

**RUSH-HENRIETTA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE COMMITTEE**

To: Board of Education
Dr. Kenneth Graham, Superintendent of Schools
From: Dr. Patrick McCue, Asst. Superintendent, Human Resources & Strategic Initiatives
Re: Classroom Space Recommendations
Date: January 10, 2017

The district's Instructional Space Committee met on October 27, November 17, and December 8, to review school enrollment trends and projections, residential development plans, current school space use, and school attendance areas to determine whether there is adequate classroom space for future enrollment and, if not, to recommend actions that can be taken to provide needed classroom space.

This study has also taken into account the upcoming district-wide reconfiguration that will be implemented in the 2017-18 school year along with full-day kindergarten, including the revised elementary attendance areas approved by the Board of Education in 2015, as well as five-year projections through the 2021-22 school year.

I. Current Student Enrollment

The district currently enrolls 5,369 students – 5,247 of these students attend R-H schools, and 122 are placed in out-of-district settings (BOCES or special schools). Of the 5,247 students attending R-H schools, 2,412 attend elementary schools (grades K-5) and 2,835 attend secondary schools (6-12).

Table 1: Five-Year Fall District Enrollments

	Elementary	Secondary	Total*
2016	2,412	2,835	5,247
2015	2,506	2,842	5,348
2014	2,374	2,853	5,227
2013	2,379	2,876	5,255
2012	2,393	2,973	5,366

*Out of district placements not included

Compared to last year, K-12 student enrollment has decreased by 101 students, as shown in Table 1. The decrease is concentrated at the elementary level, where enrollment has declined by 94 students from fall 2015. Secondary enrollment decreased by 7 students, and out-of-district placements increased by 13 students, due largely to an increase this year in new entrants with significant special education needs requiring outside programs.

The decline in overall enrollment follows an unexpected enrollment spike of 121 students last year. This increase was attributed to an unusually high number of new entrants enrolling in 2015, with no discernible pattern to where they enrolled, where they moved from, or their reasons for enrolling in Rush-Henrietta. This increase appears to have been a one-year anomaly, as enrollments have fallen back by 101 students this year, consistent with the overall decline in K-12 enrollment of 119 students over the past five years. During that time elementary school enrollment has increased by 19 students while secondary enrollment has declined by 138.

II. Elementary School Enrollment and Projections

Over the past five years, the growth in elementary school enrollment has been distributed unevenly across the five schools. As shown in Table 2, over this period enrollment has declined at Crane (-13), Fyle (-4) and Sherman (-78), while it has increased at Leary (+65) and Winslow (+44). This year enrollment decreased at all the schools except for Fyle.

Table 2: Five-Year Elementary Enrollments

	Crane	Fyle	Leary	Sherman	Winslow	Total
2016	429	487	595	374	527	2,412
2015	453	467	623	428	535	2,506
2014	420	436	575	451	492	2,374
2013	416	465	573	430	495	2,379
2012	406	494	547	457	489	2,393

The largest elementary school, Leary, which has experienced significant growth in recent years, had a decline in enrollment of 28 students this year. Nonetheless, the school is at capacity this year in terms of available classroom space. This imbalance in enrollments relative to the other elementary schools was one of the reasons the Board of Education in 2015 revised the elementary attendance areas to balance school enrollments as part of its overall enrollment management plan and district grade-level reconfiguration.

One component of enrollment management is the Student Transition Plan, which has allowed families whose attendance areas will change in the reconfiguration to choose to send their children to their new school early (“early transition” option) or to remain at their current school until they complete their last grade there (“age out” option). The Student Transition Plan’s effects have been felt most acutely at Sherman, where enrollment this year decreased by 54 students, or 13 percent. Since 2015, families of 95 students have opted for the early transition option in anticipation of Sherman’s conversion to an intermediate school. The transition plan also contributed to this year’s decline in enrollment at Leary, where 47 students opted for early transitions to Fyle or Winslow.

As part of the reconfiguration in 2017-18, the district is moving from five to six elementary schools, implementing full-day kindergarten, and returning sixth grade to the elementary level. Elementary schools will now be configured as four primary buildings (grades K-3) – Crane, Fyle, Leary and Winslow – and two intermediate buildings (grades 4-6) – Sherman

and Vollmer. The Vollmer building is being repurposed as an elementary school again after many years of housing several of the district's learning programs, including the Alternative High School, adult literacy services and the school-age child care program, as well as the district registrar. (Many of these programs are being relocated to the Carlton O. Webster Building, home to the Ninth Grade Academy, which will close at the end of 2016-17.)

Under the new configuration, enrollments are expected to increase by 57 students at the primary level over the next five years. As shown in Table 3, growth will vary among the four schools, but overall enrollments will be relatively balanced under the new attendance areas. Crane is anticipated to remain the smallest elementary school, with relatively flat enrollment (-1), while Fyle is anticipated to grow slightly (+3), and Winslow (+15) and Leary (+40) are expected to experience larger growth.

Table 3: Primary School Enrollment Projections*

	Crane	Fyle	Leary	Winslow	Total
2016	373	411	381	413	1,578
2017	354	413	423	423	1,613
2018	356	420	411	430	1,617
2019	354	410	418	416	1,598
2020	368	416	421	419	1,624
2021	372	414	421	428	1,635

*New K-3 school configuration, excluding self-contained Special Education classes. Data for 2016-17 are not actual current enrollments; they are for comparison purposes, using the 2017 attendance areas to show what K-3 enrollments in 2016-17 would be under the reconfiguration.

These projections are somewhat lower than what the Space Committee projected in its 2015-16 report, due to revised information from the component towns on anticipated housing development, especially in Henrietta. While town officials expect continued steady growth in residential developments over the next five years, the rate of growth will not be rapid as previously projected. Additionally, several of the large developments in Henrietta will be predominantly townhouses, patio homes, duplexes and smaller apartments that are marketed toward demographics other than families with school-age children. As a result of this revised outlook, the Office of Information Systems has lowered its enrollment projections, while still anticipating steady growth.

One critical variable factored into the primary projections is the effect of full-day kindergarten, resulting in a jump in projected K-3 enrollment for 2017-18 of 35 students, as we anticipate that some students who otherwise would have been enrolled in private or parochial full-day kindergarten programs will now be enrolled in Rush-Henrietta.

At the intermediate level, student enrollment is projected to decline over the next five years by 25 students (see Table 4, next page). This change, however, will not be evenly distributed between the two schools, due largely to differences in residential and population growth between the western (Vollmer) and eastern (Sherman) halves of the district. Vollmer is projected to add 33 students by 2021-22, while Sherman is projected to decrease by 58.

Table 4: Intermediate School Enrollment Projections*

	Sherman	Vollmer	Total
2016	630	630	1,260
2017	559	623	1,182
2018	558	643	1,201
2019	584	629	1,213
2020	587	644	1,231
2021	572	663	1,235

*New 4-6 school configuration, excluding self-contained Special Education classes. Data for 2016-17 are not actual current enrollments; they are for comparison purposes, using the 2017 attendance areas to show what 4-6 enrollments in 2016-17 would be under the reconfiguration.

As with the primary schools, these intermediate enrollment projections take into account current enrollments as well as projected growth in residential development, and historic trends in terms of the typical percentages of students who enter or leave a particular grade level or school in any given year (known as the “survival rate”).

Elementary School Classroom Space Requirements

Board of Education Regulation 4020-R establishes class size guidelines for elementary schools. At grades K-4, the current class size target is 15 with maximum class sizes of 17 at grades K-2 and 18 at grades 3-4. At grade 5, the class size target is 22 with a maximum class size of 24. However, efforts have been made in recent years to keep the maximum grade 5 class size at 18 students to be more consistent with the rest of the grades in the school.

For the reconfiguration, the Board has revised the guidelines so that at all primary grade levels the class size target will be 15 and the maximum will be 17. At all intermediate grade levels, the class size target will be 18 with a maximum class size of 20. Using these class size guidelines, classroom space requirements over the next five years are expected to be as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Required Classrooms, 2017-21

	Rooms Available*	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Rooms Needed
Crane	29	23	23	23	24	24	0
Fyle	31	26	27	26	26	26	0
Leary	36	27	26	27	26	28	0
Winslow	33	26	28	26	26	27	0
Sherman	40	29	30	30	30	30	0
Vollmer	40	32	33	33	33	35	0
Total	209	163	167	165	165	170	0

*Rooms available = Total Classrooms – 3 for related services

These classroom space projections require placing self-contained special education classes (district and BOCES classes) at elementary schools that have available space. Currently two Life Skills classes are placed at Leary, primary Regents-track classes are placed at Crane and Fyle, and intermediate Regents-track classes are placed at Sherman. The current plan for reconfiguration is to place these self-contained special education classes as follows:

Table 6: Placement of Elementary Self-Contained Classes

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Crane	0	0	0	0	0
Fyle	0	0	0	0	0
Leary	2*	2*	2*	2*	2*
Winslow	3	3	3	3	3
Sherman	3	3	3	3	3
Vollmer	2*	2*	2*	2*	2*
Total	10	10	10	10	10

*Life Skills classes

Including those classes, the total anticipated classroom use and available space for the elementary schools will be as follows:

Table 7: Total Required Classrooms, 2017-21

	Rooms Available*	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Rooms Needed
Crane	29	23	23	23	24	24	0
Fyle	31	26	27	26	26	26	0
Leary	36	29	28	29	28	30	0
Winslow	33	29	31	29	29	30	0
Sherman	40	32	33	33	33	33	0
Vollmer	40	34	35	35	35	37	0
Total	209	173	177	175	175	180	0

*Rooms available = Total Classrooms – 3 for related services

Discussion

Given these enrollment projections and available classroom space, the committee believes that the elementary schools will continue to have adequate space to accommodate projected enrollment during the reconfiguration and over the next five years. Elementary enrollments this year decreased, erasing the effect of the unexpected 101-student increase in 2015-16, and suggesting that this increase was an anomaly and not the beginning of a sharp upward trend in the coming years. Historic trends, current enrollments, and expected residential building suggest slow but steady growth over the next five years.

Enrollments among the primary schools are predicted to come into relative balance with the implementation of the new attendance areas and enrollment management plan next year. Even in attendance areas where growth is expected, such as Leary and Winslow, classroom space is projected to be adequate for the foreseeable future. In addition, enrollments will further stabilize once students who elected the early transition or age-out options under the Transition Plan leave the primary grades by 2019-20.

The projected growth is not expected to place pressure on available classroom space as significantly as was projected in the Space Committee's 2015-16 report, especially in the Vollmer/Fyle/Leary attendance area, where much of the Henrietta growth in housing and school-age population is concentrated. Fyle and Leary are expected to see enrollment growth over five years, as steady development continues in large Riverton projects such as Queens Park and Fox Field. Fyle has adequate space available, and while Leary may experience more growth, it will be more than able to accommodate it as it has more available classrooms due to several additions built over the past decade. Slower but steady population growth in the Winslow attendance area is also expected as young families continue to move into older established neighborhoods in eastern Henrietta.

One factor that will need to be monitored is the planned placement of the primary self-contained Regents-track special education classes at Winslow. As the school's population grows, more classrooms will be in use, so it may make sense to create space for growth by assigning the self-contained classes instead to Crane, where space had been set aside for future growth that now appears unlikely. Two of the primary-grade classes are already at Crane, so leaving them there also would avoid a transition for the students and families. In addition, near-term growth in the Crane attendance area is expected to be minimal, with the cancellation of anticipated residential construction at City Gate and at the University of Rochester's graduate housing complex, both in west Brighton, and the indefinite delay of Buckingham Properties' Winfield Park project on Brighton-Henrietta Town Line Road. That large development – originally calling for more than 300 single-family homes – is on hold due to utility capacity problems and some legal issues experienced by the developer. But plans can change quickly, and the development will need to continue to be monitored; given its projected size, if it eventually moves forward it would have a significant impact on Crane enrollment, classroom availability, and the placement of the self-contained classes.

As discussed earlier, kindergarten enrollments are an important variable in projecting classroom space needs, especially for the first year of full-day kindergarten implementation in 2017-18. It is difficult to predict kindergarten enrollment with a high degree of certainty even in a normal year, because those predictions are based census data about births in the

district, projecting out five years to when children reach school attendance age. The percentages of children born in a given year who actually enroll in kindergarten five years later can fluctuate significantly from year to year.

For 2017-18 predicting enrollments is made even more complex due to the start of full-day kindergarten, as we can expect that some families who currently enroll their children in private full-day pre-school and kindergarten programs will choose to enroll those children or siblings in Rush-Henrietta's full-day kindergarten next year. The projections incorporate an analysis of district surveys of families who send their children to private or parochial pre-schools and kindergarten programs, but being able to predict with certainty the percentage of those children who will enroll with Rush-Henrietta is difficult. The Space Committee considered other factors as well, such as the possibility that some families may have held back their younger eligible children (born in September, October and November) from enrolling in kindergarten this year in order to wait for full-day kindergarten next year, which would result in an even greater increase in kindergarten enrollment. However, data from the Information Systems survey showed that 19 children were held back in 2016, which is comparable to the average of 19.4 over the last five years. The 2017-18 projections take all of these factors into account, and registrations throughout the spring will need to be monitored closely to ensure that there are enough kindergarten sections planned to accommodate the enrollment within the board's class size guidelines.

At the intermediate level, the capital construction project is adding classrooms at both Sherman and Vollmer, and as a result both buildings will have more than enough space to accommodate the five-year projected enrollments. Because of the board's balanced enrollment management plan, the two attendance areas are projected to produce the exact same enrollment of 630 in 2017-18 (see Table 7 on page 5). Beyond that, with most residential construction and population growth concentrated in the western half of the district, it is not surprising that Vollmer is expected to grow over time while Sherman's enrollment declines. As the projections show, Vollmer is expected to be utilizing all but three of its available classrooms by 2021-22, so it will be important to monitor enrollment growth in that area of the district in the next several years.

Given current information, the availability of more than enough space, and the diminished reliability of projections beyond three years, the Space Committee is not recommending any further redrawing of attendance areas at this time. However, it will be important in the next two to three years to monitor residential growth and to keep open the possibility of attendance area adjustments by the end of this decade to maintain enrollment balance between the Vollmer and Sherman areas.

III. Middle School/Junior High School Enrollment and Projections

As shown in Table 8, middle school enrollment over the past five years has remained relatively stable, decreasing by 15 students, with Burger growing (+56) while Roth enrollment has declined (-71).

Table 8: Five-Year Middle School Enrollments

	Burger	Roth	Total
2016	545	665	1,210
2015	508	692	1,200
2014	489	705	1,194
2013	468	709	1,177
2012	489	736	1,225

As a result, the enrollment gap between the middle schools is continuing to close. This trend accelerated in the past two years due to the Student Transition Plan, in anticipation of the reconfiguration. Some 88 students (69 at Burger, 19 at Roth) chose the “early transition” to attend a their new middle school of attendance, and 134 students (37 at Burger, 97 at Roth) have decided to remain at their current school until they “age out” after grade 9.

Table 9: Junior High School Enrollment Projections*

	Burger	Roth	Total
2016	545	665	1,210
2017	536	653	1,189
2018	564	610	1,174
2019	629	611	1,240
2020	639	563	1,202
2021	659	560	1,219

* Excluding self-contained Special Education students. Totals for 2016 are for grades 6-8; totals for 2017-22 are for grades 7-9.

Table 9 illustrates that for the next five years, as these buildings transition to junior high schools, enrollments are expected to decline slightly from the current level, then begin growing again as the modest enrollment bubble that is currently moving through the elementary grades reaches the junior high level, along with anticipated new residential growth.

Junior High School Classroom Space Requirements

Board of Education Regulation 4020-R establishes class size guidelines for middle schools. At grades 6-8, the current class size target is 24 for core content instruction, with a maximum of 26. These guidelines will continue to apply to grades 7-9 when the schools are reconfigured as junior high schools next year. Based on these guidelines, both schools have adequate classroom space for projected enrollment. The junior high school level is expected to grow very slowly over the next five years, adding only 9 students (see Table 9). However,

the growth is expected to mirror the pattern at the primary and intermediate schools, concentrating more in the western (Burger) half of the district. Burger is expected to add 114 students over this period, while Roth enrollment declines by 105. This is expected to reverse the long-standing pattern of Roth's enrollment exceeding Burger's. The construction at Burger is expected to provide adequate space for this growth, but space will need to be monitored in the early 2020's, to ensure that available classroom space continues to accommodate expected growth while meeting the board's class size guidelines.

IV. High School Enrollment and Projections

Over the past five years, high school enrollment has experienced a steady decline, decreasing by 189 students across both schools. Enrollment has declined at the Ninth Grade Academy by 45 over that period and at the Senior High School by 144.

Table 10: Five-Year High School Enrollments

	NGA	SHS	Total
2016	397	1,162	1,559
2015	383	1,193	1,576
2014	400	1,259	1,659
2013	415	1,284	1,699
2012	442	1,306	1,748

The reconfiguration next year will bring the closure of the NGA, as 9th grade moves to Burger and Roth. Projecting forward, enrollment at the Senior High School is expected to stabilize, with a slight increase of 32 students over the next five years.

Table 11: Senior High School Enrollment Projections*

	NGA	SHS	9-12 Total
2016	397	1,162	1,559
2017	--	1,218	1,641
2018	--	1,212	1,579
2019	--	1,185	1,610
2020	--	1,208	1,618
2021		1,194	1,625

* Excluding self-contained Special Education students

Senior High School Classroom Space Requirements

Board of Education Regulation 4020-R establishes class size guidelines for high schools. At grades 9-12, the class size target is 25 for core content instruction; a maximum class size has not been established. These guidelines will continue to apply to grades 10-12 under the district reconfiguration. Based on these guidelines, the Senior High School will have more than adequate classroom space for projected enrollment over the next five years.

V. Summary and Recommendations

Based on analysis of the enrollment projections and space requirements for the next five years, the Instructional Space Committee concludes that the District's long-range space planning continues to be sound, as schools at all levels – elementary, junior high school and high school – are anticipated to have more than adequate space to meet the needs of expected enrollments and future growth. Enrollment management actions taken in 2014 and 2015 by the Board of Education – such as revising attendance areas, school reconfiguration, and classroom construction in the current capital project – have positioned the District well to meet its space needs.

There are a few areas that need to be monitored based on the enrollment projections for the next three to five years. Therefore, the committee requests that the Board of Education consider the following recommendations:

1. Assign all three K-3 self-contained Regents-track special education classes to Crane Elementary beginning with the 2017-18 school year, instead of Winslow, to free up additional classroom space at Winslow for anticipated enrollment growth.
2. Monitor kindergarten registrations in spring 2017 and actual kindergarten enrollments in fall 2017 to inform potential subsequent projections of classroom space and staffing needs. The extent to which implementation of full-day kindergarten will impact family decisions to enroll in Rush-Henrietta is still not certain.
3. Monitor projected residential growth in the Burger/Vollmer attendance zone over the next three to five years, to determine whether (a) K-3 attendance areas will need adjustment, and/or (b) self-contained class assignments will need to be revised.

Respectfully Submitted,
Instructional Space Committee

Chair: Patrick McCue, Assistant Superintendent

Members: Mary Bloss, Amy Brewer, Amber Brewster, Karin Christensen, Rhonda Delaney, Lesley Doupe, Carrie Giambra, Brian Hill, Melissa Holahan, Patricia Koops, Nikki LaPlaca, Ann Martin, Maria Meli, Karen Milburn, Annette Muller, Ken Nelson, Pam Reinhardt, Todd Russo, Chris Sherron, Sue Smith, Sherry Stevens, Jennifer Tomalty, Renae Veneziano, Phyllis Wickerham, Michelle Wood