



Palos Heights School District 128

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Merryl B. Brownlow, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Staffing Overview for 2023-2024

This overview is intended to provide the board with a big picture view of our staffing and enrollment. It incorporates the current state of the district and our future vision for continuing to provide high quality programming in a fiscally responsible manner. In order to examine the needs of the district, it is important to consider our mission and vision, our strategic plan (Portrait of a Learner), and the program parameters that guide our decision-making.

Program Considerations

- **Early Intervention:** We are committed to supporting literacy and mathematical concept development at the younger grades to intervene and fill gaps for struggling learners to better prepare them to access the instruction in later intermediate and middle school years.
- **Class Size Guidelines:** We are committed to responding to best practices as outlined by the Evidence Based Funding (EBF) model. We use EBF as a guide for appropriate class sizes to maximize instruction. Guidelines are just that. **We always consider context when making a formal recommendation that may be above or below the guidelines below.**
- **Recommended Class Size Guidelines**
 - Kindergarten = Recommendation to stay at 20 students per class
 - Smaller class sizes in Kindergarten provide higher levels of intensive support to close gaps from those with no previous formal school experience
 - First Grade = Range of 20-22 students per class
 - EBF recommendation is 20
 - Grades 2-3 = 22 -24 students per class
 - EBF recommendation is 20
 - Grades 4-8 = 24-26
 - EBF recommendation is 25
 - We are comfortable going to 26 in our core classes
- **Co-Teaching:** We are committed to an inclusive education for all students and have created a co-taught instructional model to support that commitment. Requires a special educator to be assigned to core content classes in the areas of literacy and mathematics to be sure IEP goals are supported and students achieve the targeted goals.
 - **Note:** Individual IEP needs may dictate a need for individual direct instruction programming.

INDIAN HILL
12800 S. Austin Ave
(708) 597-1285

CHIPPEWA
12425 S. Austin Ave
(708) 388-7260

NAVAJO HEIGHTS
12401 S. Oak Park Ave
(708) 385-3269

INDEPENDENCE JR. HIGH
6610 W. Highland Dr
(708) 448-0737

- **Middle School Programming:** We are committed to developing a true middle school model to support our students. Our recommendations reflect adjustments to take steps toward best practices that represent a successful middle school model.
 - **Grade Level Teams:** Creating teams at each grade level builds continuity and coherence for each cohort of students. It allows teachers the necessary collaboration and common planning opportunities to fully support at-risk students. It provides interdisciplinary instructional opportunities with common scheduling.
 - **Advisory:** Advisory continues to be a key component of a middle school model program.

2022-2023 CURRENT YEAR ENROLLMENT

Grade	Projected 22-23 Enrollment	Enrollment as of 1/9/2023	Sections	Average Class Size
Kindergarten	68	60*	3	20-21
1	80	82	4	20-21
2	90	92	4	23
3	75	75	4	18-19
4	81	88	4	22
5	68	68	3	22-23
Core 6	69	72	3* (4FTE)	24
Core 7	65	59	3* (4FTE)	19-20
Core 8	82	86	4	21-22
TOTALS	678	682	34	

*Pre-K Enrollment in 2021-2022 was 31

Projected Enrollment 2023-2024					
Grade	Current Enrollment 22-23	Projected Enrollment 23-24	Sections	Notes	Avg Class Size
Kindergarten	Grade PK - 50	63*	3*		21
1	Grade K - 60	68	4		17
2	Grade 1 - 81	84	4		21
3	Grade 2 - 92	93	4		23-24
4	Grade 3 - 75	77	4		19-20
5	Grade 4 - 88	91	4	+1 FTE	23-24
Core 6	Grade 5 - 68	71	3** (4 FTE)		24
Core 7	Grade 6 - 72	75	3** (4FTE)		25
Core 8	Grade 7 - 59	61	3** (4FTE)		20-21
TOTALS		683	35		

* Current Pre-K enrollment is +19 over 21-22, so more likely that we may tip to 4 sections in Kindergarten

** Core teachers are assigned as additional support for Tier 2 intervention in disciplines or for support for small group instruction. We would not reduce staffing, as we have larger sections at primary heading to IJHS that will push us back to a 4-section model beginning in Grade 6 next year.

Staffing Implications for FY 2024

Class Size Core

- **Kindergarten Enrollment:** The last 3 out of 4 years Kindergarten consisted of 4 sections. We currently have 50 Pre-K students enrolled. We had 31 enrolled last year at this time. We had agreed to target 20 as an ideal class size for Kindergarten. Given this year's low enrollment, we will monitor registration in February through April to determine if we will recommend a start to the year of 3 or 4 sections.
- **Grade 5:** One additional section needed to address enrollment.
- **Grade 3:** Current Grade 2 enrollment sits at 92. We do not typically take in many new students and have had little historical fluctuation in the overall total from Grade 2 to 3. However, we will monitor this grade level and if the enrollment hits 97, we would add a 5th section of Grade 3 next year.

Student Services

- **Overall Resource Staffing:** Currently there we are not anticipating the need to hire any additional employees to meet the needs of students. We are planning to shift the 4th special educator from Independence to Chippewa. The enrollment is down at IJHS and we have enrolled students with greater instructional needs at Chippewa. We will be looking to expand the continuum of services at Chippewa beyond the traditional co-taught model.

Related Services Staffing

- **EL Program:** As presented this past fall, we are recommending the addition of a 2nd EL teacher to be able to service our English Learners at the appropriate levels as outlined by the state as best practices in English Language instruction. All other related services are staffed at the appropriate levels.

Summary of District Impact

- Increase of 2.0 - 3.0 FTE in total