



# **Planning for class size reduction:** **Citywide & in School District 20**

Presentation to Presidents Council District 20

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New class  
size law  
passed last  
spring in  
legislature &  
signed by  
Gov. this  
Sept.

- [S9460/A10498](#) requires NYC to implement a 5-year class size reduction plan beginning in fall of 2022.
- Gov. Hochul signed the bill into law this fall, based upon agreement that the phase-in will begin Sept. 2023 instead.
- Law requires NYC to cap class size at 20 students per class in grades K-3, 23 students in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, and 25 students in HS classes in core academic subjects by the end of the 2027-8 school year.
- Phys education and performing art classes capped at 40 students per class.
- Each year starting in September 2023, 20% of all classes must achieve these caps, with an additional 20% of classes each year.
- The city must prioritize schools with high levels of poverty to reduce class size in first.

Last year  
class sizes  
decreased  
significantly  
citywide  
and in most  
districts;  
why?

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Enrollment fell sharply

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School budgets were not tied to enrollment for first time

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There was additional federal funding for Covid relief

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Many parents/teachers said class sizes in their schools ideal to meet learning & emotional needs of students, still recovering from disruptions & trauma of pandemic

But this  
year, there  
were big  
budget  
cuts to  
schools

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Budgets were cut drastically in most every school, tied to continued projected enrollment decline through Fair Student Funding formula

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Federal funds also reduced sharply - about \$1B, even though NYC still had more than \$4B in federal Covid funds unspent as of late August

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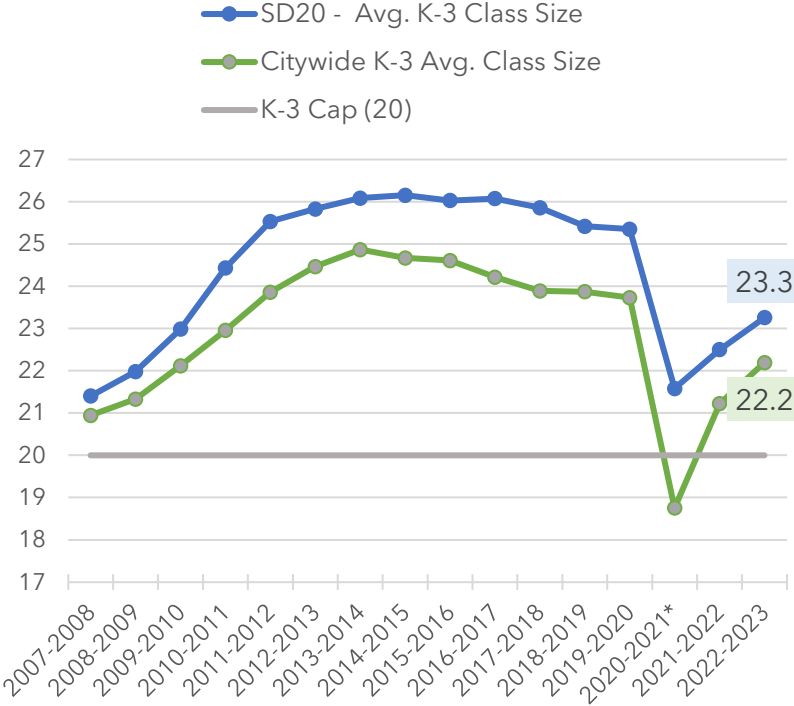
These cuts led to class size increases in many schools as teachers were let go or retiring teachers not replaced, and critical programs & service eliminated.

# How much were schools cut?

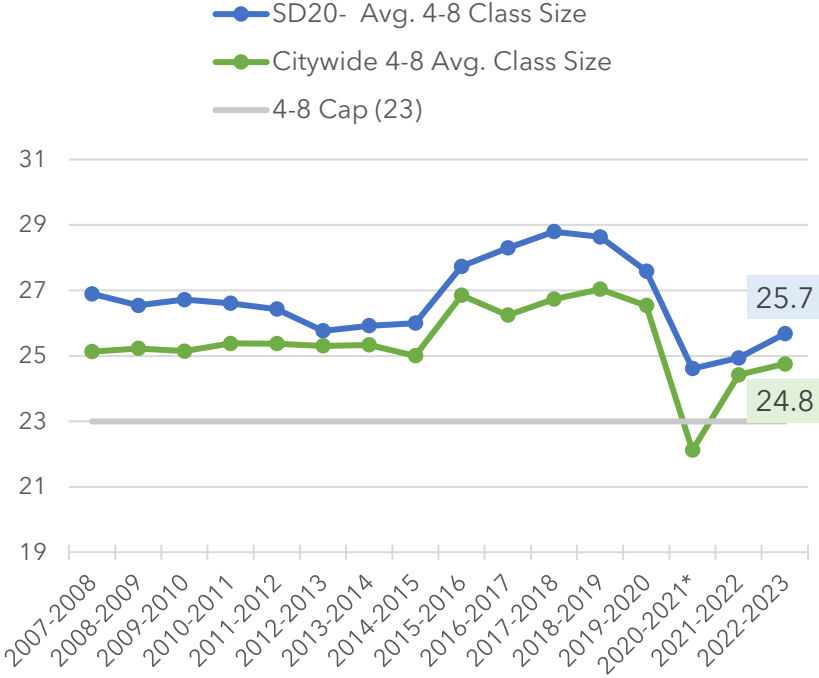
- City Comptroller estimated that 77% of schools had their Fair Student Funding cut by a total of \$469 million
- ***In SD 20 schools, Fair Student Funding was cut by \$41.2 Million, a 10.8% cut of FSF portion, compared to a 7% cut citywide.***
- As of Jan. 13, 2023, schools' entire Galaxy budgets slashed by net \$822 Million -a 6.2% cut;
- 86% of schools suffered Galaxy cuts totaling \$893 million, averaging about \$655,000 each.
- ***In SD 20 schools, Galaxy budgets were cut by \$46.5 Million as of January 13<sup>th</sup>, 7.9% cut of their entire budgets.***

# Across all three school levels, District 20 has above average class sizes that are way above city average & class size caps.

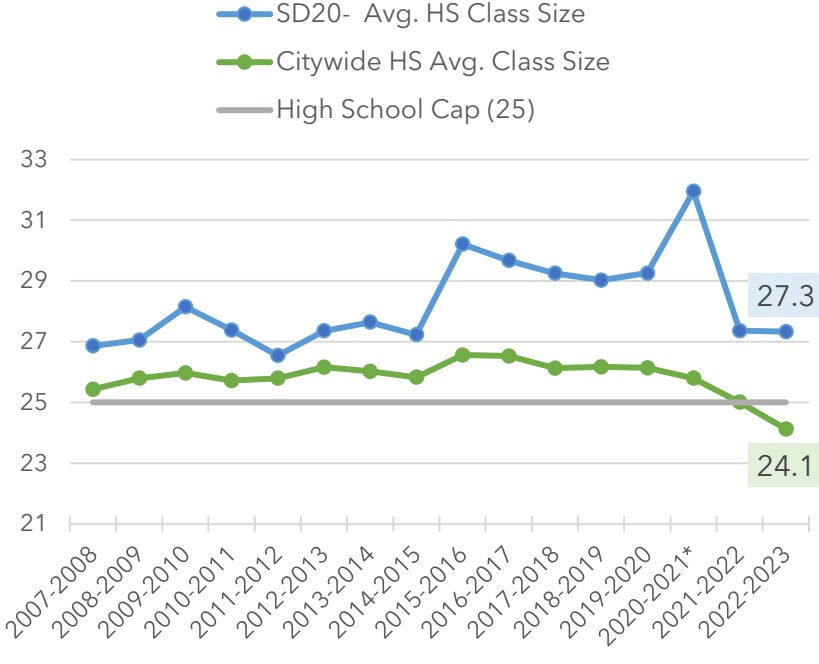
Average ES Class Sizes in School  
District 20  
(2007-2023)



Average MS Class Sizes in School  
District 20  
(2007-2023)



Average HS Class Sizes in School  
District 20  
(2007-2023)

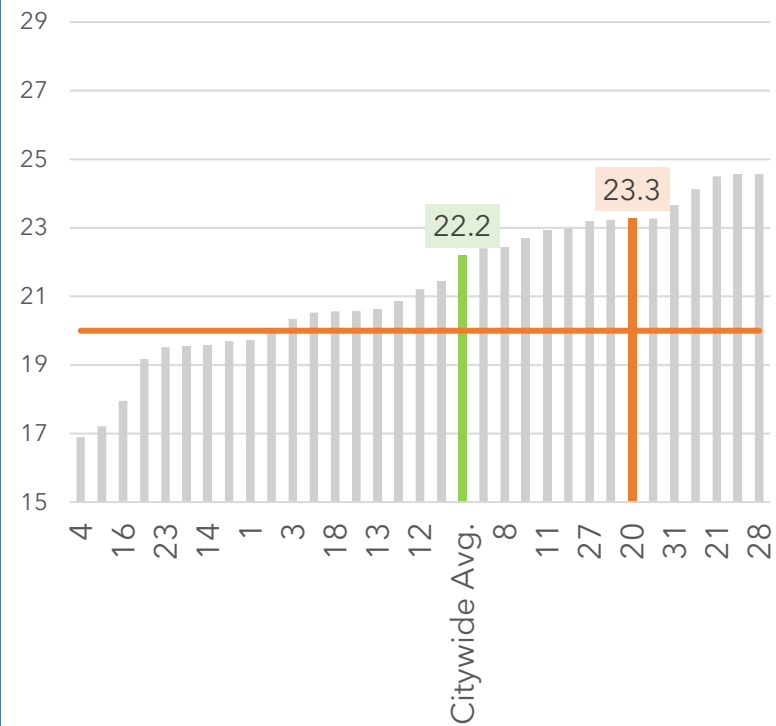


\*Class size data during 2020-21 school year in person only

Here are average class size charts by district; D20 has the 7th highest in K-3, 9th highest in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, and highest in HS .

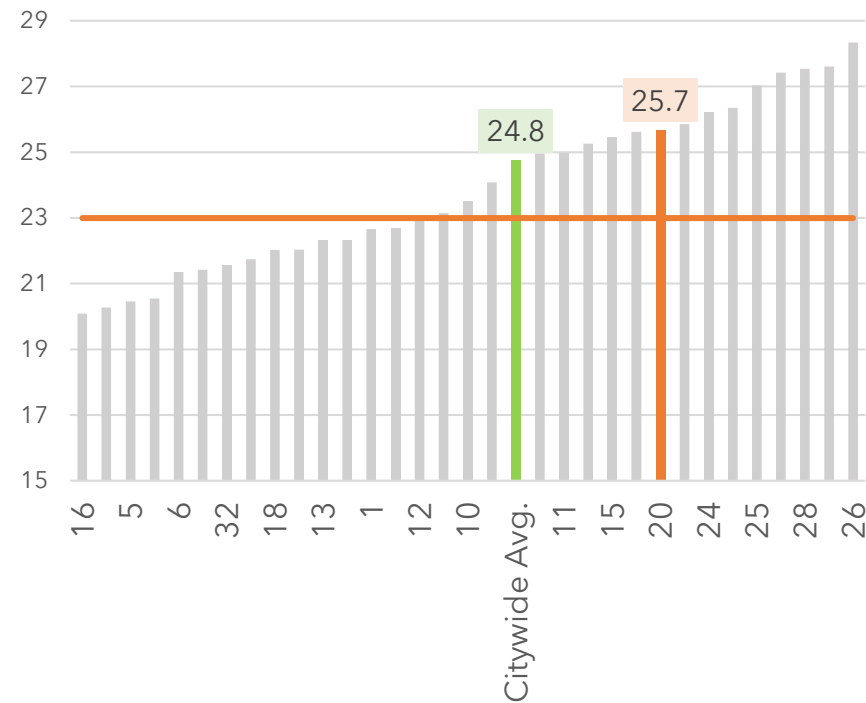
K-3 Class Sizes by School District ('22-'23)

Class Size Cap (K-3)



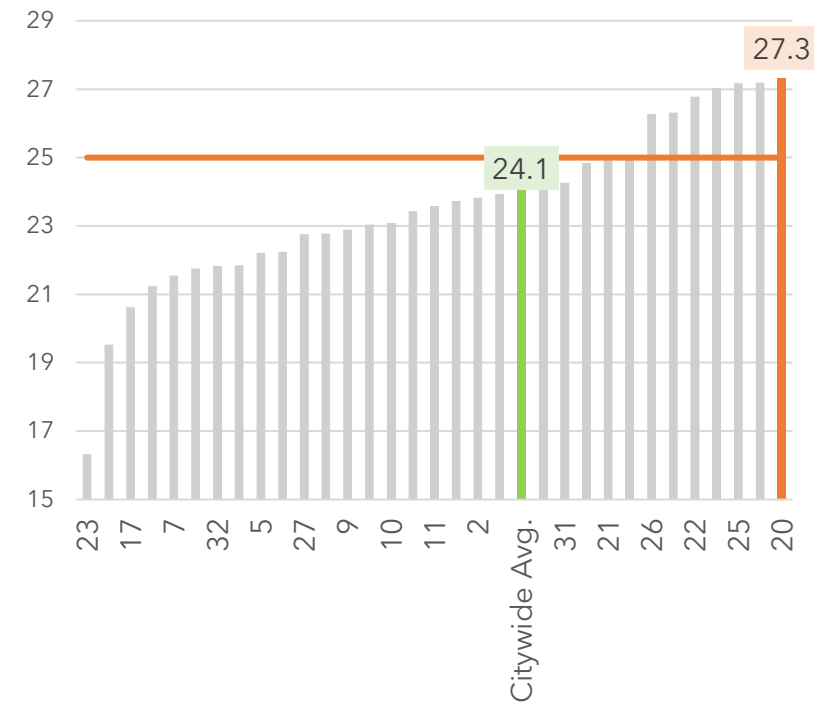
4-8 Class Sizes by School District ('22-'23)

Class Size Cap (4-8)



High School Class Sizes by School District ('22-'23)

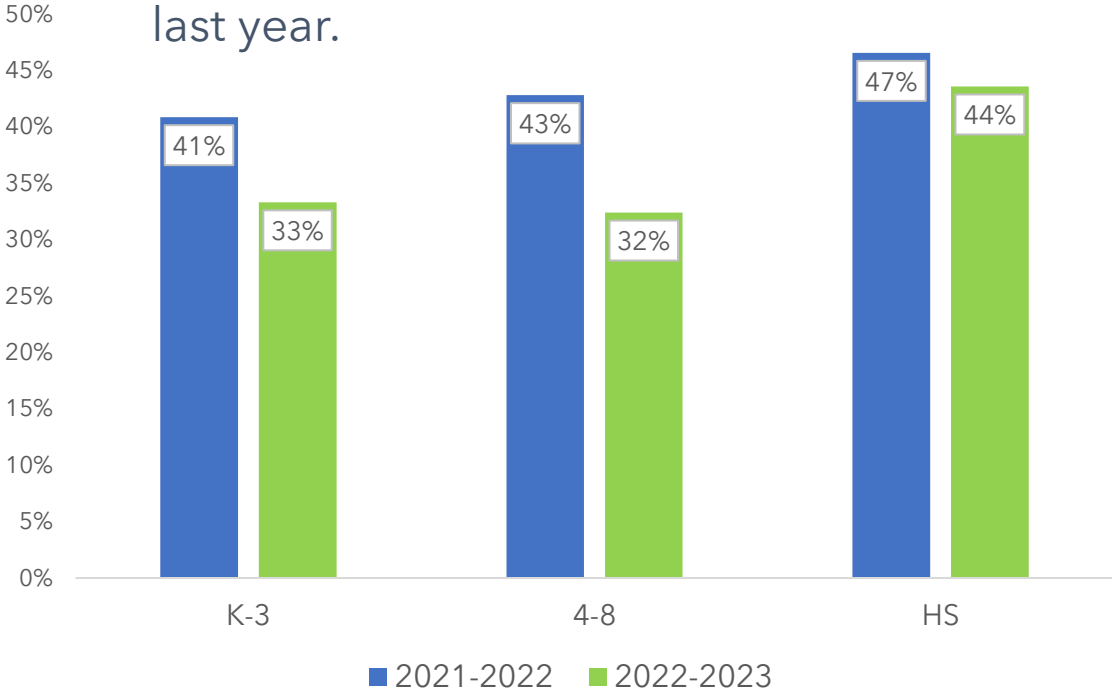
Class Size Cap (HS)



# Only 25% of District 20 classes met the class size caps as of Oct. 31, 2022 - less than 31% last year & far above city averages.

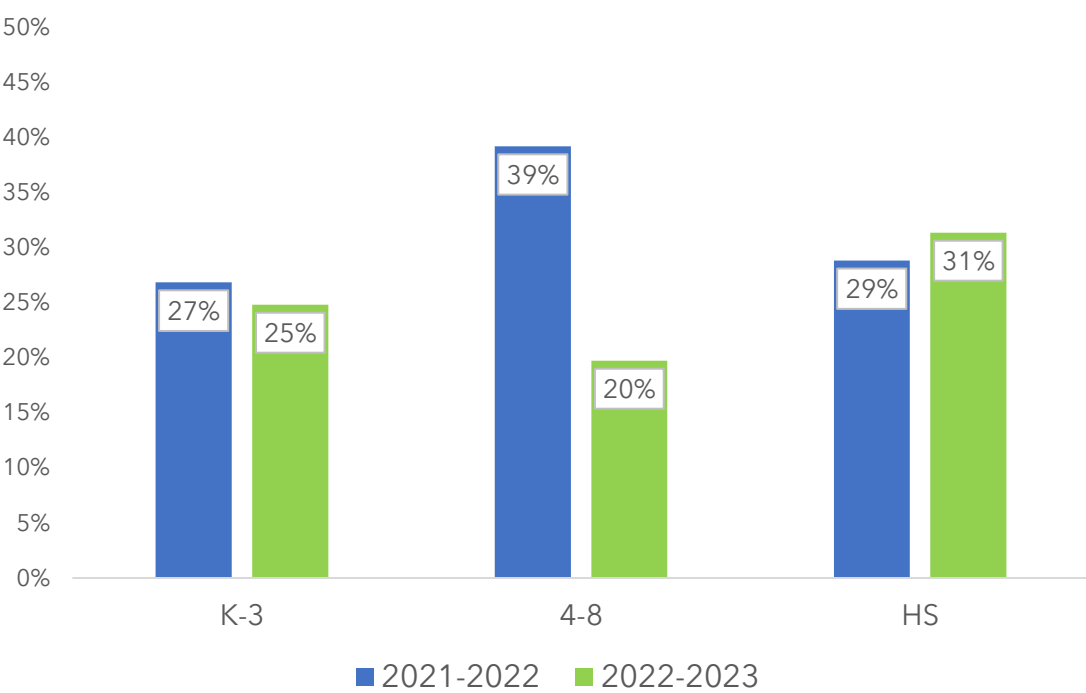
## Citywide

38% of classes citywide are at or below new class size caps, compared to 42% last year.



## School District 20

25% of classes were below the class size caps this year, versus 31% last year.

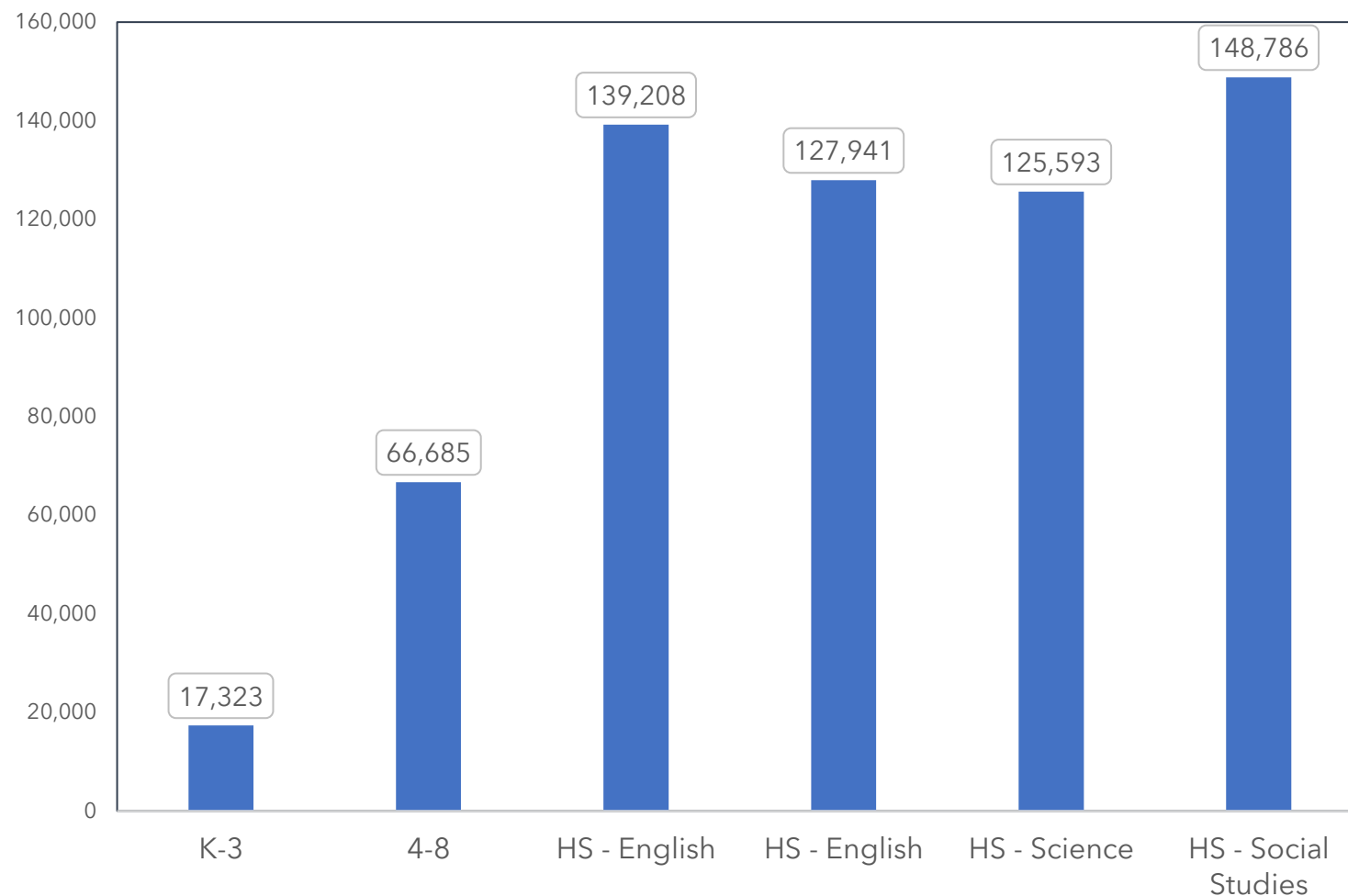




Number of Students in Classes of 30 or larger  
(2022-2023)

More than 232,000\*  
students citywide  
are crammed into  
classes of 30 or  
more

\* - (only HS social studies classes  
included, so not to double  
count)



DOE likely will likely comply with 20% cap next year, but out years unclear without policy reforms

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Additional budget for staffing/ hiring additional teachers

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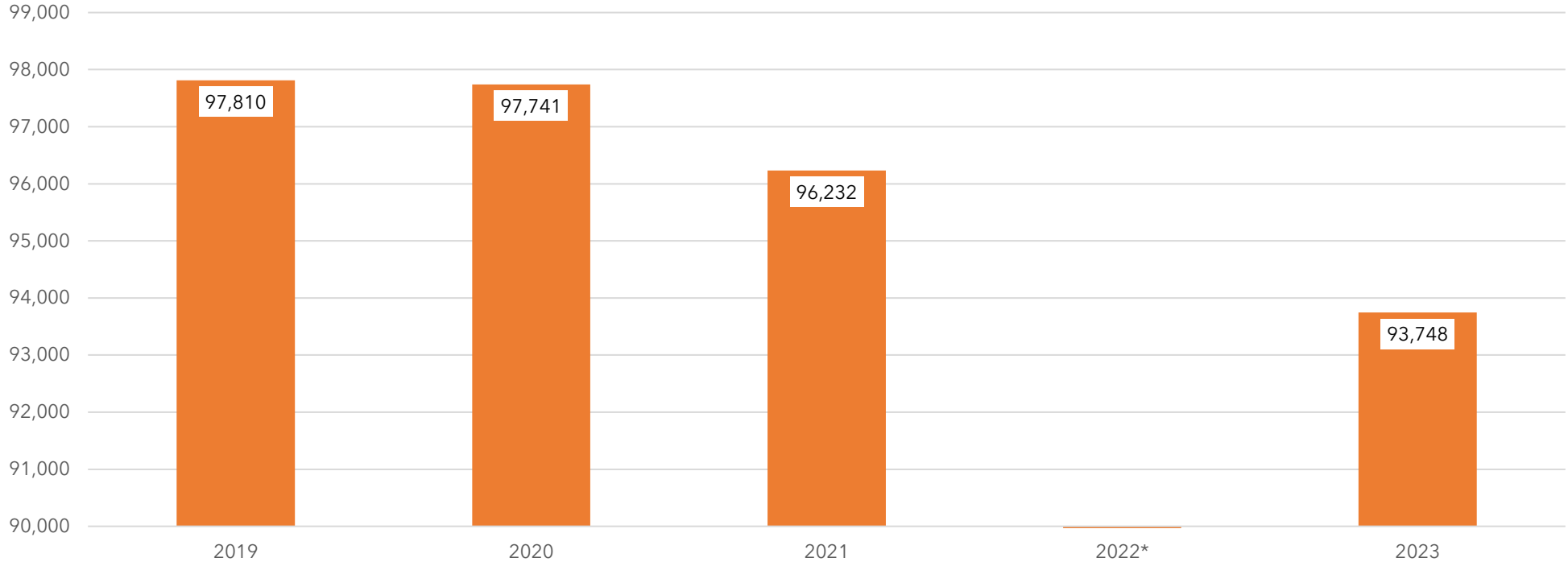
Creating more space in overcrowded districts like D20 by building more schools & possibly moving more 3K & preK classes to CBOs

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Cap enrollment at extremely overcrowded schools at lower levels

# DOE has lost over 4,000 full-time K12 teaching positions since FY 2019

Data sources: DOE headcount reports  
(U/A 401 gened, U/A 403 sped & U/A 481 categorical)



\* -2022 Headcount report missing from NYC Council website as of February, 2023

# Mayor's preliminary budget for FY 2024

- DOE overall budget would be cut by another \$800 million, over and above a cut of \$176 million in November.
- DOE claims no school budgets will be cut next year but this is unclear
- Unclear if the prelim budget if implemented would cause a further loss of K12 teachers
- Certainly would NOT allow schools to rehire the positions they've lost over the last four years
- DOE has not yet confirmed that the changes to FSF formula that will send additional \$90M to schools with high concentrations of homeless and/or students in poverty will not cause other school budgets to be cut same amount - as there doesn't seem to be any increase in the FSF amount

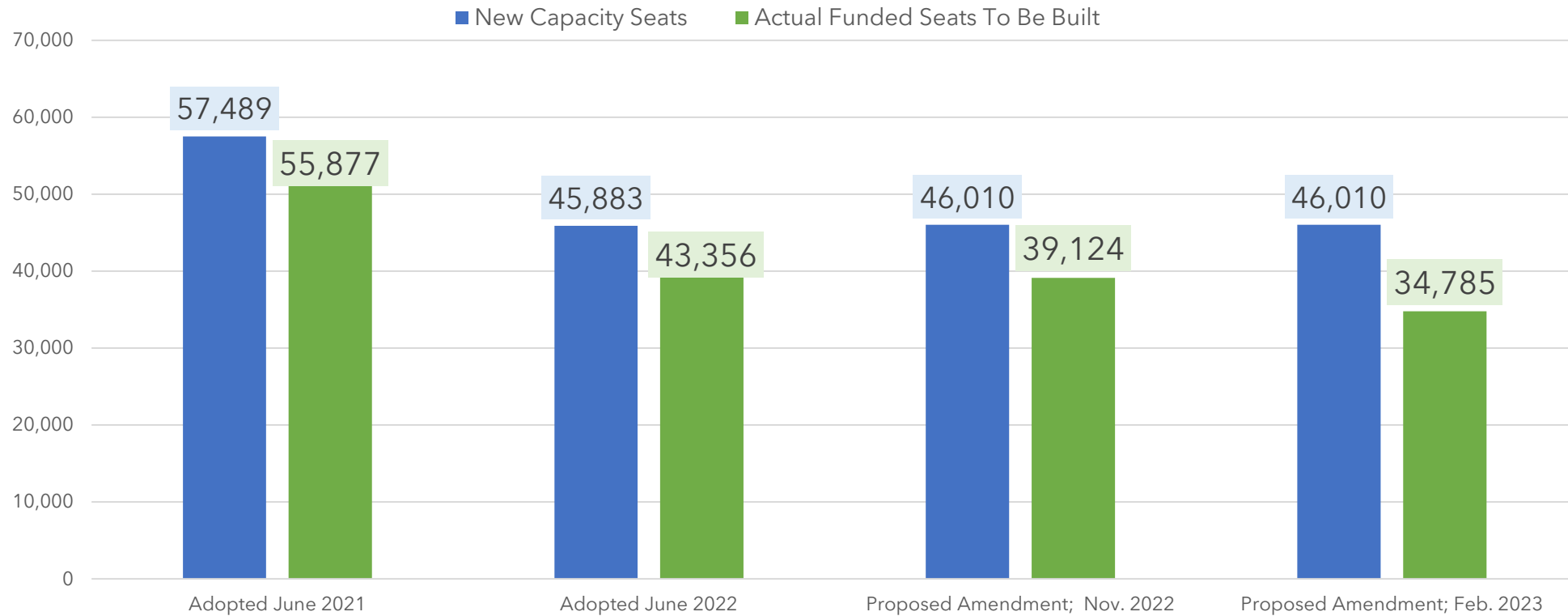
In any case,  
schools should  
be receiving  
**MORE** funding  
to help them  
restore  
programs &  
reduce class  
size

- DOE has lost about 4,000 full-time K12 pedagogues between FY 2019 & FY 2023.
- [According to OMB budget doc](#), DOE plans not to add a single additional teacher through at least June 2025.
- Yet IBO projects NYC will end fiscal year 2023 with \$4.9B surplus & as of early Feb., NYC cash balance was at \$14.6B, including reserves.
- Next year, DOE slated to receive \$568M in additional state Foundation Aid --final CFE phase-in amount over three years of \$1.3B in additional annual aid, in which class size was a central issue in the case
- Just-announced tweaks to FSF formula ignores how formula continues to be aligned with large classes & incentivizes principals to overcrowd schools & classrooms.

Adopted  
school capital  
plan also cut  
\$1.5B in new  
capacity vs.  
plan adopted  
in 2021

- Amount to be spent on new capacity plunged from \$7.8B to \$6.3B in the June 2022 adopted plan
- More than 11,000 net seats cut (57,489 cut to 46,010)
- Yet 347,000 (38%) of students citywide were in schools over 100% last year, according to Blue Book.
- Feb. 2023 proposed cap plan amendment cuts another \$820M & pushes an additional 11,000 seats in 11 districts into “funded for design only” category, including in School District 20.

Since plan adopted in June 2021, funding for new capacity slashed by \$2.3 billion & actual funded seats to be built cut by over 21,000 (38%)



Source: New Capacity section of FY2020 - 2024 Capital Plan, including un-sited D75 seats

Between June 2021 adopted plan and Feb. 2023 proposed amendment, nearly 10,000 seats pushed into “funded for design-only” category **including 2 of D20 subdistricts: Dyker Heights & Borough Park/Kensington/Bensonhurst**

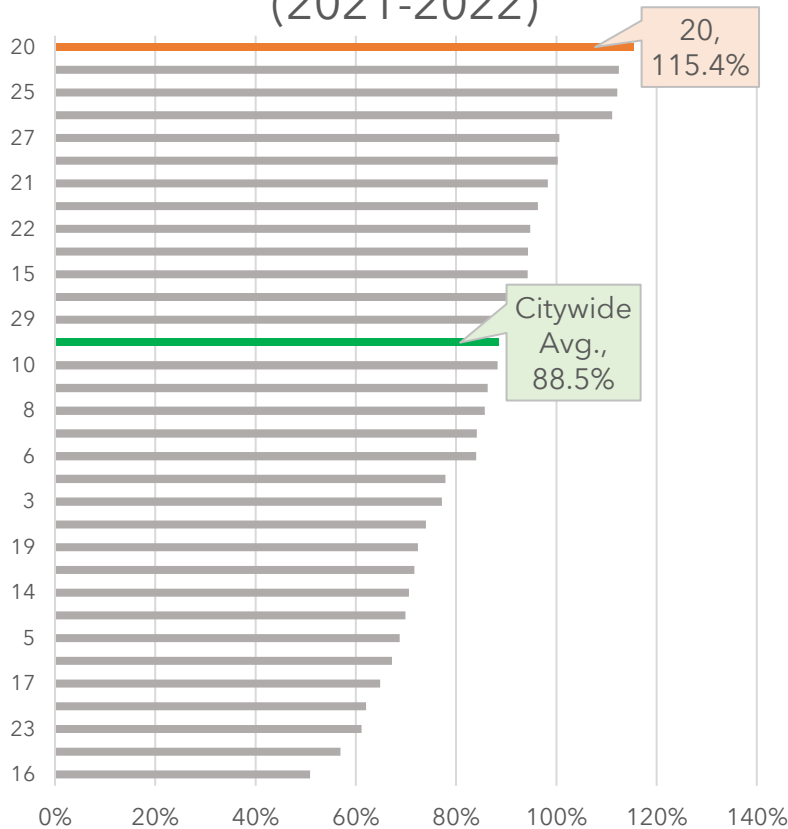
Plan	New Capacity Seats	PS/IS Seats	HS Seats	Total Estimated Cost	Funded Design-Only Seats	Actual Funded Seats To Be Built
Adopted June 2021	57,489	50,804	6,685	\$ 7.80 Billion	1,612	55,877
Adopted June 2022	45,883	40,202	5,681	\$ 6.34 Billion	2,527	43,356
Proposed amendment: Nov.2022	46,010	40,137	5,873	\$6.02 Billion	6,886	39,124
Proposed amendment: Feb. 2023	46,010	40,137	5,873	\$5.52 Billion	11,225	34,785

Source: New Capacity section of FY2020 - 2024 Capital Plan, including un-sited D75 seats

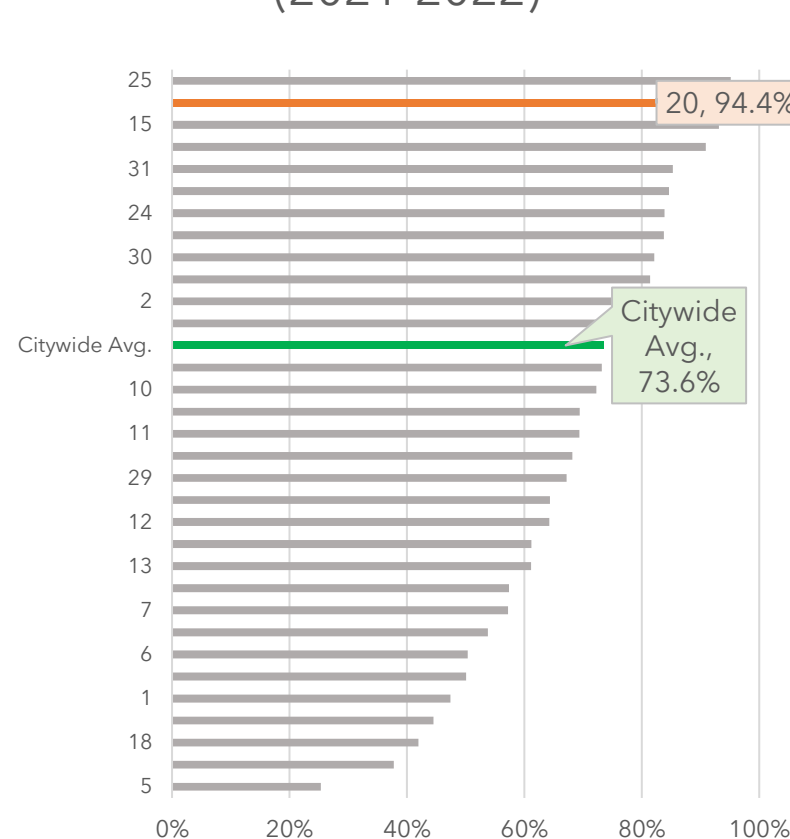


D20 has the highest average utilization in ES at 115.4%, 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in MS at 94.4%, and highest in HS at 130% .

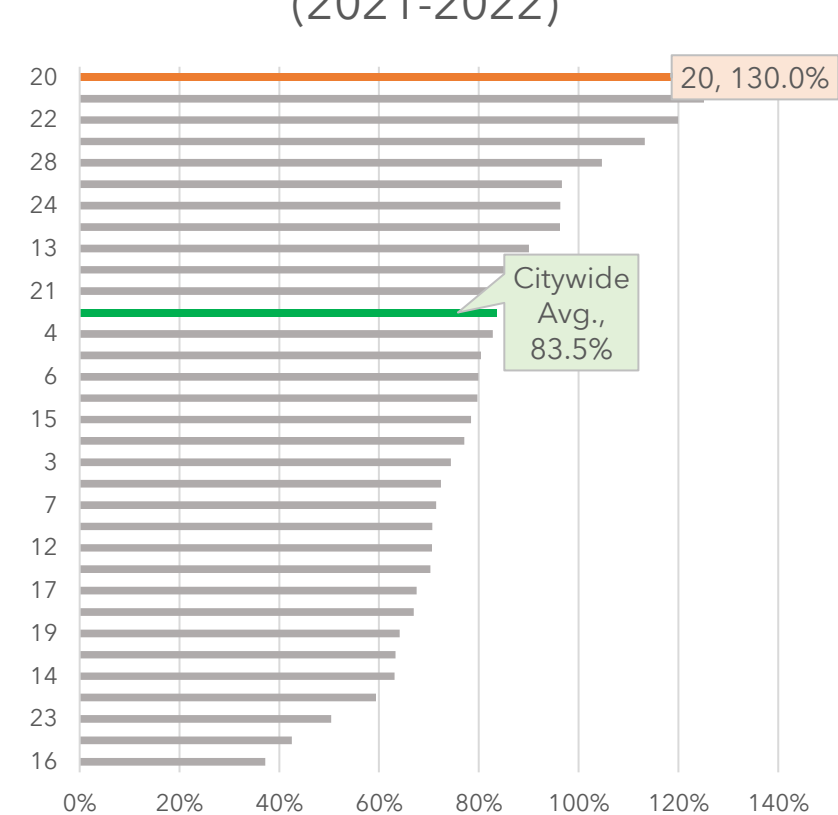
Average ES Utilization by School District (2021-2022)



Average MS Utilization by School District (2021-2022)



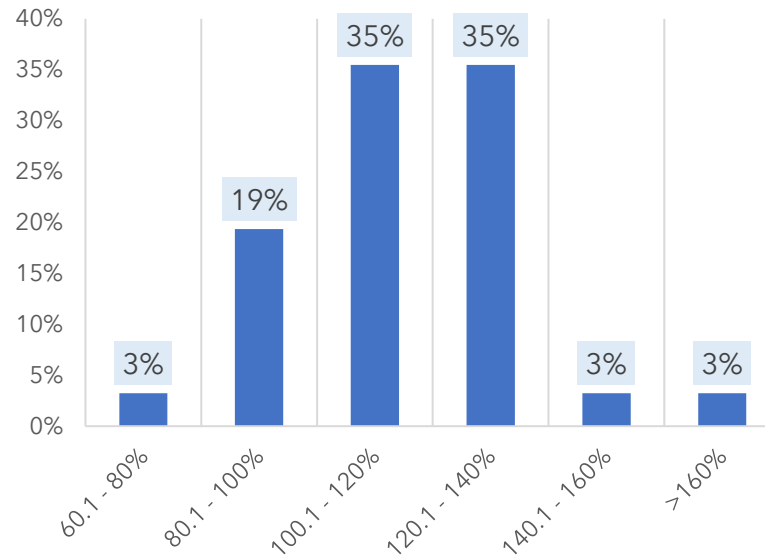
Average HS Utilization by School District (2021-2022)



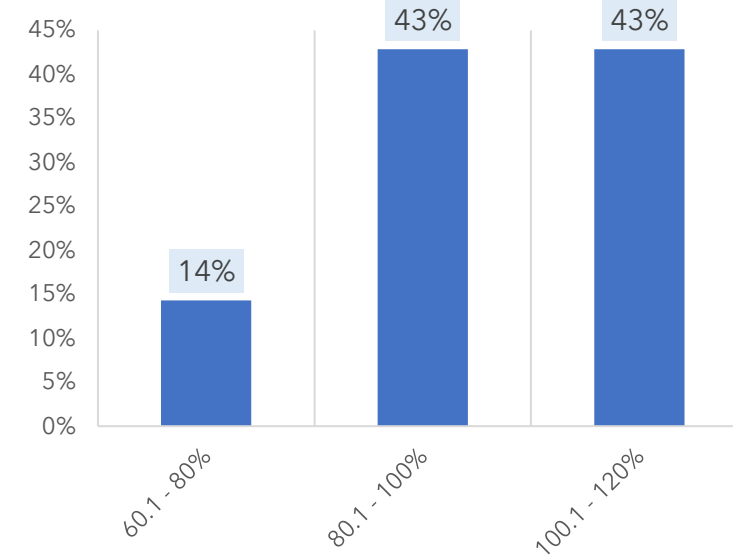
Using last year's figures, without revising the BB formula, in D20 76% of ES, 43% of MS, and 60% of HS above 100%.

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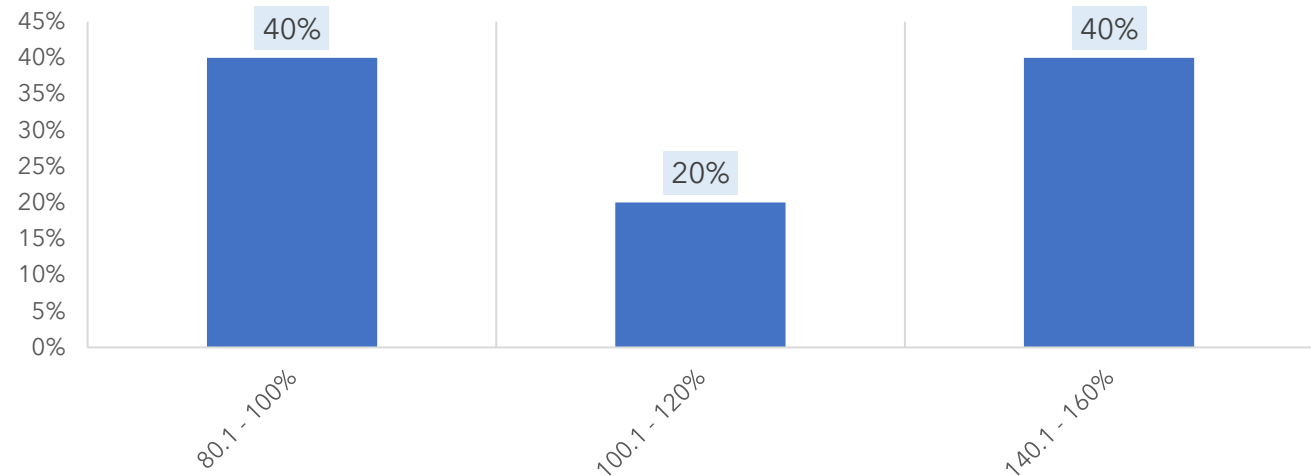
Elementary Schools by Utilization Percentile School District 20



Middle Schools by Utilization Percentile School District 20

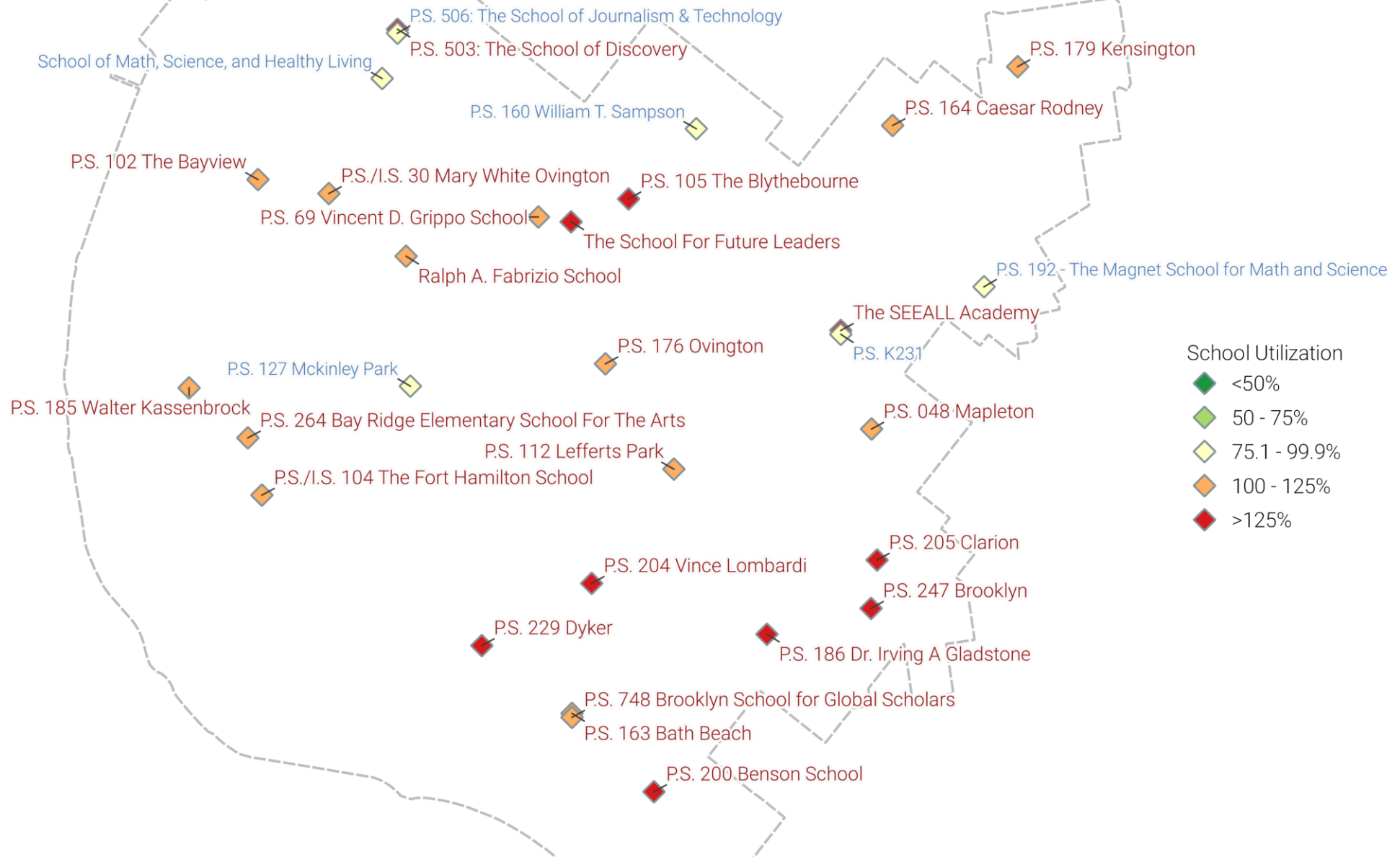


High Schools by Utilization Percentile School District 20



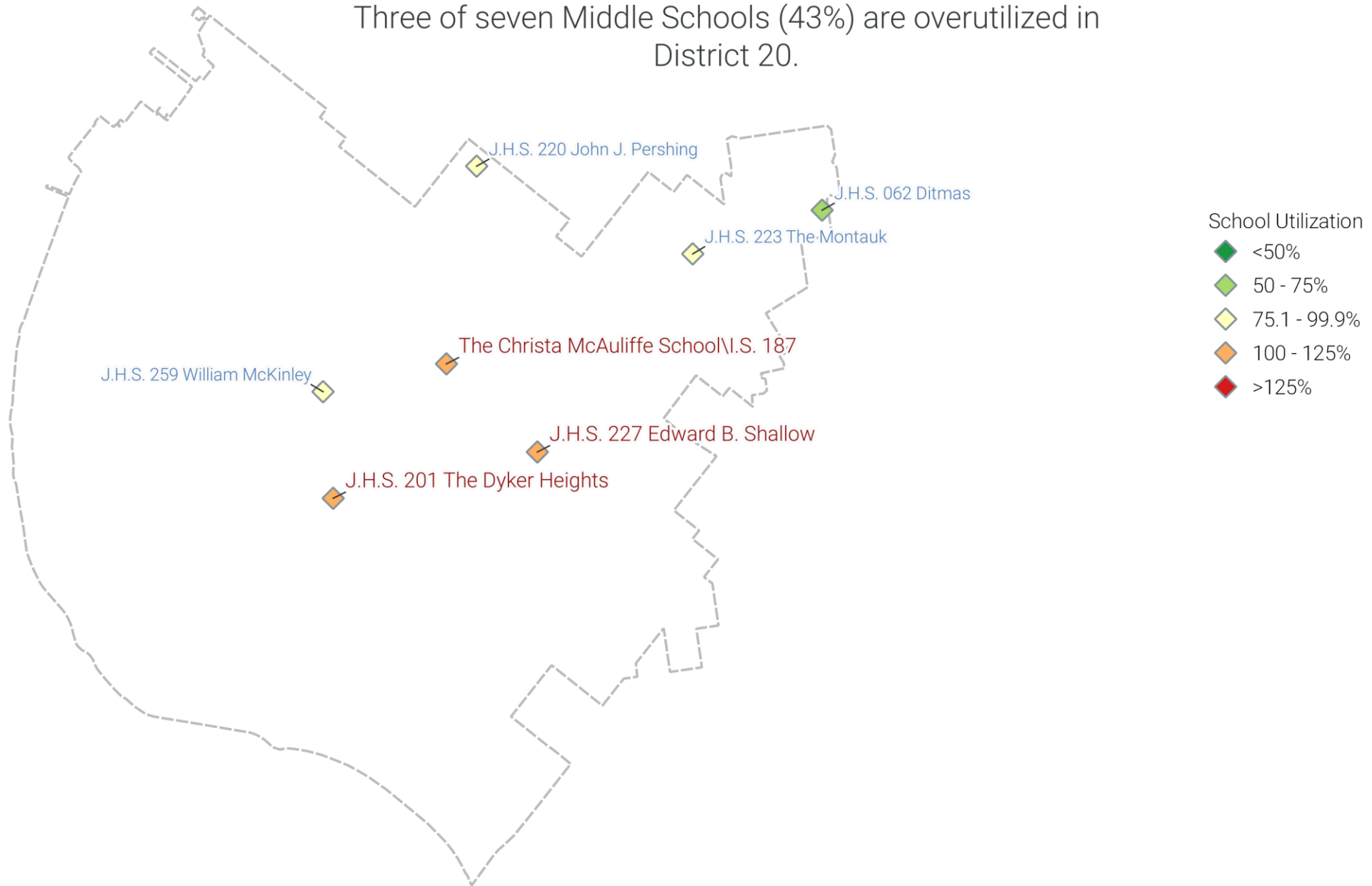
# Elementary School Utilization - District 20 ('21-'22)

24 of 31 Elementary Schools (76%) are overutilized in District 20.



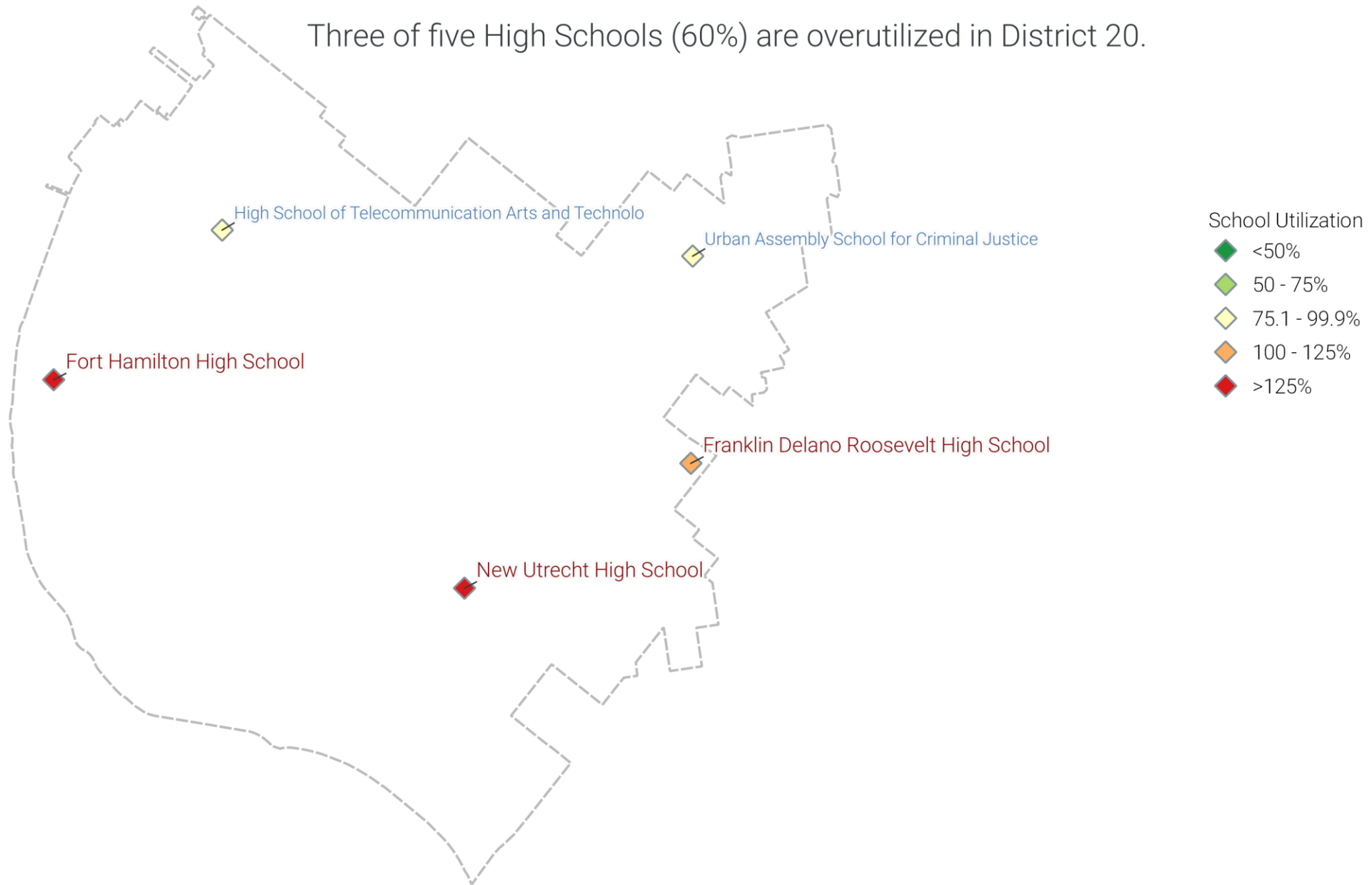
# Middle School Utilization - District 20 ('21-'22)

Three of seven Middle Schools (43%) are overutilized in District 20.



# High School Utilization - District 20 ('21-'22)

Three of five High Schools (60%) are overutilized in District 20.



Overall cuts  
in capital  
plan not  
explained  
but  
presumably  
for 2  
reasons

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Enrollment decline which DOE is projecting to continue though this is uncertain - see increase in migrant students this year

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SCA adjusted room capacity limits down to new caps in the law but also changed "efficiency ratio" in utilization formula, that assumes how many periods a day a MS or HS classroom will be scheduled.

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Previously regular classrooms were expected to be in use 7 of 8 periods a day. Specialty rooms 5 of 8 periods a day; but now all MS and HS rooms expected to be scheduled 100% of time - difficult if not impossible to achieve.

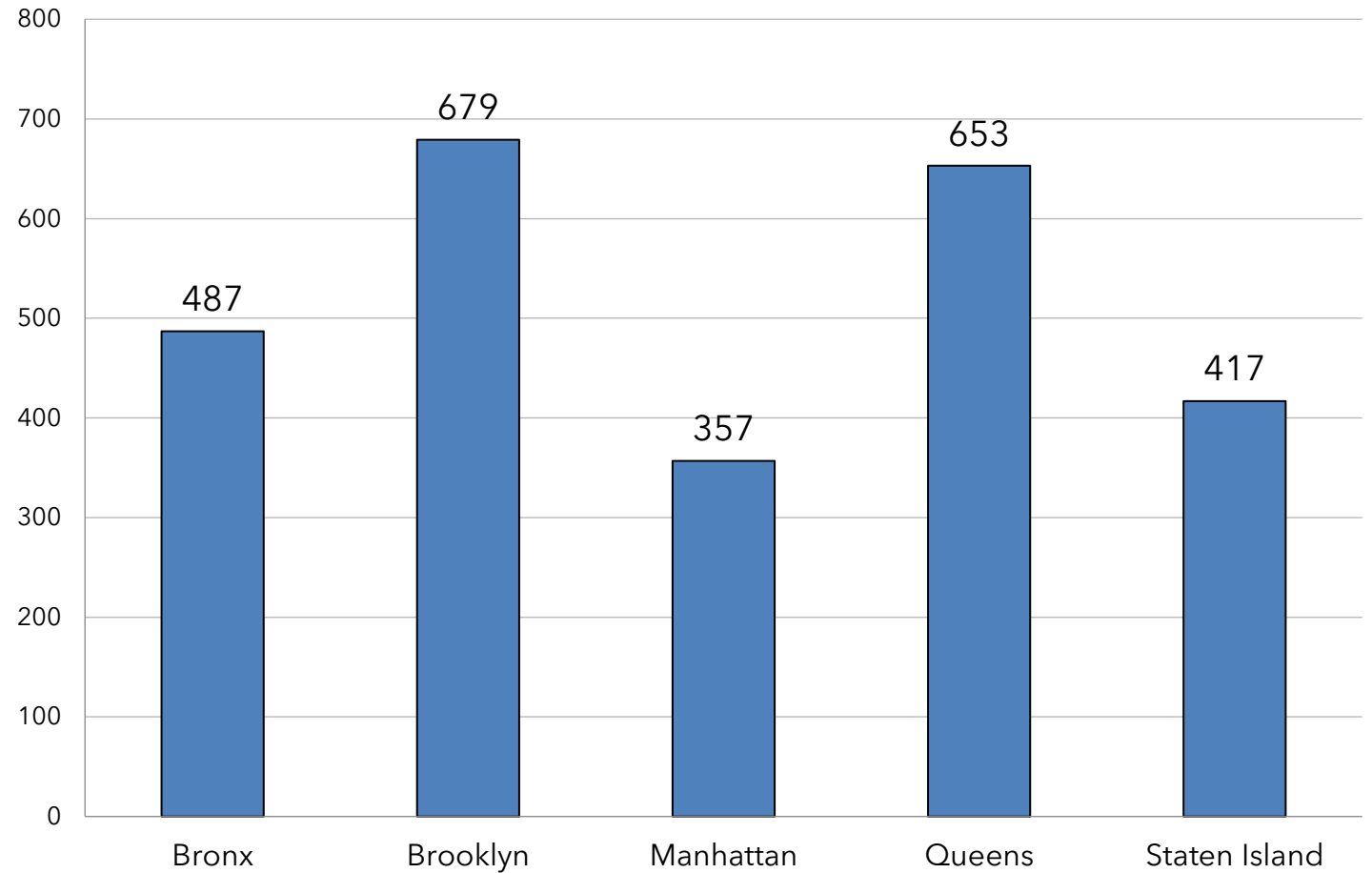
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This single change artificially added 2593 seats to existing MS & 20,279 Seats to HS without building any additional space

2,593 Seats  
were added in  
Middle Schools  
due to the  
revised  
efficiency ratio

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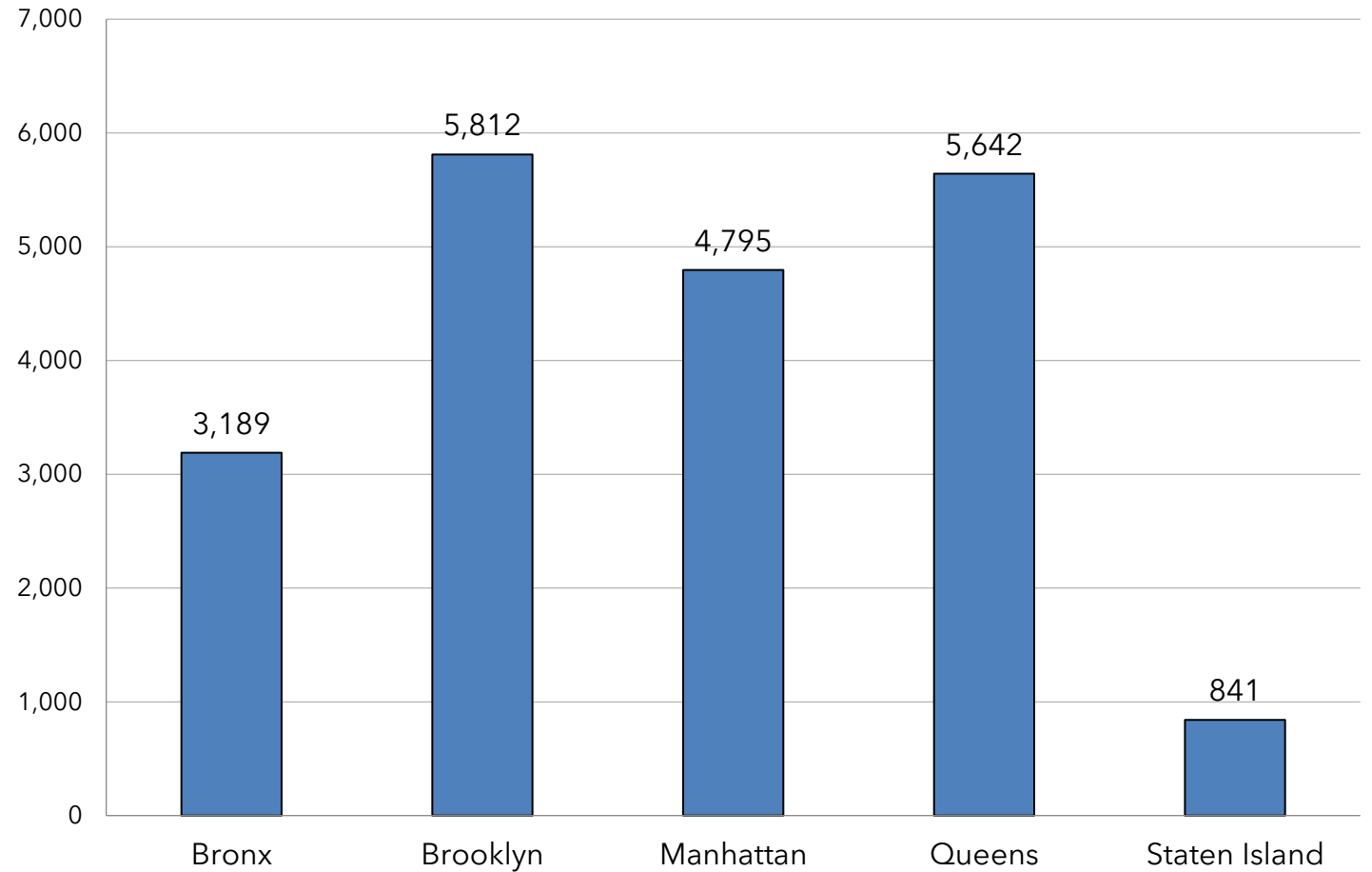
Seats Added in Middle Schools by borough  
due to revised efficiency ratio



20,279 Seats  
were added to  
High Schools  
due to the  
Revised  
Efficiency Ratio

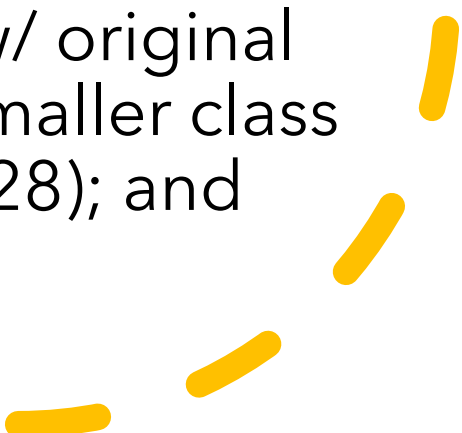
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Seats Added to High Schools by borough  
due to Revised Efficiency Ratio

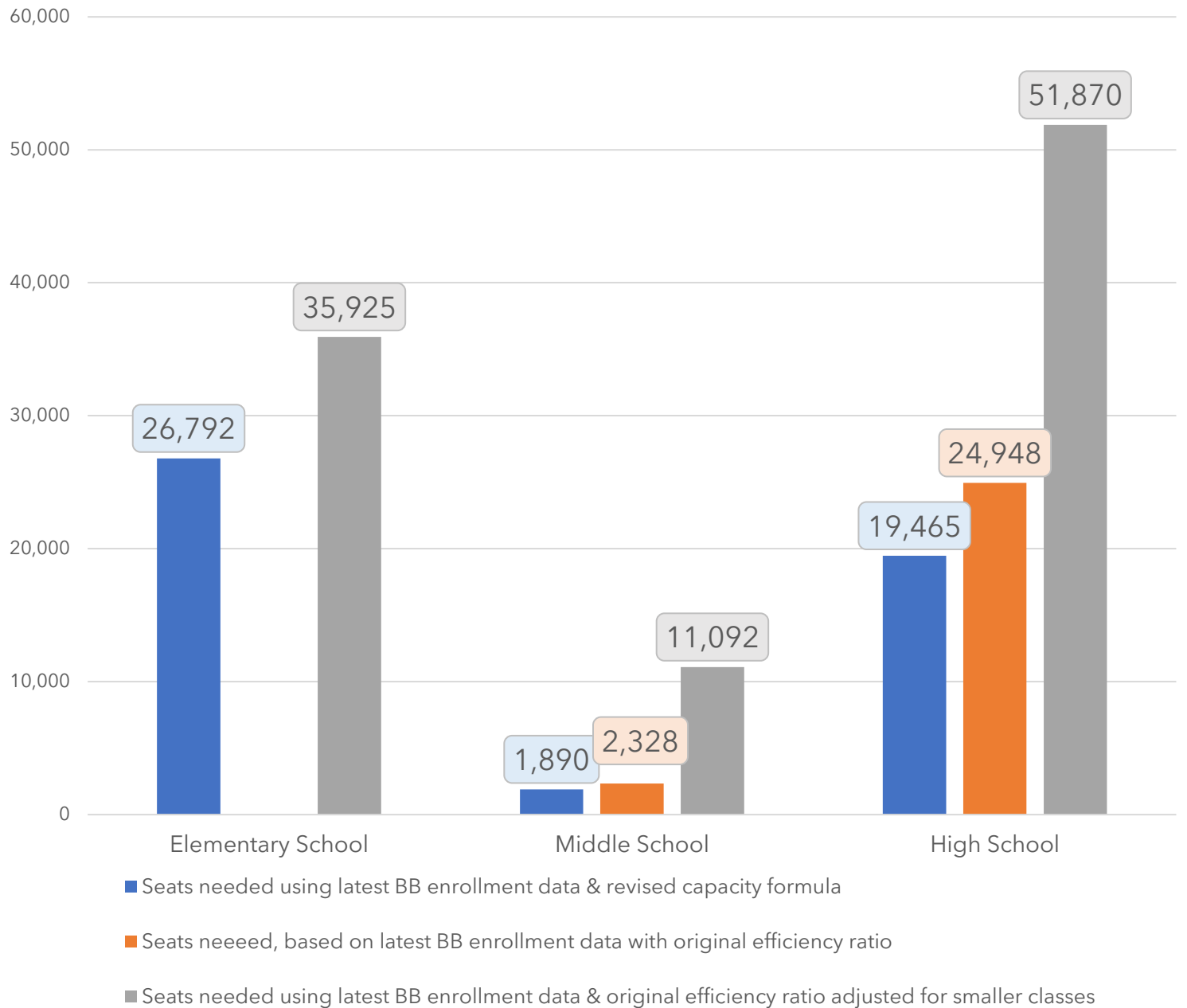




We  
calculated  
the need  
for new  
school  
seats three  
ways

- A: We used the latest capacity/enrollment from the '21-'22 Blue Book.
  - B: Using latest enrollment data but MS/HS capacity with original efficiency ratio (classrooms scheduled 7/8 periods; specialty rooms 6/8 periods; efficiency ratio of ES unchanged)
  - C: With latest enrollment data w/ original efficiency ratio & adjusted for smaller class size caps for grades 4-8 (23 vs. 28); and grades 9-12 (25 vs. 30)
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Estimates of seat shortage in overutilized schools range from 48K -100K depending on which efficiency ratio & assumed class sizes

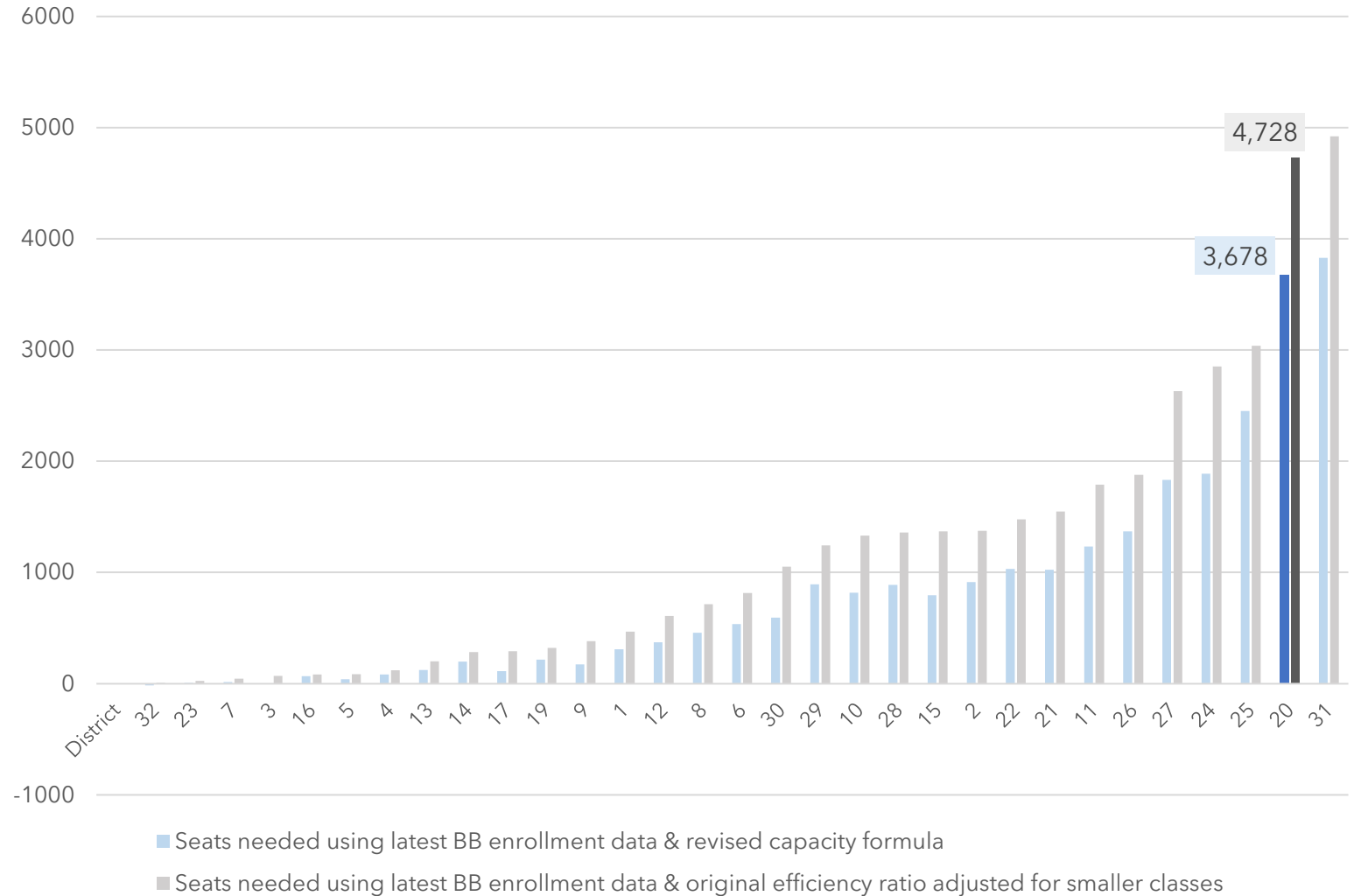


26,000+ to nearly 36,000 Seats Citywide are needed in over-utilized elementary schools by School District.

3,600 - more than 4,700 elementary seats needed in SD20, if using latest capacity figures or original capacities adjusted for smaller classes in grades 4-5.

*In D20, 4,341 ES and MS seats currently funded in plan but an unknown # funded for design only*

Seats needed in over-utilized elementary schools by School District

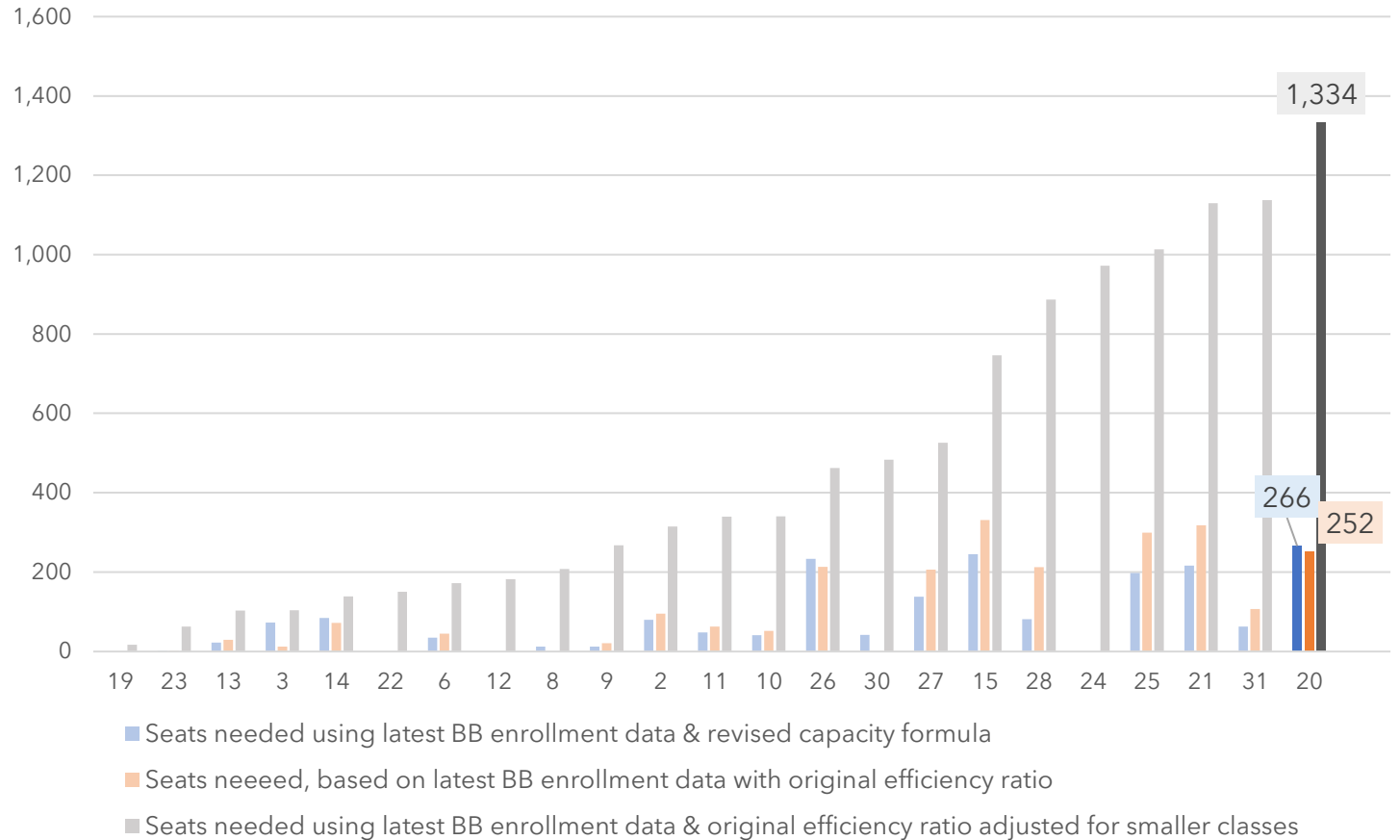


# Approximately 1,800 to 11,000 Seats Citywide are Needed in Over-Utilized Middle Schools by School District

Between 260 to more than 1,330 seats would be needed in SD20 if using original capacity figures adjusted for smaller classes in grades 4-8.

*In D20, 4,341 ES and MS seats currently funded in plan but an unknown # funded for design only*

## Seats needed in over-utilized Middle schools by School District

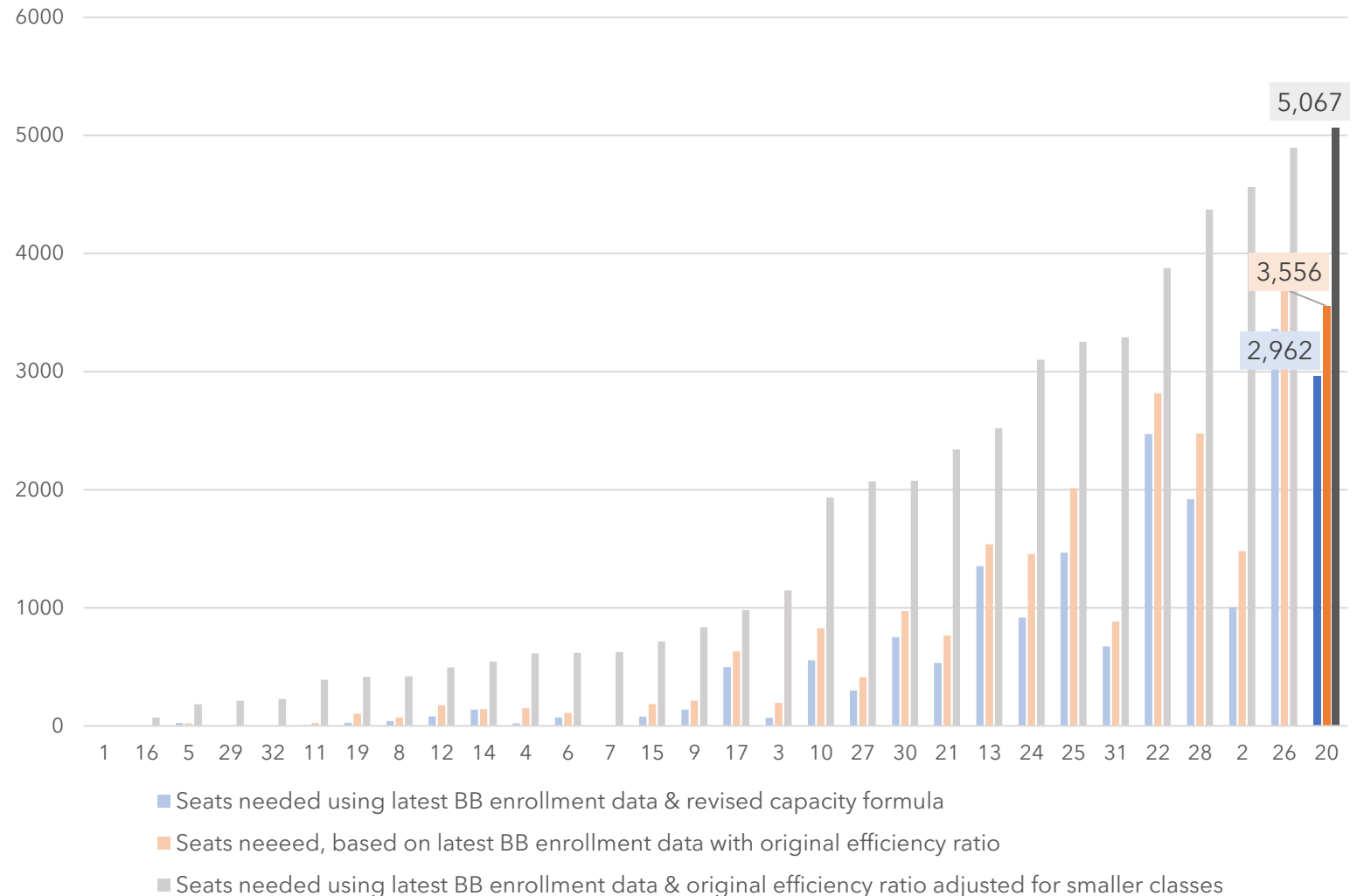


Approximately 19,000 to more than 51,000 Seats Citywide are Needed in Over-Utilized High Schools by School District.

2,900 - more than 5,000 seats needed in SD20, if using original capacity figures adjusted for smaller classes in HS.

***ONLY 192 HS seats planned for entire borough of Brooklyn!***

Seats needed in over-utilized High schools by School District



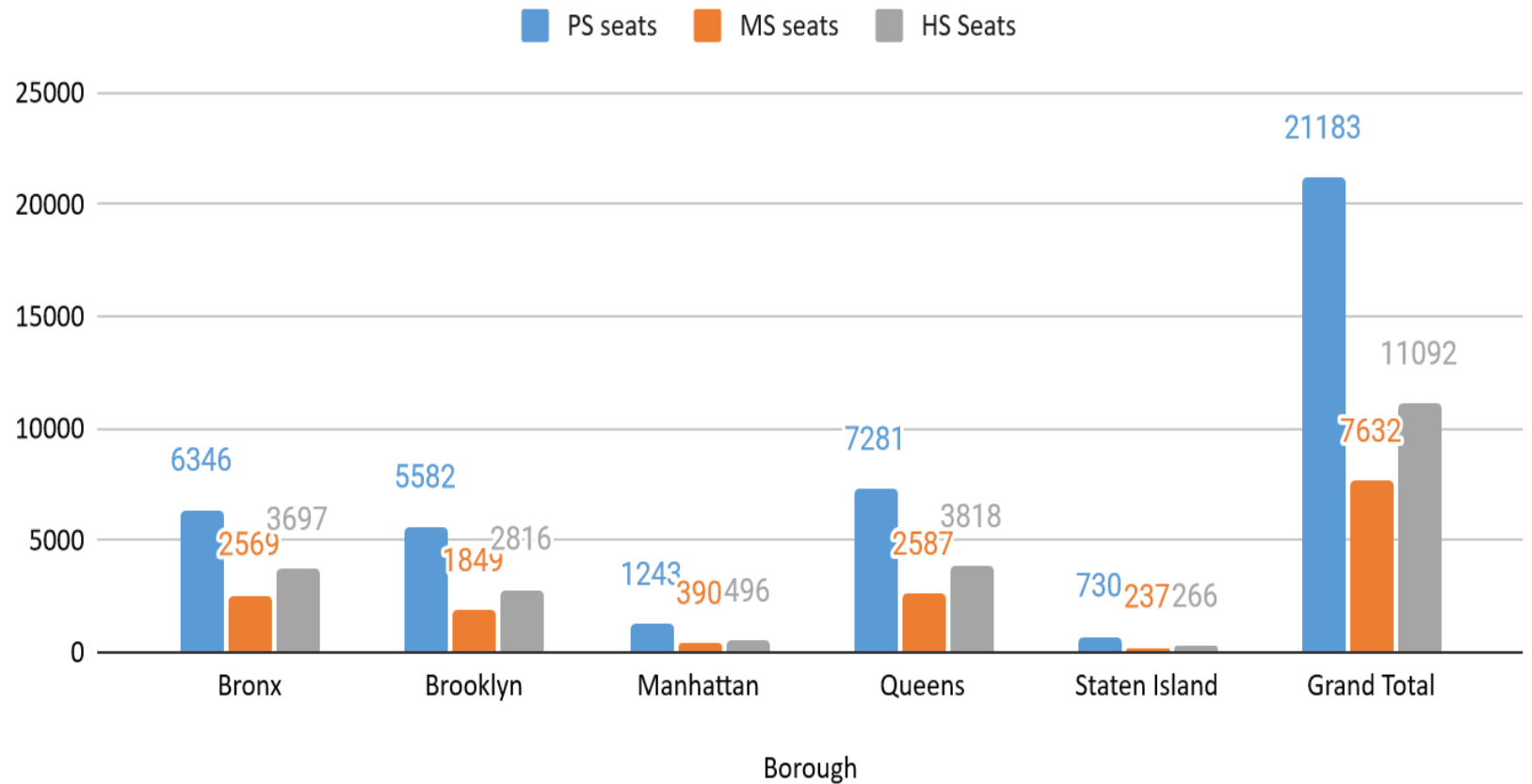
# These estimates based on 2021-22 enrollment

- Blue Book capacity figures often incorrect as do not take into account need for specialized rooms, intervention rooms, & issues related to co-located schools
- Future enrollment trends difficult to predict especially as changes in in-migration and out migration rates uncertain
- About 12,500 newly enrolled migrant/refugee students in 599 schools are currently receiving funds through [Project Open Arms](#)
- This includes about 880 new students at D20 schools -- many already overcrowded
- Reducing class size could lure more parents into staying in city and/or sending their children to public schools vs. charters/privates as happened in CA
- Also DOE looks at building starts which add to & redistribute student population across the city

Another ~40K seats may be needed from new residential development 2020-2029

*(Housing start data 6/2020; multiplier based on 2010 census data)*

Projected need: 40K additional school from Building Starts multiplied by public school ratio



# Reforms also need to be considered to admissions/ zoning policies

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SCA in general does not plan to build any schools where district or subdistrict AVERAGE utilization is under 100% except in rare occasions

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Yet many schools in same district may be at 50% utilization or less while others over 150%

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Accelerating rezoning of elementary schools and revamping MS & HS admissions to more equitably allocate enrollment across all schools would lower # new seats needed

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This would also likely create more diversity across system and more sustainable school budgets for under-enrolled schools.



Yet so far  
DOE  
appears to  
have no  
plan to meet  
benchmarks  
in the law

- In Capital plan no mention of need to create school space to lower class size and thousands of seats were cut and thousands more moved into the “design only” category.
- DOE district planning documents dated Aug. 2022, “**2023-2024 Strategic Planning Data Considerations**” do not mention of need to lower class size.
- During Council hearing on Jan. 25, 2023, when Deputy Chancellor Weisberg asked whether the DOE planning to cap enrollment at extremely overcrowded schools to enable them to comply with the new law, he said no & instead they would rely on underutilized schools offering “**new programming that is responsive to what the community is asking for,**” though didn’t say what that programming would be.
- Educational Impact Statements for recent charter school co-location proposals assume current class sizes in existing schools to continue into the indefinite future, including those schools where all of their classes are far above levels required in the law.

# Need for task force to start planning for class size reduction NOW

- Planning needs to start now to ensure sufficient funding for staffing
- Also an expanded & accelerated capital plan & new admissions policy to ensure that all schools can achieve class size targets over next 5 years.
- Chancellor Banks is soliciting applications for a working group to help them develop a plan, but both he & Deputy Chancellor say they may have to sacrifice other programs in order to lower class size.
- ***With an equitable, efficient, and fully funded plan, no other important programs would need to be sacrificed.***

# How can parents help?

- Ask your Council Member Justin Brannan, chair of Finance committee to hold joint hearings with Education Committee, to ask DOE about the progress of their planning for class size reduction.
- Urge him to oppose approving capital plan unless it can prove that it has sufficient new seats for D20 and citywide to comply with the new class size law by the end of the phase-in period.
- Co-sponsor amendment to the class size reporting law passed in 2005, [Local Law 125](#), to require reporting by school of each class size rather than just averages and ranges. (CM Joseph has submitted this LS)
- Also, require that second round of reporting in Feb. each year reflects 2<sup>nd</sup> semester class sizes as originally intended (rather than audited version of Oct. 31 class sizes).

# Also re budget

- Council should require new Unit of Appropriation --a subset of the General Education and Special Education U of As -- to reflect school-level funding, or else it will be impossible to know in advance what spending & cuts are being made to school budgets.
- Council should insist that budget cuts made to schools this year be restored and sufficient funding in capital plan to help them meet the class size benchmarks in the law.
- Require DOE to comply with two laws passed in 2018, to require better and more transparent capital planning and more timely school siting.

# SCA/DOE claims they're building sufficient seats but haven't provided data to support this

- [Local Law 167](#) (2018) required DOE to provide transparent methodology and data on which seats needs estimates made. Neither has happened.
- Enrollment projections do not include 3K, D75, D79 or co-located charter school students, and no sub-district trends are available.
- Seat needs in capital plan STILL do not differentiate elementary vs MS needs
- Housing start data is from 6/2020; with multiplier based on 2010 census data; rezonings/changes in school utilization info provided only to 2021
- Methodology isn't provided in enough detail, instead vaguely describes using "*qualitative analysis*" and "*various strategies to address need*" without specifying.
- Data source <http://www.nycsca.org/community/capital-plan-reports-data> as of 5.22.22

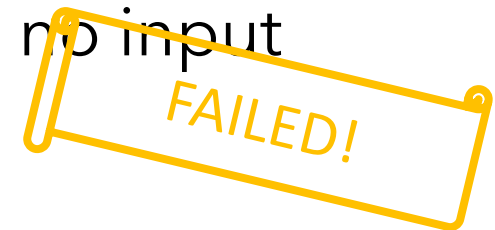


FAILED!

# DOE also in non-compliance with Local Law 168

[Local Law 168](#) (2018) created a Task Force for School Siting to identify sites where new schools could be built, including all city-owned & privately-owned empty lots

The Task Force met only twice, released a 2-pg report with no input from City Council & parent members



Through FOIL we received a spreadsheet that ruled out hundreds of city-owned sites for unclear reasons, and never reported on suitability of 22,065 privately-owned sites.