Citizens Advisory Committee Questions - Spring 2018

Questions 1, 2 and 3

- Under slide #15 educational capacity for Lynbrook is 1803 and the projected number of students is 1826. Same question for Homestead, where the educational capacity is 2295 and projected is 2434.

- Glad it explained the difference between enrollment capacity and plant capacity. The misunderstanding of these terms seems to lead to lots of upset. I wanted to ask if the second paragraph under LHS Supplemental School Assignment Program is accurate. I think McAuliffe was inadvertently omitted unless I'm misreading it.

- The educational capacity for Lynbrook is 1803, yet attending enrollment slightly higher than that. Is it normal? I am concerned that this way of presenting information continues to lend support to the misperception that our schools are too crowded because we exceed our capacity.

Answer: *You may remember that the District received multiple questions from community members about educational capacity back in January 2017. In response, District staff created a Frequently Asked Questions document that addressed this topic (along with several other issues), which was then shared with the group and community. Below is the information that was provided as part of that FAQ document.*

(1) What is the difference between Educational Capacity and Maximum Capacity?

The State of California requires school districts to calculate and provide the Board-approved Educational Capacity for each of its schools every year. Educational Capacity is the capacity of a campus as it is being utilized that year, using assumptions that maximize the effectiveness of the campus to meet the current educational needs of the staff and students. Those assumptions are the same across all high schools and may include how many periods a day a classroom is used and the average number of students in each class.

Educational Capacity is different from Maximum Plant Capacity, which is the maximum number of students a campus can safely and effectively contain, without any educational restrictions or limits for that year. These restrictions or limits are the reason that Educational Capacity is usually much lower than Maximum Plant Capacity, which also ensure that going over Education Capacity does not negatively impact the safety and effectiveness of the campus, students or staff.

The resources (sections, teachers, etc.) provided to each school are not determined by Education Capacity or Maximum Plant Capacity, but by the actual number of attending

students. All high schools across the District follow the same Section Allocation Methodology to ensure the most efficient and equitable allocation of resources.

Analogous Example (Hotel Capacity):
One might think of school capacity as similar to the capacity of a hotel. For example, a hotel with 100 rooms might have a standard capacity of 2 people per room. This would provide the hotel with a standard capacity of 200 people. However, each room is equipped with two queen beds and can safely and effectively accommodate up to four people. This provides the hotel a maximum capacity of 400 people.

There are days when the hotel is sold out and may have some rooms with more than 2 people. This is how the hotel may have more people staying there than its standard capacity. However, it would be unusual for the hotel to regularly meet its maximum capacity of 400 people.

Why does Educational Capacity change from year to year?
The annual capacity review by the District is critical for planning purposes due to the ever-changing nature of school campuses and various factors that affect school capacity. These changes can be due to construction, change of use for a particular room(s) or changes in the assumptions used in the Educational Capacity calculation.

Large changes in Educational Capacity from one year to another are usually the result of construction projects being completed. In the last several years, Cupertino, Monta Vista, Homestead and Fremont all completed construction projects that included new classrooms.

As new buildings are completed, a projection of how each new room will be used is made and included in the capacity calculation for the school. After a new building has been used for a full school year, adjustments are often made on how each room is actually used. This can cause educational capacity for the school to change even as total enrollment may remain the same.

However, Educational Capacity can also shift based on changes in how rooms and space within the campus are being utilized from year to year.

One example of this can be found at Lynbrook High School. Because of space available, Lynbrook uses one of its standard classrooms as a Flex Lab that can be used by any teacher through a sign up process. Therefore, this room is not counted towards the educational capacity of the school. If needed, this room could be converted back to a standard classroom, thereby increasing the educational capacity of the campus.

At Fremont High School, a standard classroom was used as teacher offices and textbook storage for two departments. However, with the construction of a new building, the need for these offices and textbook storage was eliminated. Therefore, this room was

converted back to a standard classroom, further increasing the educational capacity of the school.

Question 4: From the low of mid 1750s, we now expect Lynbrook attending enrollment to be stable close to 1850s. One benefit of having a larger student body was to provide more sessions and more unique course offerings to the students. Could we get data on the year on year sessions and course offering growth at a Lynbrook? It would be good to share this data with the community so they can see the benefit of a larger enrollment size.

Answer: *Lynbrook, like all schools in the district, makes decisions on which courses to offer based on student requests, teacher availability, specialty room availability (art rooms, computer labs, etc.) and, most importantly, the number of sections (classes) that each school is given based on enrollment. As student enrollment rises, the number of sections will rise. In 2017-18, Lynbrook added five new courses: AP Computer Science Principles, AP Studio Art, Accounting II, Ceramics and Photography. The growth in enrollment meant Lynbrook was given more sections and the additional sections provided the flexibility to add these courses to the school's current offerings. Having additional students provided Lynbrook with flexibility to work with the sections (classes) allocated. The five additional classes were driven by student choice. Art teachers offered fewer of some classes that were not as popular and opened new ones. New sections enabled Lynbrook add the AP Computer Science Principles course. The additional students meant more students in classes that were previously struggling with enrollment. When classes do not have enough students enrolled in them, they risk being closed. Lynbrook students overall benefited from the transfer process in two ways, through the new class offerings and fuller classes with less risk of closure due to under-enrollment.*

Question 5: I was interviewed by the student newspaper last semester. The student editor shared that the campus was noticeably more crowded with the additional new 9th graders. Library became more crowded and not always able to find a space. Computers not as available. Longer lunch lines. Etc. While from hardware perspective (number of rooms etc) we understood Lynbrook can hold more students, maybe the software aspects needed to be invested in more to keep up. The software side makes a big difference in the education experience. Could you kindly raise this with the district?

Answer: *The District understands that there continues to be a sentiment from some members of the community that some of our campuses are overcrowded. However, when looking at some of the factors mentioned regarding the library and cafeteria facilities, Lynbrook is not more crowded than any other campus. Lynbrook has more computers/devices per student than our four other campuses. In terms of cafeteria service, District administrators have worked with each of our principals to determine the length of time that it takes students to get through our lunch lines, which was determined to be no longer than about 10 minutes at each of our sites. Several of our*

other campuses put out significantly more school lunches than Lynbrook, with one campus producing twice the number of school lunches for students. Once the cafeteria is demolished, there will be some staff temporarily displaced and moved into the library and this will likely make the campus feel slightly more crowded. However, once the new cafeteria and quad renovation are complete, students will have more usable space for studying and other activities.