

***Contracts for Excellence:
New York City's failures and violations of law
as regards class size***

Community Education Council D 30
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Why is class size important?

- Class size reduction one of 4 reforms proven to work through rigorous evidence, acc. to Inst. Education Sciences, research arm of US Ed Dept. *
- Benefits especially large for disadvantaged & minority students, very effective at narrowing the achievement gap.
- NYC schools have largest class sizes in state; in 2003, NY's highest court said students denied constitutional right to adequate education as a result of excessive class sizes (Campaign for Fiscal Equity decision).
- 86% of NYC principals say cannot provide a quality education because of excessive class sizes.
- Smaller classes are top priority of parents on DOE learning environment surveys every year.
- **Other three K-12 evidence-based reforms, are one-on-one tutoring by qualified tutors for at-risk readers in grades 1-3, Life-Skills training for junior high students, and instruction for early readers in phonemic awareness and phonics.*

Despite claims of administration, stagnant achievement in NYC schools since Bloomberg elected

- Over the last 8 yrs., NYC black & Hispanic students fallen further behind their peers in other large cities, according to national assessments (NAEPs);
- NYC only city where non-poor students have lower NAEP average scores than in 2003.
- NYC's real graduation rate about 54% (including discharges), & three-quarters of HS grads need remediation in college.
- Only 21% of HS grads are "college ready"; and those needing triple remediation* at CUNY have doubled in last 5 years.

* *Triple remediation means make-up classes in reading, writing & math.*

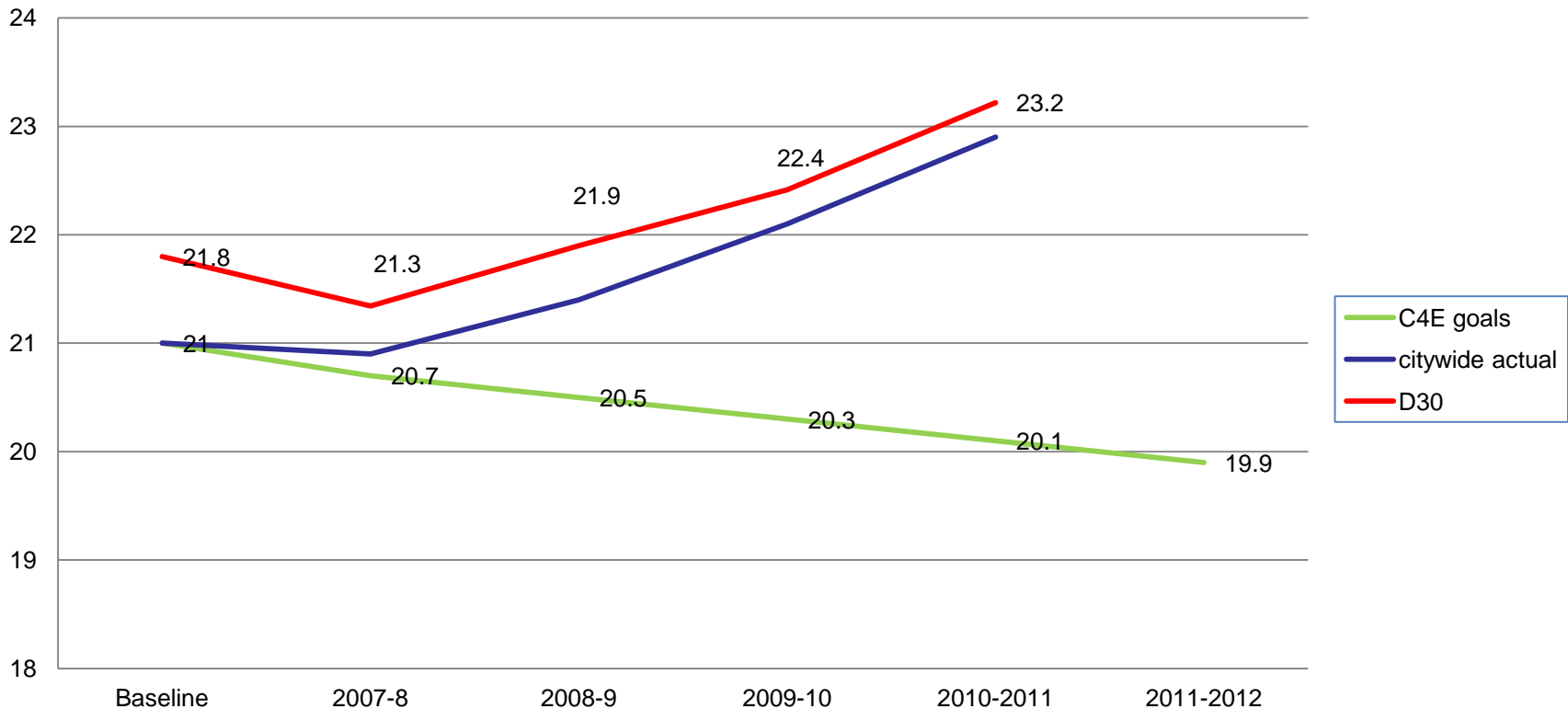
Contracts for Excellence

- In April 2007, NY State settled the Campaign for Fiscal lawsuit by passing the Contracts for Excellence (C4E) law. State agreed to send billions in additional aid to NYC & other high needs school districts; which they would have to spend in six approved areas, including class size reduction.*
- In addition, NYC had to submit a plan to reduce class size in all grades.
- In fall of 2007, the state approved DOE's plan to reduce class sizes on average to no more than 20 students per class in K-3; 23 in grades 4-8 and 25 in core HS classes.
- In return, NYS has sent \$2.4 billion in C4E funds to NYC since 2007.

**other allowed programs include Time on Task; Teacher & Principal Quality; Middle & HS Restructuring; Full-Day Pre-K; & Model Programs for English Language Learners*

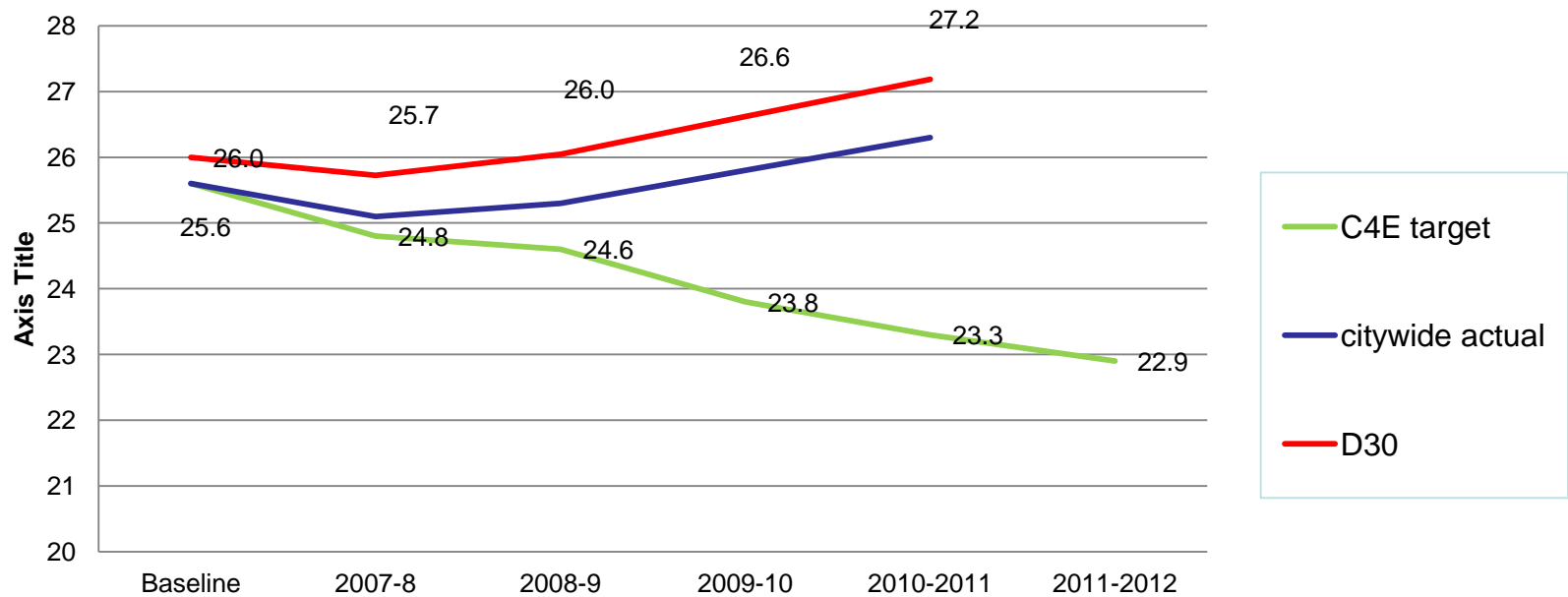
But class sizes have risen sharply in all grades since 2007...esp. in K-3; now largest in 11 yrs!

K-3 average class size

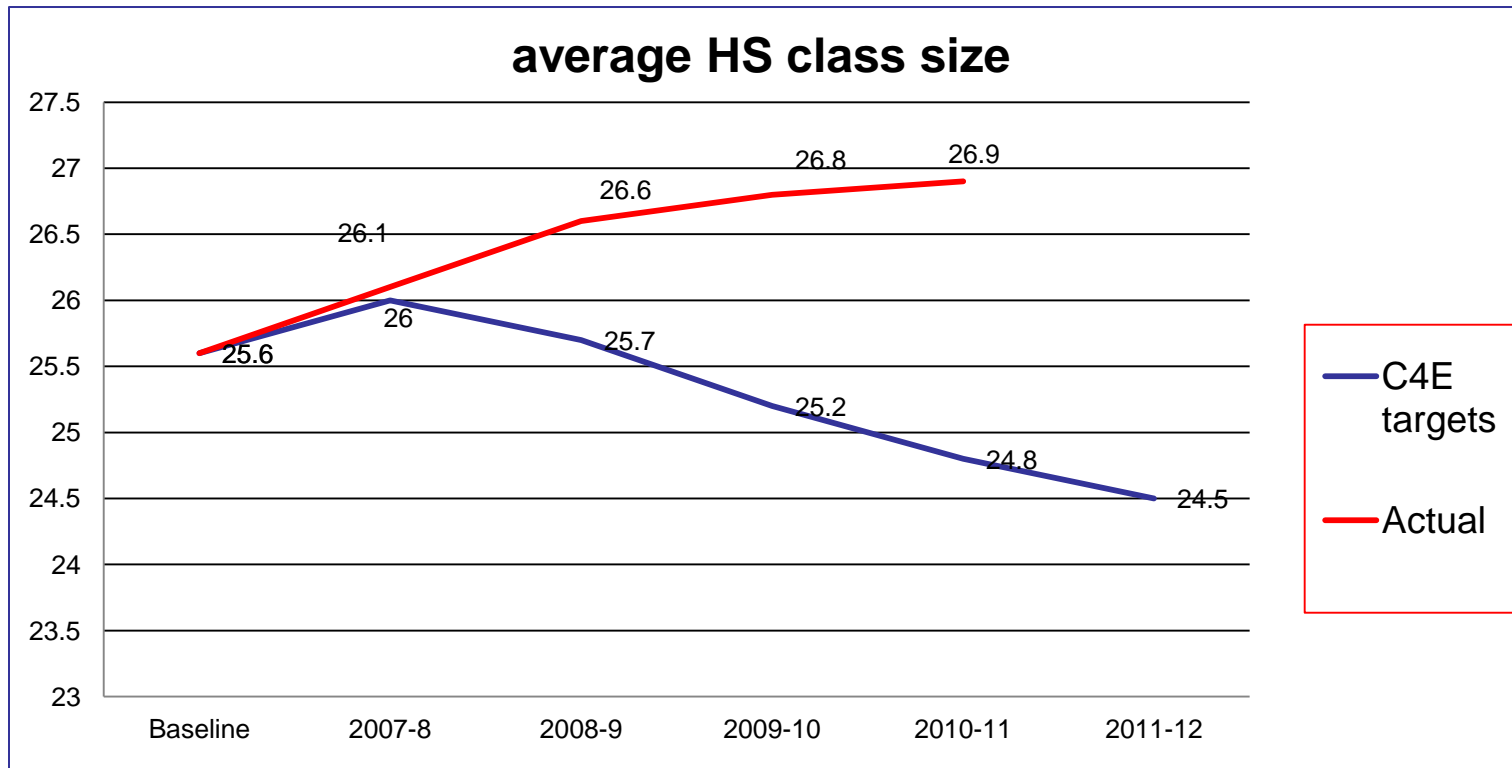


This year's class size data will be available on Nov. 15 at <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/data/classsize/classsize.htm>

Also in grades 4-8, class sizes have increased



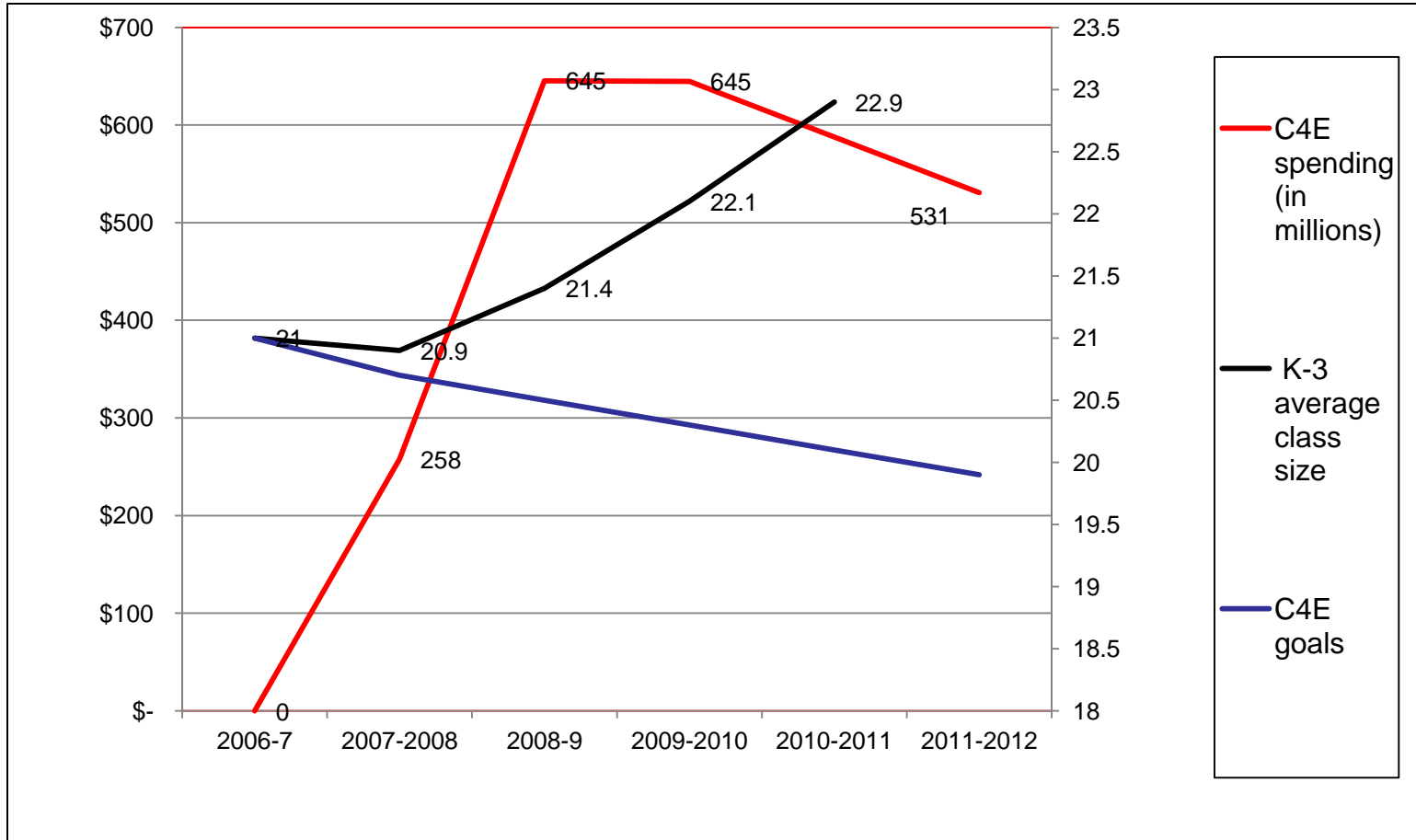
Also in HS: average class sizes have risen



What happened?

- Despite more than \$2 billion in C4E funds and higher overall spending, city has cut school budgets about 14% since 2007.
- Maintenance of effort provision in C4E law was ignored (city cut funding to schools when state increased spending)
- Overcrowding in many schools worsened by growing enrollment & damaging co-locations.
- C4E state funding never reached full level & has now flat-lined or slightly decreased.

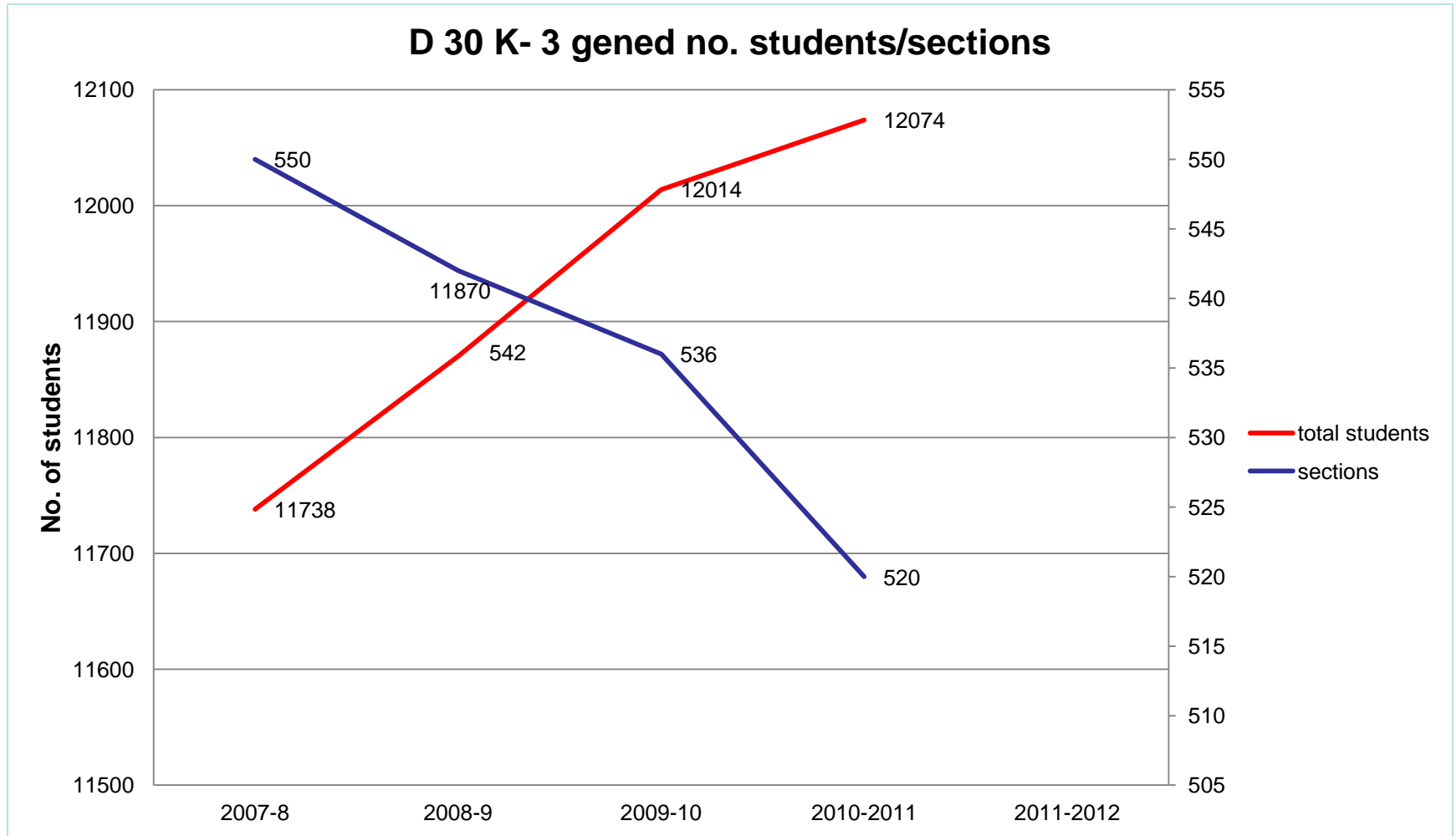
But even when state C4E spending increased; class sizes grew !



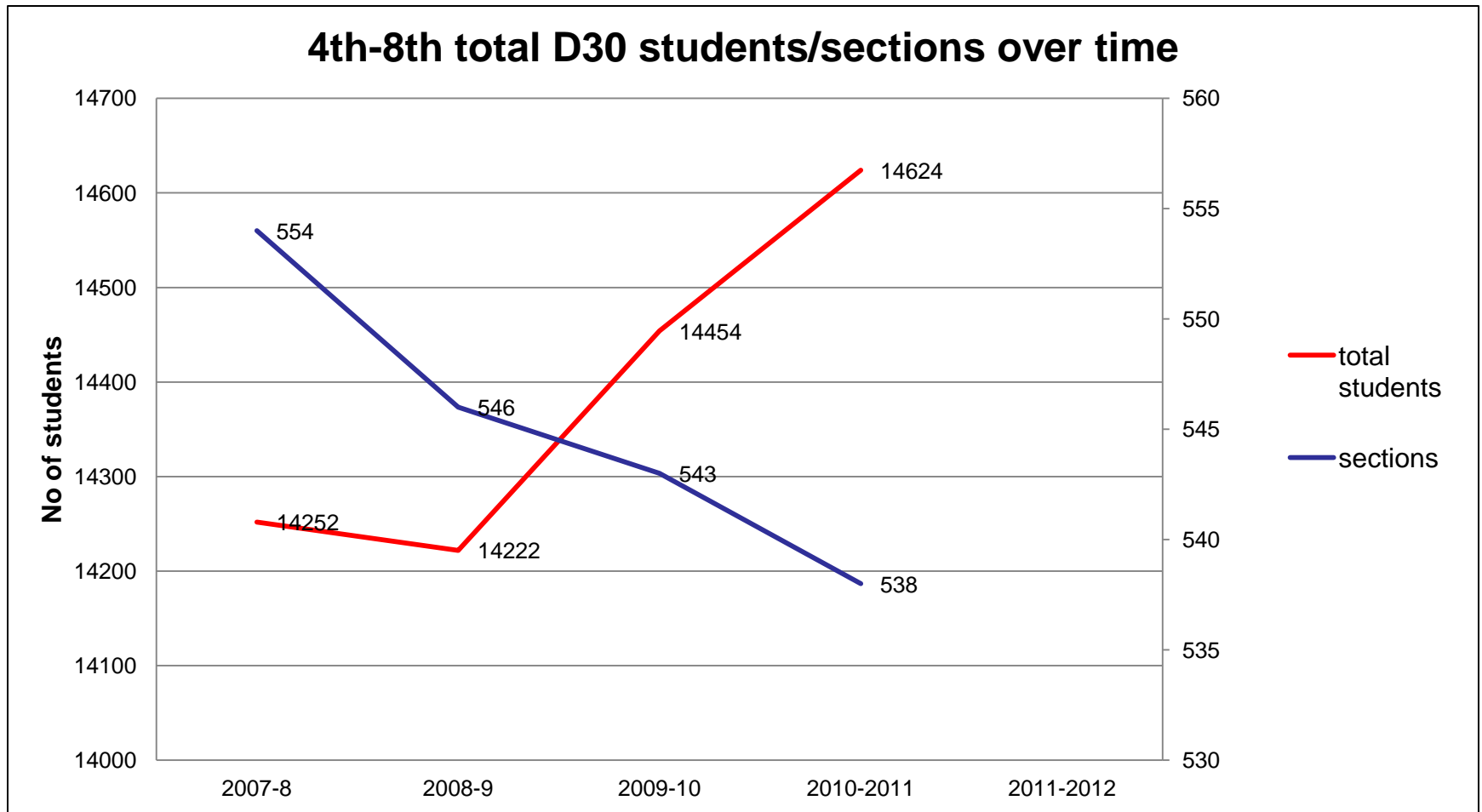
Why? administration had other priorities

- Between 2002-9, while out-of-classroom positions grew by over 10 thousand, general ed classroom teachers shrunk by more than 1600.*
- In 2010, there were 2,000 fewer teaching positions and 18,000 more students.
- This year, there are 2,500 fewer teachers and 20,000 more students.
- Spending on testing, contracts, consultants, and more bureaucrats have all risen sharply.
- *(including principals, secretaries, APs, literacy coaches, etc. NY Times, "With More Money, City Schools Added Jobs," June 30, 2009).*

What happened in D30? Lost K-3 teachers/sections as population was growing



Also in grades 4-8, more students and fewer teachers/sections in D30



But can we afford to reduce class size?

- In 2009, DOE estimated that it would cost \$358 million per year to achieve average C4E class size goals across the city;
- DOE estimated it would cost \$448 million per year in staffing to achieve class size goals in ALL schools; plus more in capital costs for school construction.
- This year, NYC is to receive more than \$530 million in C4E funds.

Other questions re city's plan

- State ed allocated \$530.8M in C4E funds to city this year. Yet city's plan only includes \$348M; what happened to rest of these funds?
- Why did the city choose not to centrally allocate a penny of C4E funds to class size reduction, given they had a legal obligation to lower class size ?
- Only C4E district-wide initiative that DOE claims as “class size reduction” is to expand CTT classes, which does not lower class size.

Problems with public process

- This year, C4E meetings happening too late in the school year; supposed to happen before money spent, so public can have input.
- This yr., SED asked to “pre-approve” plan; but state law says city’s plan should be submitted to state only after public hearings occurred, so that public comments can help guide decision as to whether plan needs changing.
- C4E law requires for borough hearings as well as CEC presentations; but DOE has refused to do this since 2008.
- See letter to Commissioner King from CSM & UFT, pointing out the many violations of law in public process this year.

What can CECs do?

- Pass a resolution; we have a sample one for yr. consideration.
- Write a letter to Commissioner King, to protest the botched process & DOE's failure to reduce class size and/or send a message to contractsforexcellence@schools.nyc.gov; deadline Nov.23.
- Encourage parents to submit C4E complaint as per law, we will be offering help w/ this.
- Collect information about class sizes in your district's schools, violations of union contract & building code.
- ***Questions or to join newsletter list, email us at info@classsizematters.org***

Contractual limits vs. C4E class size goals

	UFT Contract limits	C4E Class Size goals by 2011
Kindergarten	25	19.9
1-3 grades	28	19.9
4-5 (Title 1 Schools)	32	22.9
4-5 (Non-Title 1)	32	22.9
6-8 (Title 1 Schools)	30	22.9
6-8 (Non-Title 1)	33	22.9
9-12 (core classes)	34	24.5

NYC Building code for classroom space

- Requires 35 Sq. ft. per Kindergarten student, 20 Sq. ft. per student in grades 1-12
- DOE's "instructional footprint" redefined full size classroom downward with minimum 500 sq. ft.
- 500 sq. ft. legally holds only 14 Kindergarten students, 25 students in grades 1st-12th.
- Sq. footage of each room listed in Annual Facilities survey on every school's DOE portal.