement of relocatable classroom units; such as typography; impact to playfields, parking lots, and walkways; location of underground utilities; and proximity to building entrances. For this reason, Cromwell Valley Elementary Regional Magnet School has limited capacity relief options when it has high utilization.
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How is the impact of new development considered during a boundary study?

BCPS provided the boundary study committee with a list of approved developments in the study area and the projected pupil yields of these developments.

Anticipated pupil yields from the developments are determined using data from Baltimore County Department of Planning and the Baltimore County Public Schools 2017 Pupil Yield Study.

What are pupil yield factors and how were the 2017 Pupil Yield Factors developed?

Pupil yield factors are ratios that indicate the expected number of students a residential development will likely generate over time. Planners and developers use these yield factors when filing plans with the Baltimore County Office of Planning. Yield factors are specific to elementary, middle, and high school students, as well as to housing type, tenure (rent vs. own) and Baltimore County election district.

The 2017 Pupil Yield Study provides information on the methodology and data used to develop 2017 pupil yield factors.

Please clarify who the 80 students represent in planning block 102.

The 80 students referenced represent all students within planning block 102. This planning block includes several other residential developments. Please visit our interactive map to view the full extent of developments included in planning block 102.

How are potential changes in Transportation evaluated?

During each boundary study process the BCPS Office of Transportation reviews the draft options to evaluate potential changes in student transportation. These may include, changes to walk boundaries, bus routes, and/or travel times.

Regarding potential transportation changes for this study, some community members expressed concerns regarding the potential for increased travel times for students. BCPS evaluated the draft options and determined that anticipated travel times for students were consistent with existing ride times within the current service area for Hampton Elementary School.
Why are official September 30, 2018, enrollment data used during the study?

BCPS has historically used the most recent official September 30 enrollment data available at the time of the boundary study. These data are used for several reasons:

- These data are the most recent official enrollment data verified by both BCPS and MSDE.
- When a boundary study begins the September prior to the new boundary becoming effective, the most recent official enrollment data available are from the previous school year. The official September 30 enrollment data for the current year in which the study is being performed are not available from MSDE until mid-November of that year and a geographically located file is not available until early December.
- September 30 data from the previous year are the only data geographically located (mapped). These data are needed to provide accurate student counts by planning block.
- Using official September 30 enrollment data provides consistency among documents and processes (e.g., Capital Improvement Plan, Educational Facilities Master Plan, and Students Count).

In an effort to provide current enrollment data, starting in meeting two the current unofficial enrollment numbers were provided. Updated enrollment data were provided throughout the process.