

**BPS CAPITAL PLANNING**

# **LONG-TERM FACILITIES PLAN UPDATE**

## **MOVING TOWARD OUR VISION OF A HIGH-QUALITY STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

**MAY 2024**

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Over the course of two years, the City of Boston and the Boston Public Schools worked to develop the first-ever Long-Term Facilities Plan (LTFP). At the end of 2023, BPS published the [Long-Term Facilities Plan](#) (LTFP). The LTFP serves as a framework for creating an ecosystem of school buildings that support the High-Quality Student Experience (HQSE) we collectively envision for every one of our students. The HQSE was defined based on the priorities we heard from our collective community through more than 20 listening sessions and focus groups and a survey that reached more than 9,000 people. The LTFP confirms that many BPS school facilities currently are unable to provide the spaces for communities of teaching and learning to thrive. The plan outlines models for optimal physical environments to support the high-quality student experience and reviews, school by school, [which facilities are capable of fitting a model school](#).

This report provides an update on the work completed since December 2023 on the next steps to implement the Long-Term Facilities Plan (LTFP). Specifically, we write this to provide a public update on the work to engage communities on the LTFP, identify key interests and opportunities, and gather community feedback on how the LTFP should be used to develop specific school proposals. This report also presents a data framework, based on the LTFP and the decision-making rubric, to develop new proposals for school closures, mergers, grade reconfigurations, and other changes to advance the goal of a High-Quality Student Experience (HQSE) for all BPS students.

### **VISION FOR BPS SCHOOLS**

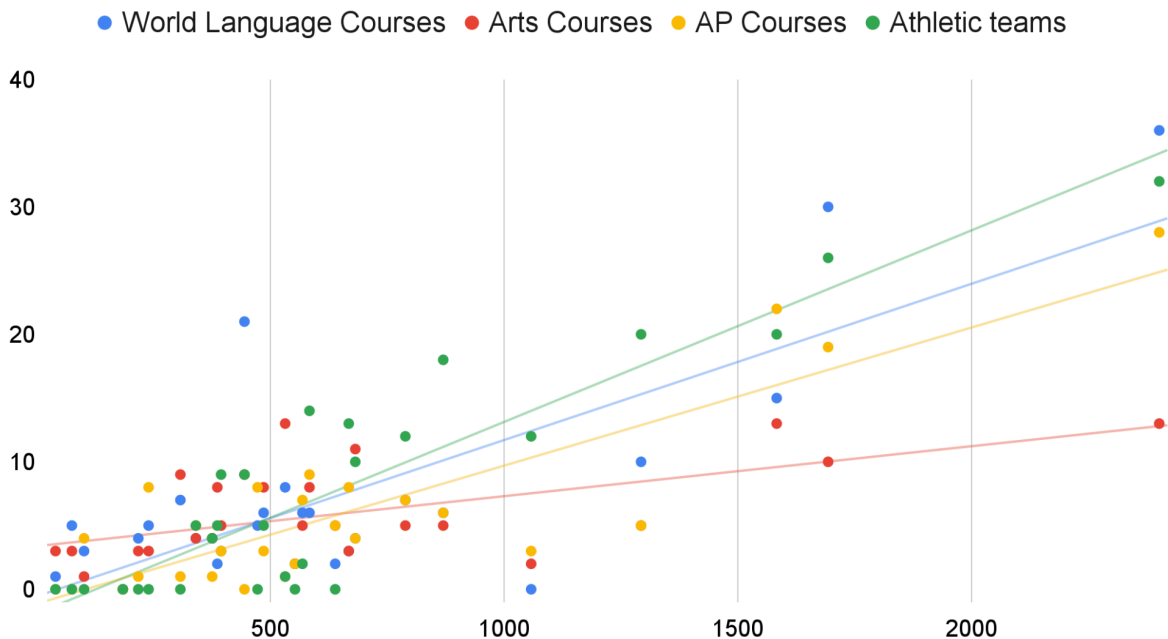
Throughout the year-long engagement process for the PreK-6 & 7-12 School Design Study, students and families expressed that access to a high quality education was their top criterion for choosing a school. Families have also expressed that, particularly in elementary school, they want high-quality options close to home. Collectively, we want students to learn in schools that provide rigorous and culturally affirming learning experiences, provide access to wellness and enrichment, contain a supportive network of caring adults, and have the physical spaces to support all aspects of a student's education – the four components of the BPS High-Quality Student Experience (HQSE).

The HQSE is the vision for the future of education in BPS expressed by our collective community – students, families, educators, alumni and partners – over many years. The decisions we are making to invest in our schools serve to bring that vision to reality for every

student, regardless of the student's needs or the school they attend. Students and families are clear that in a high-quality learning environment, students are excited to attend school. This means access to world languages, specialized science classes, theater and performing arts, native language learning, computer science and coding, music and band, athletics and clubs.

When school communities are housed in outdated, undersized buildings, they can only support small student populations. These schools are often unable to offer all of the academic and enrichment our students and families want, as their buildings do not have the appropriate physical spaces nor the student body scale to support a diversity of educational experiences.

### Secondary School Enrollment versus # of Academic and Enrichment Offerings



*The graph above shows a positive correlation between secondary school enrollment and the number of world language courses, arts courses, AP courses, and athletic teams offered at each school. (The number of arts courses from Boston Arts Academy, 84, has been hidden from the graph for greater readability). In general, schools with larger student bodies are able to offer a greater diversity of experiences.*

To make BPS the first choice for Boston families, we must ensure that every school is fully enrolled, resourced, and equipped to offer a full array of educational opportunities for students. From a facilities perspective, this work will require different long-term facilities changes, including closing, merging, reconfiguring, and renovating schools, as well as investing in new buildings.

Shifting the physical footprint of our District also serves as a catalyst to align our larger policies and practices in service of our future vision. By ensuring that our buildings support a full continuum of services, we are building capacity across the district for equitable distribution of specialized programs and expanding access to a broader array of learning experiences for all

students. This [expansion of District-wide inclusive education](#) increases options for students and families to find a school that meets their needs and aspirations – increasing access to participate in our choice system.

Each of our schools has unique “gems” that our students are experiencing right now – high-quality academics; strong school cultures where students feel a sense of belonging; exciting extracurriculars and athletic opportunities. But right now, our school buildings – and the ways that we’re utilizing our available physical spaces – do not allow for a full and rich array of learning experiences for every student, in every school, in every neighborhood. Acting now to shift the physical footprint of our District sets BPS on a path to greater stability and growth in the future – so that current BPS students have access to higher-quality learning environments, and future generations of Boston’s children have equitable access to the High-Quality Student Experience.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SINCE JANUARY 2024**

Since January 2024, we have been engaging our community to apply the data from the LTFP, identify themes to inform the development of specific proposals this spring, and to understand priorities related to transition support. This round of community engagement has included:

- An online webinar with more than 400 participants
- 3 in-person neighborhood-based workshops with an average of 50+ participants each
- 1 in-person high schools workshop with about 50 participants
- Focus groups with the Boston Student Advisory Council, several language-specific English Learner Advisory Councils, and the BPS Community Equity Roundtable
- A professional development session with all School Leaders
- A district-wide survey, with 1,874 survey respondents

The [webinar recording](#) and the [in-person workshop presentations](#) are available online in multiple languages.

At each in-person workshop and at several of the focus groups, we invited community members to participate in two activities:

- The Hypothetical Schools Implementation Exercise (summarized on [Slide 19](#)) was a simplified simulation of a decision process to build understanding of how data can be used to develop proposals, and jointly question the process. Data included hypothetical schools’ enrollment, utilization rate, specialized programming, model space feasibility, and distance to other nearby schools.
- The Neighborhood Data Activity was an opportunity to explore school-based and neighborhood-based data on an [interactive map](#) and identify the assets, opportunities, and challenges evident in the data. In addition to the LTFP data, the interactive map includes data on school populations and the number of BPS students living in each census tract.

The community engagement process and an analysis of common feedback themes is summarized in [this presentation](#).

Community members have shared invaluable feedback throughout the last few months that we are using to inform our planning. Below is a synthesis of the overarching themes we have heard from community members across neighborhoods about capital planning proposal development, engagement, and transition planning, with quotes from participants *in italics*.

1. **Proposals should be developed based on the entire ecosystem of schools, and not a series of one-offs.** This is a core principle of our planning efforts. Boston Public Schools is one district, and changes to one school will affect other school communities, as well. Participants in the workshops emphasized, for example, that if a school is under-enrolled, closing that school may lead to higher enrollment at surrounding schools – which then brings additional resources to the welcoming schools (*“the benefit of growing the community is that you grow the resources”*). Proposals should also be considered carefully to ensure that a closure or relocation of a particular school does not leave a vacuum in the neighborhood for any particular type of programming or resource.

Without careful attention to the broader ecosystem of schools, closing or merging schools has the potential to exacerbate existing inequities in BPS. For this reason, collaboration with school leaders and the inclusive education team is critical. For example, if a school that closes has a highly specialized program, like a substantially separate strand for students identified as having a particular disability, conventional planning would relocate that program – and its students – into existing schools that already have the same substantially separate strand. This transition would risk over-concentrating students with high needs in our welcoming schools. Instead, BPS Capital Planning is working with the Office of Specialized Services, the Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education, and the Schools Division to map out potential transition pathways for students in closing schools that offer more opportunities, more diverse programming in the least restrictive environment, and an overall higher-quality student experience to the greatest extent possible.

2. **Proposals should be future-looking, based on a vision of a growing district. Proposals should be based not only on BPS enrollment, but on the overall population of school-aged children in Boston.** During the workshops, participants explored maps showing the number of BPS students per census tract and identified themes, but many pointed out that the number of school-aged children – and the number of children who attend charter schools, parochial schools, METCO, or other options – should be a factor, as well. Participants emphasized that BPS should have a goal of increasing its “market share” or capture rate of all school-aged children, and that new or renovated facilities and new programmatic resources will help BPS compete with the alternatives. Several participants also asked about future-looking population projections. For example, one participant from Charlestown shared that PLAN: Charlestown includes a plan for steady population growth, which will require more school capacity to meet the

need – even though the current population of BPS students living in Charlestown may not justify a new or expanded school.

The BPS Planning and Analysis and Capital Planning teams are working closely with the Boston Planning and Development Agency's (BPDA's) Research Division to assess the population of school-aged children by neighborhood, along with the population of current BPS students. We are also looking closely at the population of current K2 students to understand the likely population and geographic distribution of future high school students. Additionally, we are working with the BPDA to understand neighborhood-level population growth projections, although it is difficult to precisely predict how overall population growth will impact BPS enrollment.

- 3. BPS planning and school changes should be integrated into broader neighborhood plans and capital investments.** One participant, for example, shared that a park adjacent to their school is currently being renovated, but the construction logistics have impacted staff, and communication to the school community about the park project has not always been clear. When located close to a school, City parks may provide outdoor space for sports, play, or outdoor learning – a critical component of the high-quality student experience - that may be lacking at the BPS facility itself. When evaluating whether a facility can support the high-quality student experience, we should also be considering neighborhood assets and the school community's access to them to understand the true lived experience of students at that school. Capital planning decisions about other neighborhood assets should be coordinated with capital planning decisions about BPS.

At the in-person workshops, planners and project managers from several other City departments – including the BPDA, the Streets Cabinet, the Environment Department, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Boston Housing Authority – shared an overview of current projects that are in construction or design that may impact school communities. Participants suggested several ways in which City planning across departments should impact BPS planning.

- 4. Student travel time must be considered.** Participants pointed out that while the workshop activity included an analysis of how many BPS students live in each census tract, the interactive map did not show where those students actually go to school. Travel patterns from home to school should be part of our planning, with the goal of increasing high-quality options for students closer to home. For example a participant noted, *"It has an adverse effect on the community [when students travel far to other schools] because in our neighborhood, the kids on a single street go to five different schools. This means the neighborhood isn't cohesive; people don't know each other. This impacts crime too – if there's a sense of community in the neighborhood, they look out for each other."* Participants emphasized that in the transition planning process, students who live near a school should get priority registration at that school (*"If you have to walk past a school to get to your school, then that's a problem"*).

As we are considering proposals, we are looking at the geographic diversity of a student body to understand how the school's home neighborhood will be impacted. Closing a high school where the majority of students are traveling from outside the neighborhood may be less disruptive than closing a high school that anchors the neighborhood's student body. As we are developing transition plans, we are working to identify what school options would be available to students as "welcoming schools." Wherever possible, we want to ensure that students have access to schools as close or closer to home than the closing school.

5. **Ensure that students who experience disruption also experience the benefits of these changes. Transition plans should particularly focus on students with autism, students in SLIFE programs, students who have experienced trauma, and other students with specialized needs.** BPS Capital Planning is working closely with the Office of Specialized Services, Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education, the Office of Human Capital, and the Student Support team to design transition plans that focus first on our highest needs students. This work must advance equity for our students at every step—and not further exacerbate inequities. This requires careful coordination with the expansion of inclusive education so that students learning in substantially separate settings who may experience a school closure or disruption are welcomed to a new school that can better support their needs and offer a broader range of inclusive learning opportunities.
6. **Be clear about where there is room for input, and where there is not.** Participants sometimes expressed frustration that past planning efforts have not resulted in action, or that community feedback has not been reflected in proposals. Participants asked: *"What can be stopped or reversed? When are we looking for alternatives?"* Participants also asked BPS to show clearly how community input is being used (*"People sometimes feel unsure where their input went after a listening session."*)

The themes synthesized here are an initial attempt to reflect how community input is shaping our planning efforts. As we prepare to finalize a set of proposals, we are designing our community engagement efforts to be as clear as possible about where we are looking for community input to shape proposals and what has already been decided. We will particularly ask for feedback from school communities on transition planning, including identifying programs, services, or resources that should be established at welcoming schools; human resources processes for staff; assignment support for students and families; celebrations or events to mark the experience of school changes; etc. We will bring proposals to school communities first so that they are aware and prepared to engage in the process, but not for school communities to pick which proposals will move forward to the School Committee.

Over the last year, we have also spoken with and learned from school administrators in other cities who have recently undergone similar processes, including Chicago, Philadelphia, New

York, Baltimore, Washington DC, and Indianapolis. We have also spoken with BPS colleagues who were directly involved in past school closures and mergers to learn what worked well and what did not work and must be improved. We are committed to continuous improvement and are focused on aligning resources to support students, families, staff, and communities through transitions over the next few years.

## DATA FRAMEWORK

The Long-Term Facilities Plan (LTFP), published in December 2023, includes new data and tools to guide decision-making around major capital investments to increase access to the High-Quality Student Experience (HQSE). The data from the LTFP also serves as an initial guide for decisions around closures, mergers, reconfigurations and other school changes.

Building on the LTFP data and the community feedback we have heard since publication in December 2023, we have identified 3 metrics that indicate that some type of intervention should be considered, whether a closure, merger, reconfiguration, or another change. Below each metric, we have included a selection of quotations from the [PreK-6 & 7-12 School Design Study Engagement Report](#) that reflect how community priorities have shaped this data framework.

All of the underlying data referenced below is available [at this link](#).

1. Is the five-year average utilization rate less than 84%? The utilization rate of a school building assesses how fully enrolled a school is, and is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled in a school by the capacity of the physical school building.<sup>1</sup> The ideal utilization rate is between 90-104% for both primary and secondary schools. A school that is under 84% enrolled tends to result in under-enrolled classrooms, with fewer resources for students, which in turn can limit learning opportunities and impact the ability to create a strong sense of school community. There are [32 school buildings](#) that have 5-year average utilization rates of <84%.

***“BPS schools that are very small get less attention – it limits sports activity, and you can’t represent your school.” – BPS Student***

***“My experience is that enrichment opportunities are based on the school. I attended a lot of open houses, one student’s experience is not the same school to school which is unfortunate.” – BPS Family***

***“They start languages in elementary and middle school in other places, and we don’t have that opportunity in our schools, even high schools. It speaks to equity and cultural competency.” - BPS Language Teacher***

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<sup>1</sup> Note: An external consultant assessed nearly all school buildings to determine their capacity. Since sharing this data publicly, a small number of school leaders have raised questions about the capacity numbers. BPS Capital Planning will re-assess the capacity of a small number of schools late April 2024 with a different consultant to confirm the numbers.

***“One of the big stresses is the open positions that cannot be filled. People get really thin and sometimes it’s very stressful and troublesome.” – Retired BPS Teacher, School Leader***

2. Is the Building Experience Score a 2 or less on the 0-4 scale? The Building Experience Score (BES) measures whether a building has the physical spaces needed to support the High-Quality Student Experience. The BES is assessed across four categories: 1) rigorous and culturally affirming learning experiences, 2) wellness and enrichment, 3) supportive network of caring adults, and 4) overall facilities. A BES of 2 or lower means that the building meets basic adequacy in 2 or fewer categories, meaning the building does not have all of the physical spaces needed to support the HQSE. There are [70 school buildings](#) that have a Building Experience Score of 0-2.

***“Some elementary schools are very old especially for the kids coming from early childhood. [Schools are] not welcoming: [classrooms are a] dark room in the basement with a lack of kid-friendly, safe, comfortable classrooms.” – BPS Teacher***

***“We don’t have an open gym or place where students can play. In winter, recess has to be indoors and they’re running around the school. That isn’t fair to the students. There isn’t a space to come together as a community which also feels really unfair. We don’t have space to work with students in small groups. We’re pulling students into the hall while gym might also be in the hall which is challenging.” – BPS Teacher***

***“The art teacher doesn’t have a room. She can’t prepare for the lesson before the students arrive because she has to change classrooms each time. She is carrying a rolling cart of supplies up 3 flights of stairs and washing things in the basement.” – BPS Teacher***

***“I was a coach in the District, and teaching PE. A building where you are trying to teach PE with no gym in a tiny cafeteria is not adequate for the educational programs for our students. We are resilient and can adapt, but we are doing our students a disservice to not have access to a gym and wellness space for both students and faculty to engage in.” – BPS Staff***

3. Does the building have the physical spaces to provide a full continuum of services? This is one of the metrics within the Building Experience Score, and is a key measure as we work to shift the physical footprint of the District to support inclusive education in every school. The metric assesses a school building’s ability to fully serve all BPS students well by evaluating 1) the quality of substantially separate spaces, 2) the quality of small group instruction and break-out room spaces, 3) the adherence to universal design principles<sup>2</sup>, and 4) whether there are at least two classrooms for each grade level

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<sup>2</sup> The seven principles, defined by the Center for Excellence in Universal Design, assess whether the design and composition of an environment can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent



currently served in the building. When a building does not have the physical spaces to support a full continuum of services, certain student needs are not able to be served in that school, limiting the diversity of learners in the building and limiting students' and families' educational experiences and choices. There are [75 school buildings](#) that cannot provide a full continuum of services.

***“What about special space for collaborations, or 1 on 1 teacher and student times, pull out, and also storage? Different types of spaces are needed based on the program. At some schools, all these happen in corridors.” – Community Member***

***“Inclusion doesn’t have any barriers. So meaning open space...wide halls, no bright lights...no steps...feels like it was well thought out to not exclude any particular group... Space applies differently to different disabilities. E.g. bright lights for vision issues, corner clearance for wheelchairs, space to sign across the room, colors that are too bright. People who cannot negotiate stairs.” – Community Partner***

***“No one has their own office including the front office and nurse. Social workers and therapists, they all have shared spaces.” – BPS Teacher***

***“I worked in Sheltered English Immersion. Finding a space was really hard, I found myself in copy spaces and students are distracted by noises or people. We have privacy issues. There is no assigned space or office, it limits our ability to serve students and build relationships. There are not a lot of office spaces, and I might have to take kids to the stairs.” – BPS Teacher***

We shared these three indicators with all School Leaders and a cross-departmental team of BPS and City subject matter experts in March and April 2024, and asked for feedback on the effectiveness and equity impacts of using these metrics to guide the development of proposals. The additional metrics listed below were incorporated into this data framework as a result of feedback from these stakeholders, reflecting specific considerations for closures and mergers.

### **Additional Metrics Considered in Decision-Making**

High percentage of students who are administratively assigned to a school. BPS operates as a choice system, but many schools have a large number of students who did not choose that school, but rather, were administratively assigned. A large number of administrative assignments indicates that relatively few students and families are choosing that school. Current district administrative assignment data only includes students assigned to a school in lottery rounds 1, 2 and 3. By winter 2025, BPS will report this data on all students

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possible by all people regardless of age, size, ability, or disability. Universal Design Principles incorporate a variety of strategies and approaches for designing accessible school spaces through the seven principles of Universal Design: 1) Equitable use, 2) Flexibility in use, 3) Simple and intuitive use, 4) Perceptible information, 5) Tolerance for error, 6) Low physical effort (Efficient use design), and 7) Size and space for approach and use

administratively assigned by October of a given school year in order to better understand the number of students attending a school they did not select. Although not specifically administrative assignment and therefore not reflected in this dataset, this dynamic of limited or no choice is similar for many students identified with disabilities whose IEPs require a substantially separate setting and multilingual students whose English Language Development (ELD) Level requires a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) program. As only certain schools house programs that meet specific learning needs, families and students requiring these programs are often unable to participate fully in the BPS choice system, but rather are given a limited number of school options. The implementation of the district's inclusive education plan over the next five years will increase the number of school options for students with disabilities and multilingual learners.

Low number of students for whom the school is first, second or third choice. Similar to the administrative assignment metric, some schools have a higher number of students ranking the school as their first, second or third choice. A high number of students ranking the school in the top three of their choices indicates the school is more highly chosen.

***“This could be an opportunity to close schools that don't work, especially if parents are not choosing them. A good way to rebrand and listen. But this needs to be based on listening to parents.” – BPS Parent***

***“I felt like my son was winning when we got our first choice in the lottery process. I heard from other parents that the process and system was complicated. I felt so lucky to be able to get a spot.” – BPS Parent***

Number of sections per grade in secondary schools. In order to ensure students have access to a full academic portfolio in grades 7-12, a secondary school should have at least four sections per grade level. The rubric data metric “Continuum of Services” tells us whether a building's physical spaces are able to, on average, support two sections per grade. School-specific analysis using student enrollment tells us which schools are able to provide at least four sections per grade. Four sections per grade allows for desirable programming, teacher collaboration time, and the structure to support a full continuum of services. In general, schools with more sections per grade have more course offerings, including advanced level courses, a broad range of world languages, visual and performing arts, business and technology, and other specials. This is particularly important at the secondary level.

High concentration of specialized programs for students with high needs. This is measured by the percentage of students at the school who are in a substantially separate program or a SLIFE (Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education) program. Historically, District policies have led to a high concentration of specialized programs within a relatively small number of schools that were under-enrolled and therefore had the physical space to take on new programs. This concentration impacts a school's budget, feeling of community, and ability to provide a range of academic and enrichment activities to all students. In recent years, enrollment decline at the secondary level has been concentrated in these open enrollment

schools. With smaller student bodies, there are generally fewer options for advanced coursework, world languages, arts and music classes, sports, and other programmatic offerings.

As a part of our inclusive education work, BPS is moving towards supporting more students with disabilities and multilingual learners in inclusive general education classrooms and shifting our specialized programs to be shared equitably across school communities. We will continue to support substantially separate and SLIFE classrooms to meet the needs of students who require them, as well as specialized programs and schools that serve a particular high needs student population, such as alternative education programs and special education public day schools. However, where possible, we will be situating specialized classrooms within schools that also provide opportunities for students to be integrated with their peers for a portion of the school day and for others, whose needs allow, to be fully integrated with appropriate supports. Closing a school that meets this criteria opens up opportunities for the current students to be better served in different school communities, often in less restrictive environments with greater access to high-quality learning experiences.

***“We work with a lot of new arrivals who are new English learners. That’s the biggest issue for the children of our clients: learning English and being able to participate in their classes. If you’re a new arrival and you’re 13, that’s not an option to go to [School Name] for dual language.” – Community Partner***

Low percentage of the student body lives near the school. Over the last year of community engagement, students and families overwhelmingly expressed a desire for high-quality schools *close to home*. Yet at many of our schools, students travel from far away neighborhoods – often because programs to support their IEP or language needs limit their options closer to home. This is particularly true for elementary school students. In our choice system, secondary students may choose schools citywide; however, they, too, should have a quality option close to home. As BPS expands inclusive education in every school and increases access to rigorous and culturally affirming learning experiences in every school, all students will have high-quality options close to home.

For schools in Boston’s geographically isolated neighborhoods – Allston-Brighton, Charlestown, and East Boston – close proximity is defined as living within the same neighborhood as the school. For schools in all other neighborhoods, close proximity is defined as living within 1 mile of elementary schools and 2 miles of secondary schools.

***“I would love for every neighborhood to have a decent school, not racially segregated, so that everyone could go to their neighborhood school.” - BPS Staff Member***

***“I live in Dorchester. To the right of my home is the [School Name 1] and the left is [School Name 2]. We got a school WAY on the other side of town where she [my daughter] would be bussed and there was no support system. If she got sick in the day and I couldn’t leave work, my aunt couldn’t get her. As a result, we were unable to send her to BPS... We are city people, love the neighborhood, love the schools in our***

***neighborhood, we go to all the school events but did not have an opportunity to attend. I couldn't get my child into her neighborhood schools.” – BPS Parent***

### **Additional Metrics Considered for School Mergers**

The metrics to consider a school for a merger are similar to those considered for a school closure, but in the case of a merger, the schools are assessed in combination. Combining schools should lead to a higher-quality student experience, such as increasing the diversity of learners able to be served by the school or improving the school's ability to provide a full continuum of services.

Proximity to one another or to an empty building. To be considered for a merger to become a 2-campus school, the two school buildings must be within a mile of one another. To be considered for a merger into a single school building, there must be a building large enough to house all involved school communities. While 2-campus schools are not ideal long-term, they will continue to be part of the BPS portfolio in the short- to medium-term.

One or both schools has a utilization rate under 84%. When at least one of the schools is under 84% enrolled, it tends to have half-full classrooms, with limited access to resources for students. Combining schools creates an opportunity to combine classrooms, concentrate resources for students and free up physical space in the building(s) to support additional elements of the HQSE.

One or both schools cannot support a full continuum of services, but together they can. School mergers can create multiple classrooms at each grade level, allowing for greater flexibility to foster a team-based approach to serve a diversity of learners. When physical space is freed up within the building(s), that space can be repurposed as small group learning space, break-out space, educator planning space, family or community meeting space, space for specials like science or art, or other spaces to support the HQSE.

One or both schools is a single-strand school. Single strand schools, defined as schools with only one classroom per grade level, are generally the smallest schools in BPS. While some of these schools are fully enrolled and in-demand, they are generally not able to serve students with diverse learning needs and offer the full range of experiential programs, specialty classes, arts, athletics, clubs, and other academic enrichments that make up the High Quality Student Experience.

### ***What about neighborhood and District-level metrics?***

In addition to individual school-level metrics, we also consider neighborhood-level and District-level metrics to ensure proposals strengthen the entire ecosystem of BPS schools. We may remove schools from consideration of closure if:

- A school is located in a neighborhood where there are more students than available seats

- A school serves students in highly specialized programs and there is no current transition pathway for these students to be served well in other schools

### ***Developing 2024 Proposals and Transition Plans***

As we apply the data framework to our current schools, it's clear that there are more schools that meet the criteria for closure, merger, or other changes than we plan to recommend this year. We have proposed an annual cycle to consider new proposals each spring, with any closures or mergers going into effect after the next full academic year.

Shifting the physical footprint of BPS to create a District that is stable and growing is a long-term process that will take decades to complete. The 18-month time frame from proposal to implementation ensures that the District can align the staff and resources to manage and support transitions well, while the City's 5-year Capital Plan allows us to look ahead and plan for new builds and renovations.

As we apply the LTFP data to develop proposals for closures, mergers, and other changes, we are guided by the following planning principles:

1. Proposals should unlock specific near-term opportunities for a higher-quality student experience. They may also offer an opportunity to renovate a building for future use or create clear transition pathways for students and families.
2. Each transition must be managed carefully, with designated support from Welcome Services, the Office of Human Capital, Academics, Student Support, and other Central Office teams. Students, families, and staff should have clear points of contact for one-on-one support as they choose a new school and address other transition issues. We have limited staff resources to do this well, and so we are committed to only taking on the number of changes we can manage effectively.
3. As we move forward in shifting the physical footprint of BPS, we must maintain our focus on analyzing unintended consequences. We are committed to placing students in a higher quality and/or more inclusive environment as a result of these changes. We will identify transition pathways that allow students in highly specialized programs to be served well in new school communities.

All students impacted by a school closure will have priority in the assignment process. Before the general assignment season opens, students impacted by a closure will receive information and support on the school selection process including invitations to visit schools and participate in showcases; assistance with school choice forms; and registration during the priority round. Students who are enrolled in specialized programs for students with disabilities or multilingual learners will have one-on-one support from the Office of Specialized Services and the Office of Multilingual and Multicultural Education to understand their options.