

What is your school's utilization?

Chicago Public Schools calculates whether a school is underutilized, efficiently utilized, or overcrowded by taking the total number of classrooms according to their data; and subtracts out roughly 24% of the rooms as "ancillary" classrooms (defined as rooms used for science, music/art, technology lab, special education classes and "specialty" classes related to programming); then they take the number of students currently enrolled as of September 20th that year and divide the total amount of classrooms (minus the ancillary classrooms), then divide that total by 30 students per classroom.

Total Classrooms - Ancillary Classrooms = Total Homeroom Classes

Divide current enrollment/30 students = the number of classrooms that should be occupied

Take the number of classrooms divided by/how many classes should be occupied

That percentage is the utilization rate.

20 total classrooms - 5 ancillary classrooms = 15 Homeroom Classrooms

300 students/30 = 10 Classrooms should be used

10/15 classrooms = 66% utilization rate

Many folks believe that CPS hasn't even accurately counted the number of rooms in some schools. Yet CPS will use its "formula" and how it ranks YOUR school, to decide if your school should be closed.

Concerned parents, LSCs and educators can do YOUR OWN assessment of your REAL-LIFE utilization by doing a "Walk Through" of YOUR school, and documenting the answers to some key questions:

- How is each classroom used? Will 30 students really "fit" in that classroom?
- Which grade uses each room? Be sure to document rooms used for early childhood, Pre-K and K.
- What is the number of students in room? Note whether you think you need smaller class sizes.
- Do you have a library? Science lab? Computer lab? World Languages lab? CPS calls these "ancillary" uses, too.
- Do you have enough lunchroom space, or do you have to stagger lunch periods b/c of lack of space?
- Playground - is it adequate for your needs?
- Document any spaces used for ELL, Spec. Ed, any special programs your school may have, and review how many are counted as your total student population on the CPS website.
- Do you have After-School programming? What spaces are used, by how many and at what times? (also an "ancillary" use).
- Does your school have any "external" partners using space in the bldg? Who are these Partners, and what spaces do they use, for how many students, and at what times?
- How does your current use of available space align with the school's "Continuous Improvement Work Plan"?
- Has the longer school day impacted the use of your spaces?
- And finally . . . **WHAT IS YOUR VISION for how the space in the school should be used to better support learning and teaching?**
- What condition is your school in? While you're doing your own assessment of your school's use of space, it's also a great opportunity to document what facility improvements that you need to improve learning and teaching conditions, and advance YOUR educational vision for your school.

How does YOUR Space Utilization Assessment compare to CPS' Ranking of your school?

To find CPS' Utilization Report on your school, you can . . .

- Go to CPS' website, search for your school, scroll down to the bottom of the "At A Glance" page and download your school utilization report.
- Or, use this link to find CPS' School Utilization Rankings released on December 5th, 2012:
http://cps.edu/About_CPS/Policies_and_guidelines/Pages/qualityschools.aspx
This will also let you see which other schools are ranked "efficient," "under-utilized" or "over-crowded."

ONCE YOU'VE COMPLETED YOUR "WALK THROUGH" AND ASSESSED FOR YOURSELVES WHAT YOUR SCHOOL'S SPACE NEEDS REALLY ARE – TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE – SHARE YOUR FINDINGS!

- Meet with your local Aldermen and state legislators.
- Be sure that your Principal and Local School Council members participate, and know what you found.
- Tell your CPS "Network Chief".
- Email your results to the General Assembly's "CHICAGO EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES TASK FORCE" at:
ceftf.ilga@gmail.com
- IS CPS' RANKING WRONG? Share your results with CPS officials.

REMEMBER: STATE LAW REQUIRES THAT CPS' UTILIZATION STANDARDS SHOULD ACCOUNT FOR THE SPACE NEEDS OF DIFFERENT AGES AND GRADES AND THEIR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM NEEDS.