

Cleveland City Schools

Facilities Meeting

July 10, 2025 8:00 AM

Educational Support Center



1. **Welcome**
2. **Regular Agenda**
 - A. **Ad-Hoc Committee**
3. **Adjourn**

Moving Cleveland Forward: Strategic Plan to Address Growth and Capacity in Cleveland City Schools



Executive Summary

Cleveland City Schools is proud to serve a city on the rise. The Board of Education has determined that constructing two new elementary schools is the most effective solution. This decision not only addresses school capacity needs but also aligns with the city's projected population growth, ensuring that school infrastructure grows in tandem with Cleveland's expanding neighborhoods and residential developments.

As Cleveland's population grows, so do the opportunities for our school system. This plan outlines how Cleveland City Schools will proactively respond to population increases by constructing two new elementary schools, expanding Cleveland High School, and addressing options for middle school growth.

By investing now, we are not just building facilities, we are building champions and building community. This fully supports the city's mission of Moving Cleveland Forward through strong educational infrastructure.

I. The Need for Immediate Action: Elementary Schools

Laying the foundation to build champions from the start.

Over the past several years, Cleveland has experienced steady growth and projections show that this trend will continue. The city's population is expected to increase from 47,500 residents today to approximately 85,500 by 2045, a projected gain of 80%. With 12% of the population typically represented by school-age children, Cleveland City Schools must proactively respond to this growth to ensure we maintain high-quality learning environments for all students.

Currently, our elementary enrollment stands at approximately 2,700 students. Based on population growth projections and consistent historical enrollment patterns, we anticipate this number could rise to over 4,800 students by 2045. Even if these population projections are too ambitious and the growth is only half that aggressive, the projected number of students to enter elementary schools would increase to 3,750. That equates to the need for two additional elementary schools. Additionally, strategic planning includes an anticipated student increase

from families through an expansion of Pre-K programs, contributing to overall elementary enrollment pressure. The value for early childhood education continues to be on the rise.

Why Two New Elementary Schools Are Needed Now:

Capacity Relief: Most of our existing elementary schools are nearing or have reached capacity.

Pre-K Expansion: Adding classrooms for Pre-K students is needed as the majority of the CCS Voluntary Pre-K classrooms are off campus.

Citywide Growth: New developments are occurring in areas throughout the city and beyond.

Timelines for Construction: It takes approximately 3–4 years to build a new school.

Strategic Recommendation: Construct two new elementary schools in the next 3–5 years to meet enrollment demands, prevent future overcrowding, prepare for potential city expansion, and be set to address secondary school needs after addressing these needs.

II. Addressing Growth at Cleveland High School (Phased Approach)

Expanding excellence - academically, artistically and technically.

As elementary and middle school cohorts expand, Cleveland High School (CHS) will face increased enrollment pressure and infrastructure concerns in the coming years. To accommodate growth while continuing to offer high-quality academic, technical, and extracurricular programs, a phased expansion strategy is proposed.

Phase 1: Career and Technical Education (CTE) Addition (2030)

Construct a new CTE wing to expand hands-on career preparation programs in fields such as health sciences, robotics, engineering, culinary arts, and skilled trades. This addition will strengthen workforce readiness and support Cleveland's economic development.

Phase 2: Academic Wing Addition (2031–2032)

Build additional academic classrooms to support growing student enrollment in core subjects: math, science, English language arts, and social studies. This phase may also include necessary upgrades to cafeteria, common areas, and student support spaces.

Phase 3: Theater Arts Auditorium (2032–2034)

Construct a state-of-the-art auditorium to serve the expanding Fine Arts program at CHS. This facility will provide dedicated performance space for theater, choir, and instrumental music, and also serve as a community venue for large gatherings and events.

III. Planning Ahead: Middle School Growth and Options

Creating opportunity across the city as we move Cleveland forward.

While our focus must first address the urgent needs at the elementary level, we must also take a long-term view. Cleveland Middle School currently enrolls approximately 1,300 students and serves the entire city's grades 6–8. Our projections show that by 2032, that number could climb to over 1,730 students, and by 2045, we anticipate enrollment could reach 2,444 students, an increase of over 1,090 students. While this may be ambitious, we need to have proactive and strategic steps in mind to address potential overcrowding.

Steps to Address Growing Middle School Population

- Monitor enrollment projections annually and adjust space allocation for elective, intervention, and special education programs to maintain core instruction space.
- Expand the dining hall area to accommodate the growing population.
- Add additional portable classrooms to the Cleveland Middle School campus as needed to increase capacity temporarily.
- Evaluate current property and determine areas for adding some additional classrooms.
- Evaluate rezoning or grade-level realignment options to relieve specific overcrowded areas within the district.
- Engage with staff, families, and community stakeholders regularly to communicate plans and gather feedback.
- In time, there could be a need for the construction of an additional middle school on the east side of the city to balance the current middle school location.

Strategic Recommendation: Work closely with middle school staff, architects, operations team, and community to address potential growth needs. It may be beneficial to consider land acquisition as a contingency for a future middle school site.

Conclusion

To remain a strong, thriving school system that supports Cleveland's growth and preserves our high standards for educational excellence, we must act now. Constructing two elementary schools in the next 3–5 years will relieve overcrowding and lay the foundation for long-term success. Expanding Cleveland High School and planning for potential middle school growth ensures we remain ahead of the curve and prepared for the next wave of student growth.

By taking bold but necessary steps today, Cleveland City Schools is not only building facilities, we are building a stronger future for our children, our families, and our city.

Estimated Costs for Proposed Projects

The following are preliminary cost estimates for the three major school construction and expansion projects outlined in this proposal:

- Two New Elementary Schools (Combined): \$70 million
- Cleveland High School Phased Additions: Estimated \$40–50 million total, broken down as follows:

Phase 1: CTE Addition: \$13-15 million

Phase 2: Academic Wing Addition: \$14-16 million

Phase 3: Theater Arts Auditorium: \$13-15 million

- Potential Middle School Additions: \$5-10 million
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Next Steps for 2025–2026 School Year

- The City Council and CCS Board of Education continue to work together through the Ad-Hoc Committee to acquire land for future schools.
- CCS Board of Education approves architect for future school project, including renderings.
- Continue to assess city progress and growth and its impact on schools.

Appendix: 2024–2025 Current Enrollment Data

The following table shows the enrollment numbers at the end of the 2024–2025 school year compared to each school’s optimal and maximum capacity. This data highlights the need for additional facilities at the elementary level followed by addressing facility needs at the high school and middle school levels.

School	Optimal Capacity	Maximum Capacity	Current Enrollment
Arnold	236	260	312
Blythe-Bower	544	600	663
Candy’s Creek Cherokee	426	470	454
Mayfield	354	390	415
Ross/Yates	544	600	534
Stuart	236	260	261
Cleveland Middle	1050	1190	1292
Cleveland High	1595	1875	1740

Defining School Capacity: Non-Traditional Classroom Space

English Language Learners

- 20% English Learners
- 31% Non-English Background
- 34 ESL Teachers
- Every 35 EL Students Equates to an Additional Teacher

Special Education

- 15% SPED Students
- High-Needs ERC/CDC Programming Requires Low Student/Teacher Ratios
- Outside Therapy Providers
- Adult Residential Facilities in Cleveland

PreK Needs

- 4 SPED PreK at Stuart
- 4 Non-SPED PreK in CCS Buildings
- 5 Non-SPED PreK Not in CCS Buildings

Related Arts

- Art, Music, STEM, Physical Education
- Dedicated Classroom Space is Needed

Defining School Capacity: Terms

Optimal Capacity

- K-3: 18 students/class
- 4-6: 23 students/class
- 7-12: 28 students/class
- Classroom(s) allocated for future fluctuation or growth
- ESL, SPED, RTI, and Related Arts are Allocated Classroom and Meeting Space

Maximum Capacity

- K-3: state maximum 20 students/class
- 4-6: state maximum 25 students/class
- 7-12: state maximum 30 students/class
- No classrooms for future fluctuation or growth
- ESL, SPED, RTI, and Related Arts are Allocated Classroom and Meeting Space