



School Capacities Fall 2015

Key Findings

1. Most MMSD schools are not over capacity. Six of the 32 elementary schools and one of the 12 middle schools had Third Friday enrollment numbers above their calculated capacities.
2. Thirteen of the 32 elementary schools, two of the 12 middle schools, and one of the five high schools had Third Friday enrollment numbers above the ideal 90% of capacity.

Capacity Methodology

Research indicates that the ideal operating capacity for schools is 90% to allow for flexibility during the school year. Capacity calculations in MMSD vary by level. At the elementary school level, capacity calculations are based on the number of available classrooms and the number of students that can sit in a classroom. The number of available classrooms is calculated by first counting the number of rooms in each building that could become a classroom (well-ventilated rooms that are 500 square feet or larger). Then, rooms that are used for certain other activities (art, music, Reach, strings, alternative programs, 4K, etc.) are subtracted from this count. These room counts were established by an audit of classroom use conducted by the Chief of School Operations during the spring semester of the 2014-15 school year. This number of rooms is then reduced by one to create an intentionally conservative calculation, and then multiplied by the number of students who can sit in a classroom to calculate a capacity. Because room use can change significantly from year to year, school capacities are not static and can also vary over time. At the middle school level, because homerooms are less static and students move more frequently from room to room, school capacities are based on the number of instructional spaces and gyms without any adjustments based on room usage.

According to a review conducted by Hanover Research, MMSD's capacity calculations are aligned with practices in other similarly sized school districts. These capacity calculations do not address issues of inadequate facilities, scheduling, or space use. Instead, they provide context around the number of students each building could support based only on available seats. As such, they may be an incomplete picture of capacity and should be used in concert with qualitative data to assess capacity concerns.

Schools Over 100% of Capacity

For the 2015-16 school year, six elementary schools were above 100% capacity as of the Third Friday of September count. Based on five-year enrollment projections we expect six schools to be above 100% capacity by 2020-21, although these projections are highly variable and subject to significant change. At the middle school level one school was above 100% of capacity and one high school and middle school were above 90% of capacity. Based on five-year enrollment projections we expect two middle schools and no high schools to be above 90% of capacity by 2020-21. Traditionally the school capacity formula is designed to be conservative in order to flag schools early, so schools listed as slightly over capacity will likely still have seats available for additional students.

Short-term Facilities Plan Capacities Expansion

The short-term facilities plan, approved via referendum in April 2015, includes renovations and additions increasing the capacity at five elementary schools and one middle school. Of the six elementary schools currently above 100% of capacity, three were included in the short-term facilities plan for capacity expansion.



Elementary School Capacities

	2015-16 Student Capacity	2015-16 Third Friday Enrollment	2015-16 Remaining Spaces	2015-16 Percent Capacity	2015-16 Percent Capacity with Additions	2020-21 Projected Enrollment	2020-21 Projected Percent Capacity	2020-21 Projected Percent Capacity with Additions
<i>Elementary overall</i>	13905	12303	1602	88%	86%	12111	87%	85%
Sandburg	374	433	-59	116%	88%	375	100%	76%
Midvale	442	475	-33	107%	90%	501	113%	95%
Nuestro Mundo	295	314	-19	106%	—	313	106%	—
Randall	370	393	-23	106%	—	287	78%	—
Van Hise	380	395	-15	104%	88%	347	91%	78%
Thoreau	413	419	-6	101%	—	358	87%	—
Lowell	354	344	10	97%	—	364	103%	—
Elvehjem	470	447	23	95%	—	432	92%	—
Chavez	648	612	36	94%	—	580	90%	—
Emerson	413	378	35	92%	—	370	90%	—
Kennedy	581	531	50	91%	79%	449	77%	67%*
Schenk	472	429	43	91%	—	410	87%	—
Shorewood	469	426	43	91%	—	478	102%	—
Stephens	558	498	60	89%	—	461	83%	—
Crestwood	423	375	48	89%	—	324	77%	—
Muir	453	397	56	88%	—	489	108%	—
Hawthorne	393	344	49	88%	76%	307	78%	68%**
Glendale	511	446	65	87%	—	472	92%	—
Franklin	393	343	50	87%	—	333	85%	—
Leopold	767	669	98	87%	—	745	97%	—
Huegel	492	428	64	87%	—	461	94%	—
Lake View	315	263	52	83%	—	267	85%	—
Orchard Ridge	374	306	68	82%	—	267	71%	—
Lapham	248	201	47	81%	—	196	79%	—
Gompers	315	254	61	81%	—	256	81%	—
Mendota	373	300	73	80%	—	319	85%	—
Falk	354	281	73	79%	—	330	93%	—
Lindbergh	256	202	54	79%	—	148	58%	—
Marquette	271	213	58	79%	—	168	62%	—
Allis	590	432	158	73%	—	478	81%	—
Lincoln	535	371	164	69%	—	431	81%	—
Olson	603	384	219	64%	—	393	65%	—

Yellow text indicates the percent of capacity is between 90% and 100%

Red text indicates the percent of capacity is 100% or more

Table is organized from high to low on 2015-16 percent of capacity

*Kennedy's additions were driven primarily by accessibility concerns. Necessary renovations for accessibility created natural space for additional classrooms, which will add to Kennedy's capacity. Therefore, the projection of lower enrollment in Kennedy in future years does not mean the additions are not necessary, as classroom space is not their primary purpose. In addition, anticipated future residential development in the Kennedy area makes their five-year projections particularly variable.

**Hawthorne's additions were not driven by the need for additional classroom space; instead, they address the need for a new gymnasium. The old gym is being converted into class space, creating extra capacity. Therefore, the projection of lower enrollment in Hawthorne in future years does not mean the additions are not necessary, as classroom space is not their primary purpose. In addition, historical crowding at Hawthorne caused a 4K section as well as other programming to be moved to a different location.

For both Kennedy and Hawthorne, if the lower projections for 2020-21 prove to be accurate, changes in practice are likely to result in the additional space being used in beneficial and necessary ways. For example, 4K or other programming could be relocated or returned to these schools. These schools also could become new destinations for Open Enrollment Enterers or internal transfers. Changes in programming and practices over the next five years mean that these schools likely will be much more full than the five-year projection number suggests.



Middle and High School Capacities

	2015-16 Student Capacity	2015-16 3rd Friday September Enrollment	2015-16 Number of Seats Remaining	2015-16 Percent Capacity	2015-16 Percent Capacity with Additions	Projected 2020-21 Enrollment	Projected 2020-21 Percent Capacity	Projected 2020-21 Percent Capacity With Additions
Total Middle	6948	5334	1614	77%	72%	4994	72%	71%
Total High	9958	7251	2707	73%	73%	7406	74%	74%
<i>East High Attendance Area</i>								
Black Hawk	576	365	211	63%	—	337	58%	—
O’Keeffe	774	470	304	61%	—	371	48%	—
Sherman	684	414	270	61%	—	447	65%	—
Total Middle	2034	1249	785	61%	—	1155	57%	—
East	2737	1585	1152	58%	—	1771	65%	—
<i>La Follette High Attendance Area</i>								
Badger Rock	126	73	53	58%	—	118	93%	—
Sennett	918	648	270	71%	—	638	70%	—
Whitehorse	522	434	88	83%	—	365	70%	—
Total Middle	1566	1155	411	74%	—	1121	72%	—
La Follette	2346	1514	832	65%	—	1534	65%	—
<i>Memorial High Attendance Area</i>								
Jefferson	540	522	18	97%	—	472	87%	See note*
Spring Harbor	306	250	56	82%	—	223	73%	—
Toki	774	586	188	76%	—	538	70%	—
Total Middle	1620	1358	262	84%	—	1233	76%	—
Memorial	2323	1920	403	83%	—	1889	81%	—
<i>West High Attendance Area</i>								
Cherokee	630	448	182	71%	—	464	74%	—
Hamilton	774	868	-94	112%	103%	746	96%	88%
James Wright	324	256	68	79%	—	276	85%	—
Total Middle	1728	1572	156	91%	—	1486	86%	—
West	2300	2116	184	92%	—	2098	91%	—
<i>Alternative school</i>								
Shabazz	252	116	136	46%	—	114	45%	—

Yellow text indicates the percent of capacity is between 90% and 100%

Red text indicates the percent of capacity is 100% or more

Table is organized from high to low on 2015-16 percent of capacity

* Jefferson is receiving a renovation of their HVAC system, an electrical system upgrade, and other updates as a part of the Referendum. They will also be changing the use of classroom space with the expectation of creating a better learning environment and increasing capacity. However, the exact capacity gained by these renovations is unknown, so we do not include an updated capacity estimate in this table.