



Annual Enrollment & Elementary Class Size Report 2025-2026

Board of Education
Monday, November 17, 2025

Lawrence Public Schools Enrollment 2025-26 Take-Aways



- **As projected, LPS 2025-26 enrollment is 2% lower than last school year.**



Though the rate of decrease represents a small year over year change, this 2%, declines continue a trend extending from **2015-16**, with a brief uptick in 2018-19.

At 10,148 students, Lawrence Public Schools enrollment is comparable to the size of the school district during the period from 1992-2005, hovering between 9,000 and 10,200 students.



- **Preschool enrollment is increased by almost 20% this year,** continuing a positive trend. Expansion of preschool programming is meeting a Lawrence childcare need, and leveraging classroom space to better serve student growth and development.
- **Enrollment in specialized program offerings at LMCMS and NY Montessori is trending positive.**

Lawrence Public Schools Enrollment in Context

- **Kansas State Enrollment Data:** statewide K–12 enrollment data also show a multi-year decline. Enrollment since the 2019-2020 school year to 2024-2025 school year declined over 15,000 students, resulting in a **3% decrease** during this period.
- **National Enrollment Data:** total public K–12 enrollment is down about **2.5%** from fall 2019 (pre-pandemic) — roughly a loss of more than 1.2 million students between 2019 and 2023. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) projects additional gradual declines over the coming decade (total enrollment projections show a ~5% drop from 49.6M to 46.9M in their projection window).
- These enrollment trends mirror a declining birth rate, & are also impacted by a wider breadth of school choice options.



Kansas Birth Rate Patterns Reflect National Reality

- In the 2024-25 academic year, Kansas public school enrollment decreased by about 2,000 students, a 0.4% decline from 23-24.
- Data from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment indicate that the state's birth rate, **at 11.6 births per 1,000 in 2023, is the lowest recorded since 1912.**
- A 15% drop in the number of children under five over recent years, and net outmigration have compounded the effect of falling birth rates, resulting in a smaller pool of school-age children.
- This trend is consistent across districts of all sizes and communities in Kansas, and further declines are expected unless birth rates rise or migration patterns shift.



Lawrence Public Schools Enrollment Next Steps



- Recognize wider patterns and impacts of birth rate over time
- Focus continuous improvement work to meet this current moment to:
 - meet greater levels of student need & ensure student supports,
 - enhance program offerings and opportunities, preschool to postsecondary
 - i.e. elementary science and enrichment, middle school enhancements, and postsecondary assets and opportunities
- Ensure greater intentionality and focused work to streamline the organization, ensure efficiencies and innovation to meet student needs, and to prioritize resources directly to classrooms, enhance programming opportunities, and ensure competitive compensation for staff
- NO recommended school reconfigurations, repurpose or closure - elementary schools are well-enrolled for their respective physical size, and secondary also has a healthy balance

Current Student Enrollment Pre-K - Grade 12



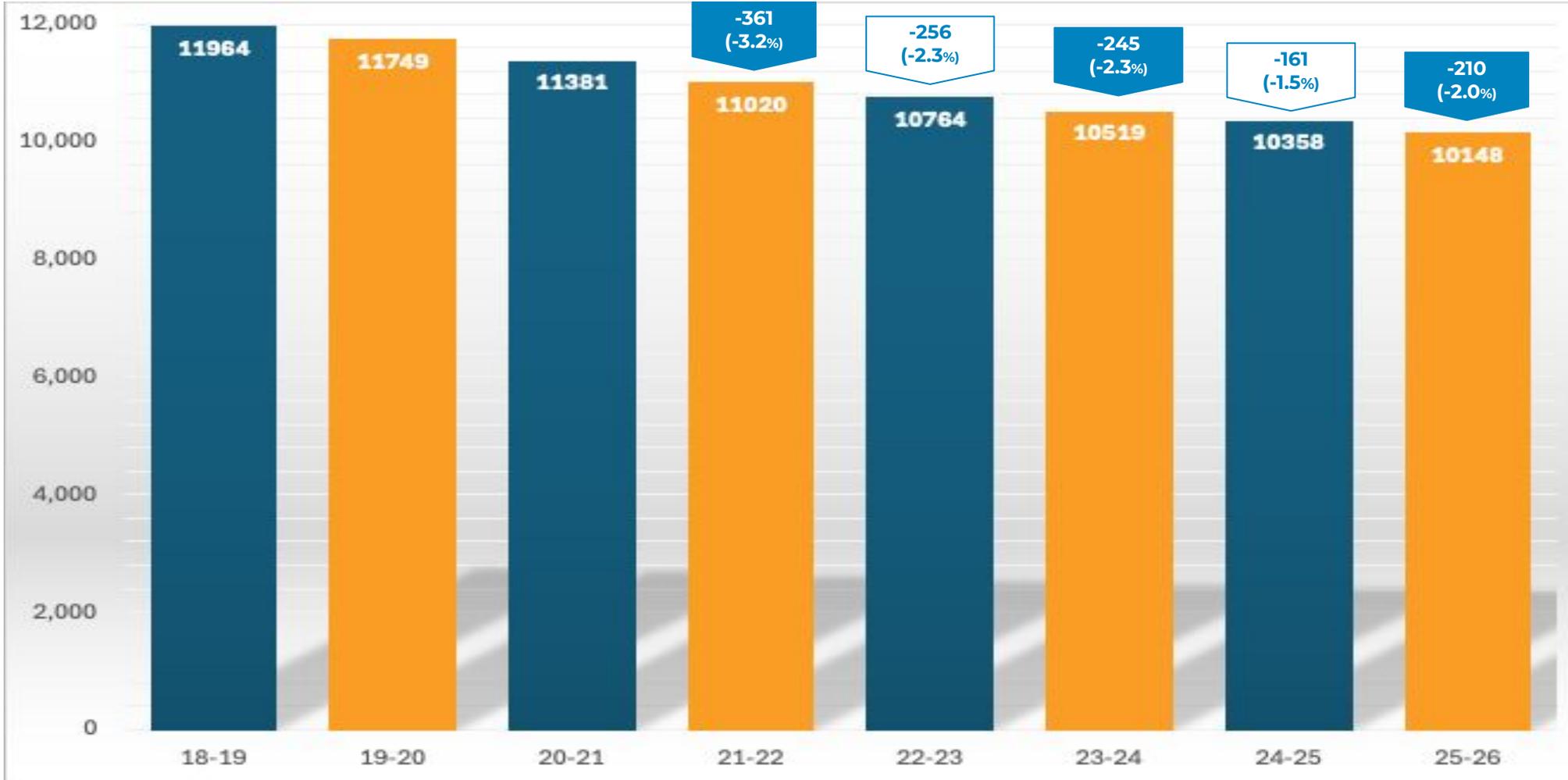
Preschool	260
Grades K-12	9,337
Lawrence Virtual School Grades K-12	551
2025-2026 Enrollment	10,148

- Enrollment numbers reflect the students served in our buildings consistently, including full-time in-person, virtual, preschool and program students



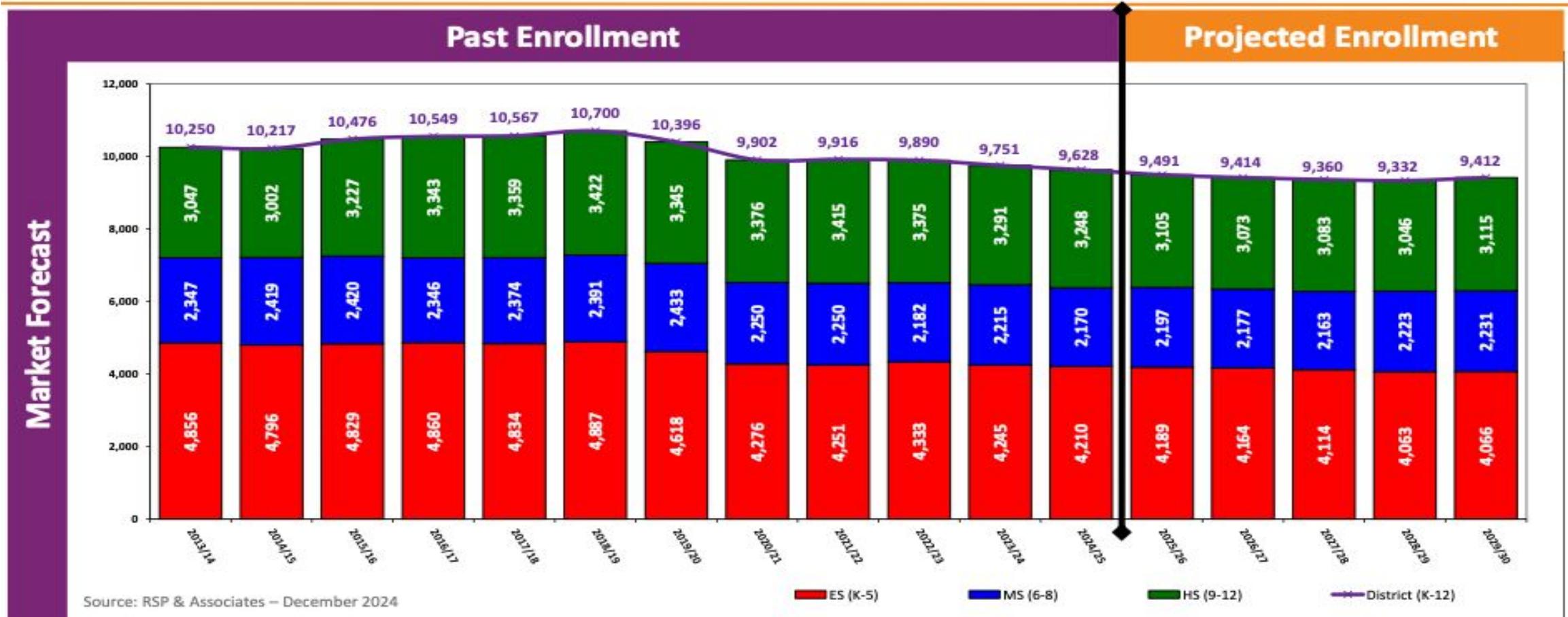
10,148 students
2025-2026
Enrollment

LPS Enrollment Over Time



RSP Projections - LPS Enrollment

Past, Current, & Future Enrollment



Lawrence Public Schools Enrollment:

USD 497 Historical Context

- **LPS Enrollment trend of gradual decline began a decade ago in 2015-2016.** At that time the district enrollment was just over **12,000 students.**
- The one distinction of that trend is that in the 2018-2019 school year, the district experienced a slight increase of ~250 students.
- District enrollment currently sits **above 10,000 students,** mirroring the range of enrollment in the district between the years **1992-2005, where enrollment consistently ranged between 9,000 and 10,500.**



Total Enrollment By Level Over Time

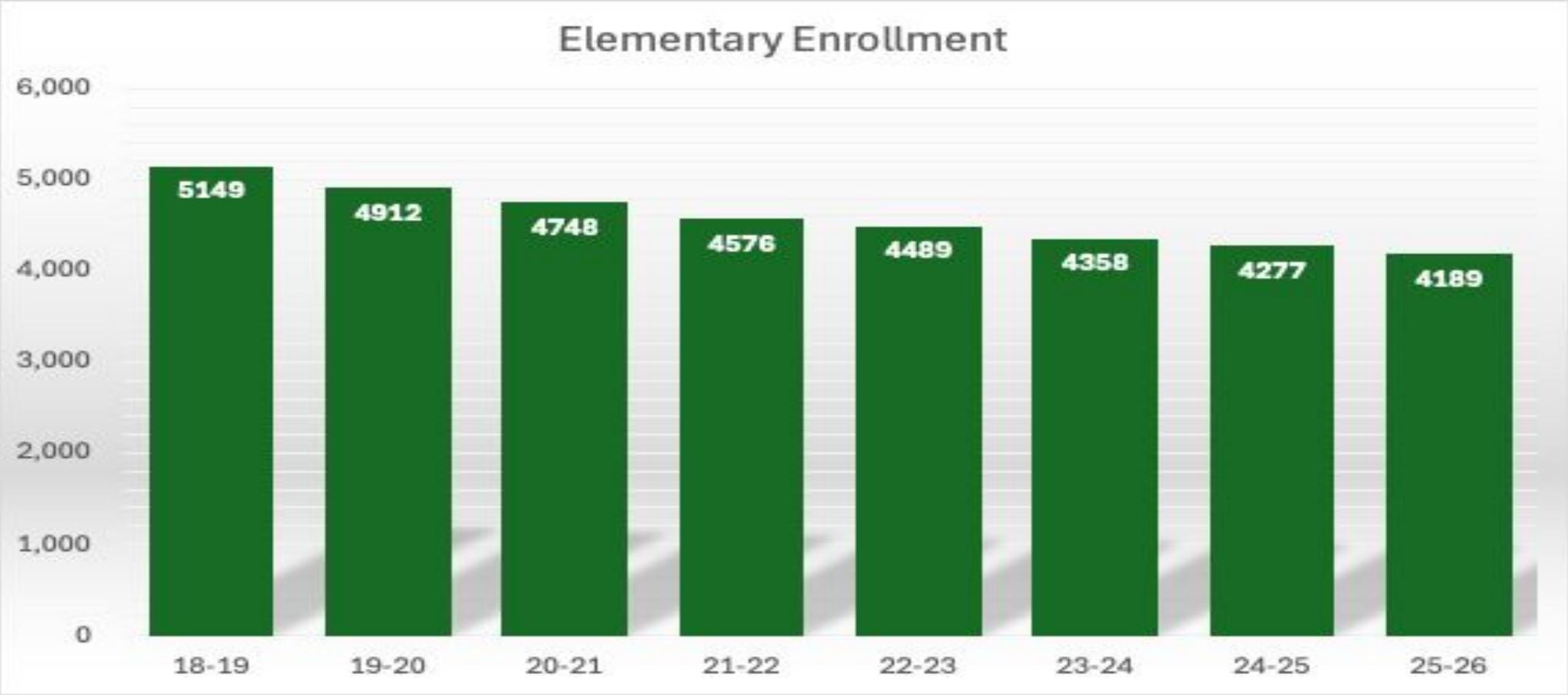


2025-2026 Enrollment		
Level	# of Students	Difference from Previous Year
Preschool	260	+40
Elementary	4,189	-88
Middle	2,299	+12
High	3,400	-174
Total	10,148	-210

- Pre-School includes Early Childhood Kennedy, Woodlawn, Sunflower, & New York Montessori (Ages 3-4)

Elementary School Enrollment Over Time (Grades K-5)

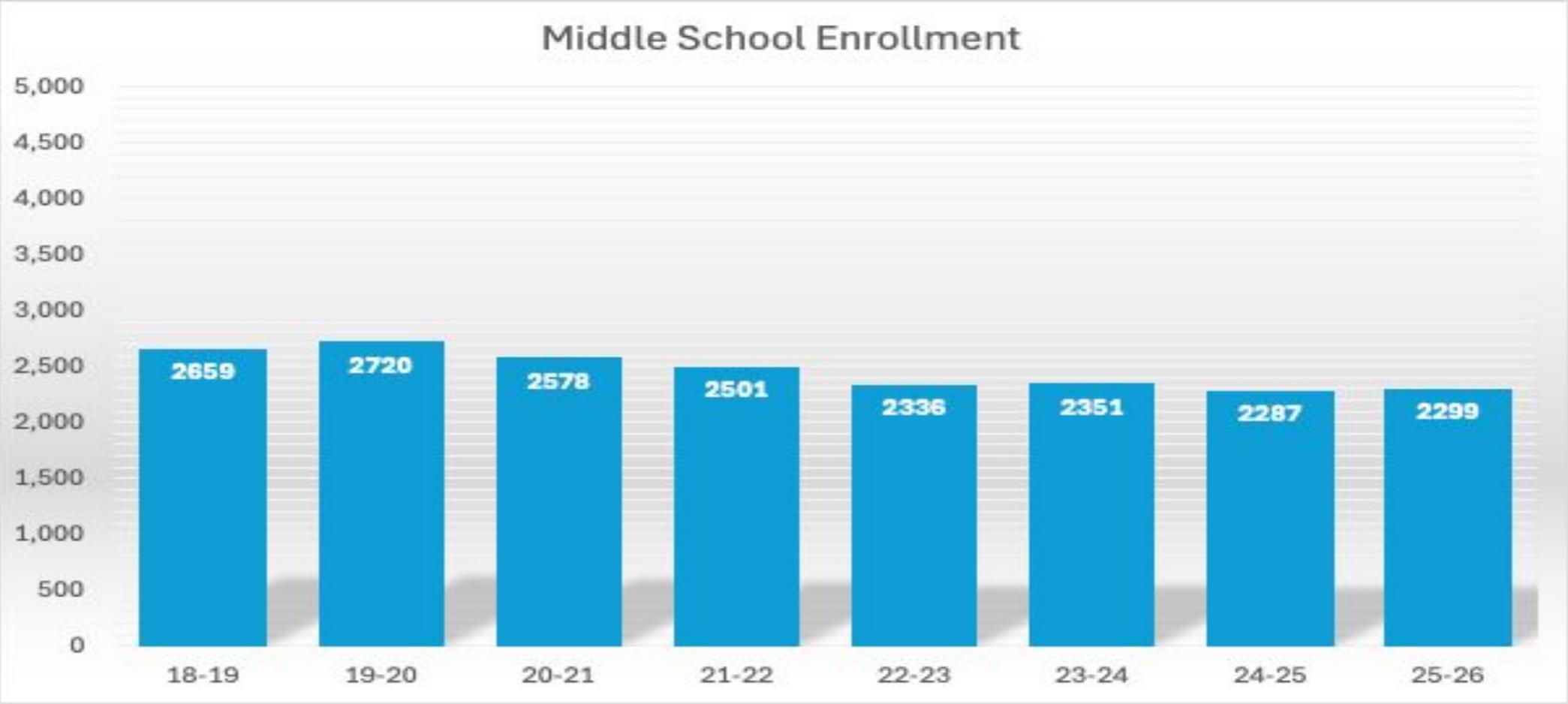
Elementary Enrollment



2018-2019: 5,149 to 2025-2026: 4,189



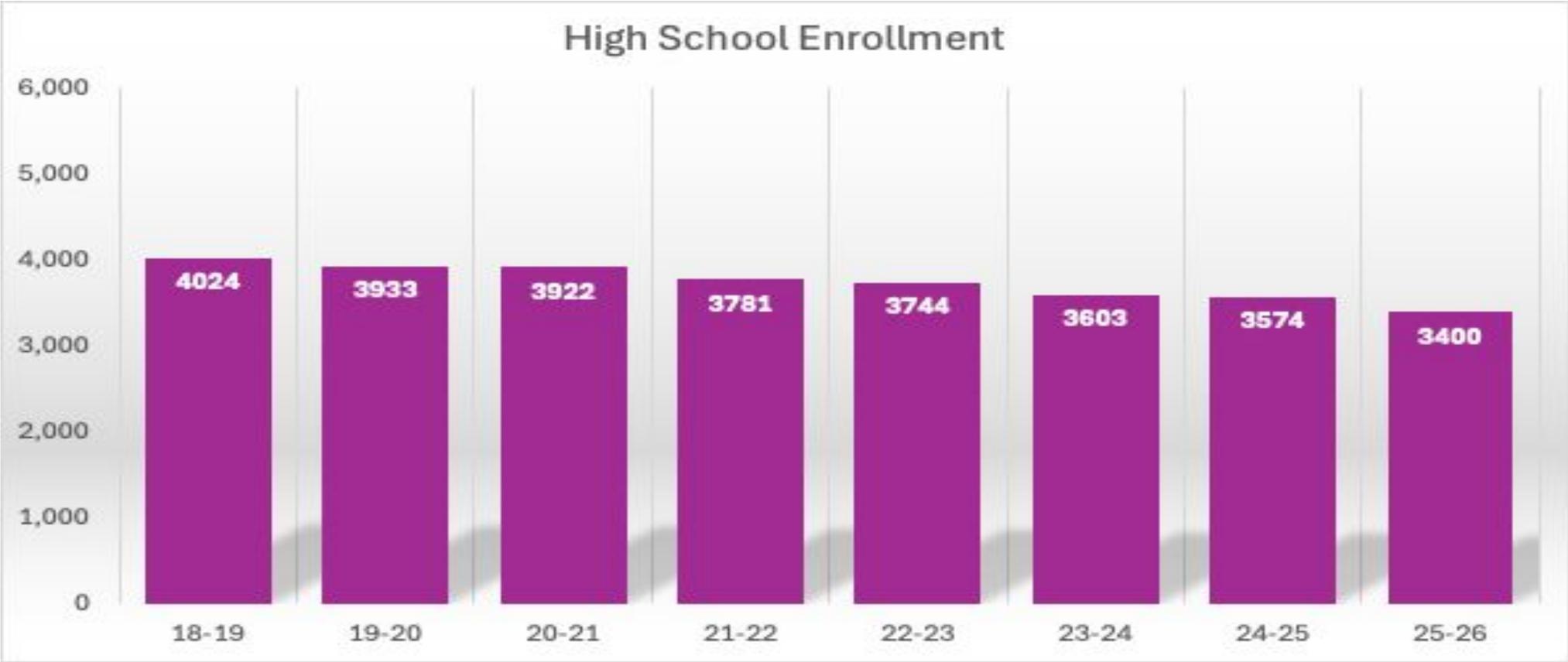
Middle School Enrollment Over Time (Grades 6-8)



2018-2019: 2,659 to 2025-2026: 2,299



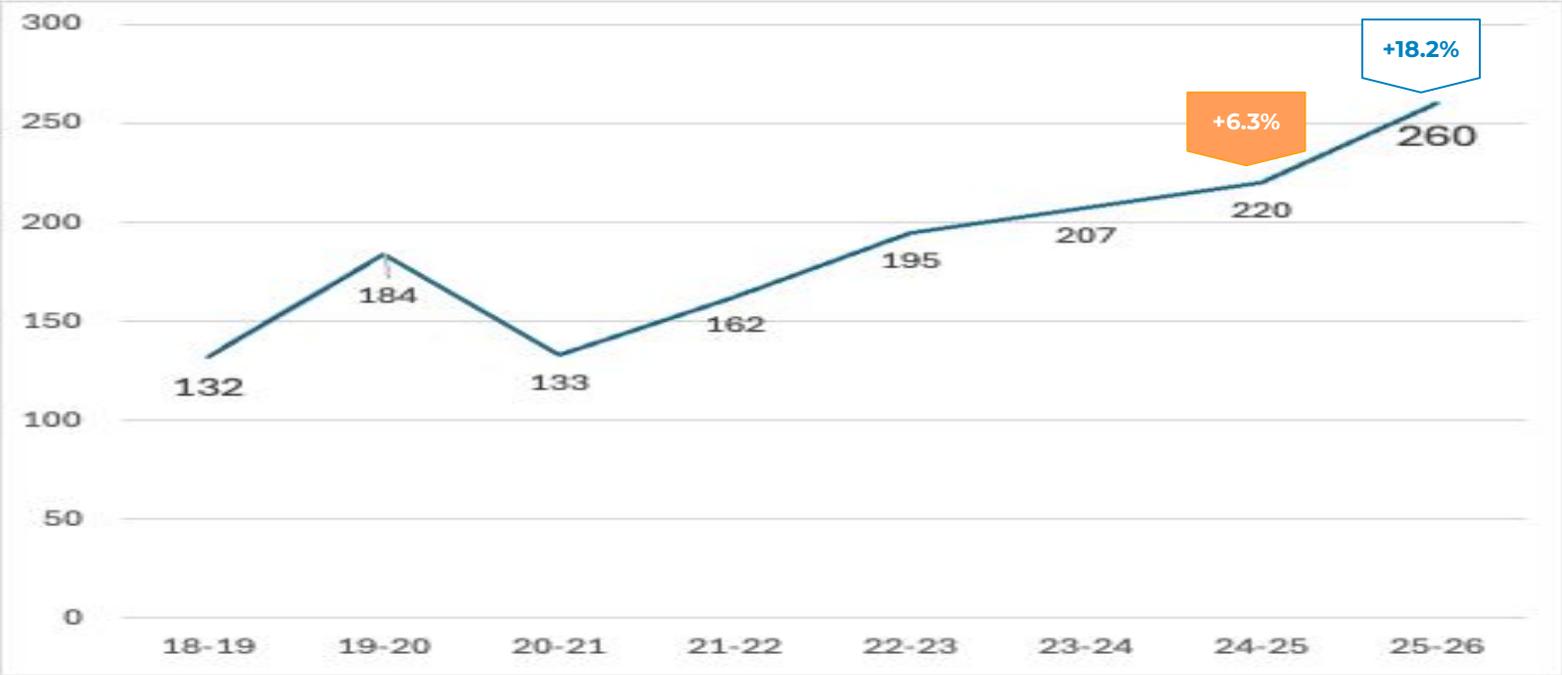
High School Enrollment Over Time (Grades 9-12)



2018-2019: 4,024 to 2025-2026: 3,400



Preschool Enrollment Over Time



Enrollment increased 20% this year, and 96% since 2020-2021

	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Early Childhood Kennedy	132	184	133	162	180	187	190	201
Montessori New York					15	20	30	28
Sunflower Elementary								17
Woodlawn Elementary								14
Total Pre-School Enrollment	132	184	133	162	195	207	220	260

Cohort Trends

Continue to observe in the data:
Incoming kindergarten classes are significantly smaller than outgoing senior class.

Example:

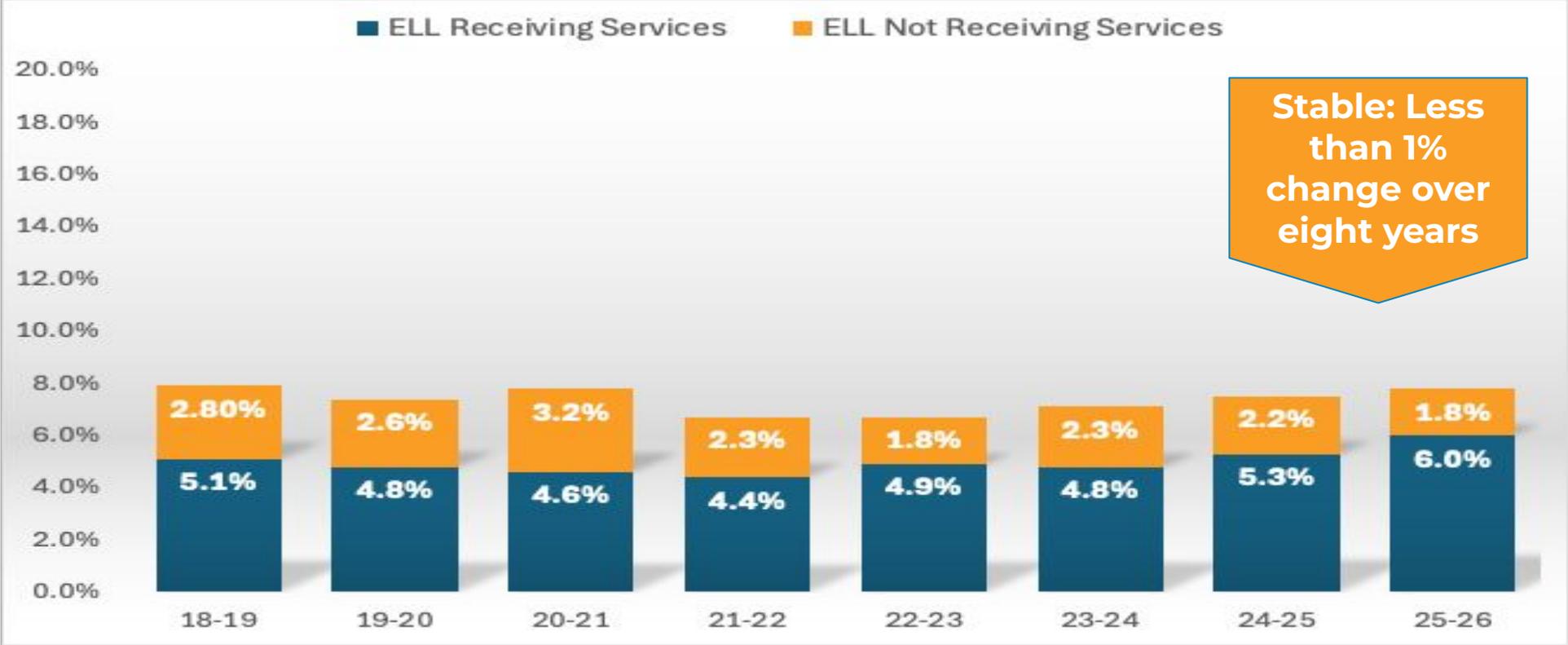
INCOMING
KINDERGARTEN
CLASS (25-26)
635

OUTGOING
SENIOR CLASS
(24-25)
939

DIFFERENCE
304



Students who are English Language Learners

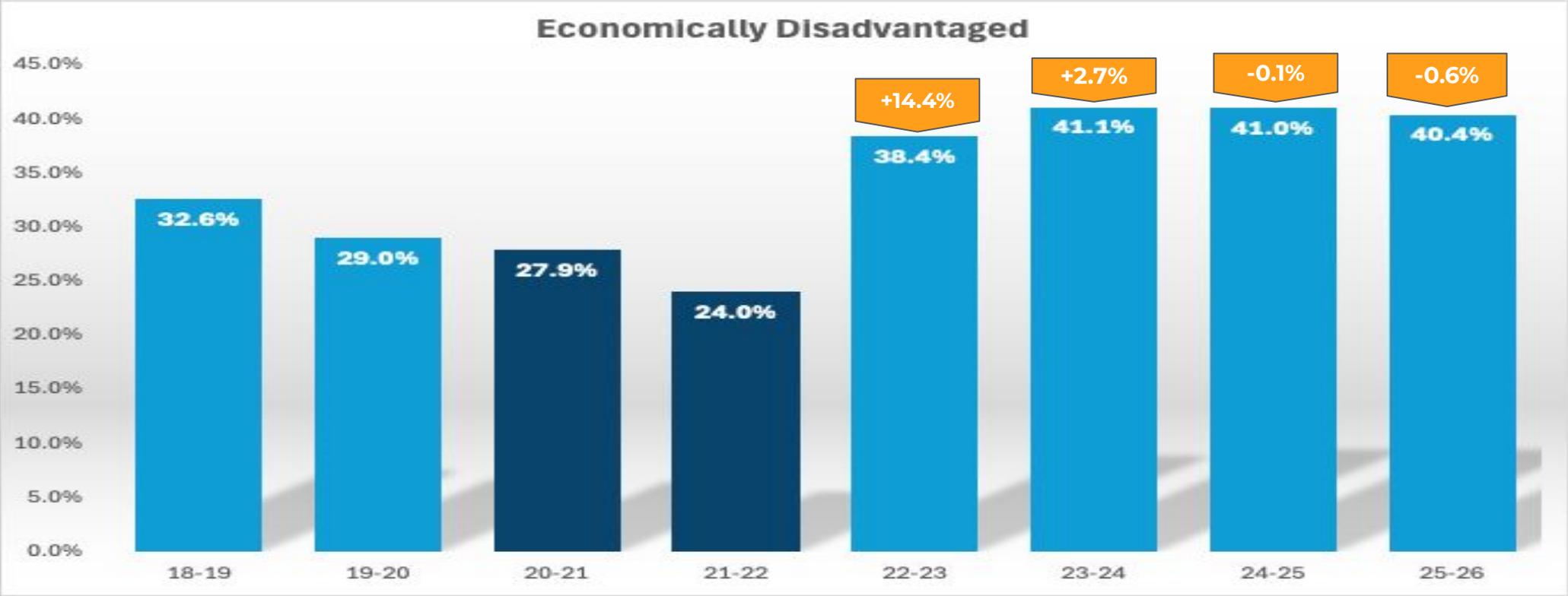


6%  English Language Learners Receiving Services
1/6

- 20 different languages represented across the district, Spanish as the largest among those groups



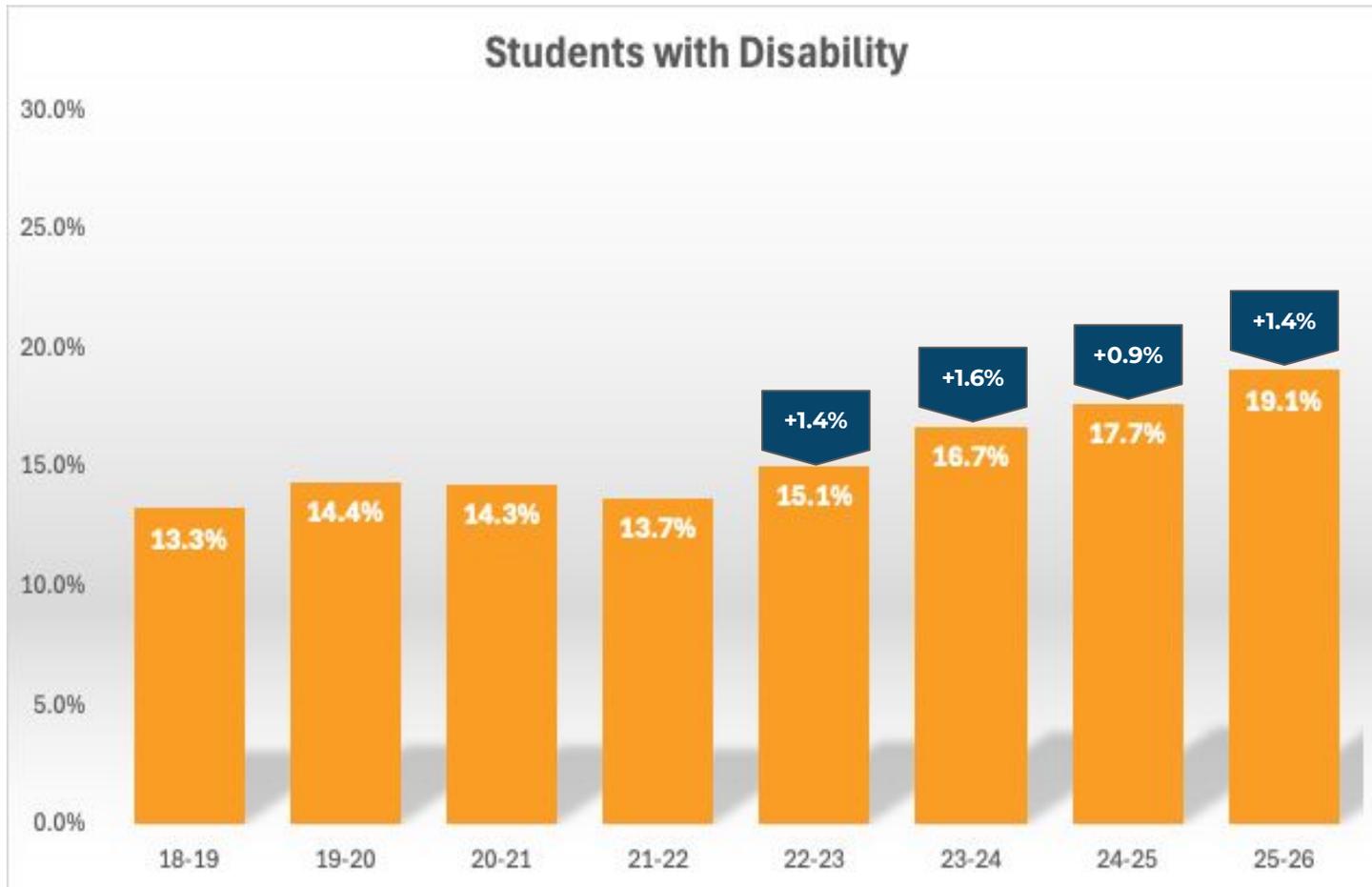
Students who are Economically Disadvantaged



Economically Disadvantaged percentage increased during the pandemic, and has remained consistent at the higher level of around 40%

- **Economically Disadvantaged is defined by students that qualify for Free OR Reduced Lunches**
- **2020-2021 & 2021-2022 school years, all students received universal free lunches**

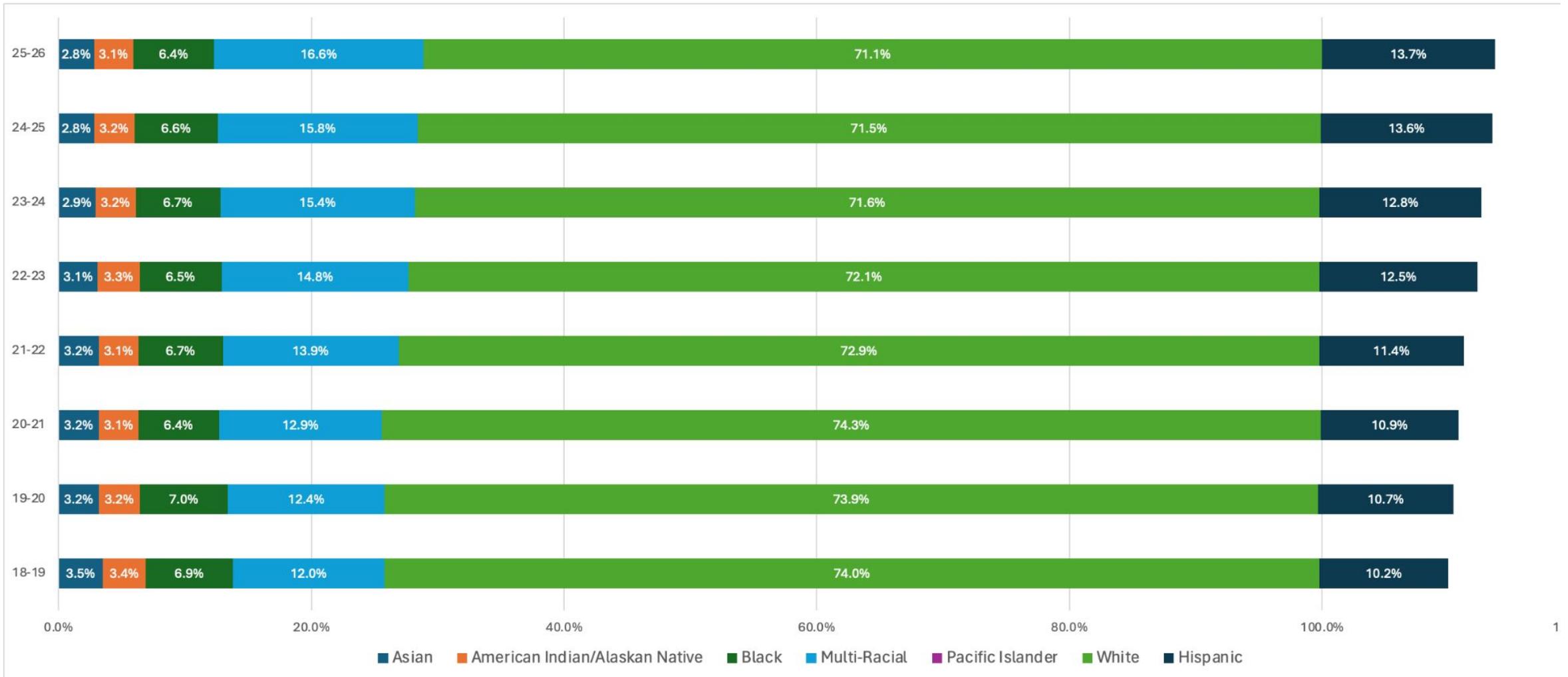
Students with Disabilities



- LPS number of students with disabilities has increased by approx **6% since 21-22 to 19.1% in 2025-26.**
- According to KASB, the percentage of students with disabilities in Kansas has increased from **14% to 16.3% from 2005-2022.**
- According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, percentage of students with disability **increased from 13% to 15% from 2012-2013 to 2022-2023 nationally.**

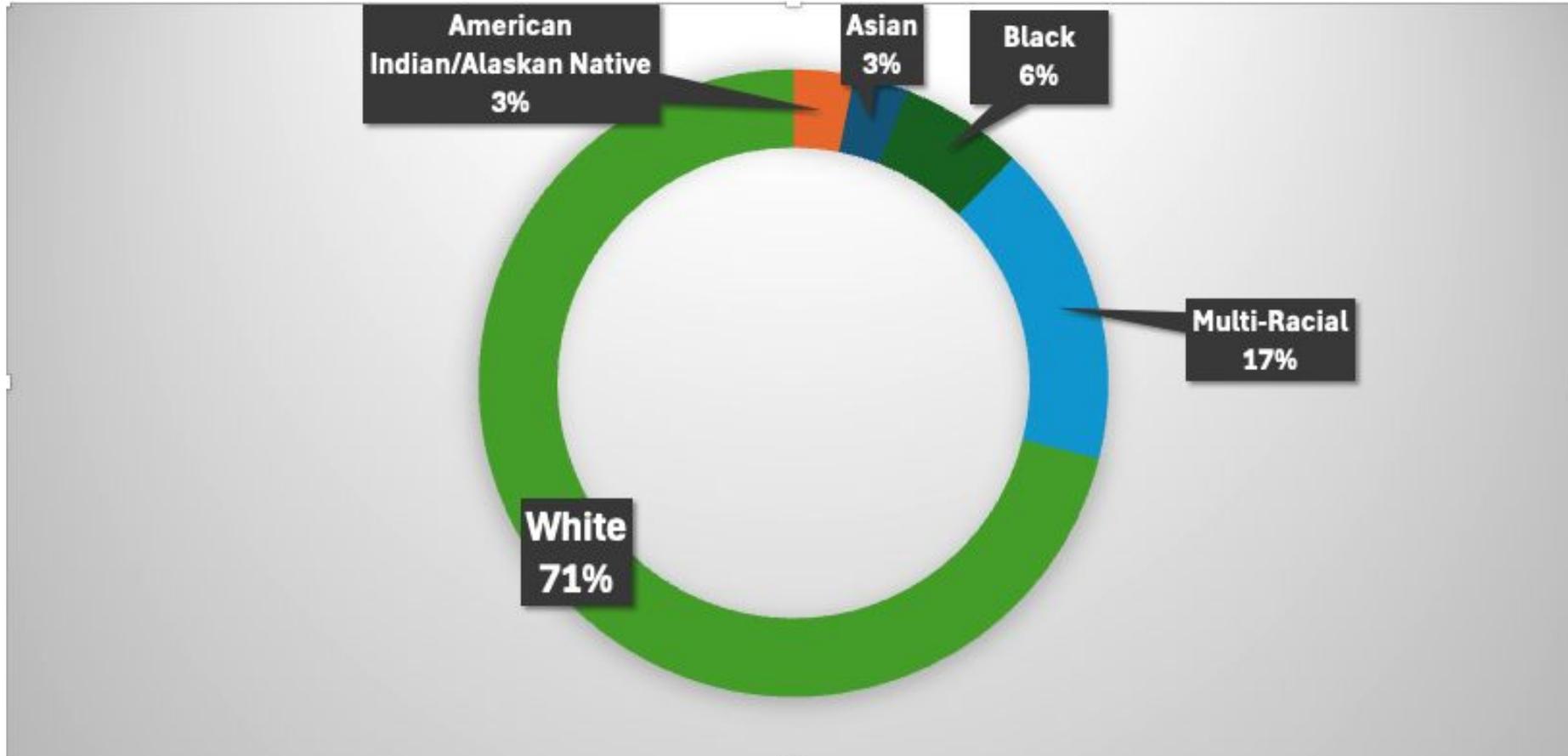
- These numbers do not include students categorized only as “Gifted.”

Race/Ethnicity Over Time



- Race/Ethnicity is self-reported by parents at time of enrollment
- Pacific Islander represents less than 1% and are not shown on this graph
- Hispanic is an additional identifier to demographics, which is why the graph exceeds 100%

2025-2026 Enrollment: Race



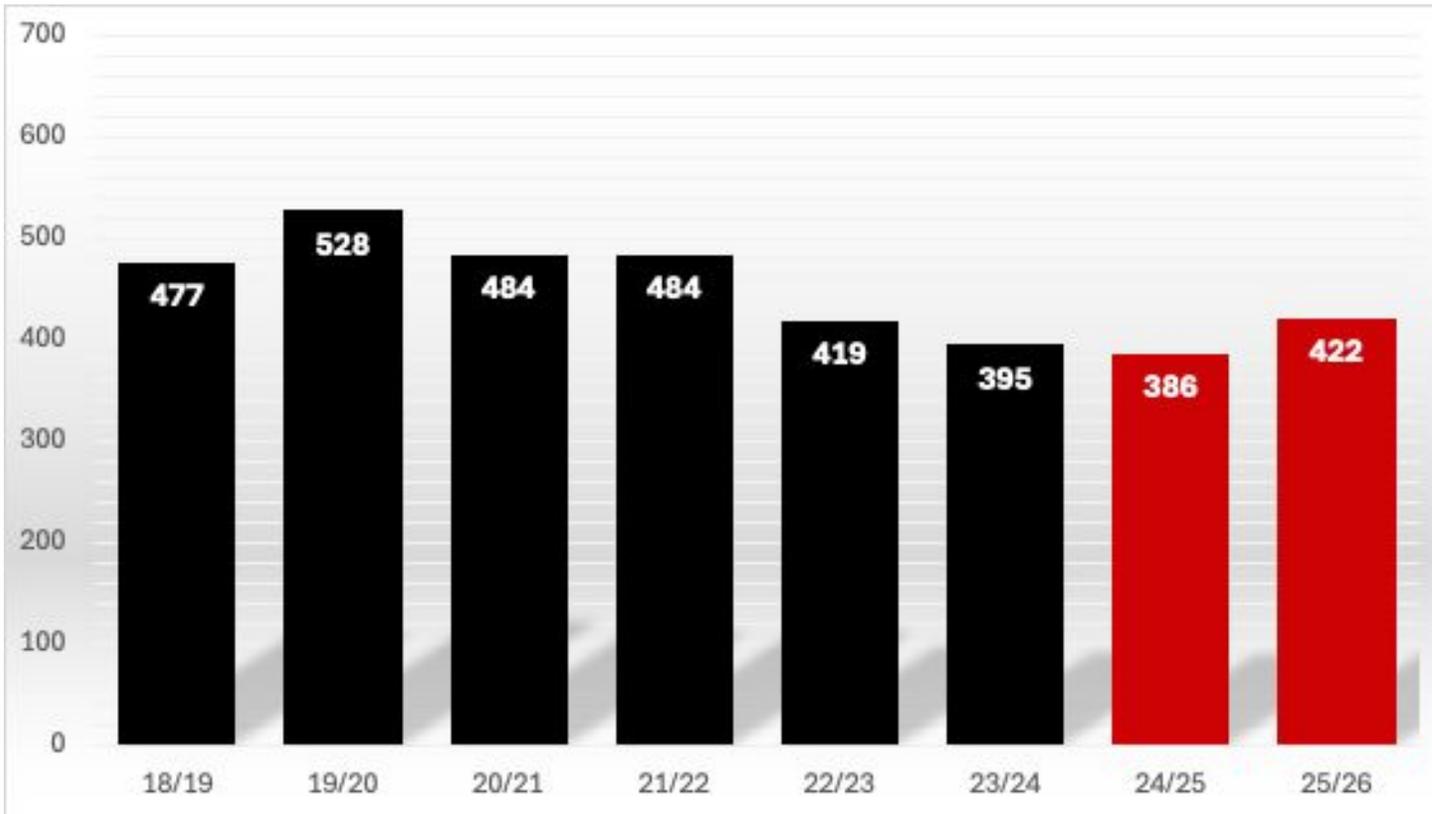
Hispanic not displayed on this graph (ethnicity) as that data is collected separately. Hispanic represents 13.7% of student population





Program Spotlight: Liberty Memorial Central Middle School

Beginning in 24-25, LMCMS launched STEAM initiative.



- **+36 student increase** in 2025-26, following first year of implementation
- **a 9% increase, following 3 years of declining enrollment**

Program Spotlight:

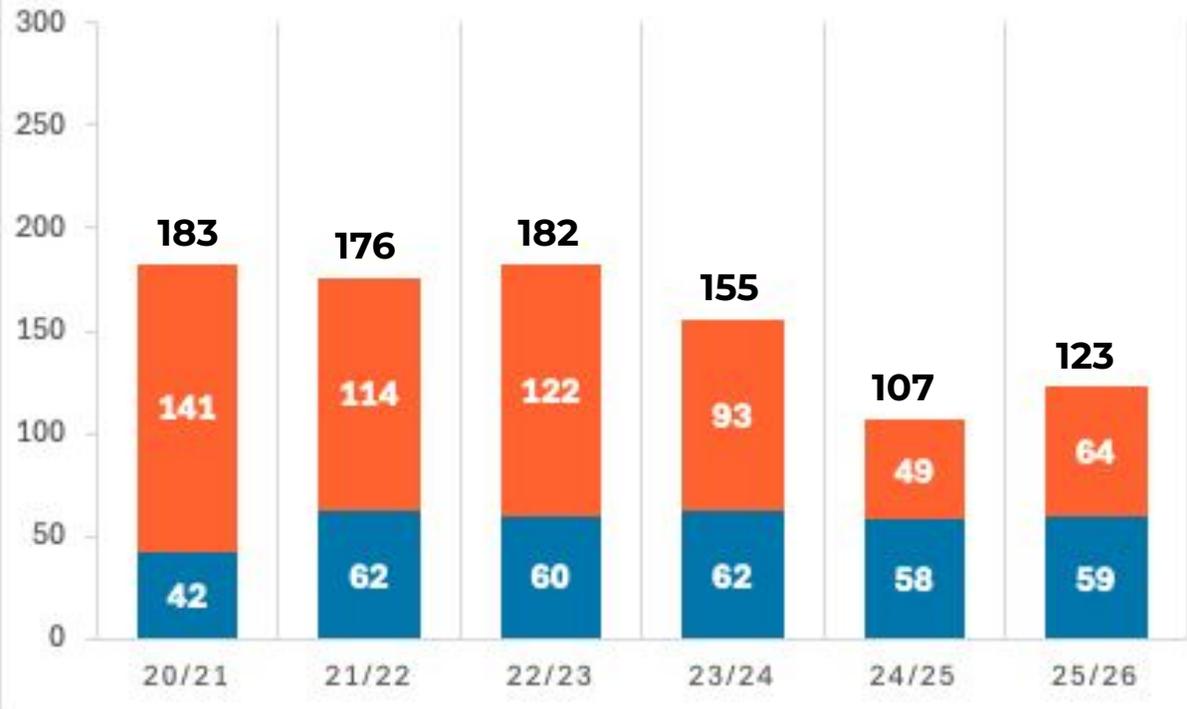


LAWRENCE
COLLEGE &
CAREER CENTER

Discover What's Next

COLLEGE & CAREER ACADEMY ENROLLMENT

■ Full-Time Academy Students ■ Part-Time Students from LHS or FSHS



Since 20/21 school year opening, College & Career Academy:

- Full-time student enrollment increased from **42 students to 59 students**
- Overall enrollment is decreased from **183 students to 123 (-33%)**

- Full-time students are part of The Academy, -they take all of their classes at the College & Career Center
- Part-Time students take one or more courses at the College & Career Center, but take the majority of their classes at either LHS or FSHS
- Overall Enrollment reflects full and part-time students combined and does not represent Diploma Completion students

Program Spotlight:



Beginning 22/23 school year, New York Elementary transitioned to open Montessori classrooms.

An enrollment trend from the prior 3-years of decrease is reversed, with an **increase of 49 students** since 22/23 - a **26% increase.**



Spotlight: High School Enrollment



Lawrence High and Free State High have seen an enrollment difference decrease **to 161 students.**



Annual Elementary Class Size Report 2025-2026

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2025-26 Class Size: Elementary

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	Overall Average	
Grade K	12	14	14	16	17	17	18	18	19	19	20	20	20	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	22	22	23	23	23	23	23	23	23				20	
Grade 1	16	16	18	18	18	18	18	18	19	19	19	19	20	20	21	21	21	21	21	21	22	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	24	24				20
Grade 2	15	16	16	16	16	16	17	17	17	19	19	19	19	19	23	24	24	24	24	24	25	25	25	25	25	26	26	26	26	26				21
Grade 3	18	19	19	19	19	20	20	20	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	22	22	22	22	23	23	23	23	23	24	24	25	26	26			22
Grade 4	15	16	17	19	20	20	20	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	24	26	26	26	27	27	28	28			22
Grade 5	19	19	19	19	19	20	20	21	22	22	22	23	23	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	26	26	26	26	27	28	29	30					23

- Each cell represents a traditional elementary classroom in the district
- Classroom numbers as of October 28, 2025
- In some high need locations, Title I dollars are used to maintain lower class sizes
- Multigrade classes not included & Montessori classes, also are not included

Summary: Class Size Elementary

	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Grade K	12	23	20
Grade 1	16	24	20
Grade 2	15	26	21
Grade 3	18	26	22
Grade 4	15	28	22
Grade 5	19	30	23



- In some higher needs locations, Title I dollars are leveraged to maintain lower class sizes
- Numbers are as of October 28, 2025
- Two multigrade classes & Four Montessori classes not included

Additional Reading on Birth Rate and Enrollment Decline

[How Smaller Families are Changing the World](#)

November 2, 2025 3:00 AM ET
Sarah McCammon & Brian Man

[Kansas birth rate hits all-time low as women contemplate health and finances](#)

August 3, 2023
Rachel Mipro, Kansas Reflector

[District cites birth rate, fewer new homes as key reasons for declining enrollment](#)

Nov 7, 2025 Updated Nov 7, 2025
Lucas Irizarry

Research Brookings

[Declining public school enrollment](#)

August 27, 2025

Dylan Council, Sofoklis Goulas, and Faidra Monachou