

Summary

Arlington Public Schools (APS) currently uses design capacity to determine the number of available seats and the capacity utilization rate at each school. Design capacity represents the initial count of classrooms intended to support both general and specific educational programs when a building is originally designed or undergoes significant renovations.

Program capacity identifies how current spaces are used during a school year to meet core and specific educational program needs. APS believes a school's program capacity provides a more accurate and real-time view of capacity utilization and seat availability and shows how a school's general and specific educational programs impact capacity. Through this lens, APS can develop a more systematic process for program placement that does not create capacity challenges at schools.

Cardinal Elementary's Design and Program Capacity

Cardinal Elementary	Design	Program*
September 30, 2024 Enrollment	681	681
Capacity	747	795
Capacity Utilization	91%	86%
Available Seats	66	114

*Program Capacity is based on APS planning factors.

A school's design capacity and program capacity may differ for reasons including:

- Change in number of general and specific educational programs or
- Repurposing capacity generating classrooms for administrative, resource, or specialized spaces when space is available due to lower enrollment. These spaces are identified as flex spaces.

2025 Program Capacity Study – Elementary Schools

APS reviewed each school's program capacity based on the following information:

- Synergy room use and assignment,
- Most recent school floor plans and layouts,
- Identifying all capacity generating classrooms,
- Most recent class size report to determine class size planning factor by grade level and specific educational program,
- September 30, 2024, Membership Enrollment Report, and
- Any follow up with school administrators.

The appendices provide additional detailed information for your review.

Appendices

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Appendix A: SY2024-25 Program Capacity by Program

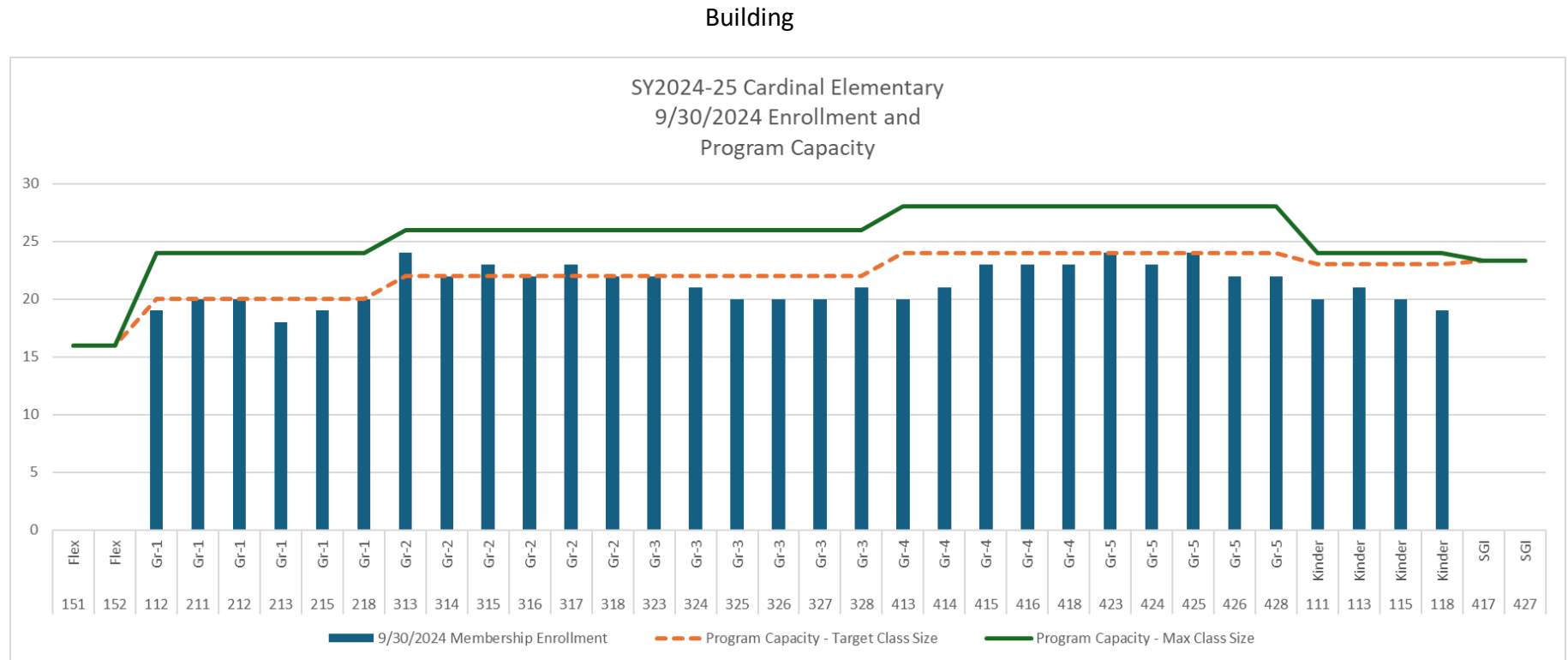
Cardinal Elementary Learning Spaces	SY2024-25 Program Capacity # of Classrooms	SY2024-25 Program Capacity # of Seats Target Class Size	SY2024-25 Program Capacity # of Seats Max Class Size
Kindergarten	4	92	96
First Grade	6	120	144
Second Grade	6	132	156
Third Grade	6	132	156
Fourth Grade	5	120	140
Fifth Grade	5	120	140
FLEX	2	47	47
FLEX	2	32	32
Total	36	795	911

Appendix B: Relocatables

Relocatable classrooms are modular, movable structures placed on school grounds to provide additional space when permanent facilities are at or over capacity. Relocatables serve as a flexible, short-to-medium term solution for schools experiencing capacity pressures, supporting enrollment growth, programmatic needs, and swing space during construction or renovation. Relocatables do not count towards a school's program capacity.

There are no relocatables onsite at Cardinal ES.

Appendix C: SY2024-25 Program Capacity by Classroom and Target Class Size



Appendix D: Definitions

Capacity – How many students a building can support based on the general and specific educational programs.

- Design Capacity – Original spaces assigned during construction or major renovation to meet the core and specific educational programs for students.
- Program Capacity – Current spaces assigned during a school year to meet the core and specific educational programs for students.

Capacity Generating Classrooms – Classrooms identified to meet core and specific educational requirements and used to calculate the number of seats available in a school.

- Examples include K-5 in elementary schools, PreK VPI, PreK Special Education (SE), MIPA.
- Classrooms that do not contribute to capacity would be small group instruction, English Learner (EL) classes, Speech.

Capacity Utilization – School enrollment divided by a building's capacity. A building can have a design capacity utilization and program capacity utilization.

Core Educational Spaces – General learning environments such as Grades K-5 and at secondary levels English, Math, Science or Social Studies.

Flex Spaces – Classrooms identified to be capacity generating but repurposed as administrative, resource, or specialized spaces.

Specific Educational Spaces – Focused self-contained learning environments such as Pre-K special education (SE), Interlude, or Life Skills.

Appendix E: Space Classifications and Descriptions

Administrative – Spaces that support administrative staff (e.g., office, guidance, counseling, clinic).

Auxiliary – Spaces that support building operations (e.g., cafeteria, storage, custodial, maintenance, toilets).

Core – General learning environments (e.g., grades K-12, science, math, social studies).

Resource – Enriched learning environments to support educational plans (e.g., English Learner, small group instruction, math coach, OT/PT).

Specialized – Specialized instructional environments (e.g., library, gym, art, music, exemplary projects, STEAM).

Specific – Focused learning environments (e.g., PreK, Special Education, MIPA, Interlude, Life Skills).

Appendix F: Capacity Formulas

$$\text{Program Capacity} = (\text{Total \# of specific educational classrooms} \times \text{class size planning factor}) + (\text{Total \# of general educational classrooms} \times \text{class size planning factor})$$

$$\text{Design Capacity Utilization} = \frac{\text{School's September 30th Membership Enrollment}}{\text{Design Capacity}}$$

$$\text{Program Capacity Utilization} = \frac{\text{School's September 30th Membership Enrollment}}{\text{Program Capacity}}$$

Appendix G: Additional Resources

1. [November 19, 2024, School Board Work Session Presentation on Program Capacity](#)
2. [September 30, 2024, Membership Enrollment](#)
3. [FY2025 Planning Factors](#)
4. [Class Size Report 2024-25](#)