



Class size: where are we now?

Presentation to Parent Action Conference

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June 7, 2025

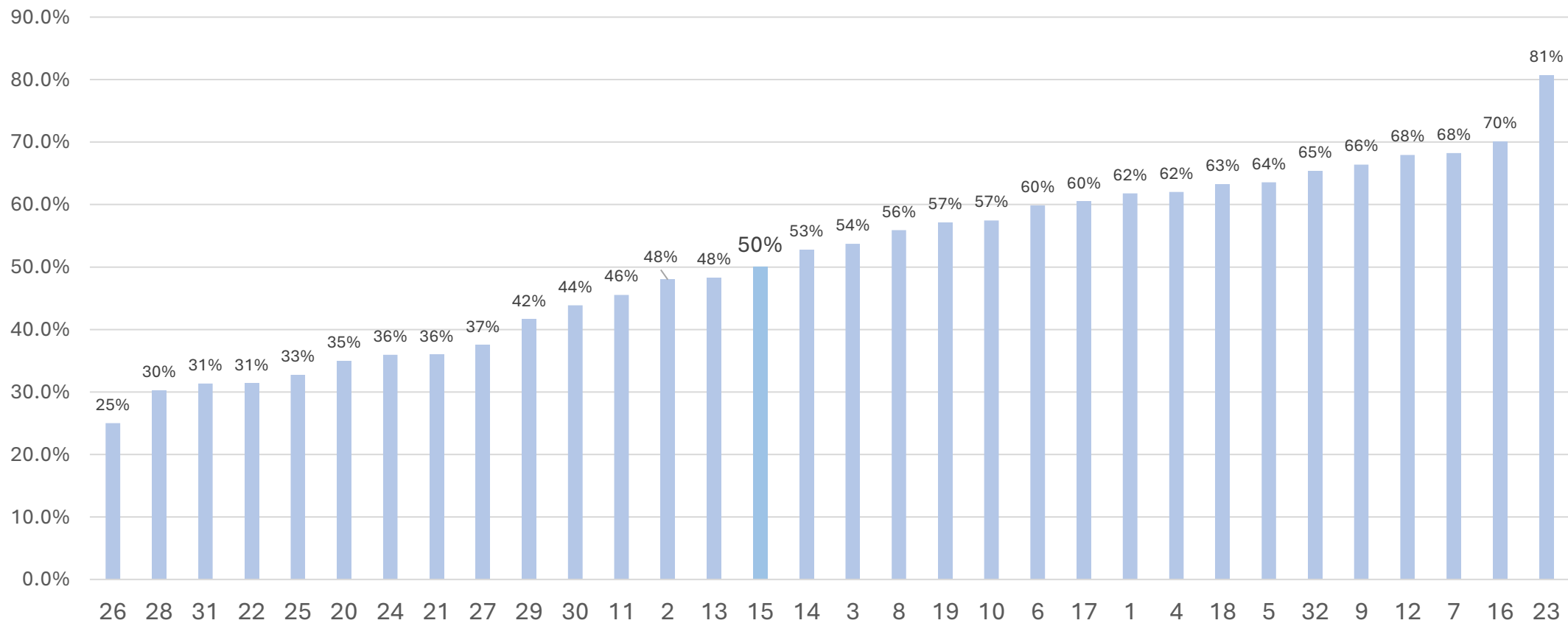
Class size bill passed June 2022 by NYS legislature

- Bill signed by Gov. in Sept 2022, who gave DOE an extra planning year to comply
- Law requires NYC to provide a 5-yr class size reduction plan to cap class size at 20 students in grades K-3, 23 in grades 4th-8th, and 25 in HS classes by Sept. 2028.
- Phys ed and performing art group classes limited to 40 students per class instead of 50.
- An additional 20% of all classes must achieve these caps each year, schools with highest levels of poverty to be prioritized for smaller classes first.
- Some exemptions allowed in the law but only with agreement of UFT and CSA.

Where are we now?

- **We are now at the end of the 2nd year of the five-year phase in.**
- DOE was already at more than 40% compliance when law was passed, mostly due to enrollment decline
- Citywide, this school year DOE schools met benchmark at 46%—though districts and schools widely ranged in percentages
- Schools may meet 60% benchmark next year, *but 80%-100% compliance in years four to five **unlikely*** without changes in DOE policies
- Though law requires multi-year class size plan, DOE has **STILL** not developed or implemented one but just acted from year to year

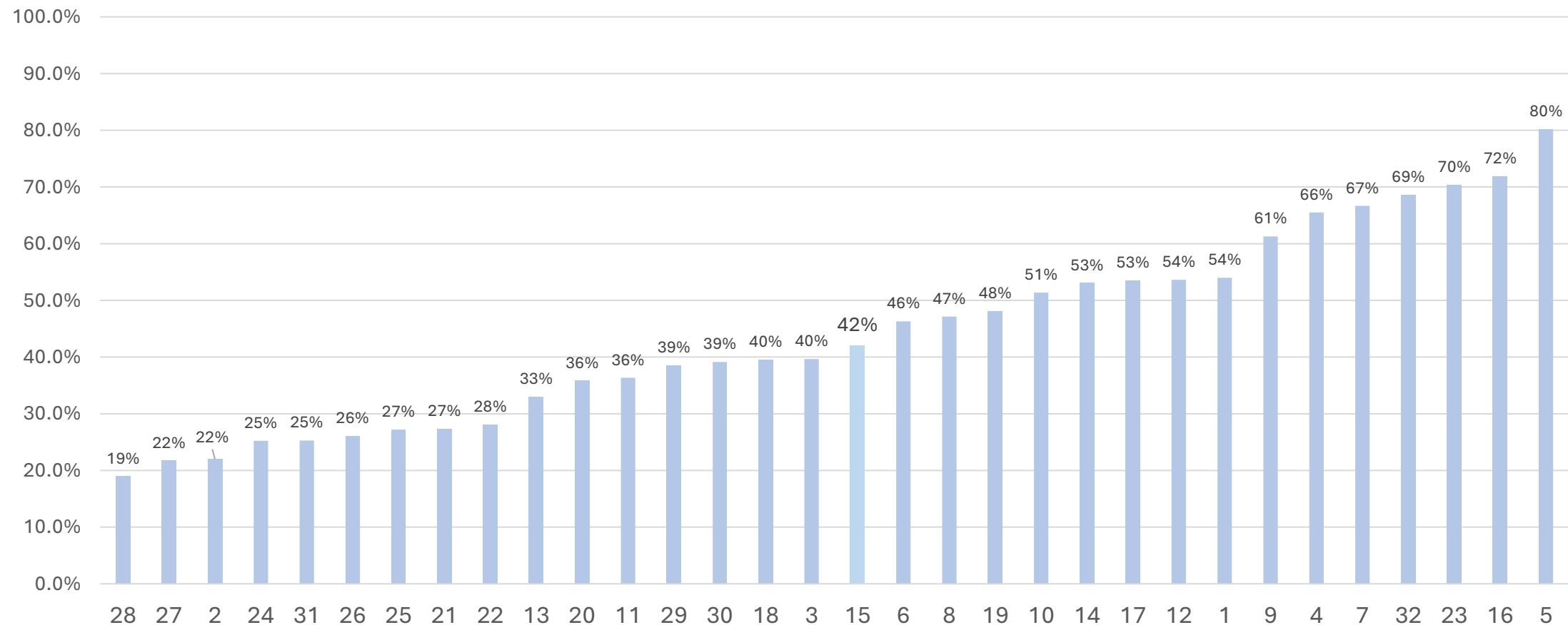
Class size compliance, all grades by district



Data Sources: DOE Table C Class Size Compliance, by School (10/31/2024)

Note: All classes, including PE/PG and Grade 6, included in analysis

Grades K-3 Compliance, by school district

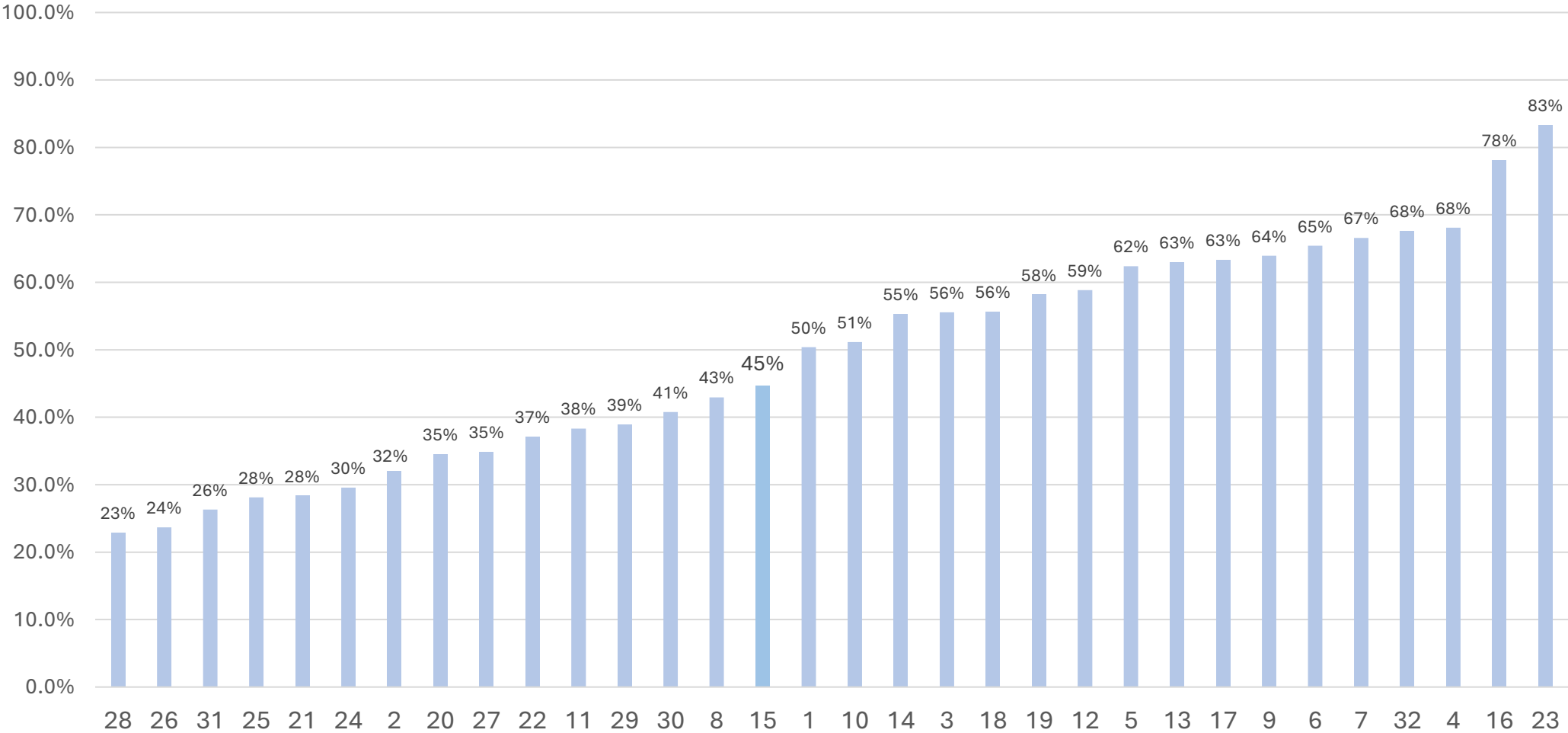


Data Sources: DOE Table C Class Size Compliance, by School (10/31/2024)

Note: All classes, including PE/PG and Grade 6, included in analysis. K-5 Bridge Classes omitted.

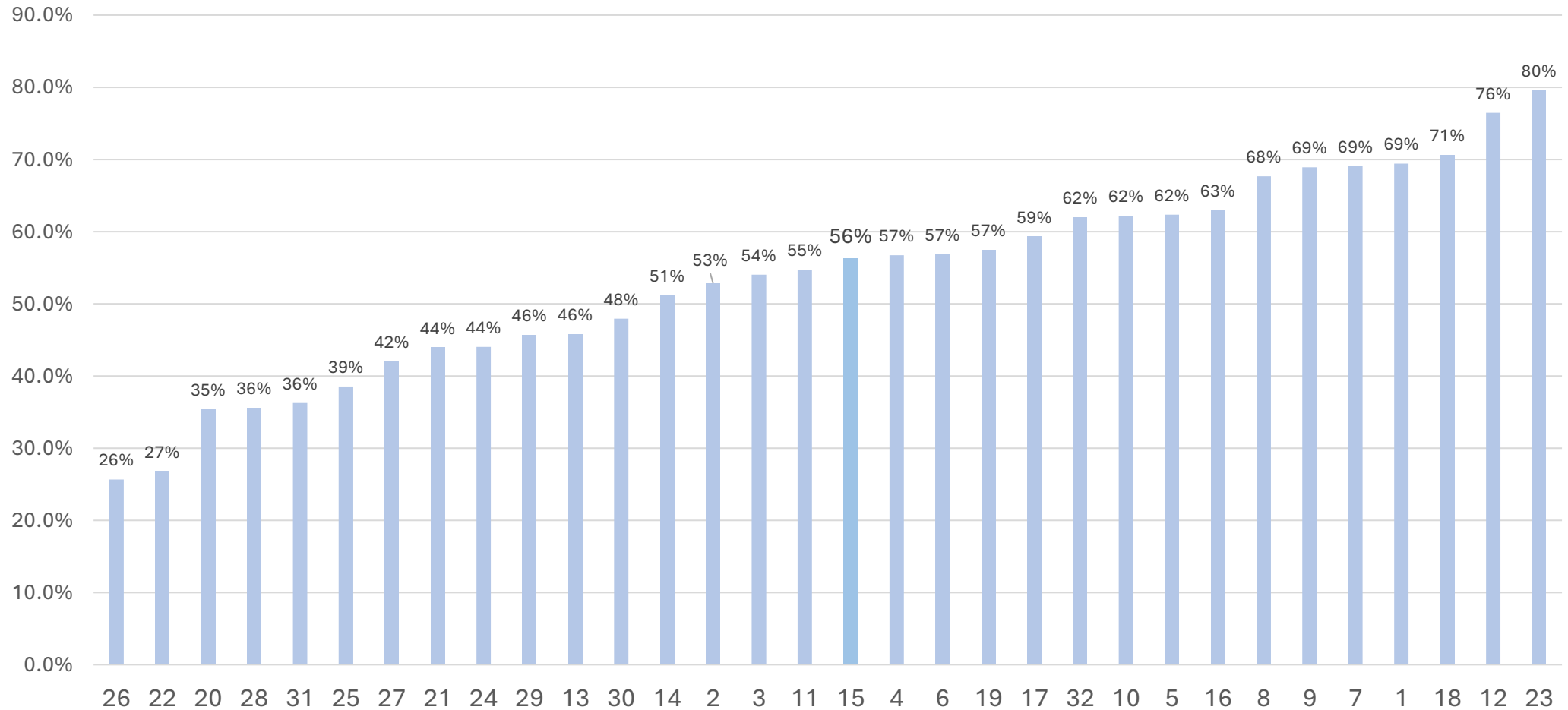
Grades 4-8 Class size compliance, by school district

D15 at 45%.



Data Sources: DOE Table C Class Size Compliance, by School (10/31/2024)
Note: All classes, including PE/PG and Grade 6, included in analysis. K-5 Bridge Classes omitted.

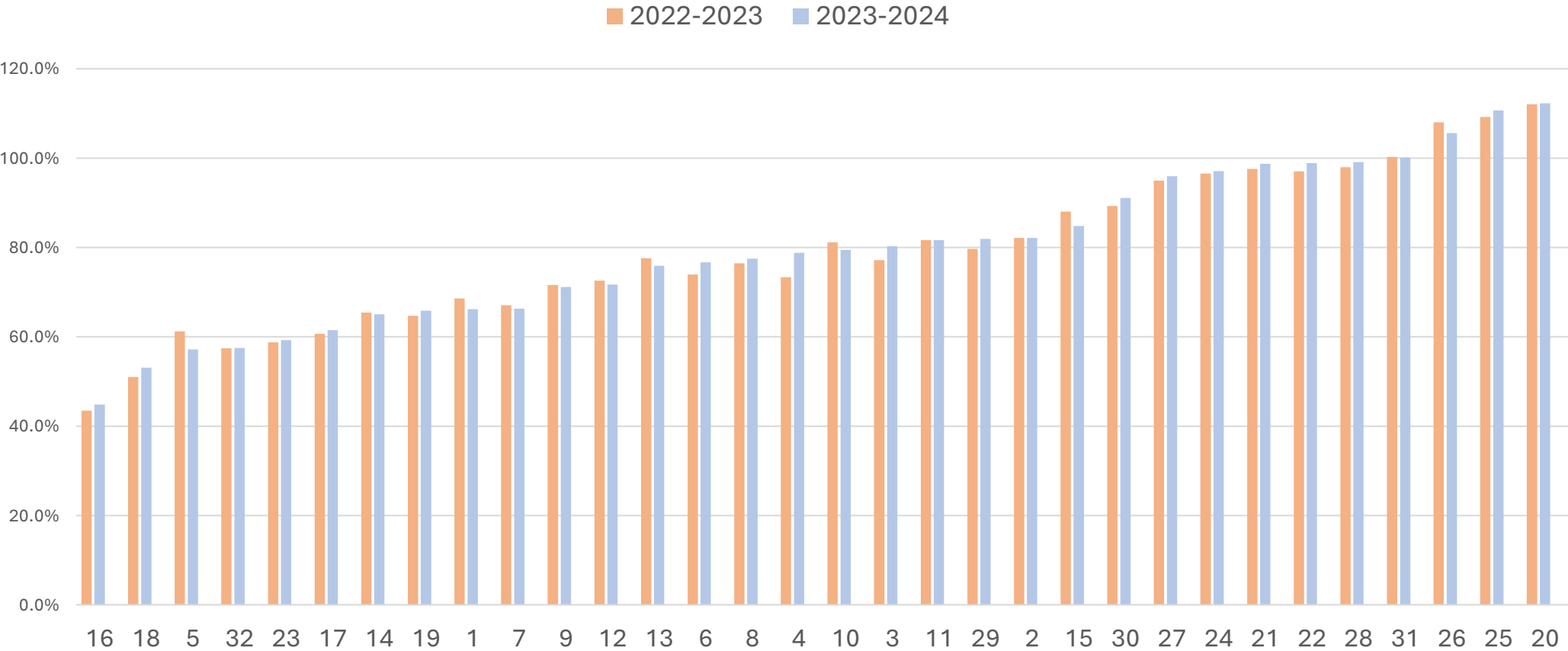
HS Class size compliance, by school district



Data Sources: DOE Table C Class Size Compliance, by School (10/31/2024)

Note: All classes, including PE/PG and Grade 6, included in analysis. K-5 Bridge Classes omitted.

Average Utilization, by School District (Citywide)
66% of districts saw an increase in their average utilization.



Data Sources: Enrollment, Capacity & Utilization Report 2022-2023 & 2023-2024 (June), School Locations Data 2022-2023 & 2023-2024
Note: District 75 and Charter Schools not included in analysis.

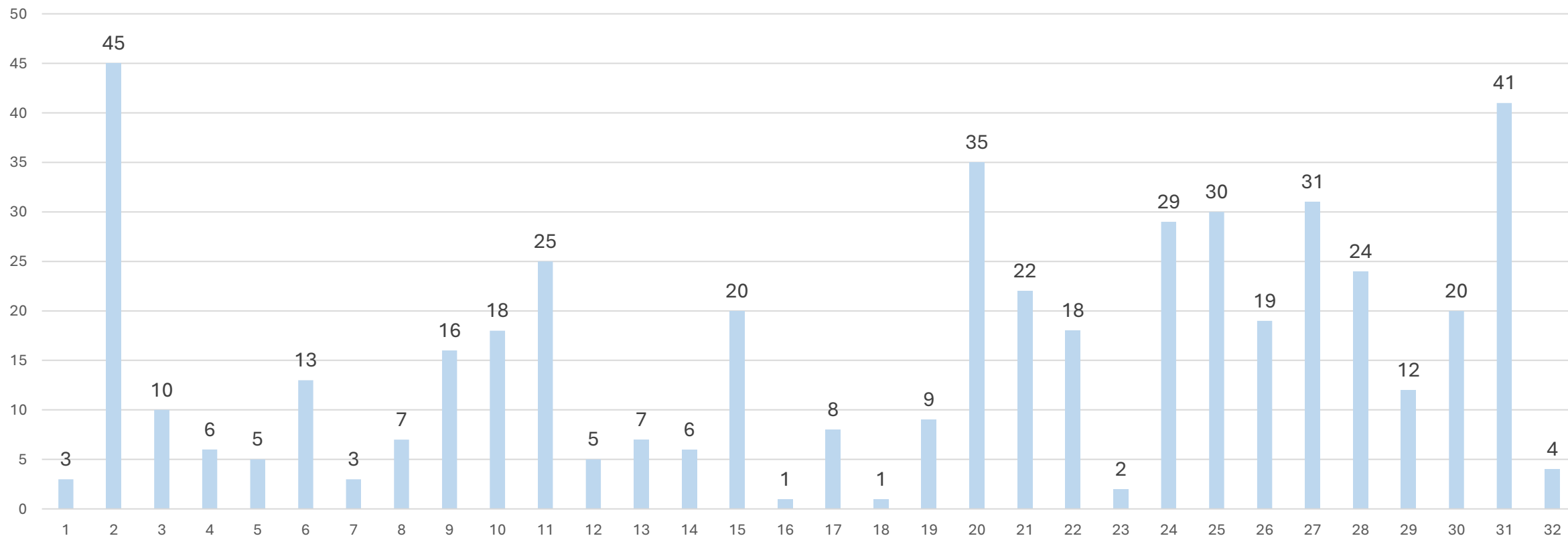
What is the DOE proposal to reach 60% next year?

- [FAQ](#): Principals in consultation with their SLTs told in October they could apply for funds to lower class size as a voluntary process
- ***But ONLY if they already had sufficient space for smaller classes without capping enrollment at a lower level***
- 741 out of about 800 schools that applied will get at least some funding for smaller classes next year; [list here](#). Many of these schools/districts already started recruiting & hiring teachers.
- This is a good start but there are about 1500 schools overall & about [500 schools](#) that enroll nearly half of all students do NOT have space to meet the caps at current enrollment

Only strategies DOE offered so far for schools to expand classroom space

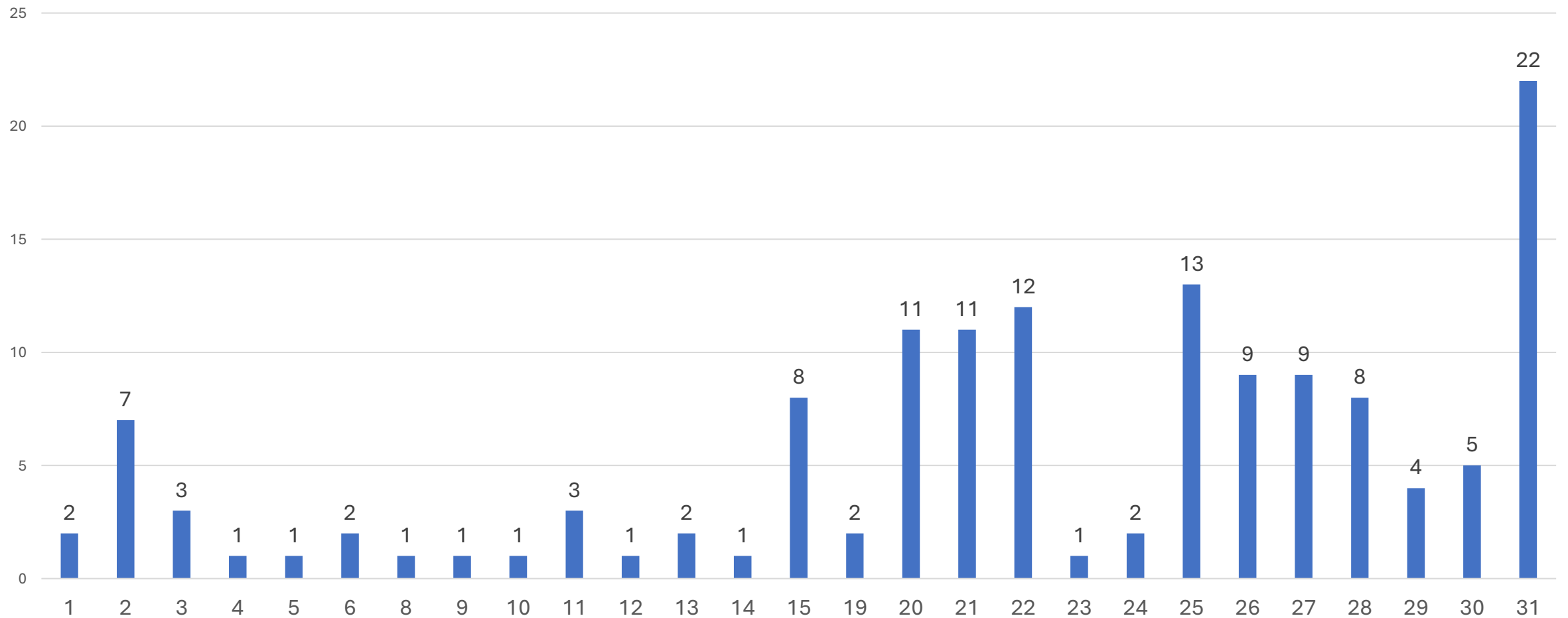
- Fully use & repurpose existing space without affecting programming
- Schools could also ask for funds to renovate existing space as classrooms, but unclear how many actually received this funding
- Go to multi-sessions
- Expand online learning (which cannot be done w/out parent consent)
- [December](#), months after briefings had occurred, DOE added that overcrowded schools could request to move 3K or PreK classes into nearby CBOs, but only if they were underenrolled would this even be considered. Unclear if any schools did ask for this.

495 Schools do not have enough space to meet class size caps says DOE, by district



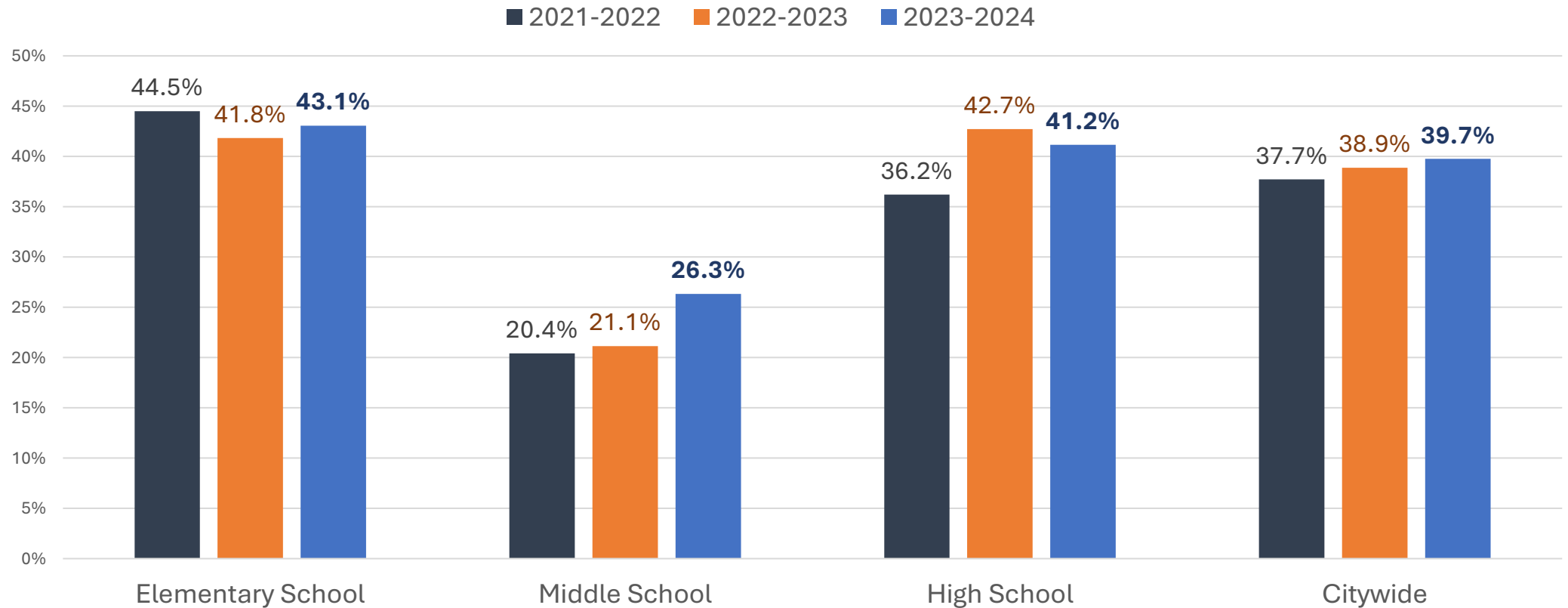
Data Sources: *DOE Class Size Space Analysis 2024-2025 (12/3/2024)*, *DOE School Locations Data (12.16.24)*

143 elementary schools with insufficient space but have PreK/3K classes (by School District)



*Data Sources: DOE Class Size Space Analysis 2024-2025
NYC DOE School Locations Data (as of 12/16/24).*

Percent of Students in Overcrowded Schools increased from 37.7% in 2021-2022 to 39.7% last year



Data Sources: Enrollment, Capacity & Utilization Report 2021-2022 - 2023-2024 (June)

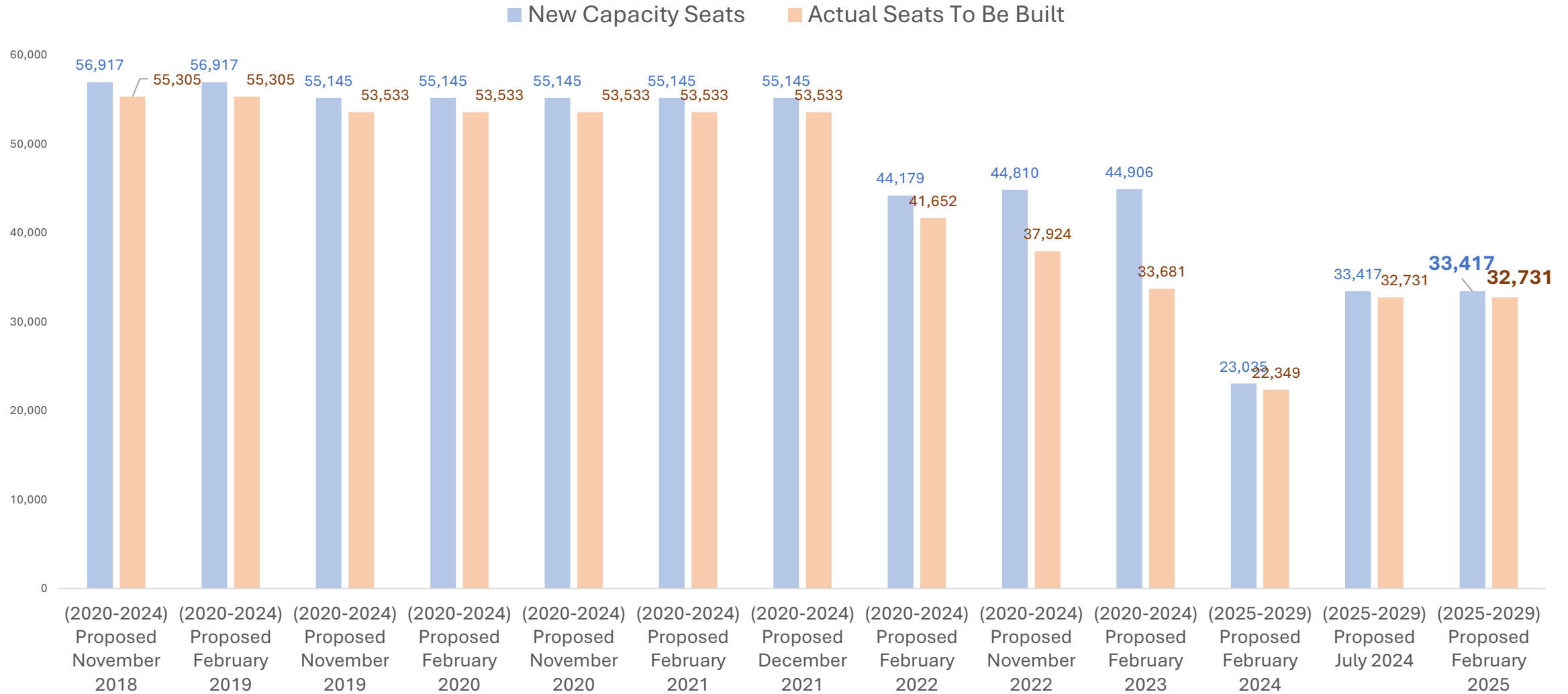
Note: DOE School Locations Data 2022-2023 used for '21-22 data, since 2021-2022 School Locations Data was unavailable.

Note: District 75 and Charter Schools not included in analysis.

Clearly, expanded & accelerated plan for school construction necessary for overcrowded districts

- SCA testified in March that 70,000 more school seats needed to comply with law – yet capital plan has less than half that number
- DOE/SCA cut funding for new capacity in the capital plan by \$2.5 billion after class size law was passed; while \$2B added in July 2024, number of new schools/annexes built will decline over next 3 years
- SCA refuses to divulge where ***nearly half of all seats funded will be located***
- DOE now proposes that even in areas where schools are overcrowded, they should not have to lower class size, if there is an “intention” to build more schools at some undefined time in the future;
- For “overenrolled” schools [i.e. schools with underutilized schools nearby] DOE proposes that they should NEVER have to lower class size.
- Any exemptions would have to be agreed to by UFT and CSA.

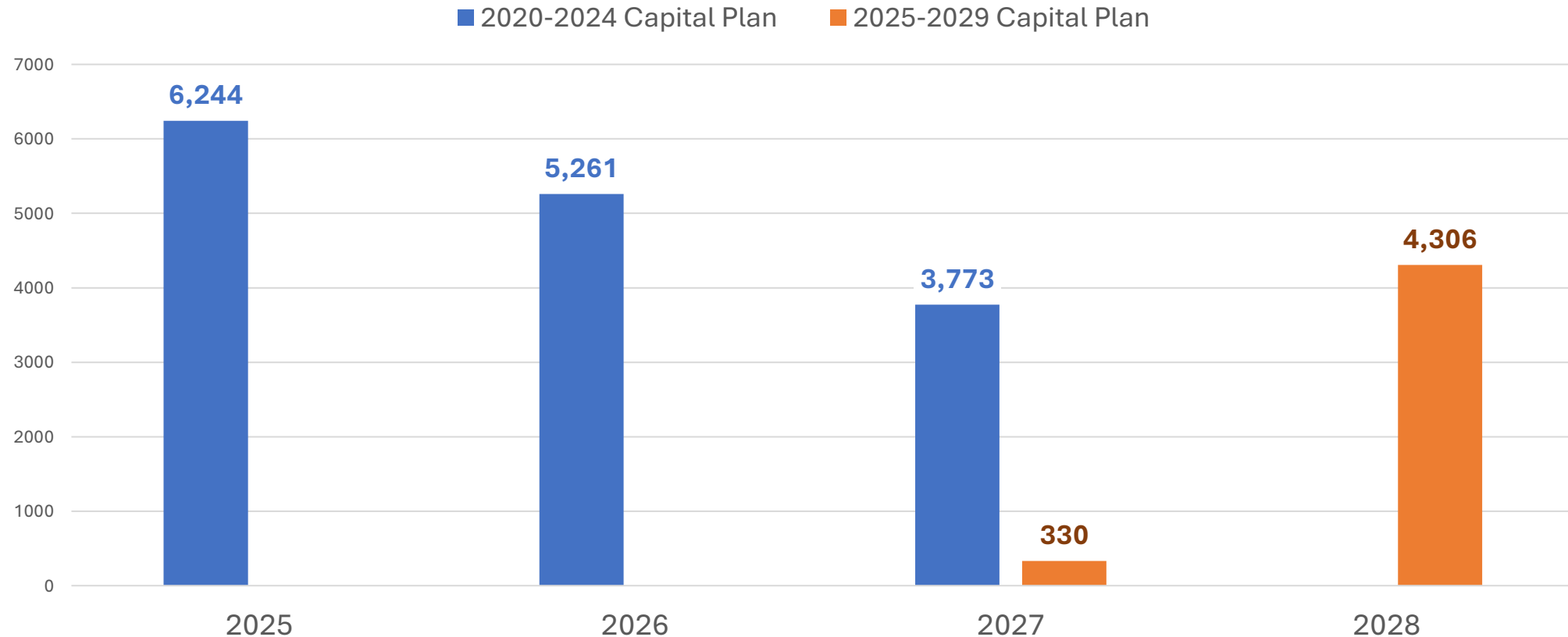
Total 'New Capacity' Seats in Five-Year Plans over time



Data Sources: FY20-24 & FY25-29 Capital Plans, November 2018 – February 2025.

Note: 'Actual seats to be built' is calculated by removing 'Design Only' seats.

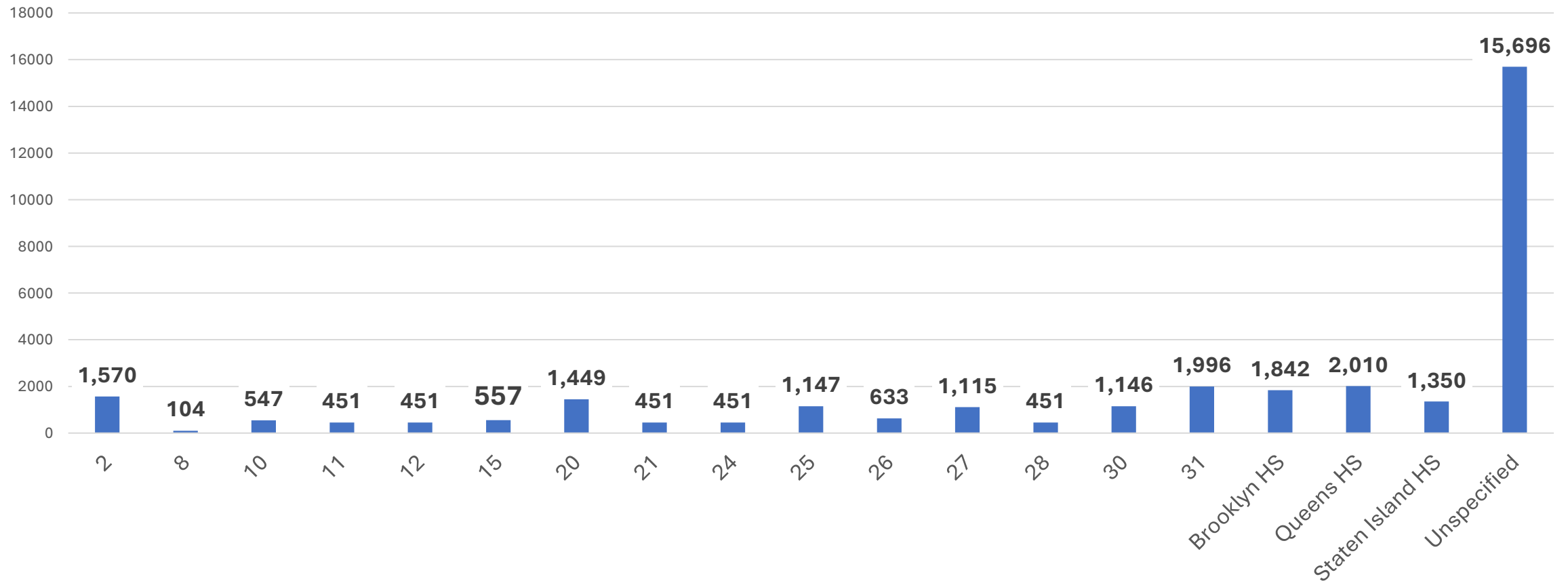
Declining number of seats to be completed over the next four years, with 19,914 projected to be completed by Sept. 2028 -- deadline in class size law.



Data Sources: [FY 2025-2029 Five Year Capital Plan Proposed Amendment - February 2025](#), FY 25-29 New Capacity Projects (C7-C10), FY 20-24 Capacity Projects in Process (C12-C13).

33,417 funded school seats in current 2025-2029 Capital Plan

47% unspecified as to district/subdistrict/grade level;

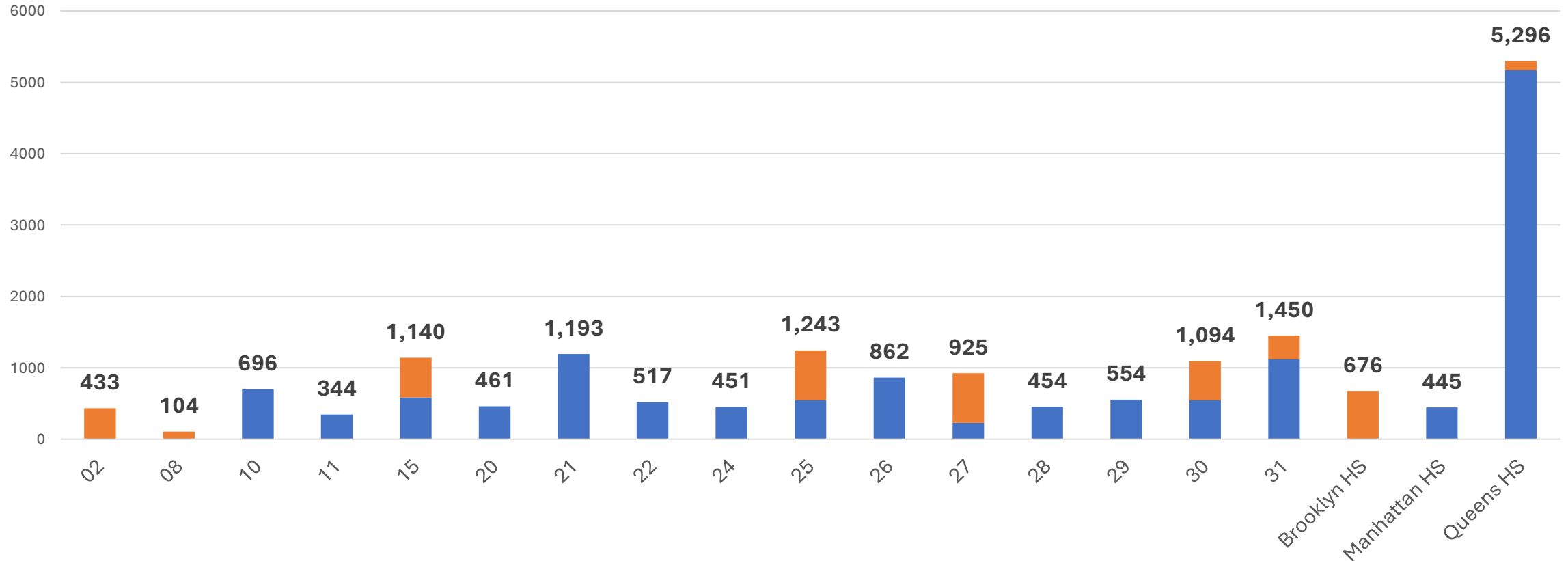


Data Sources: [FY 2025-2029 Five Year Capital Plan Proposed Amendment - February 2025](#) (page 17)

18,338 seats to be ready by Sept 2028 by district

77% carried over from previous capital plan.

■ Funded in the 2020-2024 Capital Plan ■ Funded in the 2025-2029 Capital Plan



Data Sources: [FY 2025-2029 Five Year Capital Plan Proposed Amendment - February 2025](#), FY25-29 New Capacity Projects (C7-C10), FY20-24 Capacity Projects in Process (C12-C13).

Lack of transparency & specificity violates two laws --

- Refusal to indicate where nearly half of all schools will be built violates [the class size law](#), which requires DOE to submit “*annual capital plan for school construction and leasing to show how many classrooms will be added in each year and in which schools and districts to achieve the class size targets*”
- [Local Law 167](#), passed by Council in 2018, also requires DOE and SCA to disclose in detail how many seats are needed by district, subdistrict and grade level, and the data and methodology these estimates based upon.
- ***Yet instead of becoming more transparent , after LL 167 passed, SCA deleted reporting on how many seats are needed from the capital plan***

SCA notoriously slow in finding school sites

[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 -- but it met only twice, solicited no input from Council or parent members, ruled out hundreds of city-owned sites for unclear reasons & never analyzed over 22,000 private owned sites.

Lack of transparency also hampers efforts by community leaders, parents and local officials to identify sites for schools when they know they are funded but without locations

Instead, SCA hires only 4 real estate firms in entire city to find sites, and pays them on retainer whether they identify sites or not

If DOE adjusted enrollment between nearby schools, fewer new schools would have to be built

- In some districts, overcrowded schools sit close to underutilized schools, yet DOE has refused to equalize enrollment across schools to be allow for smaller classes
- More equitably adjusting enrollment would be a win- win: overcrowded schools would be able to lower class size & offer lunch at more reasonable times to students; underutilized schools would be better funded and thus more able to provide advanced courses, extracurricular classes, and other services and programs necessary for a quality education.
- As Deputy Chancellor Dan Weisberg admitted: “***students equal dollars. ... If the school gets too small, you can't afford programs. You can't afford PSAL. You can't afford enrichment, debate clubs, et cetera. We've got too many schools that have gotten below critical mass.***” However, he’s also insisted that capping enrollment at overcrowded schools would be “***anti-parent, anti-family.***”
- Yet lowering class size is a top priority of most parents, and in a [recent survey](#) of those who took their children out of the NYC public school system, 82% said class size was a contributing factor, with 58% saying it contributed “a lot’ to their decision.

CBOs have thousands of empty 3K and PreK seats, risking their closure

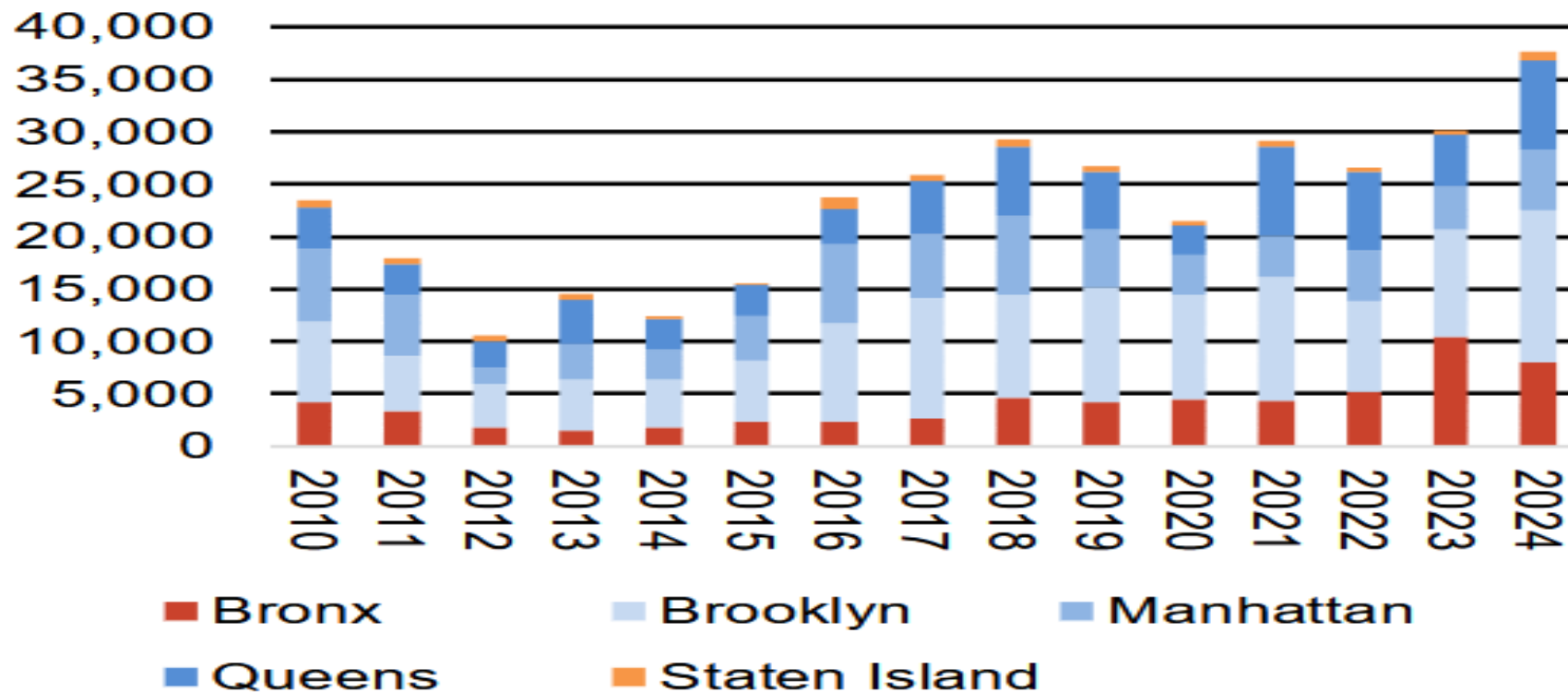
- According to DOE, there are 266 elementary schools that are too overcrowded to meet class size caps, yet 54% of them have PreK and/or 3K classes.
- In many cases, there are nearby CBOs struggling to fill their PreK/3K seats even as DOE has threatened that any CBO without 95% enrollment may lose funding
- CBOs can offer extended day and year programs unlike public schools & their PreK programs are on average rated higher in quality
- Many school districts now recognize that its better for small children to have a learning environment specifically designed for their needs, and one that can provide a more personalized, intimate, and play-based environment.

Class size Working Group made these and other recommendations in their report to create more space

- Merge more co-located schools, which could create more space for smaller classes.
- Revive Ed Construction Fund to build new public schools as part of mixed-use developments, especially for affordable housing – as “anchor tenants”
- Acquire closing parochial school buildings and analyze all city, state and federally owned buildings are available
- Reform ULURP or rezoning process to ensure that schools are built along with new housing – instead of long afterwards or not at all

NYC is experiencing rapid growth in housing – with no clear plan to build enough schools in these communities
2024 saw the highest rate of increase of units since 1965

Net New Housing Units Produced Yearly in New York City



Data source: NYS Comptroller, [Housing Production in New York City](#), March 2025

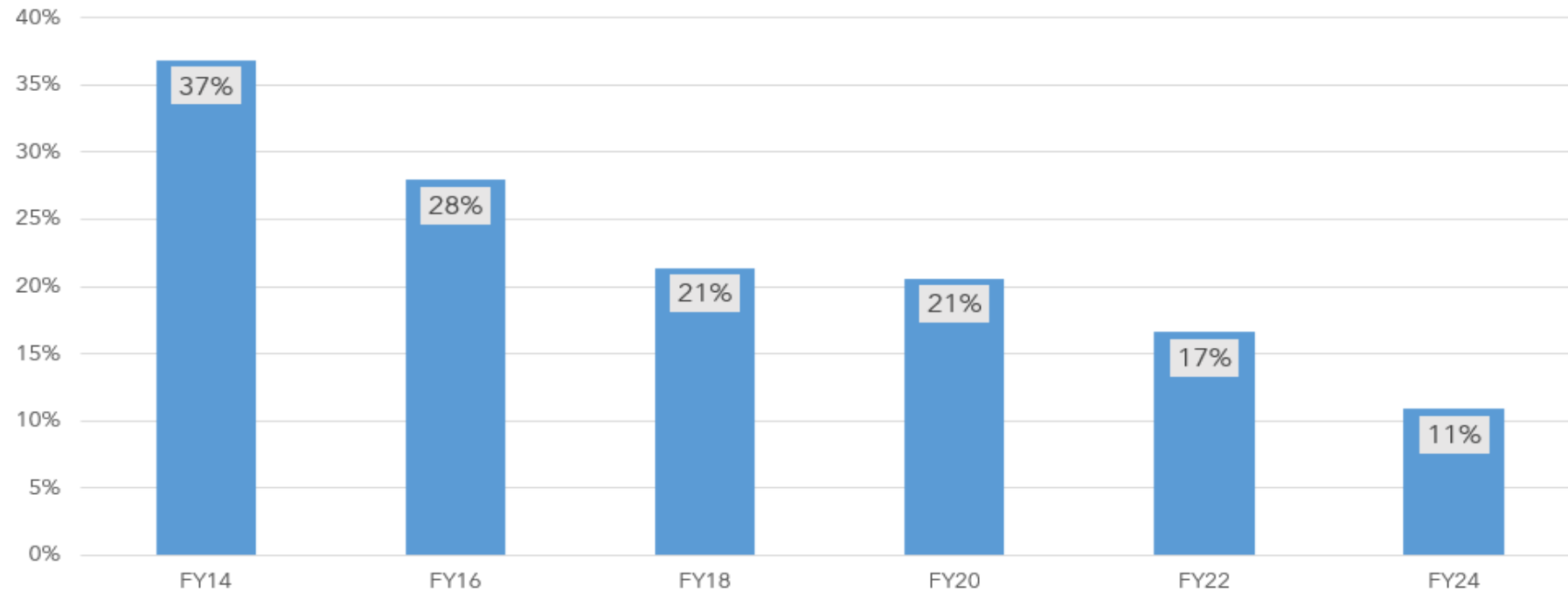
To make things worse...

- District planning has been proposing school utilization changes through the 2025-2026 year, including school closures, co-locations, grade expansions and other changes
- In their presentations to CECs, these do not even mention how these proposals could hamper efforts to achieve smaller classes in future
- In previous years, these presentations did include class size data, but District Planning stopped doing this after class size law was passed.
- When asked why they said that DOE told them to ignore class size in making their proposals & presentations.

How can parents help ensure that all NYC kids who need them get smaller classes

- Urge your Council Member not to approve the capital plan unless it provides sufficient space to allow all schools to lower class size
<https://tinyurl.com/schoolcapplan>
- Sign our petition to Chancellor, urging her to provide a real multi-year class size plan <https://tinyurl.com/petitionclasssizeplan>
- Ask your SLT or CEC to pass a resolution calling for the above changes – we can provide a draft
- Speak at one of the legally required class size [hearings starting next week](#) – we will provide talking points
- Sign up for the Class Size Matters newsletter for updates at <https://classsizematters.org/what-you-can-do/subscribe/>

Education Budget declining sharply as Percentage of NYC Ten-Year Capital Strategy Funding



Source: NYC OMB Executive Budget Ten Year Capital Strategy, 2003-2023

Borough class size hearings starting Tuesday June 10

Each session starts at 6 PM via Zoom, we can provide talking points!

Sign up to speak at <https://learndoe.org/contractforexcellence/>

Tuesday, June 10, 2025	Manhattan
Wednesday, June 11, 2025	Staten Island
Thursday, June 12, 2025	Queens
Monday, June 16, 2025	Brooklyn