

The 2015 Call for New Quality Schools

For New Schools Opening in Fall 2016 or Thereafter



Office of School Reform and Innovation
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Table of Contents

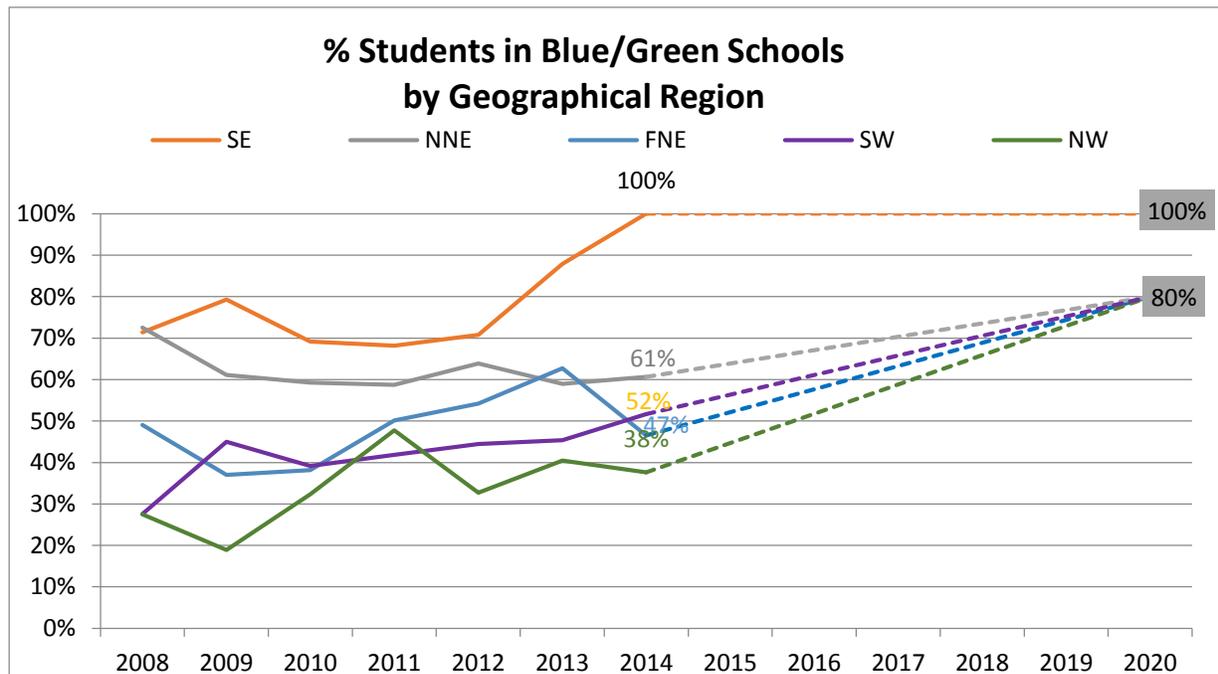
Letter from Superintendent Boasberg and Board Chair Haynes	3
How DPS Prioritizes Needs for Inclusion in the Call.....	4
The Statutory and Policy Context of the Call	5
Needs Identified in the Near Northeast.....	6
Need Identified in the Southwest	10
Other Areas in Denver	11
Additional Context	11
Six Ways for Community to Get Involved in the New Schools Process	14
Appendix A: New Schools Opened Since 2008-2009.....	15
Appendix B: Enrollment Trends	21
Appendix C: Innovation Status.....	27
Appendix D: Neighborhood Snapshots.....	27
Appendix E: Frequently Asked School Developer Questions.....	31
Appendix F: District Performance Maps	34

Letter from Superintendent Boasberg and Board Chair Haynes

December 18, 2014

Community Members and School Developers,

In Summer 2014, Denver Public Schools unveiled the Denver Plan 2020, an ambitious new vision for the district that was developed in collaboration with nearly 3,000 educators, parents, students, community partners and city leaders from across Denver. The Denver Plan 2020 establishes one overarching goal: **Great Schools in Every Neighborhood -- By 2020, 80% of students in each region of our city will be attending a high-quality school.**



To make this goal a reality, DPS is committed both to strengthening existing schools and welcoming new quality schools into the district.

In December 2014, DPS launched a series of “Great Schools Community Conversations” in each region of our city. In these meetings, community members learned about how Denver Public Schools makes decisions about its schools and its needs, explored performance and enrollment trends in their regions, and [gave feedback](#) about what makes a great school.

A key learning for DPS from these conversations was that we need to do a much better job sharing how we support existing schools, especially those that are underperforming. In January 2015, DPS will reconvene Great Schools Community Conversations in each region to speak further to the investments and supports that we provide to schools that are struggling.

The 2015 Call for New Quality Schools outlines needs DPS has identified for additional capacity in various areas of Denver. We identify needs on the basis of three sets of data:

1. **Analyzing Growth Trends and School Capacity.** Each Spring and Fall, DPS issues a [report](#) produced by the Office of Planning and Enrollment that identifies neighborhoods in our city where the number of children expected to enroll in our schools exceeds the number of seats available in existing neighborhood schools;
2. **Reviewing School Performance.** In September each year, DPS releases the [School Performance Framework \(SPF\)](#), which provides a performance rating for every school in the district based on a comprehensive set of academic and non-academic indicators; and, related,
3. **Evaluating Progress against School-level Goals.** Once the SPF has been reviewed, the Chief Schools Office tiers district schools into different bands for additional in-depth analysis and then identifies necessary and effective supports; this process is called the Tiered Support Framework. For charter schools, the Portfolio Team coordinates a review and tiering process that is very similar to the Tiered Support Framework.

Based on these considerations, the Call elevates needs for new or expanded public schools and supplies relevant details, such as the location for these needed schools, the grade levels and the approximate student counts. The Call also introduces the rigorous quality review process all new school proposals must undergo, whether they be for district-run or charter schools, provides important context for school developers, and outlines six opportunities for community members to continue to engage in the process.

Thank you for your interest in our new schools process and for joining us in pursuit of our goal: “Great Schools in Every Neighborhood.”

Sincerely,

Tom

Tom Boasberg, Superintendent

Happy

Allegra “Happy” Haynes, Chair

How DPS Prioritizes Needs for Inclusion in the Call

As Superintendent Boasberg and Board Chair Haynes highlighted, DPS uses several data points to determine potential needs for inclusion in the Call for New Quality Schools. This data informs two types of needs: 1) Enrollment Growth or Capacity Need, and 2) School Performance Gaps.

When the number of students projected to enroll in DPS schools in a particular neighborhood is larger than the number of seats available in existing or soon-to-open schools, we identify an “**Enrollment Growth or Capacity Need**.” As documented in [Appendix A](#), DPS has opened 59 new schools since 2008 with an additional 23 schools approved to open in the coming years, expanding the number of seats available in every region of the city. We evaluate enrollment growth and capacity by region and often by sub-region to ensure that we supply adequate space for students at the neighborhood level. The student enrollment throughout the district continues to increase, but not in every region as documented in [Appendix B: Enrollment Trends](#).

When schools do not meet performance standards identified in the School Performance Framework and the Tiered Support Framework, we identify a performance gap. Importantly, not all performance gaps

are elevated into a “**Performance Gap Need**” in the Call. A performance gap need is included in the Call for New Quality Schools when one of the following conditions is true:

1. **The Denver Board of Education has voted to close a school.** The Board may vote to close a district-run school, or to not renew a contract for a charter schools, when school performance has a consistent and persistent pattern of not meeting expectations and when more detailed analysis of the school suggests that it is not likely that the current program and staff will be able to rapidly improve results for students.
2. **A charter school Board of Directors has elected to close its school.** The Board of Directors at a charter school may decide independently, through a vote of its members, to surrender its charter contract or not seek renewal, based on its own assessment of school performance or other concerns. Over the past several years, Denver has seen a number of charter school Boards vote to surrender or not seek renewal of their charter contracts, and thus cease operating as a school.
3. **DPS leadership has determined that a cluster of schools in the same area are experiencing persistent performance problems, and therefore determines that at least one of the schools may need to be replaced with a new program, typically designed for turnaround.** Through the Tiered Support Framework referenced in the letter from Superintendent Boasberg and Board Chair Haynes, DPS seeks to actively provide intensive supports and sometimes interventions with schools that are not yet performing. If there is a concentration of these schools in one area, however, DPS may signal a request for a new school or additional capacity to serve this community.

The Statutory and Policy Context of the Call

The Call for New Quality Schools is placed within a rich context:

1. **The Colorado Charter Schools Act** requires districts to accept applications for new charter schools annually and identifies specific content requirements and process elements for the review of charter school applications. These applications must be assessed solely on the basis of merit.
2. **The Colorado State Board of Education and the National Association of Charter School Authorizers** have each established a series of standards or best practices for quality charter authorizing, which are embraced by DPS. Quality standards include the issuance of a document, like this one, clearly identifying district needs and priorities.
3. Through its **Policy AF: Charter Quality Authorizing**, the Denver Board of Education has established principles and standards for DPS’s authorizing work, including “creating Equitable Opportunity, Equitable Responsibility and Access, and Equitable Accountability” among all DPS schools. In this spirit, the Call is open to district-run and charter applicants.

Further, the Denver Board of Education is expected to endorse a new policy about facility allocation in January 2015. School developers and communities should expect that only new schools that are approved and meet a need identified in this document will be considered for district support of their facilities.

Denver Public Schools is the Local Education Agency for all schools in the district, charter and district-run. School developers should design schools with the expectation that 11% of students will possess disabilities.

Needs Identified in the Near Northeast

In the neighborhoods east of Quebec Blvd and/or north of I-70, DPS projects continued enrollment growth at a pace that has been generally consistent over time. **In the neighborhoods of Northfield and Stapleton**, DPS is projecting that additional seats will be needed at both the elementary and middle school levels in 2016. It is important to note that there is more than one approach to providing additional seats in schools. Sometimes it makes the most sense to open a new school, and other times it makes the most sense to add grade levels to an existing school or just increase the size of an existing school.

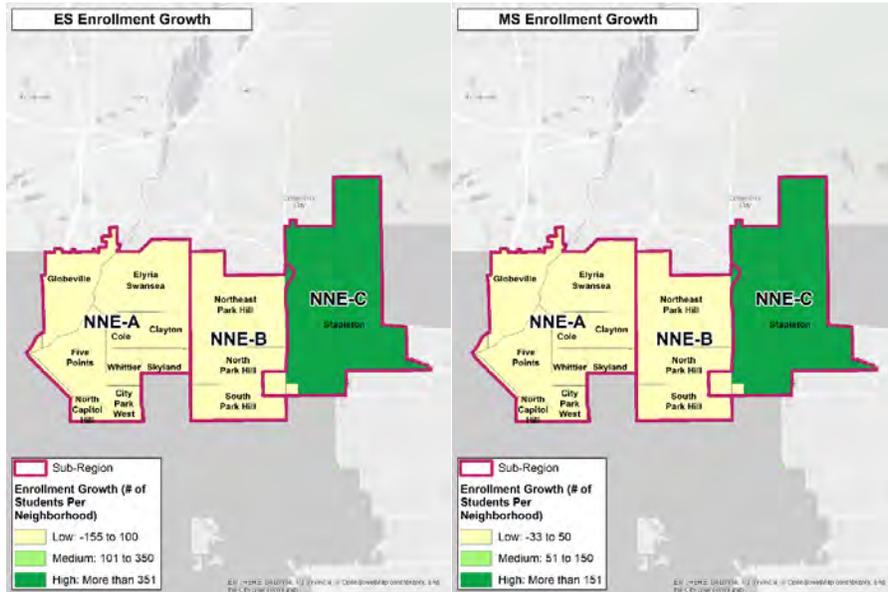
In areas west of Colorado Blvd, DPS continues to see concerning performance gaps where current schools are not meeting expectations. In these areas of the Near Northeast, we see higher rates of poverty and serve a greater proportion of students who are learning English as a second language. All new school proposals should prioritize efforts to provide equitable access to high quality schools for these students.

DPS is projecting that at least one, and possibly two, replacement elementary schools are needed as turnaround solutions in this area of the Near Northeast. Further, the planned closure of Pioneer Charter School's middle grades program, combined with capacity concerns for the area's 6-12 boundary school, is leading DPS to project the need for additional middle school seats in the northwest portion of the Near Northeast. Importantly, there is more than one approach to providing additional seats for students. Proposals at the middle school level in this neighborhood should contemplate service as a feeder for Manual High School.

As our school superintendent, Tom Boasberg, and Board Chair, Happy Haynes, [described](#) previously, DPS aims to increase access to high-quality schools by both strengthening existing schools and welcoming new quality schools into the district. In January, DPS will host another [Great Schools Community Conversation](#) in the Near Northeast to share supports and improvement strategies being leveraged in area schools.

To learn about newly opened schools or those approved to open in the Near Northeast, see [Appendix A: New Schools Opened Since 2008-2009](#).

Near Northeast Growth Needs: Stapleton Sub-Region



DPS forecasts the need for additional seat capacity at the elementary and middle school levels (the green portion of the map labeled “NNE-C”). As identified in the summary paragraphs, there is more than one approach to providing additional seats in schools. Quality proposals for new schools will be among the possible solutions considered to address these needs.

Additional elementary seats should:

1. Serve students in the [Stapleton Elementary Enrollment Zone](#);
2. Offer at least grades K-1 in Fall 2016 and grow to a full K-5 in 2017, with approximately 450 seats at full build.

Additional middle school seats should:

1. Serve students in the [Greater Park Hill-Stapleton Middle School Enrollment Zone](#).
2. Provide additional 6th grade seats in Fall 2016, 7th grade seats in 2017 and 8th grade seats in 2018, with approximately 350 additional seats at full build.

In both cases, the school must be able to participate immediately in the identified enrollment zone. Charter school developers should consider how this may affect their eligibility for federal start-up funding and plan accordingly.

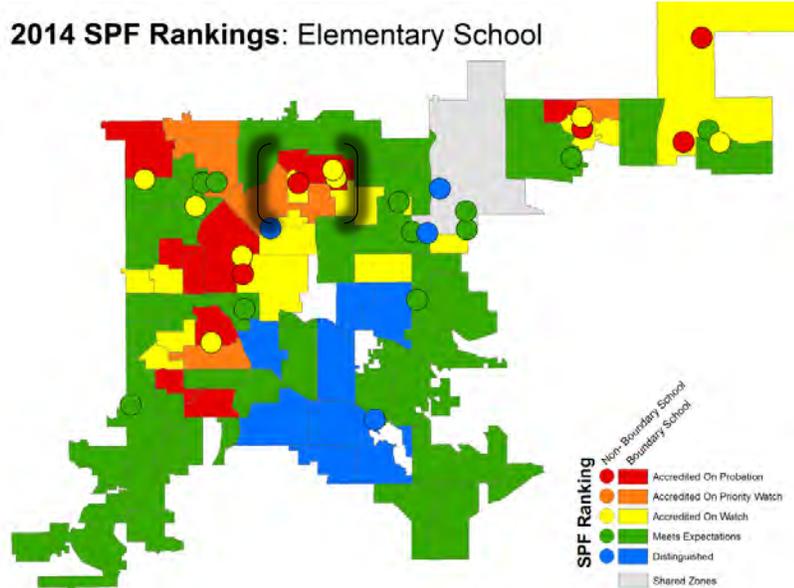
Student Demographics in the Stapleton Elementary Enrollment Zone

9% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch
 4% of students are English Language Learners
 *46% of ELLs are Spanish speakers
 25% of students are students of color

Student Demographics in the Greater Park Hill/Stapleton Middle School Enrollment Zone

36% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch
 11% of students are English Language Learners
 *74% of ELLs are Spanish speakers
 51% of students are students of color

Near Northeast Performance Gap Needs: Northwest Sub-Region



Elementary School # 1

On December 9th 2014, the Board of Directors of Pioneer Charter School, an ECE-8, voted to not seek renewal of their charter contract beyond the 2015-2016 school year. The surrounding secondary schools tend to offer a 6th through 12th grade continuum, and, to create better alignment, DPS is seeking a high quality elementary school to open to serve students in this community.

The new K-5 school should be designed to:

1. Serve students at the existing school and thus articulate clear, research-based program elements to operate as a turnaround school
2. Offer a strong program for English Language Learners, given its high proportion of ELLs, as compared to other area elementary schools
3. Provide approximately 400 seats at the full K-5 continuum in Fall 2016 (ECE may be necessary – further analysis is required)

Student Demographics at Pioneer Charter School

95% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch
77% of students are English Language Learners
*99% of ELLs are Spanish speakers
98% of students are students of color

Elementary School #2

DPS projects that there may be a need for an additional K-5 replacement program, given performance issues within a cluster of schools, other than Pioneer, in the northwest section of the Near Northeast. This cluster is circled in the graphic above.

Performance trends in this cluster of schools serving K-5 students are mixed. The cluster of schools includes both charter and district-run schools. Depending on the future performance of these schools, DPS may identify the need for a replacement program to open in 2016.

The potential school program shall:

1. Serve students reflecting the demographic of students in this cluster of schools
2. Provide a research-based turnaround approach that either opens whole school (i.e., serves grades K-5 in year one) or that phases in over a maximum of two years (e.g., serves K-2 in the first year and K-5 in the second year) with approximately 450 seats at full build
3. Offer a strong program and curriculum to serve English Language Learners
4. Continue service of any existing [center programs](#)

Cluster Demographics

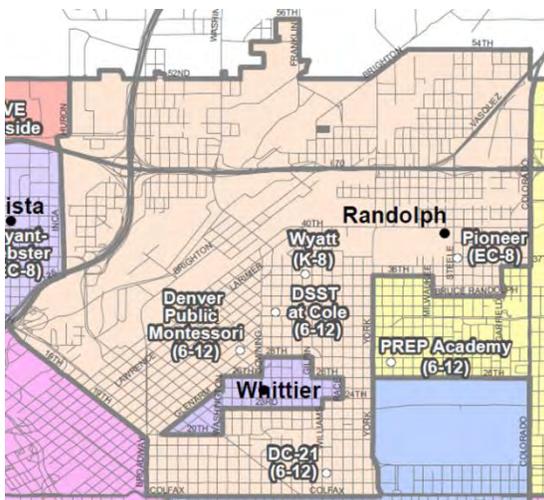
95% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch
 43% of students are English Language Learners
 *99% of ELLs are Spanish speakers
 95% of students are students of color

Near Northeast Capacity Need: Northwest Sub-Region

With the phase out of the middle school at Pioneer Charter School, combined with the reality that Bruce Randolph, the area’s boundary 6th – 12th grade school, is at full capacity, DPS projects the need for additional middle school seats in the northwest portion of the Near Northeast. As mentioned in the summary paragraphs, there is more than one approach to providing additional seats for students.

Additional middle school seats should:

1. Serve students reflecting the demographic of students in this neighborhood
2. Offer approximately 350 seats – DPS is open to either full offerings in 2016, or a slower growth model
3. Participate in a boundary or shared zone in the future, and provide a design that considers service as a dedicated feeder for Manual High School



Demographics of Area Middle School Students

88% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch
 47% of students are English Language Learners
 *97% of ELLs are Spanish speakers
 91% of students are students of color

Need Identified in the Southwest

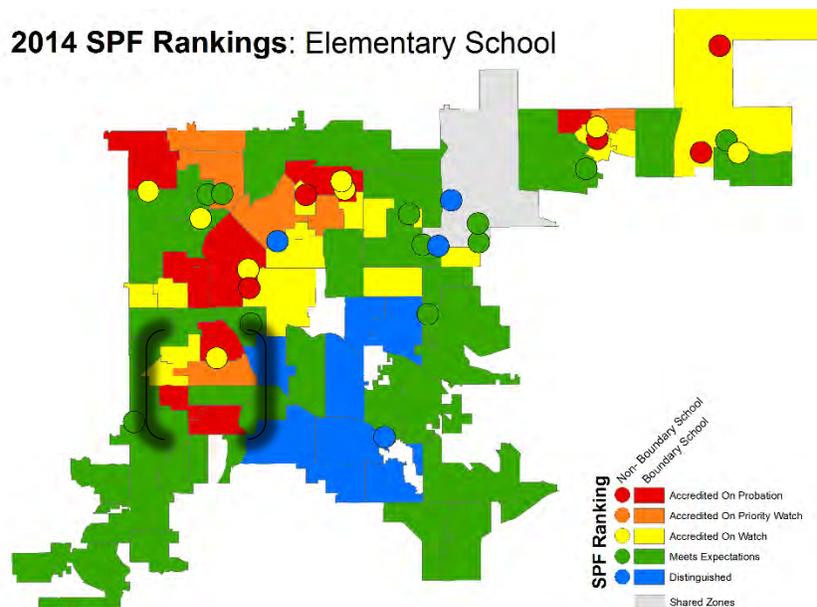
In 2013-2014, DPS launched targeted efforts to improve access to high-quality schools in the Southwest, where just 52% of students attend a high-quality school as identified on the SPF.

These initial efforts focused on quality middle-school options and on Kepner Middle School, specifically. As a result of those efforts, which were undertaken collaboratively with a dedicated Thought Partner Group from the Kepner community, two high-performing schools will replicate and open at Kepner in Fall 2016, [STRIVE Prep](#) and [Grant Beacon](#). An additional new school, [Compass Academy](#), founded by City Year and Johns Hopkins University, and in partnership with the community, also will provide new, quality options at the secondary level. Further, all three schools will deliver programming that includes Transitional Native Language Instruction and will do so in learning environments purposefully designed to be culturally responsive. In addition, [Rocky Mountain Prep 2](#) will join the Southwest family of elementary schools in Fall 2015 and provide a new Choice option for area families. To learn about new schools already open or approved to open in the Southwest, see [Appendix A](#).

These new schools offer great promise, and DPS recognizes that more must be done. This is a message we heard clearly in the Southwest's first [Great Schools Community Conversation](#), and it's something we've heard previously from community members, during public comment at DPS Board meetings, at other community gatherings and through poignant, community-based advocacy [reports](#).

As in all regions, DPS will convene another [Great Schools Community Conversation](#) in January to share supports and improvement strategies being leveraged in area schools. Simultaneously, DPS will focus attention on the possibility of attracting a new, high-quality elementary program that will, like the new middle schools in the Southwest, deliver programming that includes Transitional Native Language Instruction in a culturally responsive learning environment.

Southwest Performance Gap Need: Northern Portion Sub-Region



Performance trends in this cluster of elementary schools are mixed, and, depending on additional analysis and monitoring, DPS may identify the need for an elementary program to serve as a replacement to an existing program in this area.

The school should be designed to:

1. Serve students reflecting the demographic of students in this cluster of schools
2. Provide a research-based turnaround approach that either opens whole school (i.e., serves grades K-5 in year one) or that phases in over a maximum of two years (e.g., serves K-2 in the first year and K-5 in the second year) with approximately 450 seats at full build
3. Offer Transitional Native Language Instruction
4. Continue service of any existing [center programs](#)

Cluster Demographics

97% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch
65% of students are English Language Learners
*93% of ELLs are Spanish speakers
97% of students are students of color

Other Areas in Denver

DPS is not currently forecasting the need for additional capacity in other parts of Denver. However, DPS acknowledges that there continue to be performance challenges at a number of other schools in the city. (See [Appendix F](#)) Per the Tiered Support Framework, we are in the midst of analysis and monitoring among our district-run schools to determine whether current efforts to improve performance are likely to show results. Through the course of this analysis, it is possible that DPS would identify additional needs for replacement or turnaround schools in the district. Additionally, ongoing community conversations may surface the strong desire among community members for more rapid or intensive changes at their schools. If so, a supplement to the Call for New Quality Schools would be released in January or February 2015.

To learn more about DPS's continued support of existing turnaround schools in the city, visit [our website](#).

Additional Context

The Call for New Quality Schools is a document and a process, both designed to:

1. Transparently articulate DPS's needs for all new schools based on enrollment growth and school performance issues.
2. Provide information to help school developers choose a location that aligns to needs.

3. Support opportunities for community members to engage in the process to inform new schools in DPS.
4. Follow guidance outlined by the Colorado State Board of Education in their rules concerning charter authorizing and by National Association of Charter School Authorizers' best practice measures.
5. Act within the framework established by the Denver Board of Education in its Charter Authorizing Policy AF.
6. Establish clearly defined needs that will later inform facility allocation decisions.

As mentioned previously, the Call for New Quality Schools is open to both district-run and charter school developers.

A **district-run school** is a public school with a governance structure directly connected to DPS. It has DPS employees, and the Principal is hired and supervised by the district. A district-run school may seek flexibilities around its mission, curriculum, staffing terms, school calendar, school day and other fundamental aspects of their school design. Depending on the type of flexibilities that the school requires in order to operate its model, the school may choose to seek Innovation Status through a separate process (see Appendix C: Innovation Status.)

A **charter school** is a public school with a governance structure that is independent of the district. Charter schools are incorporated as non-profit entities in the state of Colorado and are overseen by a governing board established directly by the school. Charter schools are publicly funded and are free and open to the public without discrimination or selective criteria. Charter schools have the same responsibility to equitably serve students as district-run schools have and are held accountable through the same School Performance Framework employed throughout the district.

The Three Equities

All public schools in Denver, whether they be district-run or charter, operate within the "Three Equities:"

1. **Equity of Opportunity** means that the schools have access to equitable per pupil funding, support services from the district, and available facilities.
2. **Equity of Responsibility and Access** means that the schools must offer equitable and open access to all students—regardless of socio-economic status, disability, home language or other status—and share an equal obligation in district-wide responsibilities, such as the cost of district-wide special education services.

This equity takes shape in numerous ways, including:

- I. Access for students with more severe disabilities in high-quality schools. Historically, these students lacked access to charter schools, and, in recent years, DPS has worked collaboratively to open numerous programs for students with more severe needs in some of our best charter schools. Consistent with this equity commitment, all new school developers should anticipate serving students with more severe needs and should anticipate service for 11% of students possessing disabilities across the larger spectrum, as part of their school designs.

II. Enrollment practices. DPS offers a common enrollment system, [SchoolChoice](#), helping to ensure families have equitable access to all schools in the city. dis

3. **Equity of Accountability** means that all schools have the same accountability system under our [School Performance Framework](#) and that standards of performance are applied evenly across all school types.

The “Three Equities” originated within the path-breaking District-Charter Collaboration Compact, signed in 2010, and are now actively governed and operationalized by the [District-Charter Collaborative Council](#).

Program Interests

The [Denver Plan 2020](#) (PDF) identifies shared values, core beliefs, strategies and goals that drive delivery toward our promise of “Great Schools in Every Neighborhood.” We encourage school developers to consider key strategic elements, such as personalized learning, included within the Denver Plan.

As this document demonstrates, DPS also must focus on effective and innovative approaches to turnaround, the delivery of effective Transitional Native Language Instruction, and service to students with disabilities, as described in the Three Equities section, above.

Importantly, all public schools in Denver must fully honor the [Consent Decree](#). In situations where a charter provider seeks to serve as a turnaround provider for an existing TNLI zone school, DPS and its partners will consider modest deviations from the [language allocation guidelines](#) (PDF) established for district-run schools, in acknowledgement of charter schools’ unique posture under the Consent Decree.

A Note about Facilities

As mentioned previously, the [Denver Board of Education](#) is expected to adopt a new facility allocation policy in January 2015. This policy will set transparent criteria for the placement of schools in district-supported facilities.

In the 2015 Call cycle, school developers should be aware of two specific factors:

1. **Only approved schools that meet a need identified in the Call will be considered for facility placement or district support of their facilities.** Should schools in the performance clusters identified in this document make significant progress, for example, DPS will not need replacement providers and thus any approved schools will not be considered for facility placement.
2. **The real estate market in Denver is incredibly tight.** Locating and financing suitable facilities for public schools is extremely difficult in today’s market. In creating budgets, charter school developers should use reasonable estimates for facility costs, based on actual facility options. [Appendix D: Neighborhood Snapshots](#) includes ratings for “Facility Availability” in the real estate market.

About the Process

Coordinated by DPS's [Office of School Reform and Innovation](#) (OSRI), the process begins with release of the Strategic Regional Analysis in October and extends through June of the following year.



For more information about the process, please see [Appendix E: Frequently Asked School Developer Questions](#) and visit our [website](#).

Six Ways for Community to Get Involved in the New Schools Process

Successful new schools – and quality applications -- are formed through collaborations between parents/guardians, community members and exemplary school leaders who design rigorous programs tailored to student needs.

Parents/guardians and community members are encouraged to participate actively in the New Schools Process, and several opportunities are built in explicitly:

- (1) Participate in the [Great Schools Community Conversations](#), already underway;
- (2) Work with a founding team to propose a new school;
- (3) Write a letter supporting a new school application, for inclusion in its application or [directly](#) to the DPS Board of Education;
- (4) Serve on an [Applicant Review Team](#) (ART);
- (5) Attend the regional community meeting being hosted by DPS from [April 15-29](#); and/or

(6) Speak to the DPS Board of Education about the new school options during [public comment](#) on June 11, 2015.

Appendix A: New Schools Opened Since 2008-2009

School Name	School Type	Grades	Region	School Focus
2008-2009				
Cole Arts and Sciences Academy	District-run (Innovation) ¹	ECE-8	NE	Emphasizes learning through the arts and sciences
DSST Stapleton MS	Charter	6-8	NE	Emphasizes science and technology
Place Bridge Academy	District-run	ECE-8	SE	Serves newcomers to our country, with over 30 languages and 40 countries represented among Place students
Trevista	District-run (Innovation) ²	ECE-8	NW	Focuses on rigorous instruction and helping all students succeed
2009-2010				
Cesar Chavez Academy	Charter	K-8	NW	Focuses on scholarship, leadership, and community involvement
Denver Justice Academy	Charter	6-12	NW	Intensive pathway school with a focus on students who are involved with the criminal justice system or have not been successful in a traditional school setting
KIPP Denver Collegiate High School	Charter	9-12	SW	Provides a rigorous curriculum, more time in school, and a strong culture of achievement
Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy	District-run	K-8	SW	Focuses on the integration of the arts
Math and Sciences Leadership Academy	District-run	K-5	SW	Emphasizes science, math and technology
STRIVE Harvey Park	Charter	6-8	SW	College preparatory school that replicates a high-performing middle school
Venture Prep	Charter	6-12	NE	Provides interactive student projects with an emphasis on arts and technology
2010-2011				
Denver Green School	District-run (Innovation) ³	ECE-8	SE	Offers a hands-on learning experience focused around issues of sustainability within the community
Denver Language School	Charter	K-8	SE	Offers full language immersion in Mandarin Chinese and Spanish

¹ Cole Arts and Sciences Academy received Innovation Status in Aug. 2009

² Trevista received Innovation Status in Sept. 2012

³ Denver Green School received Innovation Status in Apr. 2010

DSST GVR	Charter	6-12	FNE	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing high school
GALS	Charter	6-12	SE	All-girls expeditionary learning school
Lake International	District-run	6-8	NW	Authorized International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program that prepares students for success in high school, college, and beyond
SOAR @ GVR	Charter	K-5	FNE	Offers holistic approach to education using the workshop model of instruction, extended learning time and added enrichment opportunities
STRIVE Highland	Charter	6-8	NW	College preparatory school that replicates a high-performing middle school
STRIVE Lake	Charter	6-8	NW	College preparatory school that replicates a high-performing middle school
Summit Academy	District-run (Innovation) ⁴	6-12	SW	Multiple Pathways Center targeted for students who are at-risk, over-aged, under-credited, and/or who have dropped out of school
2011-2012				
Collegiate Preparatory Academy	District-run (Innovation) ⁵	9-12	FNE	Offers students academically rigorous programming aimed at meeting their individual needs and providing them with the skills and abilities to succeed at top colleges and universities
DCIS Elementary at Ford	District-run (Innovation) ⁶	ECE-5	FNE	Replicates Denver's world-class magnet program focused on international and cross-cultural affairs
DCIS Secondary at Montbello	District-run (Innovation) ⁷	6-12	FNE	Replicates Denver's world-class magnet program focused on international and cross-cultural affairs
Denver Center for 21 st Century Learning (DC21)	District-run (Innovation) ⁸	6-12	NE	Multiple Pathways Center offering accelerated and rigorous education for students seeking a relationship-oriented education
DSST Cole	Charter	6-12	NE	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing high school
High Tech Early College	District-run (Innovation) ⁹	9-13	FNE	Centers on applied rigorous learning and connections with industry professionals, and offers a 5 th year of high school leading to an Associate degree

⁴ Summit Academy received Innovation Status in Aug. 2011

⁵ Collegiate Prep Academy received Innovation Status in June 2011

⁶ DCIS at Ford received Innovation Status in May 2011

⁷ DCIS at Montbello received Innovation Status in May 2011

⁸ DC21 received Innovation Status in June 2011

⁹ High Tech Early College received Innovation Status in June 2011

KIPP Montbello	Charter	5-8	FNE	Offers students a rigorous curriculum, more time in school, and a strong culture of achievement
Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy High	District-run	9-12	SW	Expands the existing successful K-8 arts-integrated magnet program
Noel Community Arts School	District-run (Innovation) ¹⁰	6-12	FNE	Offers academically rigorous programming complimented by a robust integrated arts focus
SOAR @ Oakland	Charter	ECE-5	FNE	Offers holistic approach to education using the workshop model of instruction, extended learning time and added enrichment opportunities
Swigert International School	District-run (Innovation) ¹¹	ECE-5	NE	Focuses on international affairs and is shaped through a community engagement process with the Stapleton community
University Prep	Charter	K-5	NE	Offers an academically rigorous, results-driven program, particularly focused on literacy
Vista Academy	District-run (Innovation) ¹²	6-12	FNE	Multiple Pathways Center targeted for students who are at-risk, over-aged, under-credited, and/or who have dropped out of school
2012-2013				
Creativity Challenge Community (C3)	District-run (Innovation) ¹³	K-5	SE	Focuses on thinking creatively to solve problems, learning through partnerships with community organizations, and challenging each other
DSST College View MS	Charter	6-8	SW	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing high school
McAuliffe International School	District-run (Innovation) ¹⁴	6-8	NE	Focuses on international affairs and is shaped through a community engagement process with the Stapleton community
Monarch Montessori	Charter	E-5	FNE	Offers a public Montessori educational program
Rocky Mountain Prep	Charter	ECE-8	SE	Emphasizes rigorous academic preparation, character development, and individualized support
Sims-Fayola International Academy	Charter	6-12	FNE	Provides a college preparatory, international studies program with daily character and leadership education
STRIVE Prep GVR MS	Charter	6-8	FNE	College preparatory school that replicates Denver's highest performing middle school
STRIVE Prep Montbello MS	Charter	6-8	FNE	College preparatory school that replicates Denver's highest performing middle school

¹⁰ Noel Community Arts received Innovation Status in May 2011

¹¹ Swigert International School received Innovation Status in Aug. 2011

¹² Vista Academy received Innovation Status in Aug. 2011

¹³ C3 received Innovation Status in Apr. 2012

¹⁴ McAuliffe International School received Innovation Status in Mar. 2012

STRIVE Prep SMART HS	Charter	9-12	SW	College preparatory school that provides a challenging and relevant liberal arts education of high standards, structure, and accountability
West Generation	District-run (Innovation) ¹⁵	6-12	NW	Nationally recognized Generation Schools model with a rigorous college- and career-readiness academic program
West Leadership Academy	District-run (Innovation) ¹⁶	6-12	NW	A rigorous, college- and career-focused education
2013-2014				
Academy 360	Charter	ECE-5	FNE	Expeditionary Learning with an emphasis on health and wellness
Downtown Denver Expeditionary School	Charter	K-5	NE (CBD)	Offers students a downtown Expeditionary Learning experience
STRIVE Prep NW High School	Charter	9-12	NW	College preparatory school that provides a challenging and relevant liberal arts education of high standards, structure, and accountability
DSST Byers MS	Charter	6-12	SE	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing 6-12
DCIS- Fairmont	District-run (Innovation) ¹⁷	ECE-5	NW	Replicates Denver's world-class magnet program focused on international and cross-cultural affairs
Denver Public Montessori Jr./ Sr. High School	District-run (Innovation) ¹⁸	6-12	NE	Offers a public Montessori educational program at the secondary level
Compassion Road Academy	District-run (Innovation) ¹⁹	9-12	NE	Multiple Pathways Center targeted for students who are at-risk, over-aged, under-credited, and/or who have dropped out of school with an emphasis on supporting students who transition out of the Gilliam Detention Center
Excel Academy	District-run (Innovation) ²⁰	9-12	SW	Multiple Pathways Center targeted for students who are at-risk, over-aged, under-credited, and/or who have dropped out of school
2014-2015				
Denver Discovery Middle School	District-run (seeking innovation)	6-8	NE	Offers a project-based learning environment with a rigorous 21 st century curriculum
DSST Cole High School	Charter	9-12	NE	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing high school
GALS HS	Charter	9-12	NNE	All-girls expeditionary learning school

¹⁵ West Generations Academy received Innovation Status in Mar. 2012

¹⁶ West Leadership Academy received Innovation Status in Mar. 2012

¹⁷ DCIS-Fairmont in currently received Innovation Status in Mar. 2013

¹⁸ Denver Public Montessori Jr./Sr. High School received Innovation Status Mar. 2013

¹⁹ Compassion Road Academy received Innovation Status Mar. 2013

²⁰ Excel Academy received Innovation Status Aug. 2013

Highline Academy Northeast	Charter	K-8	FNE	A charter replication school of the successful Highline Academy in SE Denver offering students a rigorous curriculum that incorporates Core Knowledge and character development
High Tech Elementary School	District-run (seeking innovation)	ECE-5	NNE	Offers a project-based learning environment with a rigorous 21 st century curriculum and high standards
Oakland Elementary	District-run ²¹	ECE-5	FNE	DSSN/program TBD
STRIVE Prep Elementary School	Charter	K-5	SW	Offers high academic expectations, instructional rigor, character development and cultural enrichment in elementary environment in STRIVE Prep network
2015-2016* Approved to Open				
Northfield High School	District-run	9-12	NNE	Comprehensive High School with an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program.
Legacy Options High School	District-run	9-12	FNE	Multiple Pathways Center targeted for students who are at-risk, over-aged, under-credited, and/or who have dropped out of school
KIPP Montbello Collegiate High School	Charter	9-12	FNE	College prep high school program focused on blended learning
KIPP Montbello Elementary School	Charter	E-4	FNE	College prep elementary school program focused on blended learning
REACH Charter School	Charter	E-5	NNE	A full inclusion elementary program with wraparound services and differentiated instruction
ROOTS Elementary	Charter	K-5	NNE	A personalized learning elementary with mixed grade levels
Rise Up Community School	Charter			A drop out recovery school serving as an Intensive Pathway program
Hampden Heights Expeditionary School	District-run	E-5	SE	An expeditionary learning school integrating environmental sciences
Competency-based HS (name TBD)	District-run	9-12	SE	A competency based approach to a small school
Compass Academy	Charter	6-12	SW	A partnership with City Year and JHU to serve students with wrap around services and 21 st century learning opportunities
DSST College View HS	Charter	9-12	SW	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing high school
Rocky Mountain Prep 2	Charter	E-5	SW	Emphasizes rigorous academic preparation, character development, and individualized support
2016-2017* Approved to Open				

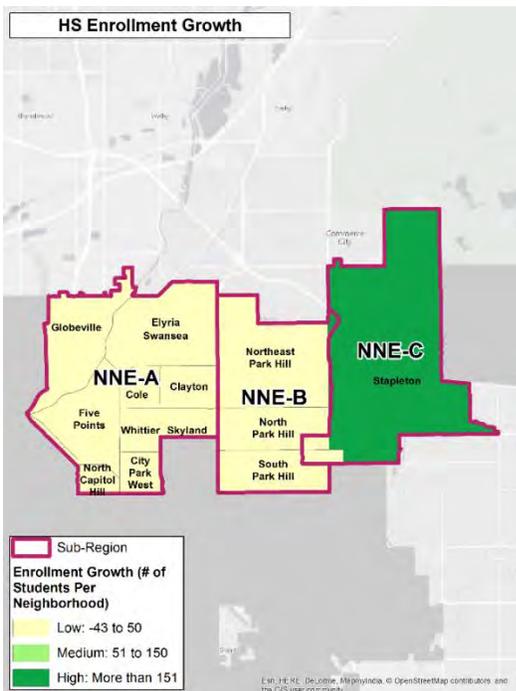
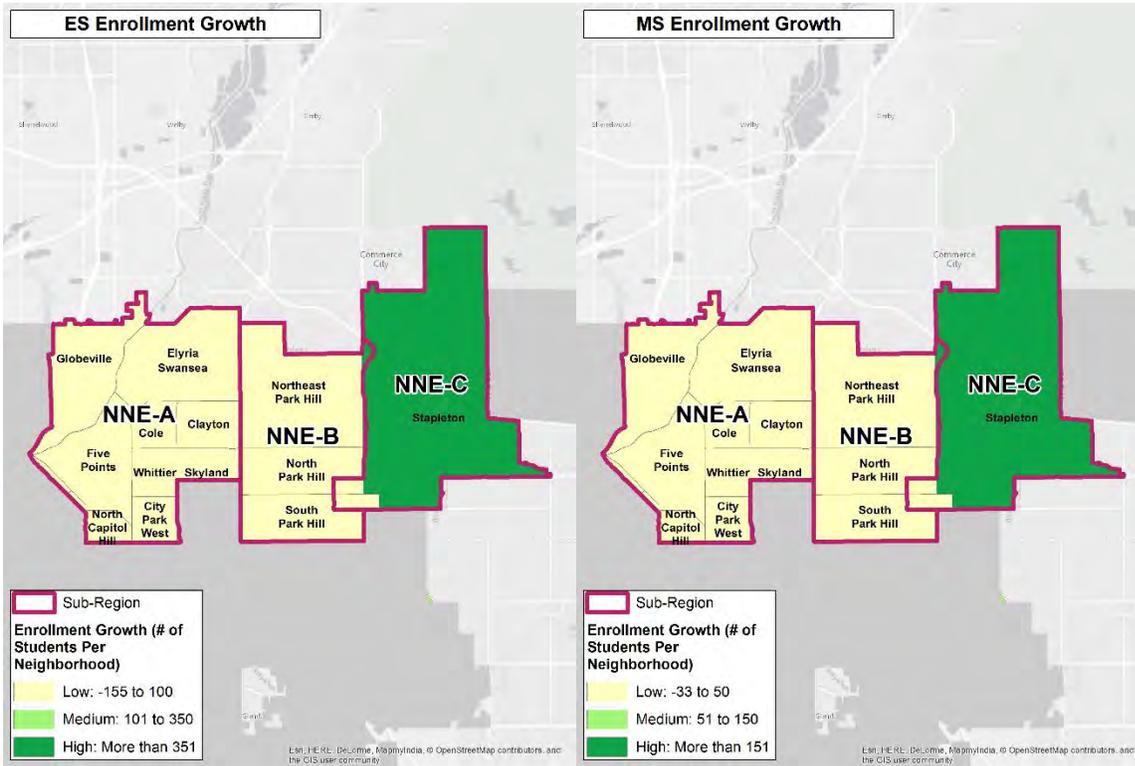
²¹ Oakland Elementary School received Innovation Status June 2014

DSST Byers HS	Charter	9-12	SE	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing high school
High Tech Early College Middle School	District-run	6-8	FNE/NNE	Offers a project-based learning environment with a rigorous 21 st century curriculum and high standards
DSST VII MS	Charter	6-8	TBD	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing high school
NNE Community Engagement School	Charter	6-8	NNE	A personalized learning approach with an interdisciplinary project-based curriculum, focused on empowering students
Banneker Jemison STEM Academy	Charter	K-5	NNE	A STEM elementary school
STRIVE Prep FNE HS	Charter	9-12	FNE	College preparatory school that provides a challenging and relevant liberal arts education of high standards, structure, and accountability
STRIVE Prep FNE ES	Charter	K-5	FNE	Offers high academic expectations, instructional rigor, character development and cultural enrichment in elementary environment in STRIVE Prep network
STRIVE SW MS #7 at Kepner	Charter	6-8	SW	College preparatory school that replicates Denver's highest performing middle school
Beacon at Kepner	District-run	6-8	SW	A blended learning approach that focuses on student leadership
2017-2018* Approved to Open				
DSST VI HS	Charter	9-12	NNE	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing high school
2019-2020* Approved to Open				
DSST VII HS	Charter	9-12	TBD	Emphasizes science and technology and replicates Denver's highest performing high school

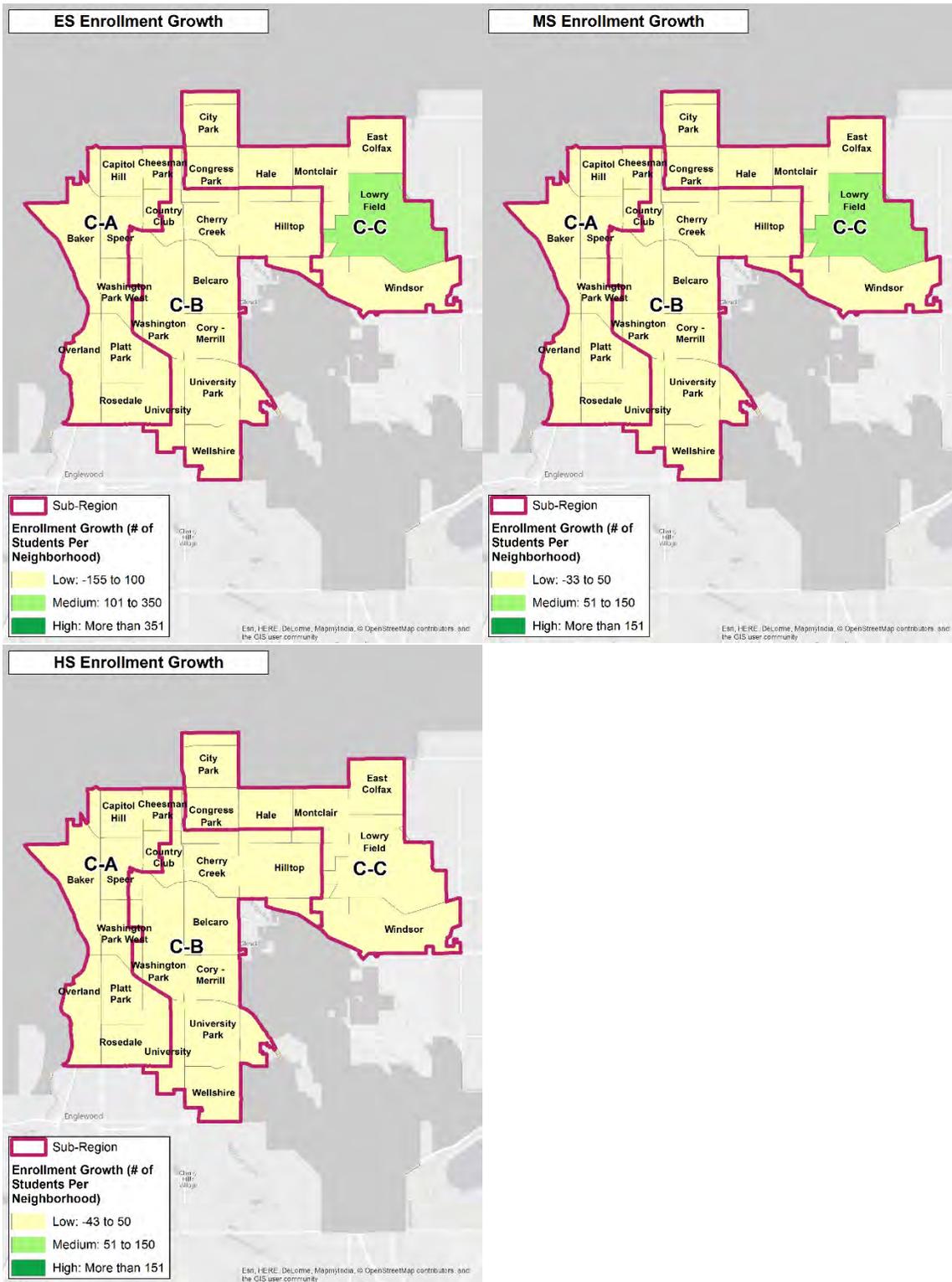
Appendix B: Enrollment Trends

Existing schools and those [already approved to open](#) are fully expected to meet enrollment growth needs outside of the Near Northeast, as specified previously in this document.

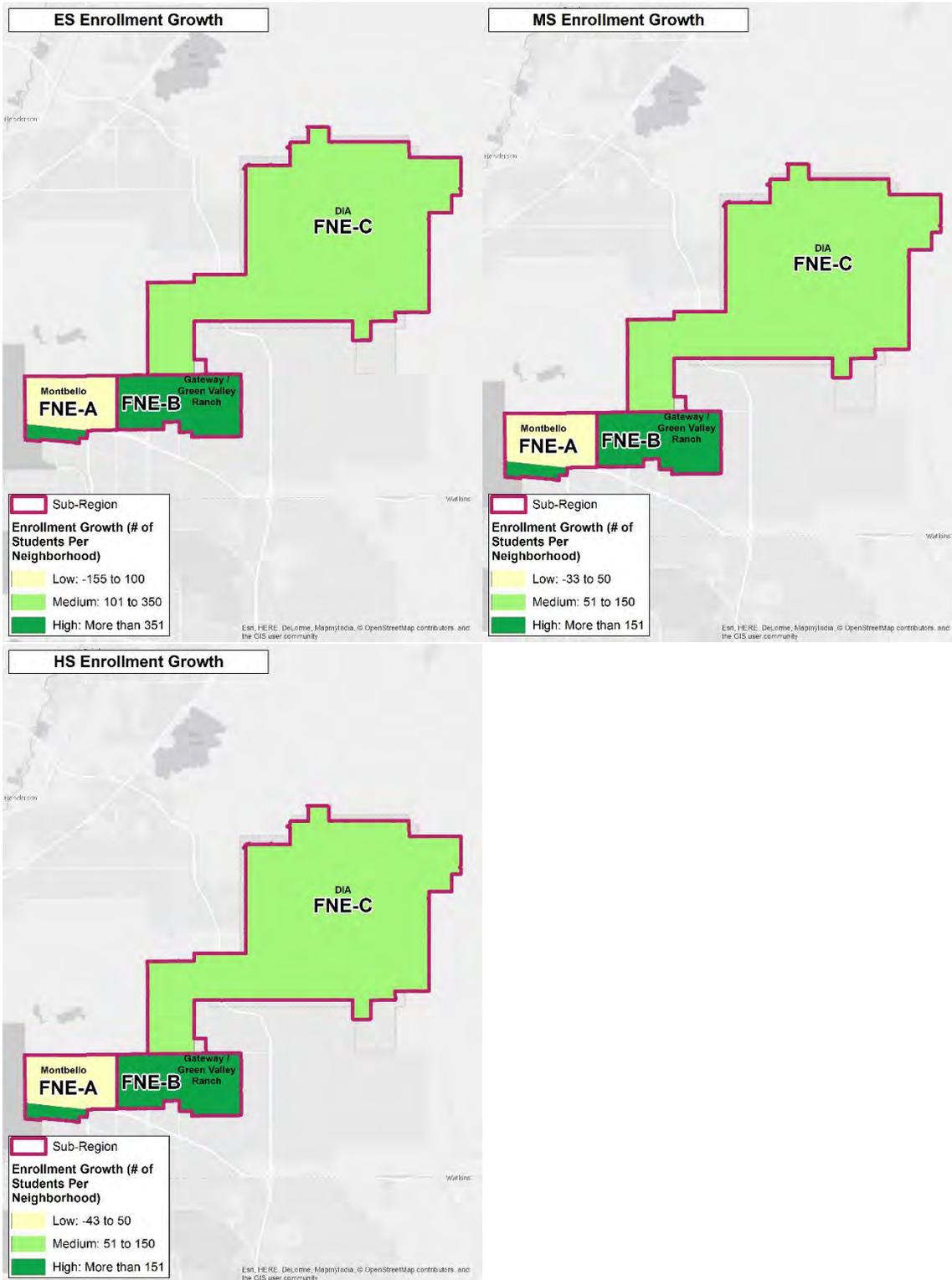
Near Northeast Region



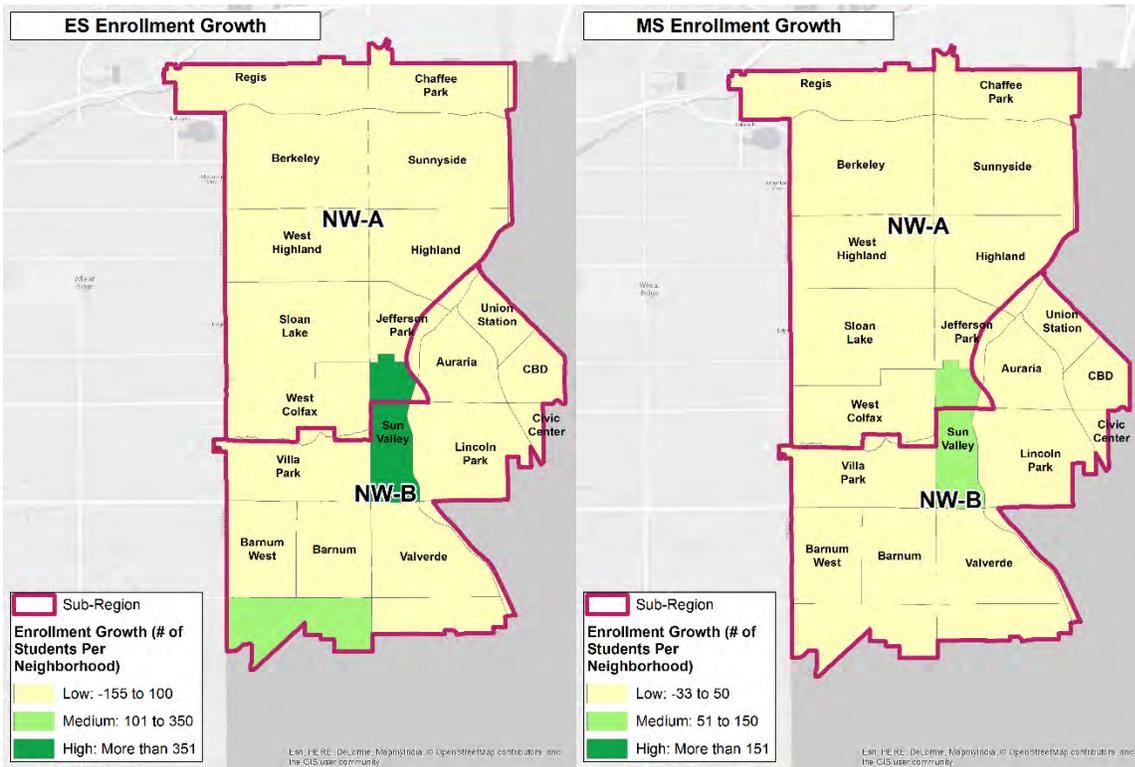
Central Denver



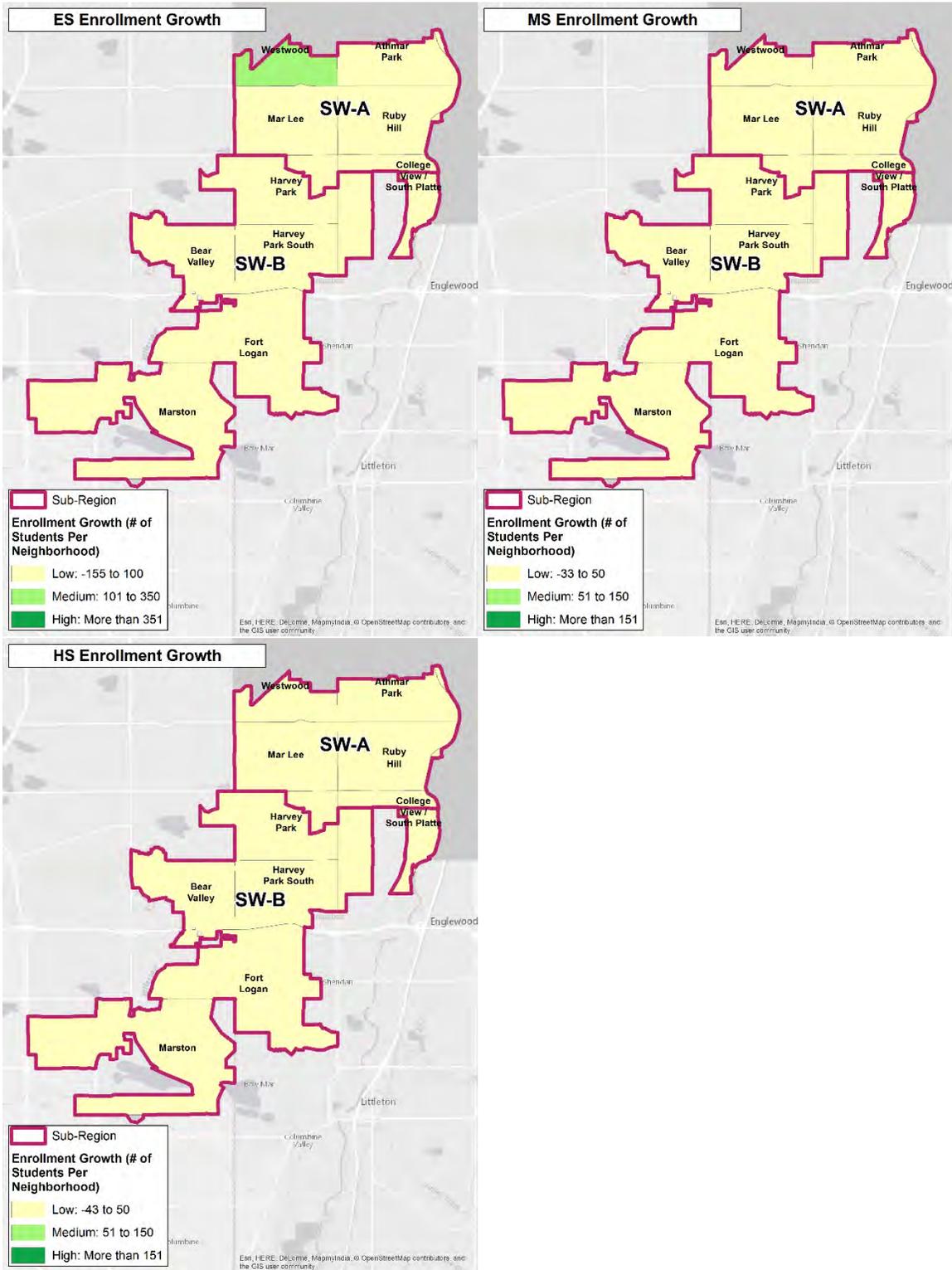
Far Northeast Denver



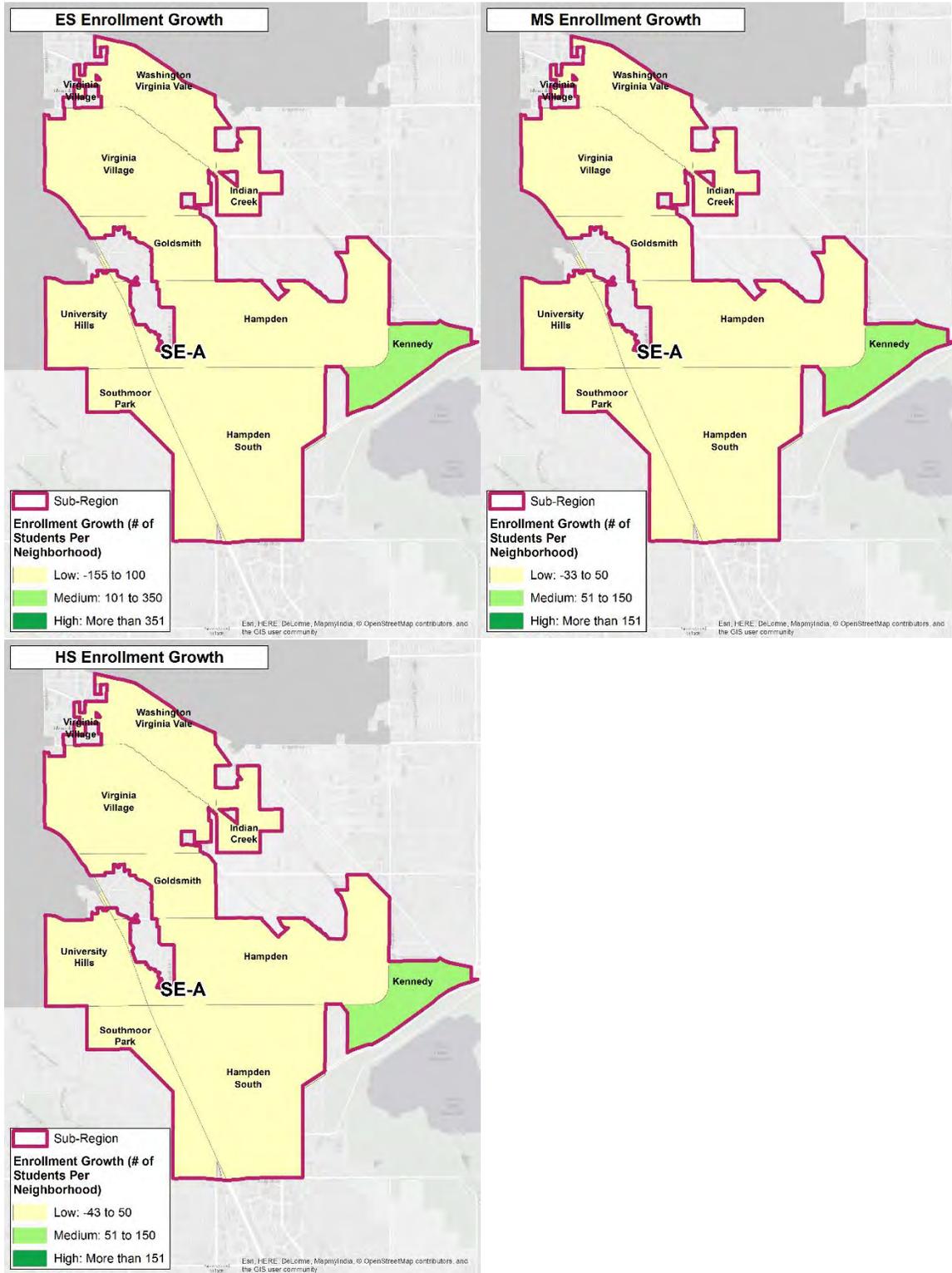
Northwest Denver



Southwest Denver



Southeast Denver



Appendix C: Innovation Status

The Colorado Innovation Schools Act, passed in 2008, encourages schools and districts to design and implement innovative practices in a wide variety of areas to improve student outcomes and, with the consent of staff members, to obtain waivers from policies in order to implement their school designs. With approval of the district and state boards of education, Innovation Schools may receive waivers of state law, collective bargaining agreements, and/or district policies.

As part of the Innovation process, a school must submit an innovation plan. The plan must demonstrate that a majority of teachers and administrators at their schools and a majority of members of the school advisory council or collaborative school committee consent to the Innovation plan. The plan must also include statements indicating support from other employees, students, parents, and community members. Developing an innovation plan requires a school to identify (1) “innovations,” or new approaches intended to increase the school’s ability to achieve its mission and (2) specific waivers from district policy, collective bargaining agreement provisions, and/or state laws and regulations that are required to give the school the ability to implement the innovations. Any waivers of a collective bargaining agreement shall be based on obtaining the approval, by means of a secret ballot vote, of at least 60%, plus 1 vote, among the members of the collective bargaining unit who are employed at the innovation school.

District-run applicants may be eligible to apply for Innovation Status, following approval of their new school applications. Existing schools as well as newly approved district-run schools interested in applying for Innovation Status are encouraged to contact Joe Amundsen, Senior Manager of School Development, at joe_Amundsen@dpsk12.org

Appendix D: Neighborhood Snapshots

In the following tables, DPS shares its topline assessments of growth, capacity, facility availability and performance by grade levels and within neighborhood clusters for each region of the district.

- “Growth” refers to enrollment growth. An “L” would indicate there is little, if any, growth in the school aged population.
- “Capacity” refers to concerns about the ability of existing schools, or those already approved to open, to provide adequate seats for students expected to enroll. “L,” in this context, would mean the district has few, if any concerns, about seat capacity.
- “Facility availability” refers to real estate inventory. An “L” in this context would mean there is low inventory, and facilities will be hard to secure.
- “School performance” refers to the overall quality of schools in the area. An “L” here would mean schools are serving students well on the whole; an “M” would mean some schools are performing well; and an “H” would mean few schools in the area are performing. For more information on performance, please see [Appendix F: District Performance Maps](#).

Generally, in looking at the following tables:

L means “low”

M means “medium”

H means “high”

Near Northeast

Sub-Regions	Neighborhoods	Grade Level	Growth	Capacity Concerns	Facility Availability	School Performance
NNE-A	Globeville, Elyria Swansea, Clayton, Cole, Skyland, Whittier, City	ES	L	L	L	H
		MS	L	M	L	M
		HS	L	L	L	H
NNE-B	Northeast Park Hill, North Park Hill, South Park Hill	ES	L	L	L	L
		MS	L	H	L	L
		HS	L	L	L	L
NNE-C	Stapleton	ES	H	H	M	L
		MS	H	H	L	L
		HS	H	L	L	L

Central Denver

Sub-Regions	Neighborhoods	Grade Level	Forecasted Growth	Capacity Concerns	Facility Availability	Academic Concerns
C-A	Capitol Hill, Cheesman Park, Speer, Baker, Washington Park	ES	L	L	L	L
		MS	L	L	L	M
		HS	L	L	L	L
		ES	L	M	L	L

C-B	Country Club, Cherry Creek, Hilltop, Washington Park, Belcaro, Cory – Merrill,	MS	L	L	L	L
		HS	L	L	L	L
C-C	City Park, Congress Park, Hale, Montclair, East Colfax, Lowry Field, Windsor	ES	L	M	L	L
		MS	L	L	L	L
		HS	L	L	L	L

Far Northeast

Sub-Regions	Neighborhoods	Grade Levels	Growth	Capacity Concerns	Facility Availability	Academic Concerns
FNE-A	Montbello	ES	L	M	L	H
		MS	L	H	L	H
		HS	L	M	L	H
FNE-B	Gateway/ Green Valley Ranch	ES	H	M	L	L
		MS	H	H	L	H
		HS	H	M	L	H
FNE-C	DIA (North of 56 th Avenue)	ES	M	M	L	L
		MS	M	H	L	H
		HS	M	M	L	H

Northwest

Sub-Regions	Neighborhoods	Grade Level	Growth	Capacity Concerns	Facility Availability	Academic Concerns
NW-A	Regis, Chaffee Park, Berkeley, Sunnyside, West Highland, Highland, Sloan Lake, Jefferson Park, West Colfax	ES	L	L	L	M
		MS	L	L	L	L
		HS	L	L	L	M
NW-B	Villa Park, Sun Valley, Auraria, Union Station, CBD, Civic Center, Lincoln Park, Valverde, Barnum, Barnum West	ES	L	L	L	H
		MS	L	L	L	H
		HS	L	L	L	H

Southwest

Sub-Regions	Neighborhoods	Grade Level	Growth	Capacity Concerns	Facility Availability	Academic Concerns
SW-A	Westwood, Athmar Park, Mar Lee, Ruby Hill	ES	L	M	L	H
		MS	L	L	L	H
		HS	L	L	L	H

SW-B	Harvey Park, College View/South Platte, Bear Valley, Harvey Park South, Fort Logan, Marston	ES	L	M	L	L
		MS	L	L	L	M
		HS	L	L	L	M

Southeast

Sub-Regions	Neighborhoods	Grade Level	Growth	Capacity Concerns	Facility Availability	Academic Concerns
SE-A	University Hills, Southmoor Park, Hampden South, Kennedy, Hampden, Goldsmith, Indian Creek, Virginia Village, Washington Virginia Vale	ES	L	L	L	L
		MS	L	L	L	L
		HS	L	L	L	L

Appendix E: Frequently Asked School Developer Questions

When can we get the application to propose a new school?

The [application guides – and rubrics](#) – for new district-run and charter schools will be available on our website no later than December 23, 2014. We strongly encourage applicants to use all three tools – the application guide, the rubric and the ELA rubric – in developing their proposals.

Wow. The application and rubrics cover a lot. Do you really need all of this?

Yes, we really do -- per statute and/or DPS Board policy. Most importantly, we must ensure your proposed school will serve students well on day 1.

Wow. The application and rubrics cover a lot. Does DPS provide any support?

We do! We offer a series of workshops. Dates and times will be posted [online](#) in early January.

Will you support us the whole time?

OSRI's Portfolio team will support your team in different ways at different stages of the process. Up until March 20, 2015, when proposals are due, we will answer any and all questions you have about this document, the process, the application and the rubrics. We'll also offer the workshops. After your proposal is received, however, we put on our "authorizer hats," and our supports will largely be limited to clear communications to support the remainder of the process, such as the time and date of your team's interview.

What are some common missteps in applications?

We cover a lot of this in the workshops, and, generally speaking, common areas of weakness include program design for English Language Learners and students with disabilities, as well as budget pieces. The best proposals are designed around student needs, demonstrate strong demand and community involvement, and offer exemplary approaches to teaching, leadership, education program, school culture and governance, which includes financial sustainability. Again, we strongly encourage applicants to use all three tools – the application guide, the rubric and the ELA rubric – in developing their proposals.

The school our founding team is proposing doesn't fit the needs identified in this document. Can we still apply?

If you are a charter applicant, yes. The Colorado Charter Schools Act requires districts to accept charter school applications annually. We strongly encourage developers in this situation to thoroughly examine [Appendix D: Neighborhood Snapshots](#) to support strategic decision-making. As outlined in the application materials and rubrics, and in statute, it's also important to develop strong evidence of community support and demand for your proposed program. As mentioned elsewhere in this document, approved schools that do not meet a need identified in this document will not be considered for facility support from the district. For this reason, all district-run applications must be tailored to the needs identified here.

Why do you want a letter of intent? Is it binding?

Knowing how many applications we may receive helps us plan. The letter of intent is required, but it's not binding; if your team later decides not to submit a proposal, that's OK.

Why did you pick March 20, 2015, as the proposal deadline?

By statute, the DPS Board of Education has 90 days from receipt of charter proposals to accept or reject them through a vote. The Board's last meeting this school year is June 18, 2015, so we backwards planned from that Board meeting.

What is an "Application Review Team"? How do they assess a proposal's quality?

All new school proposals are vetted by a team of 10-12 experts. We call these teams “Application Review Teams” (ARTs). ARTs include a parent/guardian from the region the proposed school aims to serve, an external consultant, and experts in English Language Acquisition, Special Education, curriculum and instruction, as well as legal, finance, governance, human resources and other areas. In making assessments about an application’s quality, all members of ARTs use the rubrics that are publicly available on our website.

What can we expect in the applicant interview?

A smaller group from the ART will ask a standard set of questions, along with any simple, clarifying questions about your proposal. We recommend several experts from your founding team attend the interview, including the proposed leader(s). For charter applicants, the founding board’s president and treasurer also should be present.

Why is the DPS hosting regional meetings? What can we expect?

DPS wants to hear directly from families and community members about schools being proposed in each region. Your team will be invited to present at the meeting in the region your school intends to serve. These meetings will occur between April 15th and April 29th. DPS will invite families and community members on its contact lists. Your team also can invite people who are excited about your proposed school. We’ll know more about the specific format as the event draws closer, and, typically, your team would give a short presentation and answer any immediate questions. Community members would complete a questionnaire.

What other kinds of community outreach are we expected to do?

As defined in the application and rubrics, community involvement in the development of your school’s plan is critical, as is producing sufficient evidence of demand for the program. How you undertake engagement is up to your team.

What will our presentation to the DPS Board entail?

We’ll know more once the meeting draws closer, and, typically, your team would make a short presentation to the Board and answer any questions its members may have. This presentation is tentatively scheduled for June 1st.

What is public comment?

Public comment is a time for families and community members to speak directly to the Board about their support for your proposed school. Your team will be asked to organize your supporters into a single group, which will have 10 minutes to speak.

Who makes the decision about an application’s approval?

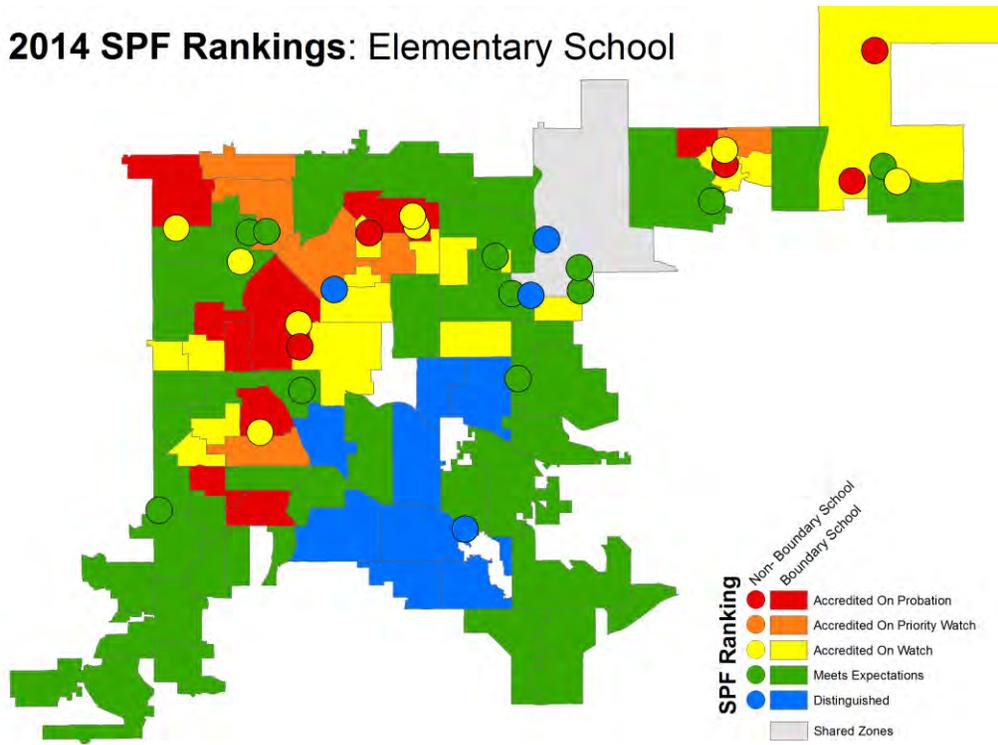
The DPS Board of Education makes the decision through a vote. The Application Review Team provides its opinion about an application’s quality to the Superintendent and the senior leadership team. The Superintendent and his team consider the ART’s opinion, and any other factors they deem relevant, and deliver a public recommendation, with evidence, to the Board. The Board can agree or disagree with the staff’s recommendation in voting to approve or deny an application.

You didn't answer my question. Who do I contact?

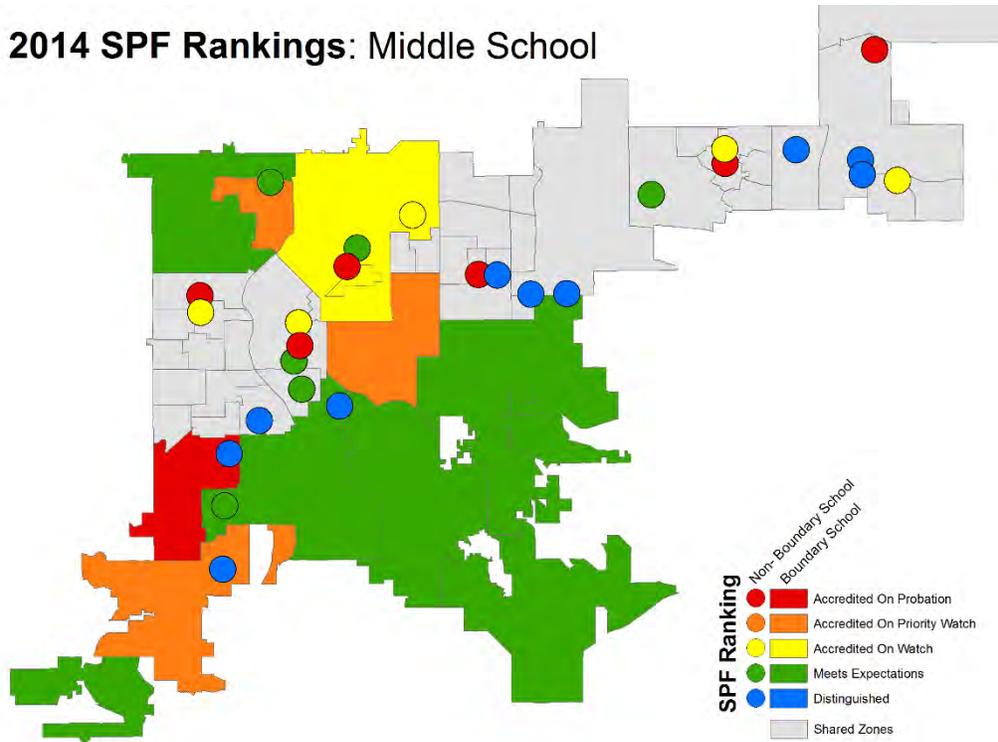
Jennifer Holladay, director of school development and support, at jennifer_holladay@dpsk12.org

Appendix F: District Performance Maps

2014 SPF Rankings: Elementary School



2014 SPF Rankings: Middle School



2014 SPF Rankings: High School

