



Solana Highlands School K-6 Conversion Exploration

Frequently Asked Questions #2 - February 2020

1. Will the District be able to control or anticipate enrollment numbers if parents are given the choice of schools?

Parents choosing to transfer to Solana Pacific will follow the Intradistrict Board Policy (BP 5116.1). This Board Policy has a specific timeline in which families must submit their application and inform the District of their intent to transfer when approved. This process takes place during our planning for the next school year so the District will be able to utilize its existing methodology when projecting enrollment. The multiple data points (e.g. population trends in the area, student mobility, age of community, etc.) in addition to Intradistrict transfer approvals are all considered when anticipating enrollment.

2. What is a comfortable enrollment figure for Solana Highlands (SH)?

The capacity of SH, if configured as a K-6, is estimated at 575.

3. What is the predicted intake for SH?

The kindergarten class size is projected to be under 70 students for the 2020-21 school year. With a total projected enrollment of approximately 300 students.

4. How is CC being impacted and what is their expected future enrollment (which in turns impacts SP)?

Students from the Pacific Highlands Ranch new development area are assigned to attend Carmel Creek (K-3) and Solana Pacific (4-6). Enrollment projections indicate the new developments will generate 80-133 K-6 students which equates to 11-19 students per grade level).

5. Is the enrollment at SR from K-3 declining?

Once the new homes are built and occupied, the enrollment wave is expected to peak and then decline. We anticipate seeing the decline begin in 2024-25.

6. Why did SH revert to K-3? When did this take place?

The K-3 conversion took place in 2014-15 following the opening of School #7, Solana Ranch, in an effort to balance school enrollments/size. Prior to 2014, the school was configured as a K-4. Carmel Creek transitioned to a K-4 at the same time. Prior to Solana Pacific being built (2004),

7. What was the capacity before the split to K-3?

The capacity of Solana Highlands when first built was approximately 640 K-6 students in 1985. Over the years, temporary and permanent classrooms were added to accommodate growth from the Carmel Valley area and to implement Class Size Reduction in grades K-3. The enrollment at Solana Highlands peaked at 740 students prior to the opening of Solana Pacific (2004).

8. Will there be enough classroom and specialty space with interim housing and conversion happening at the same time?

Different Interim Housing options are being considered that would impact Solana Highlands for 2020-21. The original plan was to make the change following the enrollment wave of housing Pacific Highlands Ranch (PHR) students around 2024-25. Once PHR students were not assigned to Solana Highlands, the timeline could be moved up to 2021-22 due to the immediate need to house Solana Vista students during reconstruction.

9. Is there an issue with child spaces in the District, specifically with 4-6 grade classes? If yes, could SH see a shift with a higher intake of kids in this age range, e.,. More 4-6 grade students overall than K-3?

The district's enrollment fluctuates annually where students enter and exit throughout the school year. The district projections are based on prior year enrollment, housing developments, and student mobility. Data shows that Kindergarten enrollment varies year to year and has been variable in recent years. The Kindergarten class size has had less students than the departing sixth grade classes, resulting in an overall decline in enrollment. Enrollment trends are monitored on a quarterly basis. Kindergarten enrollments are expected to stabilize in 2020-21.

10. Are portable classrooms being considered with the possible addition of 3 new grade levels? Will portable classrooms be an option due to interim housing or enrollment surge?

Portable classrooms are not being considered at this time due to costs and playground space consumed.

11. Will class sizes be impacted by the conversion?

Class sizes for both K-3 and 4-6 will remain the same at 20:1 and 27:1 districtwide.

12. Long term, will specialty programs for grades 4, 5, and 6 be impacted?

There never is a desire to impact educational programming and is only done short-term in order to accommodate long-term solutions.

13. Will more SpEd support be offered as a result of the expansion?

Support staff will be provided consistent with other SBSD schools based on enrollment and need.

14. Will there be an opportunity for SH and SP teachers to collaborate post conversion?

The District provides opportunities throughout the year for teachers to collaborate. In addition, both schools may work together to provide and encourage additional collaboration time.

15. Will student special services be impacted with the addition of more children/older children?

Student enrollment, programs, and staffing are reviewed and adjusted annually based on the needs of students.

16. Will clubs for upper grade level students be offered, comparable to SP and other District sites?

SH will develop its own culture of clubs and activities for students. All of the schools in the District offer opportunities that are specific to the needs and interests of their school community.

17. Will the impact of adding additional students facilitate the hiring of an assistant principal or similar support position at SH?

Support staff will be provided consistent with other SBSB schools based on enrollment and need.

18. Will teachers be hired within District or outside of District for the new 4th, 5th, and 6th grade classes?

As with every year, permanent teachers have the opportunity to transfer schools within the District per the collective bargaining agreement. If there are more student classes than permanent teachers, the District rehires temporary teachers next and then if necessary recruits new teachers from outside the District.

19. Will there be an increase in support staff (counselors, etc.) with increase in teaching hires and enrollment numbers? Will Discovery Labs be impacted?

Staffing levels for support staff are determined by enrollment and need.

20. What will be the effect on administration? Will new staff be required due to larger enrollment numbers/student body and teachers?

SBSB schools are staffed at a similar level across the District and will be based on enrollment and need.

21. How do teachers, staff, and administration feel about the proposed conversion?

Staff are positive about the proposed conversion, flexible in their thinking and committed to serving students the best educational experience.

22. Will District boundaries change as a result of or in anticipation of SH K-6 conversion?

District school attendance boundaries are expected to remain the same.

23. Would the District be open to more inter-school transfers and advertising these?

Solana Beach District is a community funded district which means we receive the majority of our revenue through local property taxes; therefore, additional students do not increase funding levels. In order to maintain our high quality educational programs, class size, and retain our qualified staff, the District has no plans to increase interdistrict transfers into the District.

24. If SH does not move to a K-6, what is the minimum number of enrolled children required before the school would consider closing?

There is never a desire to close schools and the District will continue to explore programs and services to increase enrollments at smaller schools.

25. Is further construction of SH being considered as part of the expansion?

Construction projects at SH are not being considered at this time.

26. How will the roll-in plan for conversion develop? What will the conversion timeline look like?

This has yet to be decided. The recommendation to the School Board for approval will include a proposed timeline.

27. Will SH still house students from SV if the K-6 conversion is approved? How does SV construction impact the conversion timeline?

Currently, some SV students will be housed at SH for the 2020-21 school year. The original conversion timeline of SH was after the enrollment wave (2024-25) which was moved up to 2021-22 school year when PHR students were not assigned to SH. .

28. Will student start times be staggered with the addition of older grade levels?

Start times for SH students would remain the same.

29. Will meetings regarding the SH conversion include the SP community as well?

Meetings are specifically for SH parents as Solana Pacific is separate school with separate program and community needs.

30. Will there be a plan for facility upgrades to coincide with the arrival of older students? Are the current facilities age appropriate for upper grade levels?

Current facilities are age appropriate for K-6 grade students. SH was originally a K-6 school and converted to a K-4/K-3 school after 2004.

31. How long will 'choice' option be offered? Is there a timeline in mind for providing 'choice' to parents?

Choice to any school is always available through the IntraDistrict transfer process.

32. What kind of safety enhancements will be needed with more students and older student body? Will more crossing guards be required in anticipation of more older kids walking to school?

We are unaware of any safety enhancements or campus modifications for Solana Highlands to accommodate additional upper grade students.

The school district does not employ crossing guards; however this could be explored with the City of San Diego as was done with the City of Solana Beach. Supervision of students are based upon need and number of students.

33. Is there an alternate school that SV could be housed at in an effort to expedite the conversion process?

Each school within the District is doing its part to help with several needs:

- Carmel Creek, Solana Pacific and Solana Santa Fe have been assigned new developments in the Pacific Highlands Ranch area
- Skyline and Solana Highlands are supporting the reconstruction of Solana Vista

- Solana Ranch is at capacity