Bellingham School District

Enrollment Trends and Projections

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Introduction
Enrollment: Past, Present, and Future

Enrollment in the Bellingham School District and Whatcom County has declined over the past few years following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in the Spring of 2020. Preliminary enrollment figures from September 2023 indicate that K-12 enrollment in the County is still about 1,000 students less than what it was in October 2019. There are also indications that some families and students may have opted for private schools over the public schools in the last few years. Private school enrollment in Bellingham, and the County generally, is higher than it was prior the start of the pandemic. At this point it is reasonable to assume that many of the students who stayed out of school during the pandemic have either moved, or they are pursuing educational options outside of the public schools (private schools, home schooling, or virtual schools). So, what does the future look like?

The purpose of the present report is to provide an updated forecast of enrollment for the Bellingham School District. The last update was completed in the Summer of 2020, prior to the start of school. At that time we did not have sufficient data to assess the impact of the pandemic on enrollment. Looking at enrollment today, it is reasonable to say that the pandemic had some lasting effects on enrollment in Bellingham, Whatcom County generally, and the Puget Sound as well. This is an ideal time to update our forecast.

Introduction
Enrollment: Past, Present, and Future

Prior to the onset of the pandemic, enrollment in the District and the County was growing steadily. But conditions have changed since 2020, partly due to the pandemic, and partly due to changing demographic conditions that have started to impact enrollment.

The pandemic appears to have influenced the wider public's thinking about jobs, employment, commuting, and education. More people are opting to work from home, at least part of the time, and this in turn appears to have made an impact on parent decisions about where to live and how to educate their children. As previously noted, we have seen an increase in private school market share in parts of the Puget Sound, in Whatcom County, and in Bellingham as well. We do not know if students left the public schools for private schools, since we can't track individual students. But it is clear that private schools have seen an increase in their enrollment since 2019. It may simply be that parents who are new to an area are choosing private schools over public schools for their children.

It also seems that many of the families that kept their students out of school during the pandemic may have moved or opted for some other educational option (e.g., virtual schools or home-schooling). We did see an increase in home-based instruction in Bellingham in 2020, but the numbers have since declined and are in line with what we were seeing before the pandemic. There may, however, be parents with young children who are educating their kids at home without notifying anyone.

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Enrollment: Past, Present, and Future

At this point it is reasonable to assume that the percentage of students in the public schools is likely to be lower, at least for the next several years. In addition, the smaller kindergarten classes that we saw during the last few years, translates into a smaller number of kids rolling up into subsequent grades. This makes the current enrollment in the District smaller than it would have been if the pandemic had not happened.

In addition to the effects of the pandemic, there are other notable demographic trends. Births have been trending lower than expected over the past few years. This trend is being seen at the national level as well. Women are having fewer children and waiting longer to have children. As a result we expect the kindergarten populations in Bellingham and the County to be smaller over the next four years and possibly beyond that period if births don't improve. Long range projections for Whatcom County suggest that we will eventually see a rise in births, as the number of females in their child-bearing years increases. But even with this change we are predicting fewer births in our present forecast than we were a few years ago when fertility rates were higher. This has a long term impact on the amount of K-12 enrollment growth we are likely to see in the District and the County.

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Enrollment: Past, Present, and Future

In addition to the change in births trends, we are also seeing changes in housing and population growth. There are a substantial number of new housing units that have either recently been built, or are planned for future construction within the District boundary area (about 2,800 units). But the recent rise in interest rates has impacted the real estate market and may lead to slower construction timelines. We are predicting that the District will see an average of 400 new housing units added to its housing stock annually between now and 2040, but in the near term we cannot be certain about how quickly new construction will proceed. Higher interest rates have made home-buying less attractive for some buyers and this can impact the sale of both new and existing homes. Fewer homes turning over means fewer opportunities for families with children to find a home and move into the District.

Population growth in the District and the County also slowed some between the 2010 and 2020 Census. But there is still room for additional population growth. Projections from the City and the State suggest that this region will continue to see healthy population growth over the next two decades. Although declining fertility rates can affect the amount of growth that we see in the elementary school age population, long term growth in the population between the ages of 20 and 55, generally implies an increase in the number of school-age children. The State, in its latest growth management forecast, is predicting healthy gains in this demographic, especially between 2030 and 2040.

Introduction
Enrollment: Past, Present, and Future

Over the long term we expect K-12 enrollment to continue growing in Whatcom County and Bellingham. Over the next few years, however, we could see some declines in enrollment or, at the very least, slowing enrollment gains. The combination of smaller kindergarten classes, slowing home sales, and, in some years, larger than average graduating classes will exert a downward pull on enrollment.

As always, there is uncertainty when predicting the future. To help us with this problem we have employed multiple methods to help predict future enrollment. The average of multiple methods is often a better predictor of future trends than any one method used by itself.* Our final forecast is based on births and birth projections, cohort ratios that predict the net gains or losses as students roll up through the grades, and assumptions about the amount of housing and population growth that we are likely to see in each year of the forecast. We also created alternative forecasts based on recent Census data, forecasts of the Age 5-19 population for the County available from the State, and linear models that look at population and births to predict enrollment. The average of these different methods provides a reasonable indication of where enrollment might land. We made some adjustments to our preferred forecast method so that our predicted enrollment in 2030 and 2040 is close to the average of these different methods.

**See for example, John Armstrong (2001) Combining forecasts: A review and annotated bibliography. International Journal of Forecasting, (5), 559-583.*

Introduction
Enrollment: Past, Present, and Future

We also created low and high alternatives to our main forecast which show what might happen if growth in the District were to be about one-percent lower or higher (on an annual basis) than what we assumed in our recommended forecast. The one-percent rate was chosen because it corresponds to the typical error rate that is acceptable for a one-year forecast.

We have also provided school forecasts which attempt to allocate the recommended District forecast into school attendance areas. School projections are generally less reliable than District projections because they are based on smaller numbers, making it harder to discern the difference between an actual trend in the data and random variation. The problem here is analogous to small sample sizes in polling. The smaller the sample size, the wider is the margin of error.

In spite of this problem, the school projections provide some indication of which schools are likely to trend up, down, or remain the same in the future. This information can be used to guide facility and other planning decisions in the District.

Finally, we recommend that these forecasts be updated periodically to take advantage of new enrollment and demographic information.

Introduction
Enrollment: Past, Present, and Future

In the sections that follow we provide charts and tables detailing trends in enrollment, births, housing, and population. Each section is preceded by a set of bullet points that highlight the relevant information in each section. After this, we present the alternative total enrollment forecasts and the detailed forecasts by grade level for the District. The final section provides enrollment forecasts for the schools.

Enrollment Trends

Enrollment Trends

Highlights

- Enrollment in the Bellingham School District and Whatcom County was lower in October 2022 than it was in October 2019, prior to the onset of the pandemic.

- Bellingham's share of the County K-12 public school population has declined some since 2020.

- Private schools in Whatcom County and in the Bellingham attendance area have increased their market share since the pandemic. It is possible that some students have left the public schools for private schools, though we cannot be certain since we cannot track specific students. What we do know is that private school enrollments have increased in Bellingham and the County since 2020, while public school enrollments have declined.

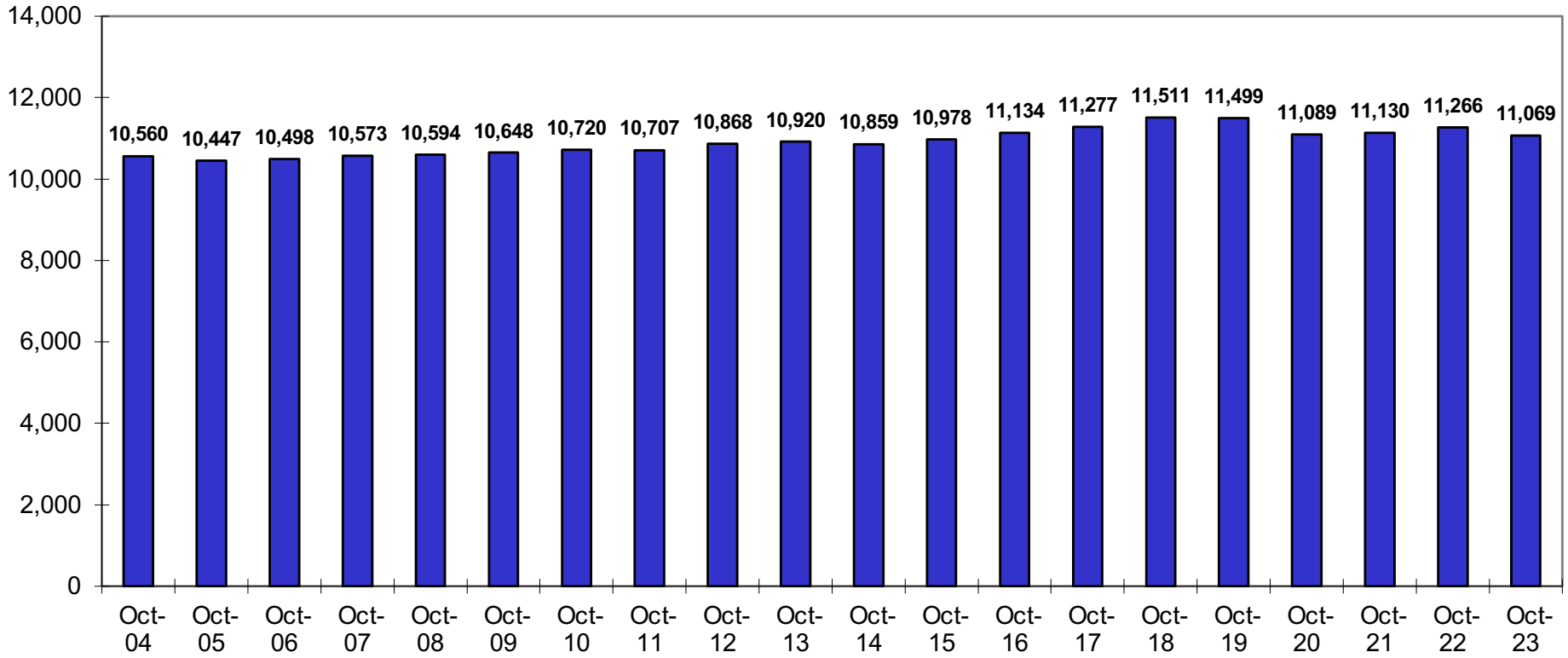
- Enrollment in the District may decline some over the next few years. We do expect enrollment in the District to eventually start growing again due to continued population and housing development, and due to predicted improvement in the birth trends over time. The State forecast of the Age 5-19 population also shows improving growth trends between 2030 and 2040.

District Enrollment Trend

October Headcount 2003-2023

State P223 Reports

Does NOT include students enrolled in Running Start Full Time

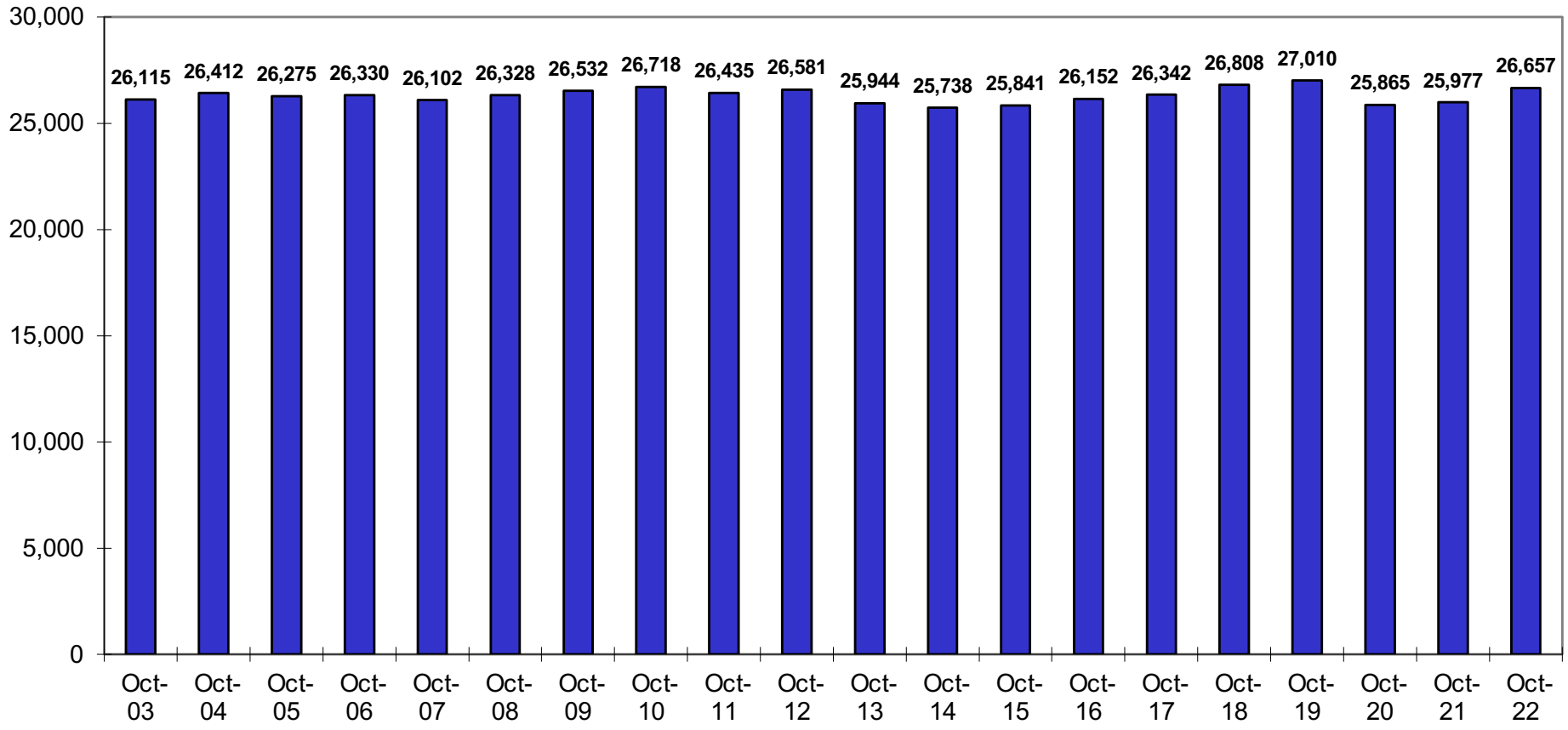


Whatcom County K-12 Public School Enrollment

October Headcount 2003-2022

State P223 Reports

Does NOT include students enrolled in Running Start Full Time

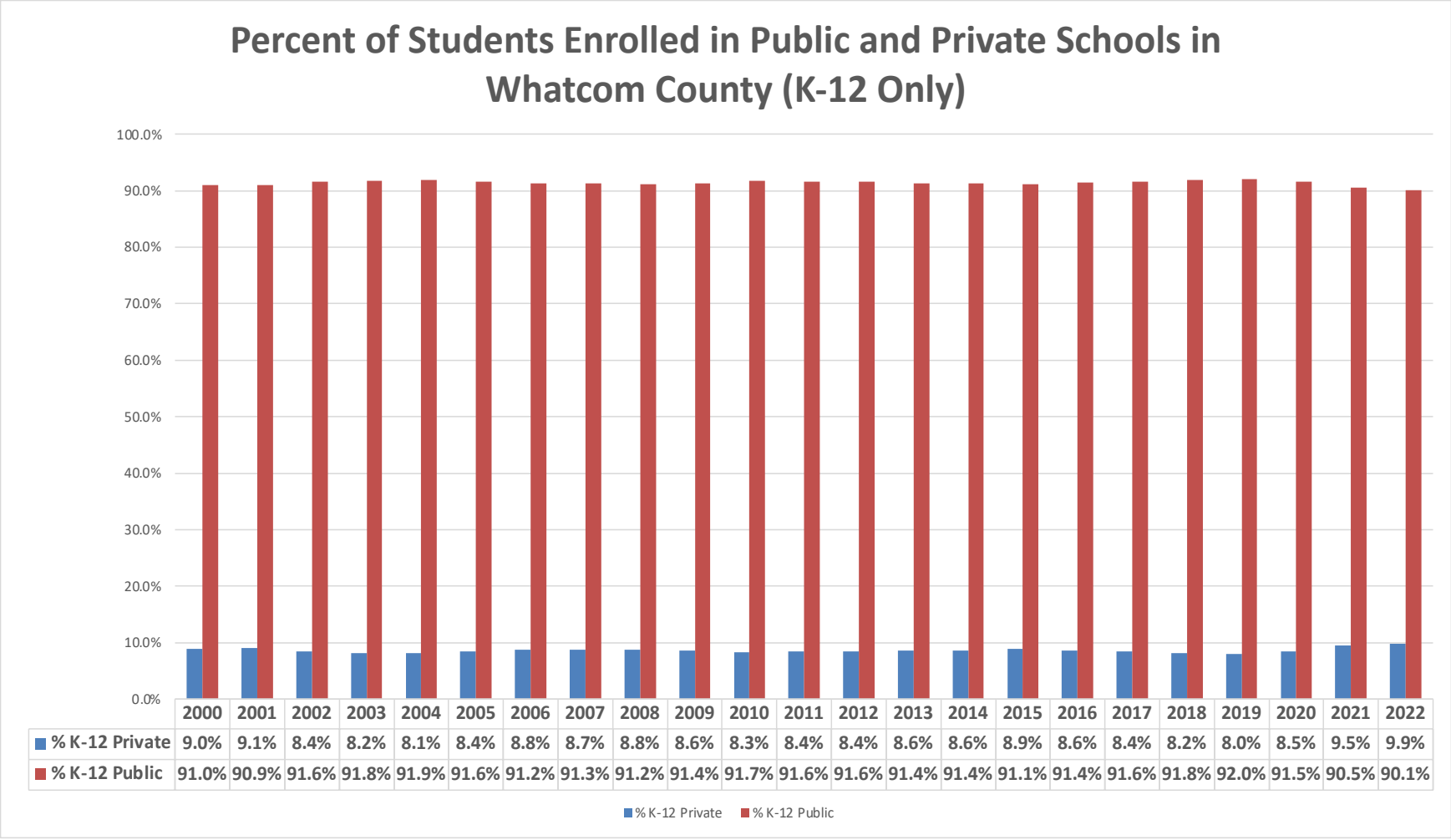


Whatcom County School Districts
Share of K-12 Public School Enrollment

Percent Enrolled by School District (Whatcom County)					
School District	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**	**2022**	
Bellingham	39.8%	40.1%	42.9%	42.7%	
Blaine	7.6%	8.1%	8.2%	7.6%	
Ferndale	20.2%	19.3%	16.2%	17.3%	
Lynden	9.9%	10.4%	12.3%	12.8%	
Meridian	6.2%	8.6%	6.9%	6.7%	
Mount Baker	9.1%	7.7%	6.4%	6.0%	
Nooksack	7.1%	5.7%	7.1%	6.9%	
Total K-12	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	

Percent of Students Enrolled in Public and Private Schools in Whatcom County

Source: Washington State School Board Private School Tracking Data



	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
% K-12 Private	9.0%	9.1%	8.4%	8.2%	8.1%	8.4%	8.8%	8.7%	8.8%	8.6%	8.3%	8.4%	8.4%	8.6%	8.6%	8.9%	8.6%	8.4%	8.2%	8.0%	8.5%	9.5%	9.9%
% K-12 Public	91.0%	90.9%	91.6%	91.8%	91.9%	91.6%	91.2%	91.3%	91.2%	91.4%	91.7%	91.6%	91.6%	91.4%	91.4%	91.1%	91.4%	91.6%	91.8%	92.0%	91.5%	90.5%	90.1%

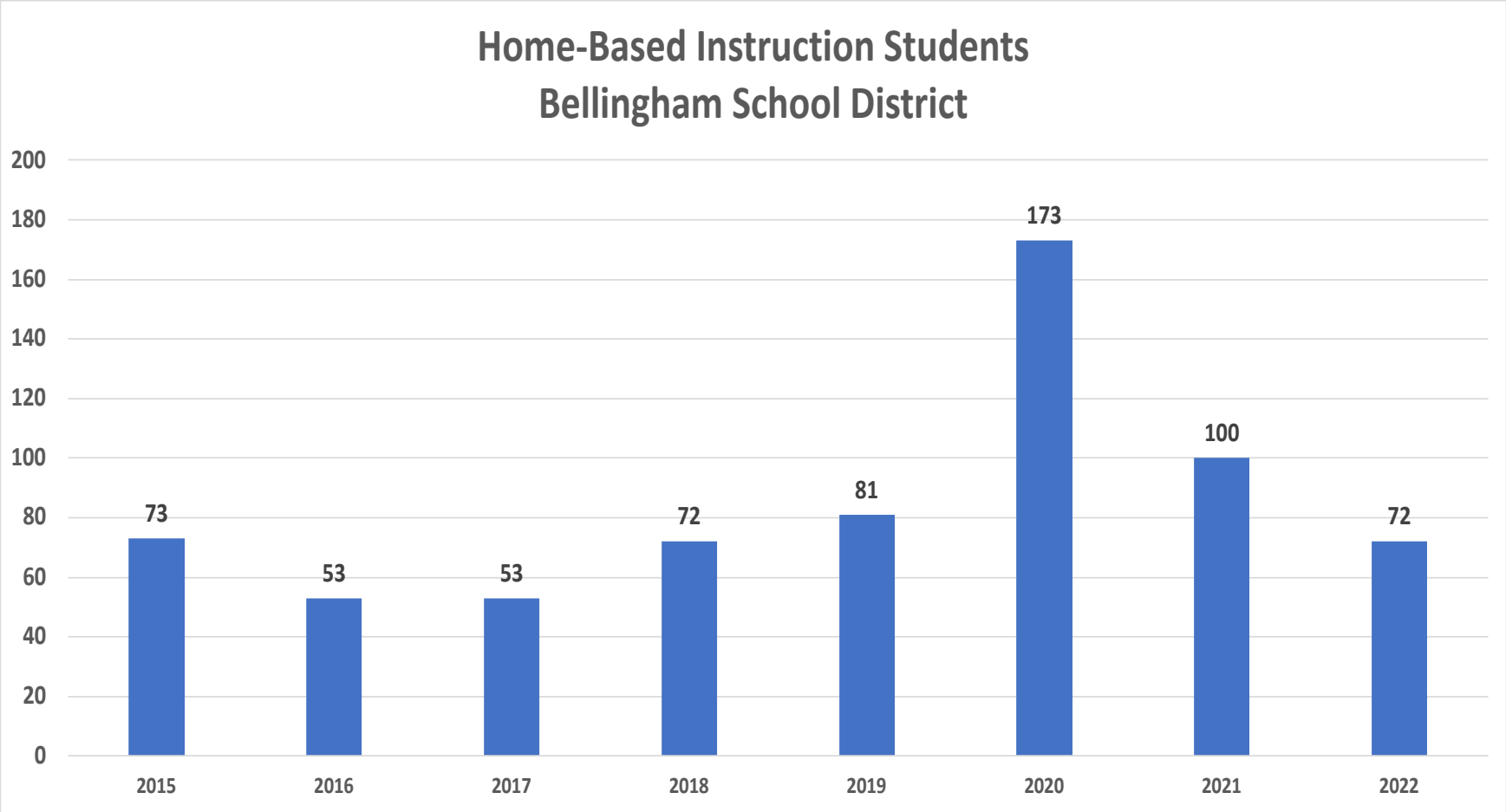
Private School Enrollment in the School District Boundary Area

Enrollment for OSPI Certified Private Schools (Bellingham Attendance Area)				
K-12 Enrollment Only	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**
Alger Learning Center	19	19	7	14
Assumption Catholic School	185	194	187	202
Baker Christian School			11	10
Bellingham Christian School	328	305	350	390
Cascades Montessori Middle School	6	0	35	35
Cedar Tree Montessori	74	68		61
Explorations Academy	41	2	20	22
Montessori at Samish Woods	7	62	65	61
The Franklin Academy			275	256
The Robert Williams School of Arts & Sciences			5	15
Whatcom Hills Waldorf School	227	104	164	170
Total	**887**	**754**	**1119**	**1236**
Bellingham School District K-12 Enroll	**11,499**	**11,089**	**11,130**	**11,015**
Public School Market Share	**92.8%**	**93.6%**	**90.9%**	**89.9%**

Source: Washington State School Board Private School Data Files

Home-Based Instruction in the Bellingham School District

Source: OSPI Home-Based Instruction Reports



Birth Trends

Birth Trends

Highlights

- Births in Whatcom County have declined and dropped below 2,000 per year in two of the last four years for which we have data. This trend is being seen in the Puget Sound as well, and throughout the nation. Women are having fewer children and waiting longer to have children.

- Our birth forecasts, based on the latest fertility rates are lower than those from the State which assumes about 2,400 births a year between 2030 and 2035. Given recent fertility trends we believe that births in Whatcom County will rise some over the next decade but still remain below 2,300 per year.

- The decline in births means that our long range forecast of Whatcom County K-12 public school enrollment is lower than the forecasts from previous years.

- The District's share of the County kindergarten population increased in 2022, due to the addition of the transitional kindergarten program. Without this population the District's share of the County birth cohort would be around 32% in October 2023. This is down some from the trends we were seeing prior to the pandemic. Looking ahead, we believe this number will eventually rise due to future housing and population growth within the District boundary area.

Birth Trends

Highlights

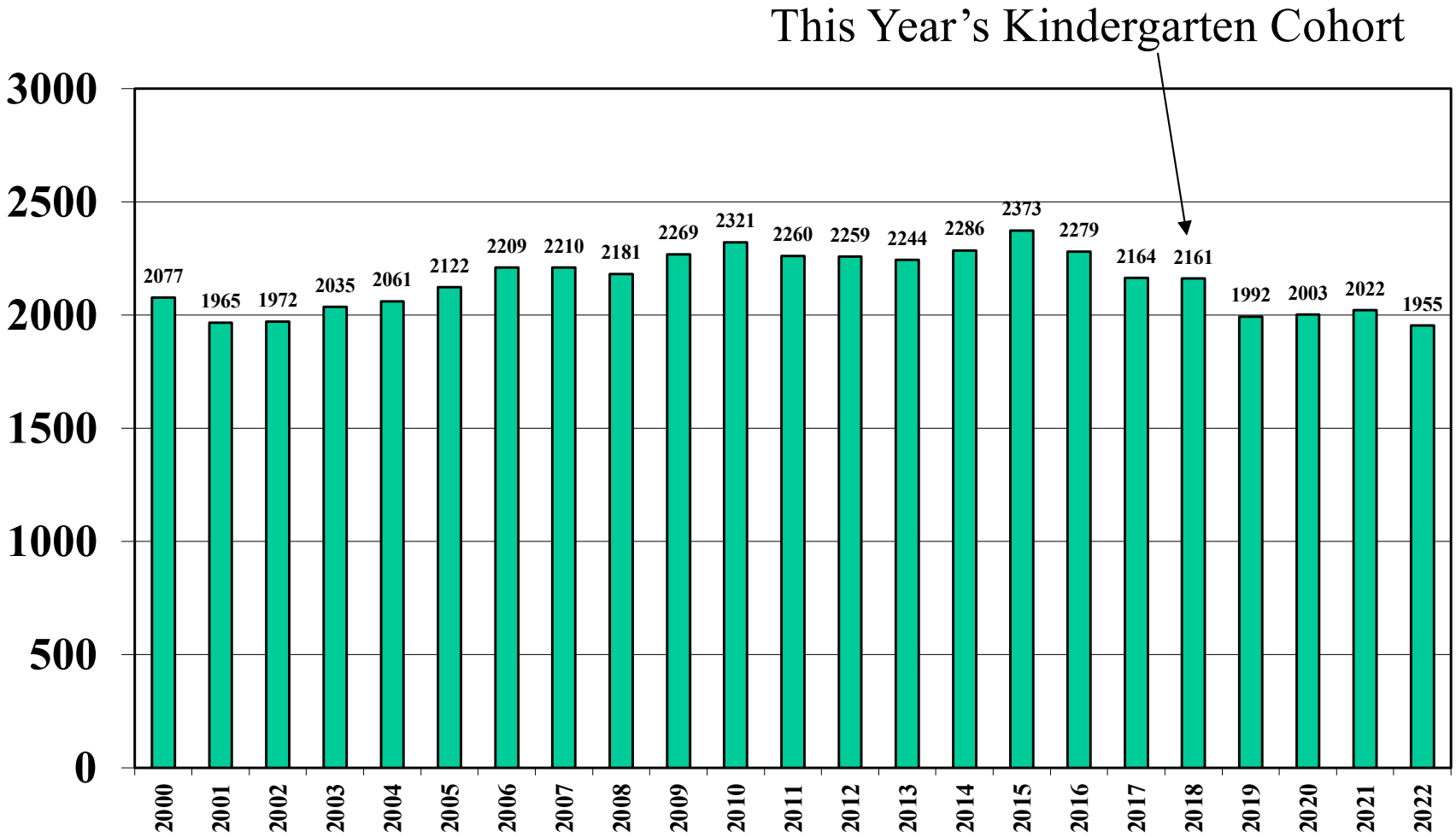
- A comparison of births in the City of Bellingham to enrollment in the school district five years later shows a net loss of families prior to the start of school. Put another way, the number of families with preschool age children moving out of the City before their children reach school age, exceeds the number of families moving in or staying put in most years.

- In order to predict kindergarten enrollment we used the birth-to-k ratio at the county level, comparing kindergarten enrollment in a given year to the County births five years prior to each year. We consider the County birth number to be a more reliable predictor of future kindergarten enrollment than the City birth number based on our past experience with both indicators.

- We also accounted for some additional growth at kindergarten due to the transitional kindergarten program (TK). To estimate the transitional kindergarten enrollment we looked at the TK enrollment in 2022 as a percentage of the birth cohort that might be eligible for transitional kindergarten given recent birth data. We used the 2022 percentage as a baseline to estimate the transitional kindergarten enrollment for each year of the forecast.

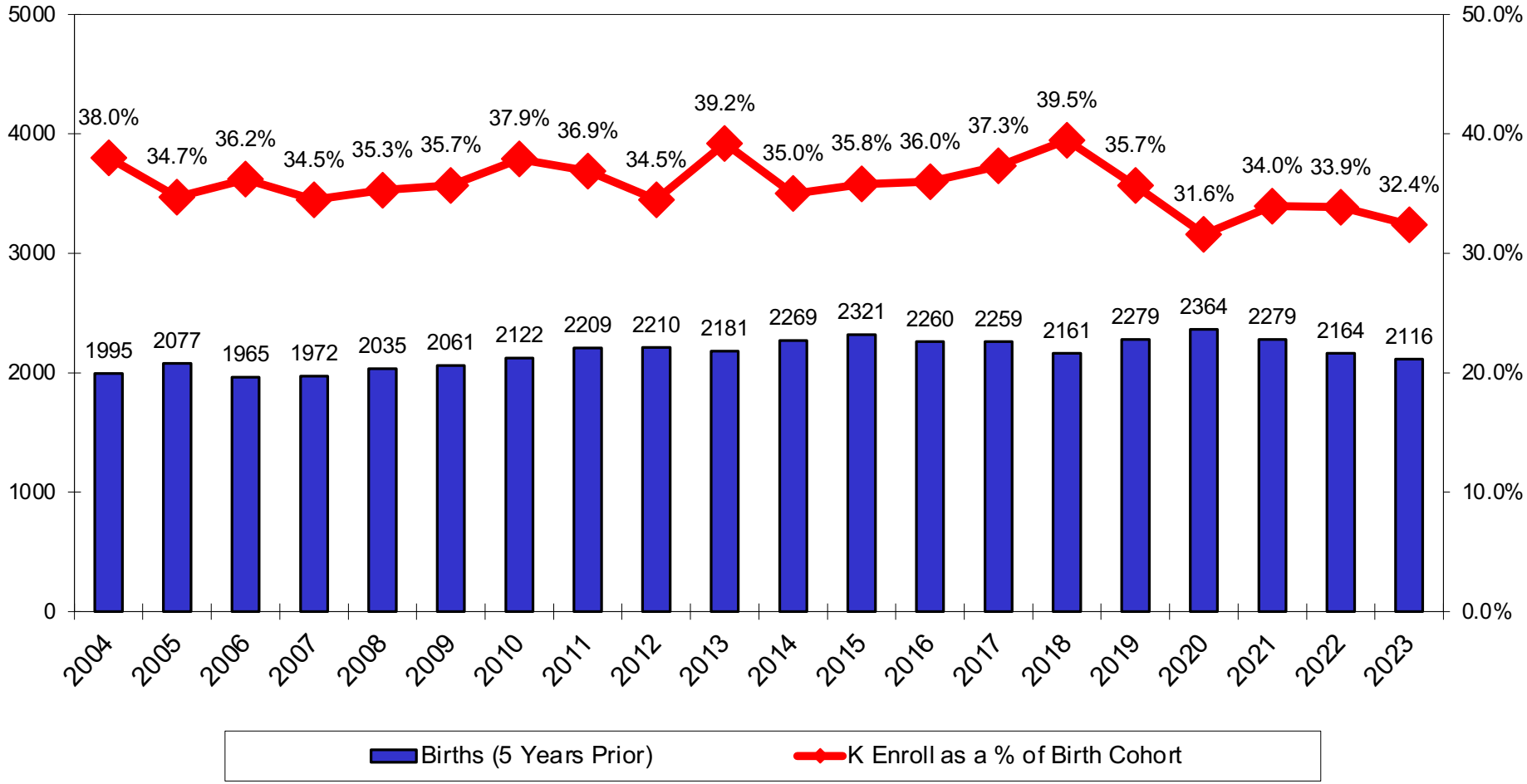
Whatcom County Births

Source: Washington State Health Department



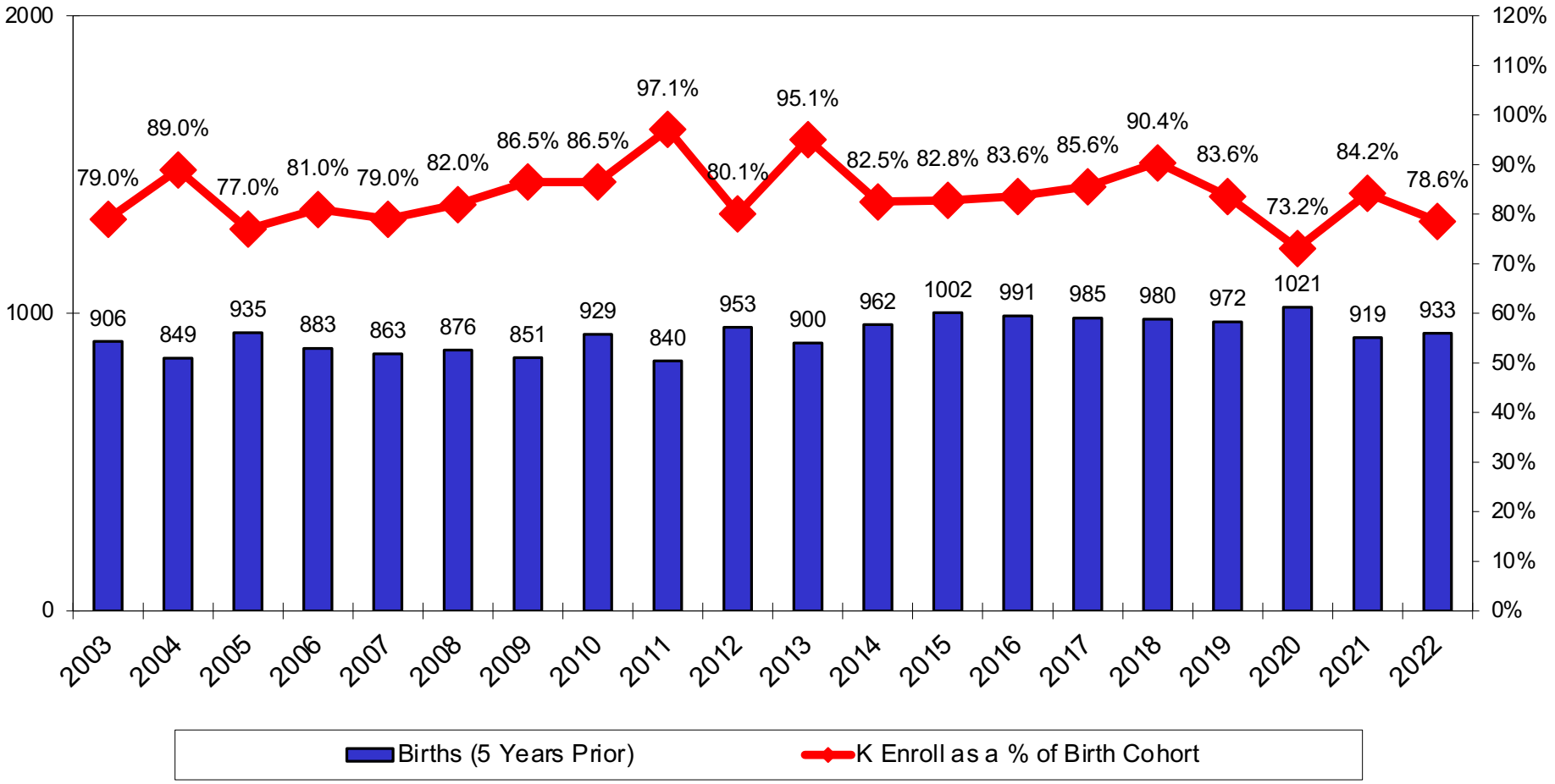
Bellingham: K Enrollment as a Percent of the Whatcom County Births (2004-2023)

Excludes Transitional Kindergarten Students

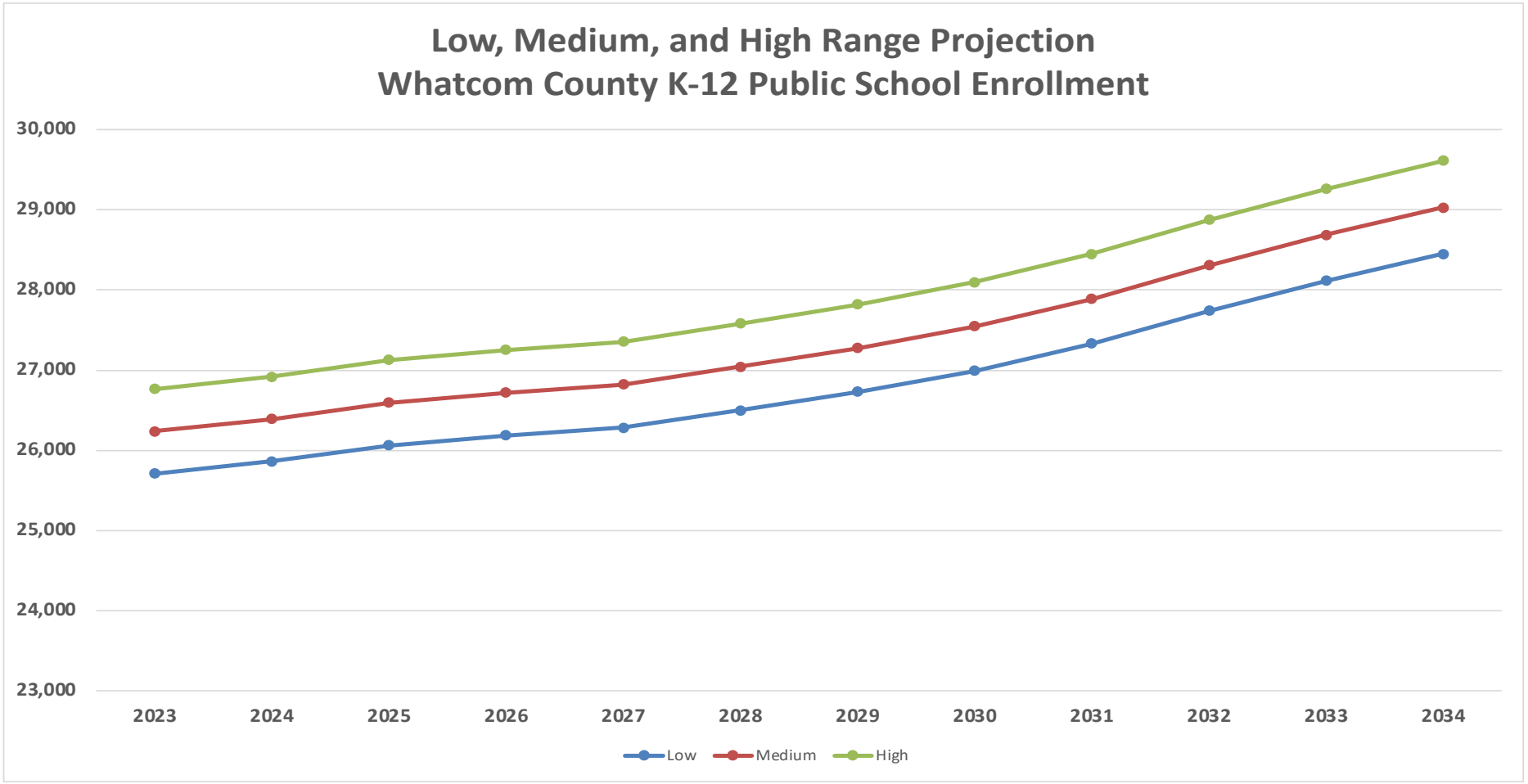


Bellingham: K Enrollment as a Percent of the Bellingham City Births (2003-2022)

Excludes Transitional Kindergarten Students



Forecast of the Whatcom County K-12 Public School Population Using Births, Historical Enrollment Trends, and Forecasted Growth in the Age 5-19 Population
Low, Medium, and High



Population Trends

Population Trends

Highlights

- The population of Whatcom County saw a net gain of almost 26,000 residents between the 2010 and 2020 Census. The net gain of residents and the rate of growth in the past decade was lower than what we saw in the previous decade.

- During the same time period, the population of the Bellingham School District grew at a rate of about one-percent annually, slightly lower than the overall County rate.

- The chart on page 30 shows the low, medium, and high forecast of the County population produced by the Office of Financial Management for the State of Washington in 2022. We used these forecasts to help us develop the alternative population forecasts for the Bellingham School District.

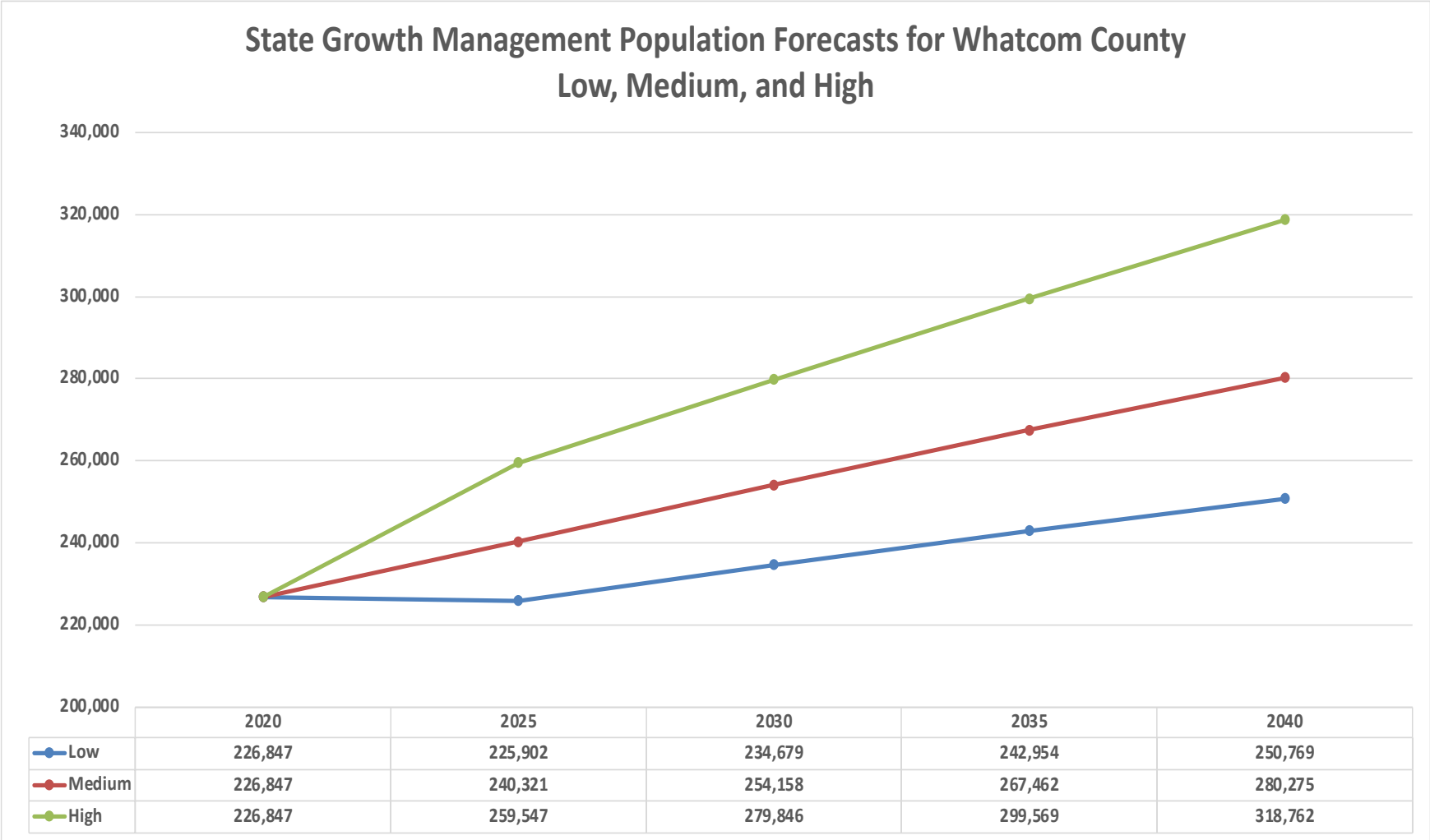
- Our preferred population forecast assumes that the District population will grow at about the same rate as the medium range State forecast for Whatcom County.

Whatcom County Census Population Figures

Source: Census Bureau

	2000	2010	2020
Population	166,814	201,140	226,847
Change		34,326	25,707
Percent Change		20.6%	12.8%
Annual % Change		2.1%	1.3%

Low, Medium, and High Range Forecasts from the Office of Financial Management (State of Washington) For Whatcom County



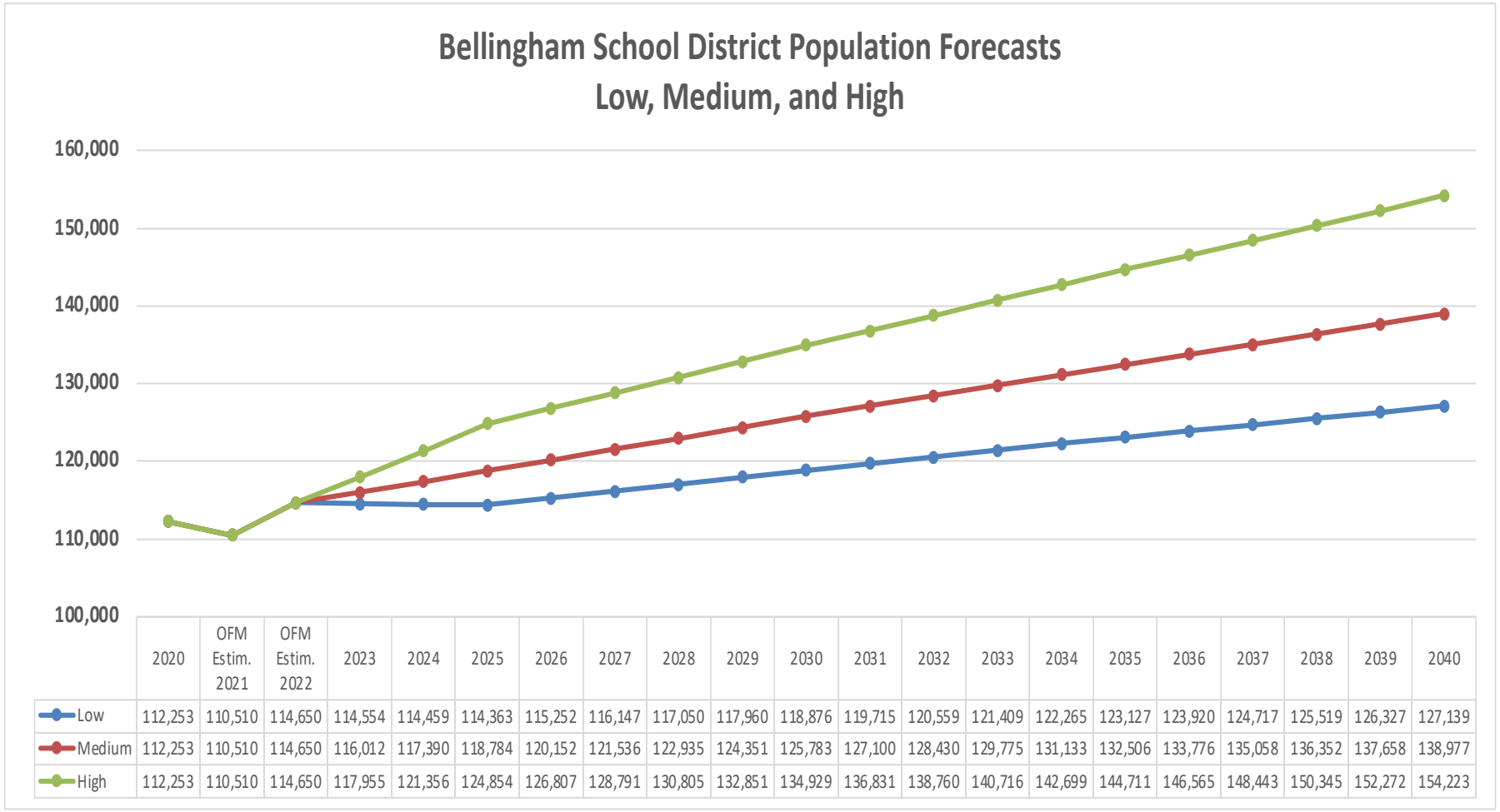
	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Low	226,847	225,902	234,679	242,954	250,769
Medium	226,847	240,321	254,158	267,462	280,275
High	226,847	259,547	279,846	299,569	318,762

Bellingham School District Census Data

Source: Census Bureau

Census Data				
Bellingham School District				
	1990	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**
Population	67,505	85,985	102,121	112,253
Change		18,480	16,136	10,132
% Change		**27.4%**	**18.8%**	**9.9%**
Annual %		**2.7%**	**1.9%**	**1.0%**
Housing	28,857	37,640	46,052	50,193
Avg. HH Size	**2.34**	**2.28**	**2.22**	**2.24**
Houses Added		8,783	8,412	4,141

Alternative Forecasts of the Bellingham School District Resident Population Based on Alternative Growth Rates Derived from the Low, Medium, and High Whatcom County State Forecasts



	2020	OFM Estim. 2021	OFM Estim. 2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040
Low	112,253	110,510	114,650	114,554	114,459	114,363	115,252	116,147	117,050	117,960	118,876	119,715	120,559	121,409	122,265	123,127	123,920	124,717	125,519	126,327	127,139
Medium	112,253	110,510	114,650	116,012	117,390	118,784	120,152	121,536	122,935	124,351	125,783	127,100	128,430	129,775	131,133	132,506	133,776	135,058	136,352	137,658	138,977
High	112,253	110,510	114,650	117,955	121,356	124,854	126,807	128,791	130,805	132,851	134,929	136,831	138,760	140,716	142,699	144,711	146,565	148,443	150,345	152,272	154,223

Housing Trends

Housing Trends

Highlights

- There were 4,141 housing units added to the District's housing stock between the 2010 and 2020 Census. The number of units added during this period is lower than the number that were added between the 2000 and 2010 Census.

- Using our population forecasts and average household size data from the 2020 Census, we created estimates of the number of housing units that are likely to be added to the District's housing stock between now and 2040. We assumed different amounts of housing based off the low, medium, and high range population estimates. Our medium range estimate is reasonably close to the estimates in the City of Bellingham's comprehensive plan.

- Our preferred medium range housing forecast assumes that the District will see about 400 new housing units a year between 2023 and 2040. Because this is an average, some years will see higher than average development, and other years, lower than average development.

- There are approximately 2,800 units in the current housing pipeline that have either been recently completed, or are expected to be completed over the next few years (data provided by the City of Bellingham). We expect the average number of units added annually between 2025 and 2028 to be slightly higher than the 400 per year average we assumed over the course of the entire forecast.

Housing Trends

Highlights

- There were approximately 22 public school students for every 100 housing units in the District based on the 2020 Census data (this is based on all housing units both new and existing). Recent estimates appear to be slightly lower than this, given the effects of the pandemic on enrollment. We expect the number of students per household to decline some between 2023 and 2030 due to smaller kindergarten populations and the presence of larger than average graduating classes in certain years. Between 2030 and 2040 this number should stabilize and perhaps even grow some as larger birth cohorts result in larger kindergarten classes during that time.

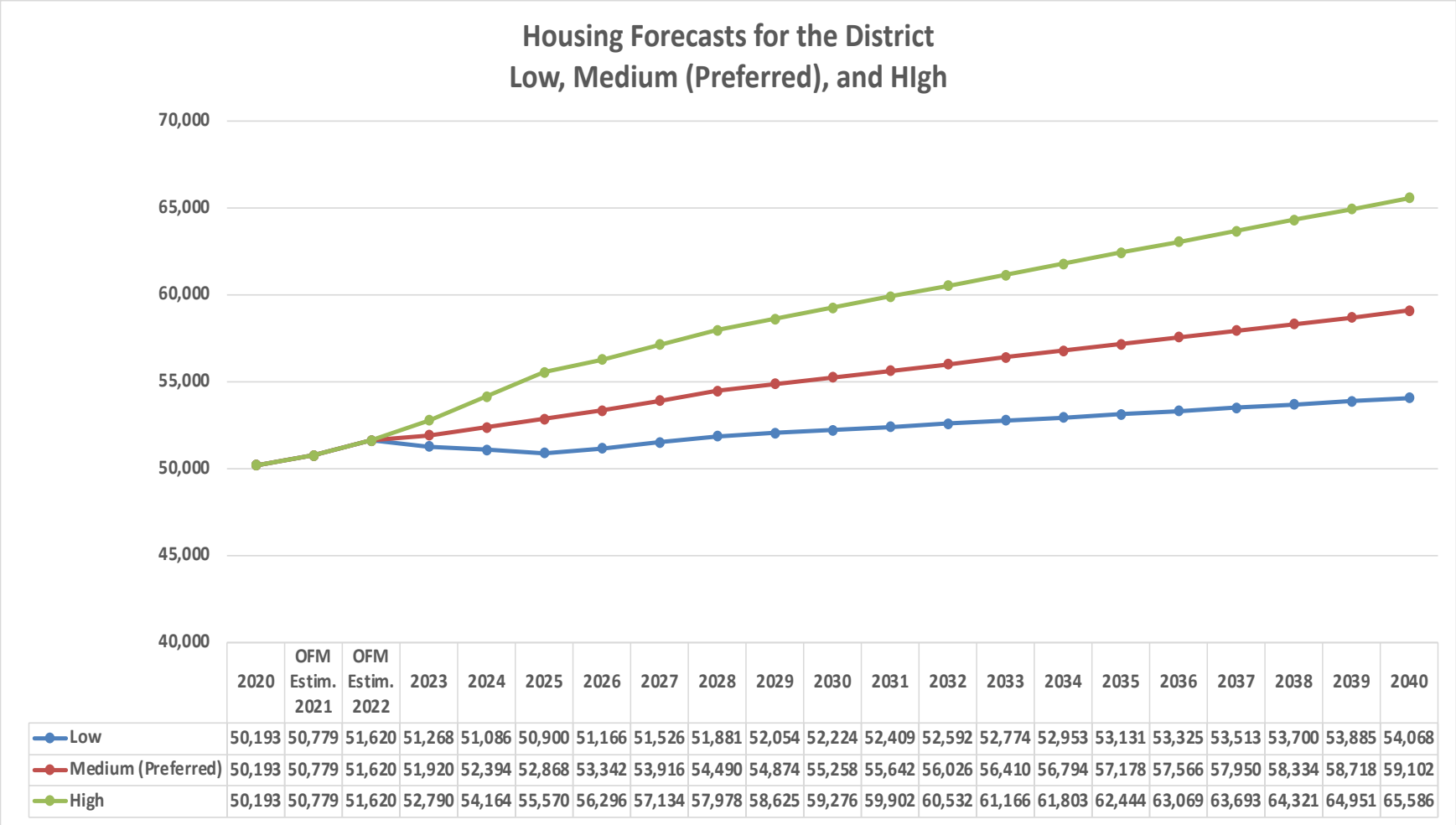
- The chart on page 37 shows a projection of the Bellingham School District population if we assume that the number of students per household drops from 22 students per 100 homes in 2020 to about 21 students per 100 homes in 2030 and 2040. This is one of the alternative forecast methods we used to help us calibrate our final forecast model.

Housing Permits Issued: City of Bellingham

Source: City of Bellingham Online Reports

City of Bellingham (Number of Units Permitted by Year)																			
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
New Single Family	320	187	145	194	86	57	72	71	104	149	145	126	194	219	186	179	119	224	178
New Two Dwelling	16	23	12	25	0	4	2	9	0	8	22	126	20	14	32	10	20	8	8
New Multi-family	57	51	207	266	102	23	8	95	26	136	322	424	232	331	361	613	354	561	363
Total Units	393	261	364	485	188	84	82	175	130	293	489	676	446	564	579	802	493	793	549

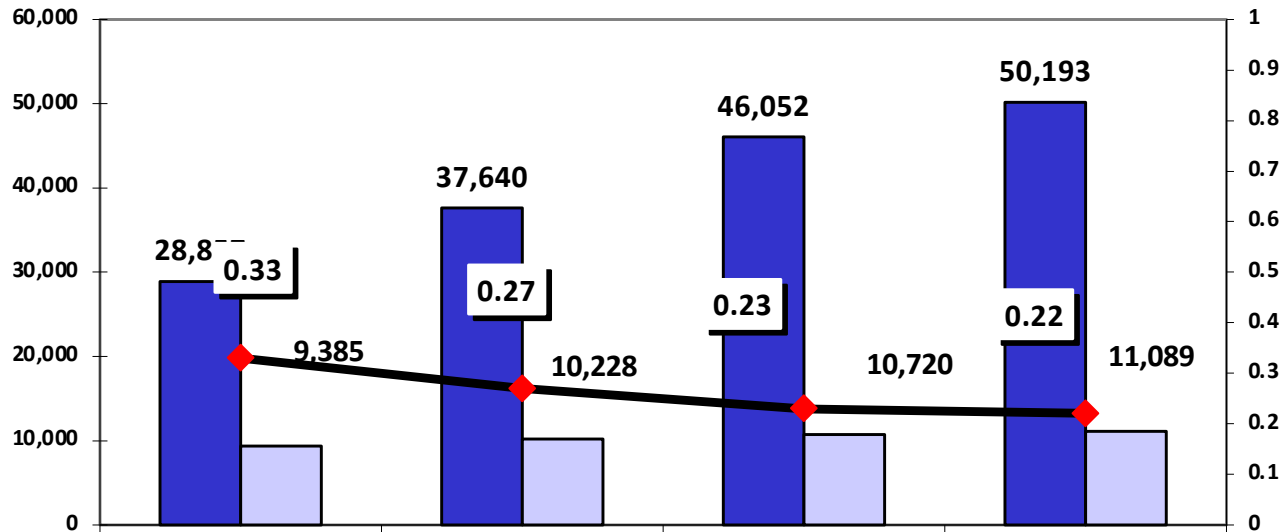
Low, Medium, and High Range Housing Forecast for the Bellingham School District Based off of the Low, Medium, and High Range Population Forecasts and Assumptions About Changes in the Average Household Size Over Time.



	2020	OFM Estim. 2021	OFM Estim. 2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040
Low	50,193	50,779	51,620	51,268	51,086	50,900	51,166	51,526	51,881	52,054	52,224	52,409	52,592	52,774	52,953	53,131	53,325	53,513	53,700	53,885	54,068
Medium (Preferred)	50,193	50,779	51,620	51,920	52,394	52,868	53,342	53,916	54,490	54,874	55,258	55,642	56,026	56,410	56,794	57,178	57,566	57,950	58,334	58,718	59,102
High	50,193	50,779	51,620	52,790	54,164	55,570	56,296	57,134	57,978	58,625	59,276	59,902	60,532	61,166	61,803	62,444	63,069	63,693	64,321	64,951	65,586

Housing Units and Students Per Household 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2020 Census Housing Data Compared to K-12 Enrollment

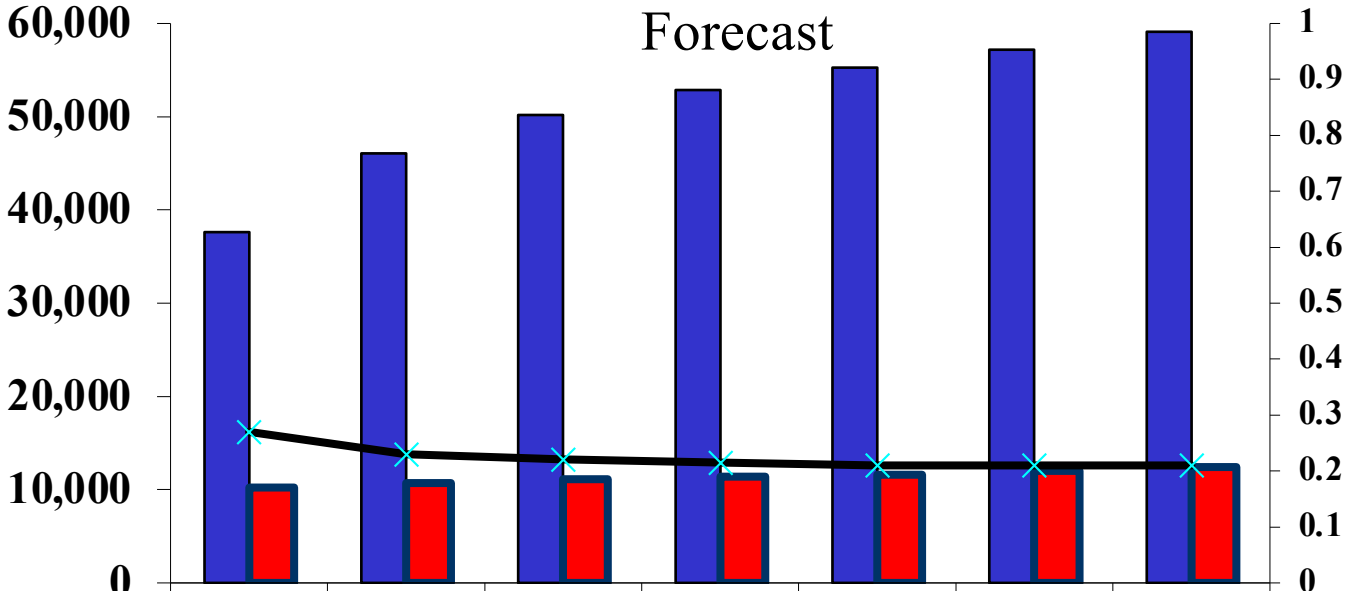




	Census 1990	Census 2000	Census 2010	Census 2020
Housing Units	28,857	37,640	46,052	50,193
Bellingham Enrollment	9,385	10,228	10,720	11,089
Public School Students Per House	0.33	0.27	0.23	0.22

A Simple K-12 Forecast For Bellingham Based on the Medium Range Housing Forecast and the Number of Students per House Using the 2020 Census and Recent Estimates

(Assumes a modest decline in the number of students per house over time)



	Census 2000	Census 2010	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Housing Units	37,640	46,052	50,193	52,868	55,258	57,178	59,102
K-12 Students	10,228	10,720	11,089	11,367	11,604	12,007	12,411
Total Students Per Household	0.27	0.23	0.22	0.215	0.21	0.21	0.21

Alternative Forecasts

Alternative Forecasts

In order to help us with the final forecast we used several different methods to predict the District's enrollment in 2030 and 2040. The following is a description of each model that we used.

Housing Yield Forecast: This model uses the medium range (preferred) housing forecast multiplied by the number of students per house that we expect over time. For this model we assumed that the number of students per house would decline from 22 students per 100 homes in 2020 to 21 students per 100 homes over the course of the forecast. The number has dropped since the pandemic, and trends over the next few years favor a continued drop due to slightly larger than average graduating classes in some years. We expect this number to stabilize in the latter part of the forecast period as births trend up. If births do not trend up in the latter part of the forecast, the District could continue to see the number of students per house decline. The results of this forecast were presented in the previous section on housing.

Linear Model Using Births and County Population: These models use actual and projected births along with the low, medium, and high range population forecasts for the District to predict the total enrollment in future years (Appendix B).

Alternative Forecasts

Age 5-19 Trend Forecasts: This forecast assumes that the school district population trends in a manner similar to the trends that are projected at the County level for the Age 5-19 population (a proxy for K-12). We used the State medium range growth management forecast for this calculation. This method produces the highest enrollment gains, primarily because the State is predicting substantially better trends in births between 2025 and 2035. Our own reading of recent fertility trends suggests that the State forecast of county births might turn out to be too high (Appendix C).

Census Age Group Changes: This method looks at the changes in five-year age groupings from one Census period to the next, to estimate future growth in the population of each age group. This provides a way for us to create a forecast of the Age 5-19 population that is different from the method used by the Office of Financial Management. We then used a similar method to the one above, by assuming that the percent of the Bellingham population that is school age will change in a manner similar to the projected changes we predict for the Age 5-19 population as a percentage of the overall County population (Appendix A).

These different forecasts suggest that our estimates of future enrollment will vary considerably based on the assumptions we make about population, births, and growth in the school age population. It is also good to remember that the estimates based on housing, population, and Age 5-19 trends consider total enrollment only, rather than enrollment by grade level.

Alternative Forecasts

Our final recommended medium range forecast is close to the average of these different estimates for 2030 and 2040. Our preferred forecast out to 2030 is 173 students lower than the average of these different methods. This occurs because of the confluence of several factors. The kindergarten cohorts that are entering over the next few years are expected to be lower than recent trends and graduating classes somewhat higher. Together, these two trends tend to exert a downward pull on enrollment. The only way to make up for this is to have greater than usual growth from migration (more families with children moving in, than out of the District) or to see a return of the students that left during the pandemic (e.g., students returning from private or virtual schools). We do not have any data at this time to suggest that this will happen. We believe that students who left the District during the pandemic are not likely to return, given that we are now three years out from 2020 and enrollment is still below where it was prior to the pandemic.

Alternative Forecasts of the Bellingham School District Enrollment

Long-Range Projections Based on Different Methods		
	2030	**2040**
Based on Census Age Group Changes	11,198	12,263
Regression (Pop/Births Low)	11,339	11,606
Regression (Pop/Births Medium)	11,492	11,978
Regression (Pop/Births High)	11,651	12,383
Students Per House (21 K-12 Per 100 Units)	11,604	12,411
Based on Age 5-19 OFM County Forecast	11,599	13,536
	11,480	**12,363**
Recommended Forecast with Adjustments	11,307	12,399
for Housing and Population Growth.		
Difference	-173	36

Main Forecasts

Final Forecast Methodology

Births and Kindergarten

County births were used to project kindergarten. The number of county births is known through 2022 which means we can predict kindergarten enrollment based on actual births out to 2027. Beyond that point births were projected based on the medium range population projections for the county provided by the State of Washington for women in their child bearing ages (15-44 years), and the average of recent fertility rates for this population. The chart on the following page shows the most recent births and the forecast of births for Whatcom County that were used to create the kindergarten forecast.

Kindergarten Projection

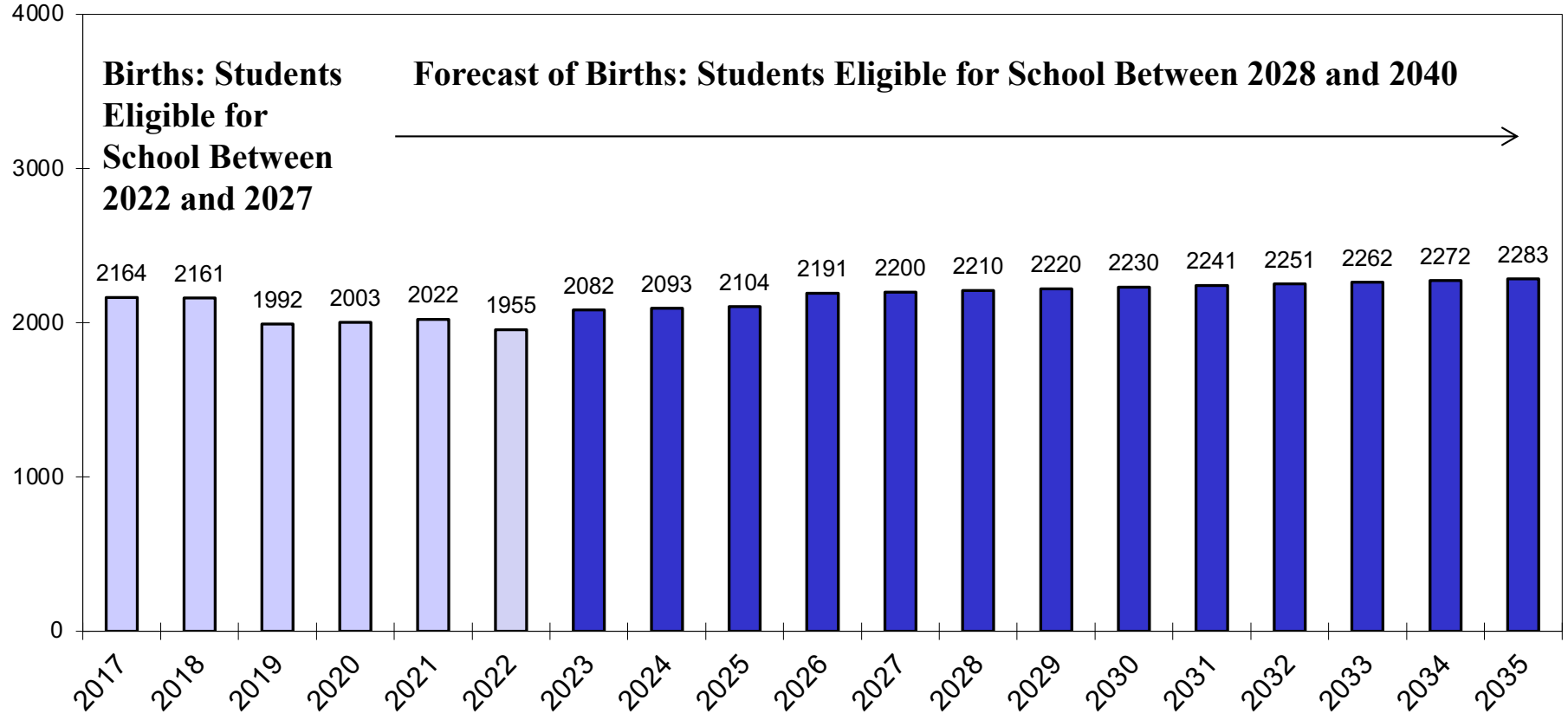
Kindergarten enrollments were projected using birth-to-k ratios. The birth-to-k ratio compares the kindergarten enrollment in a given year to births five years prior to that year. The District's birth-to-k ratio has averaged about 33% of county births in recent years, since the pandemic (excluding transitional kindergarten). The projection model assumes that this percentage will rise gradually over time as the District adds additional population and housing stock.

Transitional Kindergarten

The projection also factors in the addition of transitional kindergarten kids. This forecast was done separately and added to the main kindergarten forecast (see the section on births).

Forecast of Whatcom County Births

Based on the Average of Recent Fertility Rates (Washington State Department of Health) and the Medium Range County Forecast of the Number of Women Between the Ages of 15 and 44 for the Forecast Period. (Office of Financial Management for the State of Washington)



Forecast Methodology

Average Grade-to-Grade Growth

Enrollment at the continuing grades was projected using average cohort ratios adjusted for predicted population changes over time. Over the course of a year some families will move out of the District, and others move in. A cohort ratio is a way of summarizing the effect of these changes. By comparing the enrollment at a given grade in a given year (say 3rd grade) to the previous grade enrollment from the previous year (2nd grade), we can tell whether there is a net loss or gain in enrollment as students progress from one grade to the next. A ratio greater than one indicates that more families move in than move out over the course of a year. A ratio less than one indicates that more families move out than move in. Ratios can be averaged over several years to get a sense of how much growth or decline occurs at various grades.

The chart on page 47 shows the cohort history and different averages by grade for the Bellingham School District. Our model uses a hybrid of the different averages for projecting the continuing grades forward. It assumes that net changes will improve from the levels we have seen in the past few years, post-pandemic, and eventually be similar to the averages we saw between 2012 and 2019 when the District was adding about 400 new housing units a year. For our final adjustment we tried to make the medium range projection align as close as possible to the the average of the alternative estimates presented earlier for 2030 and 2040. As we noted earlier, the forecast for 2030 is 173 students lower than the average estimates for 2030. Although this is not ideal, it does reflect the recent changes we've seen in the birth and enrollment patterns and is considered to be a reasonable estimate at this time given District grade level trends.

Average Grade to Grade Growth

Cohort Ratio Averages for the Bellingham School District

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Cohort Averages 3 Year	6 Year	Pre-Covid 10 Year	2012-2019	2016-2019	Used	
Birth-to-K	37.9%	36.9%	34.7%	39.2%	35.0%	35.8%	36.8%	37.4%	39.5%	35.7%	31.6%	34.0%	33.9%	32.4%	33.4%	34.5%	35.2%	36.8%	37.3%	0.367	*
K-1	1.079	1.056	1.025	1.039	1.037	1.062	1.037	1.028	1.030	1.028	0.967	1.091	1.071	1.052	1.071	1.040	1.040	1.036	1.031	1.037	**
1-2	1.013	0.989	0.998	0.994	0.964	0.998	1.009	1.010	1.029	1.002	0.952	1.004	0.998	0.990	0.997	0.996	0.996	1.001	1.013	1.002	
2-3	0.997	1.033	1.029	0.992	0.982	1.008	0.993	1.021	0.997	0.999	0.963	0.992	0.997	0.994	0.994	0.990	0.995	1.003	1.002	1.000	
3-4	1.015	0.994	0.995	0.981	0.996	1.023	1.014	1.011	1.056	1.002	0.966	0.999	0.990	0.994	0.994	1.001	1.005	1.010	1.021	1.005	
4-5	1.007	1.006	1.006	1.007	0.974	1.008	1.046	1.003	1.024	0.990	0.990	0.975	0.989	0.989	0.985	0.993	0.999	1.007	1.015	1.005	
5-6	1.004	0.996	1.022	0.995	1.007	1.006	1.039	1.053	1.047	1.003	0.944	0.995	0.994	1.000	0.996	0.997	1.009	1.022	1.036	1.015	
6-7	1.003	0.980	1.027	1.008	1.016	1.012	1.044	1.022	0.991	0.973	0.987	0.998	0.980	0.999	0.992	0.988	1.002	1.012	1.008	1.005	
7-8	1.011	0.987	1.024	0.986	0.993	1.009	1.036	1.012	0.996	1.009	1.002	0.975	0.975	1.006	0.985	0.994	1.001	1.008	1.013	1.008	
8-9	1.157	1.149	1.180	1.113	1.091	1.098	1.129	1.118	1.108	1.103	1.059	1.114	1.106	1.103	1.108	1.099	1.103	1.118	1.115	1.108	
9-10	0.999	0.982	1.003	0.975	0.994	1.001	1.005	1.036	1.005	0.997	0.988	0.986	0.989	1.008	0.994	0.995	1.001	1.002	1.011	1.006	
10-11	0.913	0.960	0.926	0.942	0.948	0.958	0.902	0.903	0.915	0.944	0.888	0.957	0.925	0.894	0.925	0.920	0.923	0.930	0.916	0.928	
11-12	1.007	0.941	0.965	0.998	1.037	1.006	0.994	1.016	1.011	0.967	0.916	1.062	1.006	1.039	1.036	1.000	1.006	0.999	0.997	1.005	

*Kindergarten is assumed to be lower over the next few years and rise gradually over the course of the forecast.

**This number reflects the net gain of kindergarten to first without the transitional kindergarten kids included in the kindergarten total.

The Forecasts

Forecast Summary

The graph on the following page shows the low, medium, and high range forecasts for the District. Subsequent pages show the enrollment history for the District and the detailed forecasts by grade level for each forecast option.

The medium range forecast is recommended at this time and it conforms closely to the average of the alternative forecast estimates presented earlier for 2030 and 2040. The low and high range forecasts show what might happen if population growth in the District were to be lower or higher than what is assumed in the medium range forecast. Although the medium range forecast is recommended at this time, it is important to consider the low and high forecasts as well. Specifically, the District should consider what changes in facilities or other planning might be needed if enrollment were to trend closer to the low or high range numbers. It is possible that the recent declining trends could continue, but it is also possible that as we get out to 2025 the local economy and housing market will stabilize and bring in more families.

The medium range forecast presented here is substantially lower than the one in our last report, especially with regard to the estimated growth we expect between 2024 and 2030. This reflects recent slowing birth trends, and the recent loss of market share that occurred during the pandemic.

The Forecasts

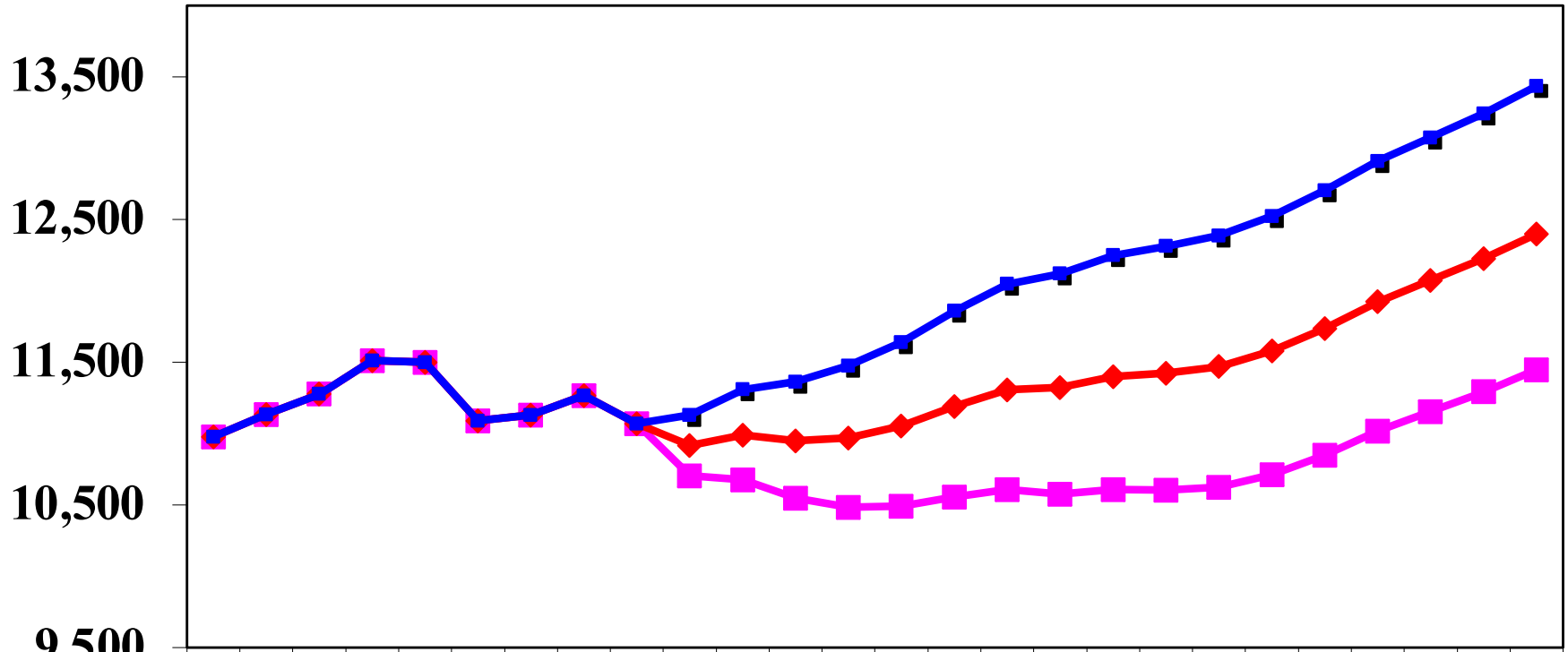
Forecast Summary Continued

Over time, we believe that there will be better birth and population growth trends in the District and the County which will result in more consistent enrollment gains. This assumption is based on our examination of the projected population by age-group data provided in the State medium range growth management forecast, and our own examination of the recent Census data.

In the near term, the District will likely see continued enrollment losses due to smaller incoming kindergarten classes (the most recent birth cohorts are smaller) and due to the larger than average graduating classes that we expect over the next few years. It is possible, of course, that the students who were out of school during the pandemic might return (assuming they are in the area), but we do not have any way to predict this possibility. As always, these forecasts should be updated periodically to take advantage of new demographic and enrollment information.

Low, Medium, and High Range Forecasts 2024-2040

Based on Kindergarten Trends, Grade-to-Grade growth and an adjustment for projected future changes in housing and population growth.



	Oct-15	Oct-16	Oct-17	Oct-18	Oct-19	Oct-20	Oct-21	Oct-22	Oct-23	Oct-24	Oct-25	Oct-26	Oct-27	Oct-28	Oct-29	Oct-30	Oct-31	Oct-32	Oct-33	Oct-34	Oct-35	Oct-36	Oct-37	Oct-38	Oct-39	Oct-40
Low Growth	10978	11134	11277	11511	11499	11089	11130	11266	11069	10703	10676	10547	10484	10490	10555	10608	10576	10608	10602	10624	10713	10849	11019	11155	11292	11448
Medium (Recommended)	10978	11134	11277	11511	11499	11089	11130	11266	11069	10917	10991	10950	10971	11054	11191	11307	11323	11399	11425	11470	11581	11737	11924	12074	12226	12399
High Growth	10978	11134	11277	11511	11499	11089	11130	11266	11069	11131	11309	11364	11474	11641	11859	12048	12120	12249	12313	12387	12525	12704	12910	13074	13243	13436

Birth Data

Birth Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
City Births	929	840	953	900	962	1002	991	*985*	*980*	*972*	*1021*	*919*	*933*
% of Cohort	86.5%	97.1%	80.5%	95.1%	82.5%	82.8%	83.6%	85.6%	90.4%	83.6%	73.2%	84.2%	78.6%
County Births	2122	2209	2210	2181	2269	2321	2253	*2256*	*2242*	*2279*	*2364*	*2279*	*2164*
% of Cohort	37.9%	36.9%	34.7%	39.2%	35.0%	35.8%	36.8%	37.4%	39.5%	35.7%	31.6%	34.0%	33.9%

Bellingham Enrollment History (October)

	Oct-10	Oct-11	Oct-12	Oct-13	Oct-14	Oct-15	Oct-16	Oct-17	Oct-18	Oct-19	Oct-20	Oct-21	Oct-22	2022 K Breakout Tot K.	2022 K Breakout TK
K	804	816	767	856	794	830	828	843	886	813	747	774	733	984	250
1	794	849	836	797	888	843	861	851	868	911	786	815	829		
2	782	785	847	831	768	886	851	870	876	870	867	789	813		
3	776	808	808	840	816	774	880	869	867	875	838	860	787		
4	809	771	804	793	837	835	785	890	918	869	845	837	851		
5	810	814	776	810	772	844	873	787	911	909	860	824	828		
6	845	807	832	772	816	777	877	919	824	914	858	856	819		
7	799	828	829	839	784	826	811	896	911	802	902	856	839		
8	764	789	848	817	833	791	856	821	892	919	804	879	835		
9	974	878	931	944	891	915	893	957	910	984	973	896	972		
10	890	956	881	908	938	892	920	925	962	907	972	959	886		
11	799	854	885	830	861	899	805	831	846	908	805	930	887		
12	874	752	824	883	861	866	894	818	840	818	832	855	936		
Total	**10720**	**10707**	**10868**	**10920**	**10859**	**10978**	**11134**	**11277**	**11511**	**11499**	**11089**	**11130**	**11015**		
										2022 With TK Enroll			11,266		
Change	72	-13	161	52	-61	119	156	143	234	-12	-410	41	136		
Percent	0.7%	-0.1%	1.5%	0.5%	-0.6%	1.1%	1.4%	1.3%	2.1%	-0.1%	-3.6%	0.4%	1.2%		
Enrollment by Level															
K-5	4775	4843	4838	4927	4875	5012	5078	5110	5326	5247	4943	9345	9192		
6-8	2408	2424	2509	2428	2433	2394	2544	2636	2627	2635	2564	2591	2493		
9-12	3537	3440	3521	3565	3551	3572	3512	3531	3558	3617	3582	3640	3681		

October Headcount Forecast (Medium Recommended at this time)

Birth Forecast

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
City Births	*856*	*747*	*803*	*759*	*750*	*799*	*803*	*807*	*841*	*844*	*848*	*852*	*856*	*864*	*868*	*872*	*876*	*881*
% of Cohort	81.8%	89.7%	86.6%	91.4%	92.0%	93.8%	93.8%	96.3%	96.3%	96.3%	96.3%	96.3%	96.3%	96.1%	96.1%	96.1%	96.1%	96.1%
County Births	*2161*	*1992*	*2003*	*2022*	*1955*	2082	2093	2104	2191	2200	2210	2220	2230	2241	2251	2262	2272	2283
% of Cohort	44.0%	44.5%	45.2%	44.7%	45.7%	46.0%	46.3%	47.3%	47.1%	47.3%	47.3%	47.3%	47.3%	47.4%	47.5%	47.5%	47.5%	47.5%
Percent of Births in City	39.6%	37.5%	40.1%	37.5%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%
% of County Cohort (No TK)	32.4%	33.6%	34.7%	34.3%	35.3%	36.0%	36.0%	37.0%	37.0%	37.0%	37.0%	37.0%	37.0%	37.1%	37.1%	37.1%	37.1%	37.1%
Numbers are rounded headcounts																		
TK	251	216	209	211	204	209	216	217	222	227	228	230	231	232	234	235	236	237
RegK	700	670	696	694	691	749	753	778	810	814	817	821	825	830	834	838	842	846
Total	951	886	905	904	894	958	969	995	1032	1041	1046	1050	1055	1063	1068	1073	1078	1083

	Actual	**Projections**																
	Oct-23	**Oct-24**	**Oct-25**	**Oct-26**	**Oct-27**	**Oct-28**	**Oct-29**	**Oct-30**	**Oct-31**	**Oct-32**	**Oct-33**	**Oct-34**	**Oct-35**	**Oct-36**	**Oct-37**	**Oct-38**	**Oct-39**	**Oct-40**
K	951	886	905	904	894	958	969	995	1032	1041	1046	1050	1055	1063	1068	1073	1078	1083
1	767	733	709	743	748	745	808	812	823	857	861	863	867	871	877	881	885	889
2	825	771	738	717	756	761	761	822	818	829	863	871	873	877	881	887	891	896
3	811	827	779	746	724	767	776	773	826	822	833	871	880	882	886	890	896	900
4	781	818	840	790	757	739	786	792	780	834	830	845	885	893	895	899	903	910
5	843	787	830	853	802	772	758	802	800	788	843	843	858	898	906	909	913	917
6	829	858	807	851	874	826	796	780	818	816	804	862	862	878	919	927	930	934
7	815	836	871	819	863	891	843	811	788	826	824	815	873	873	889	931	939	942
8	846	824	851	887	834	883	912	863	822	799	837	837	828	887	887	904	946	954
9	918	940	917	952	997	938	993	1026	960	915	889	935	935	924	991	991	1009	1056
10	982	927	951	923	958	1004	944	1000	1032	967	921	902	948	948	938	1005	1005	1024
11	783	914	865	887	862	894	937	881	933	963	902	862	844	888	887	878	941	941
12	918	795	928	878	901	875	908	951	890	942	973	914	874	855	899	899	889	953
	11,069	**10,917**	**10,991**	**10,950**	**10,971**	**11,054**	**11,191**	**11,307**	**11,323**	**11,399**	**11,425**	**11,470**	**11,581**	**11,737**	**11,924**	**12,074**	**12,226**	**12,399**
Change	-197	-152	74	-40	20	83	137	117	16	76	26	45	111	156	187	149	152	173
Percent	-1.7%	-1.4%	0.7%	-0.4%	0.2%	0.8%	1.2%	1.0%	0.1%	0.7%	0.2%	0.4%	1.0%	1.3%	1.6%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%
Enrollment by Level																		
K-5	4978	4823	4800	4753	4682	4742	4858	4996	5079	5171	5275	5344	5417	5483	5513	5539	5567	5595
6-8	2490	2518	2529	2557	2571	2601	2551	2454	2428	2441	2465	2514	2563	2639	2695	2762	2815	2830
9-12	3601	3576	3661	3640	3718	3710	3781	3857	3815	3787	3685	3613	3601	3615	3715	3773	3844	3974

October Headcount Forecast (Low Range)

Birth Forecast

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
City Births	*856*	*747*	*803*	*759*	*750*	*799*	*803*	*807*	*841*	*844*	*848*	*852*	*856*	*864*	*868*	*872*	*876*	*881*
% of Cohort	81.8%	87.9%	84.9%	89.6%	90.2%	91.9%	91.9%	94.4%	94.4%	94.4%	94.4%	94.4%	94.4%	94.2%	94.2%	94.2%	94.2%	94.2%
County Births	*2161*	*1992*	*2003*	*2022*	*1955*	2082	2093	2104	2191	2200	2210	2220	2230	2241	2251	2262	2272	2283
% of Cohort	44.0%	43.8%	44.5%	44.0%	45.0%	45.3%	45.6%	46.6%	46.4%	46.6%	46.6%	46.6%	46.6%	46.7%	46.7%	46.7%	46.7%	46.7%
Percent of Births in City	39.6%	37.5%	40.1%	37.5%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%
% of County Cohort (No TK)	32.4%	33.0%	34.0%	33.6%	34.6%	35.3%	35.3%	36.2%	36.2%	36.2%	36.2%	36.2%	36.2%	36.3%	36.3%	36.3%	36.3%	36.3%
Numbers are rounded headcounts																		
TK	251	216	209	211	204	209	216	217	222	227	228	230	231	232	234	235	236	237
RegK	700	657	682	680	677	734	738	762	794	797	801	804	808	814	818	821	825	829
Total	951	873	891	891	881	943	954	980	1016	1025	1029	1034	1039	1046	1051	1056	1061	1067

	Actual	**Projections**																
	Oct-23	**Oct-24**	**Oct-25**	**Oct-26**	**Oct-27**	**Oct-28**	**Oct-29**	**Oct-30**	**Oct-31**	**Oct-32**	**Oct-33**	**Oct-34**	**Oct-35**	**Oct-36**	**Oct-37**	**Oct-38**	**Oct-39**	**Oct-40**
K	951	873	891	891	881	943	954	980	1016	1025	1029	1034	1039	1046	1051	1056	1061	1067
1	767	719	688	721	726	723	784	788	798	831	835	837	841	845	851	854	859	863
2	825	756	716	689	726	731	731	789	786	796	829	837	839	843	846	852	856	860
3	811	811	755	716	689	729	738	735	785	782	792	829	836	839	842	846	852	856
4	781	801	815	759	720	696	740	745	735	785	782	796	833	841	843	846	850	856
5	843	772	805	819	763	727	706	748	745	735	785	785	800	837	845	847	851	855
6	829	841	783	817	831	778	741	720	755	753	742	795	796	810	848	856	858	862
7	815	819	845	787	821	839	786	749	720	755	752	744	798	798	812	850	858	860
8	846	808	825	852	793	832	850	796	751	722	757	757	748	802	803	817	855	863
9	918	921	890	914	948	883	926	946	877	828	796	837	837	827	887	887	903	945
10	982	908	922	887	911	945	880	922	943	874	825	799	841	840	831	891	891	907
11	783	896	839	852	819	842	873	813	852	871	807	764	741	779	779	770	825	826
12	918	779	901	843	857	823	846	877	813	852	871	810	766	743	781	781	772	828
	11,069	**10,703**	**10,676**	**10,547**	**10,484**	**10,490**	**10,555**	**10,608**	**10,576**	**10,608**	**10,602**	**10,624**	**10,713**	**10,849**	**11,019**	**11,155**	**11,292**	**11,448**
Change	-197	-366	-27	-129	-63	6	65	53	-32	32	-6	22	89	136	170	136	138	155
Percent	-1.7%	-3.3%	-0.2%	-1.2%	-0.6%	0.1%	0.6%	0.5%	-0.3%	0.3%	-0.1%	0.2%	0.8%	1.3%	1.6%	1.2%	1.2%	1.4%
Enrollment by Level																		
K-5	4978	4731	4670	4595	4504	4549	4653	4785	4865	4953	5052	5117	5187	5249	5278	5303	5329	5356
6-8	2490	2467	2454	2456	2445	2449	2377	2265	2226	2229	2251	2296	2342	2410	2462	2523	2571	2585
9-12	3601	3505	3552	3497	3535	3493	3524	3559	3485	3425	3299	3210	3184	3190	3278	3329	3392	3506

October Headcount Forecast (High Range)

Birth Forecast

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
City Births	*856*	*747*	*803*	*759*	*750*	*799*	*803*	*807*	*841*	*844*	*848*	*852*	*856*	*864*	*868*	*872*	*876*	*881*
% of Cohort	81.8%	91.5%	88.4%	93.2%	93.9%	95.6%	95.6%	98.3%	98.3%	98.3%	98.3%	98.3%	98.3%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
County Births	*2161*	*1992*	*2003*	*2022*	*1955*	2082	2093	2104	2191	2200	2210	2220	2230	2241	2251	2262	2272	2283
% of Cohort	44.0%	45.2%	45.9%	45.4%	46.5%	46.7%	47.0%	48.0%	47.9%	48.1%	48.1%	48.1%	48.1%	48.2%	48.2%	48.2%	48.2%	48.2%
Percent of Births in City	39.6%	37.5%	40.1%	37.5%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%	38.4%
% of County Cohort (No TK)	32.4%	34.3%	35.4%	35.0%	36.0%	36.7%	36.7%	37.7%	37.7%	37.7%	37.7%	37.7%	37.7%	37.8%	37.8%	37.8%	37.8%	37.8%
Numbers are rounded headcounts																		
TK	251	216	209	211	204	209	216	217	222	227	228	230	231	232	234	235	236	237
RegK	700	683	710	707	704	764	768	793	826	830	834	837	841	847	851	855	859	863
Total	951	900	919	918	908	973	984	1011	1049	1057	1062	1067	1072	1079	1085	1090	1095	1100

	Actual	**Projections**																
	Oct-23	**Oct-24**	**Oct-25**	**Oct-26**	**Oct-27**	**Oct-28**	**Oct-29**	**Oct-30**	**Oct-31**	**Oct-32**	**Oct-33**	**Oct-34**	**Oct-35**	**Oct-36**	**Oct-37**	**Oct-38**	**Oct-39**	**Oct-40**
K	951	900	919	918	908	973	984	1011	1049	1057	1062	1067	1072	1079	1085	1090	1095	1100
1	767	748	730	765	771	767	832	837	848	883	887	889	893	897	903	907	912	916
2	825	786	761	746	786	792	792	855	851	862	898	906	909	913	917	923	928	932
3	811	844	802	776	761	806	816	812	868	864	875	916	924	927	931	935	942	946
4	781	834	865	822	796	784	835	840	828	885	881	897	939	948	950	954	959	965
5	843	803	855	887	843	820	812	860	857	845	903	903	920	963	972	974	978	983
6	829	875	831	885	918	877	853	845	886	883	871	933	934	951	995	1004	1007	1011
7	815	852	897	852	907	946	904	879	862	904	901	891	955	955	973	1018	1027	1030
8	846	840	876	923	876	938	978	934	899	882	925	925	914	980	980	998	1044	1054
9	918	959	945	991	1048	995	1065	1111	1050	1011	992	1043	1043	1031	1105	1106	1126	1178
10	982	945	980	961	1007	1065	1012	1082	1129	1068	1028	1016	1069	1068	1056	1132	1133	1153
11	783	933	891	923	905	949	1004	954	1020	1064	1006	971	961	1010	1010	999	1071	1071
12	918	811	957	913	947	928	973	1030	973	1041	1085	1030	994	983	1034	1034	1022	1096
	11,069	**11,131**	**11,309**	**11,364**	**11,474**	**11,641**	**11,859**	**12,048**	**12,120**	**12,249**	**12,313**	**12,387**	**12,525**	**12,704**	**12,910**	**13,074**	**13,243**	**13,436**
Change	-197	62	178	54	111	167	218	189	72	129	65	74	138	179	206	164	168	193
Percent	-1.7%	0.6%	1.6%	0.5%	1.0%	1.5%	1.9%	1.6%	0.6%	1.1%	0.5%	0.6%	1.1%	1.4%	1.6%	1.3%	1.3%	1.5%
Enrollment by Level																		
K-5	4978	4915	4932	4915	4865	4942	5071	5215	5301	5396	5506	5578	5656	5726	5758	5784	5813	5843
6-8	2490	2568	2605	2660	2702	2761	2734	2658	2647	2669	2696	2749	2803	2886	2947	3020	3078	3095
9-12	3601	3648	3772	3788	3907	3938	4054	4176	4172	4183	4111	4060	4066	4093	4205	4270	4351	4498

Medium Range October Headcount Forecast Converted to October FTE Projection

Projected October FTE																	
	Oct-24	Oct-25	Oct-26	Oct-27	Oct-28	Oct-29	Oct-30	Oct-31	Oct-32	Oct-33	Oct-34	Oct-35	Oct-36	Oct-37	Oct-38	Oct-39	Oct-40
K	885.4	903.9	903.5	893.3	957.2	968.2	994.2	1031.3	1039.9	1044.5	1049.3	1054.0	1061.5	1067.0	1072.0	1077.1	1082.3
1	732.5	708.0	742.3	747.4	744.1	807.2	811.4	822.1	856.0	859.8	861.9	865.8	869.8	875.9	880.0	884.1	888.3
2	770.1	737.6	716.5	754.9	760.0	760.5	820.9	817.1	827.8	861.9	870.1	872.2	876.2	880.2	886.3	890.5	894.7
3	827.0	778.2	745.4	724.0	766.7	775.6	772.3	825.4	821.6	832.3	871.0	879.2	881.4	885.4	889.4	895.7	899.9
4	816.2	838.6	789.1	755.8	737.8	785.1	790.4	779.2	832.9	829.0	844.0	883.2	891.5	893.8	897.8	901.9	908.2
5	787.1	829.6	852.3	802.0	772.0	757.3	801.9	799.4	788.1	842.3	842.5	857.8	897.7	906.1	908.4	912.5	916.7
6	854.9	804.0	847.4	870.6	823.3	792.5	777.4	815.1	812.5	801.0	858.7	858.9	874.5	915.2	923.8	926.1	930.3
7	834.6	870.1	818.2	862.4	890.4	842.1	810.5	787.3	825.4	822.8	813.6	872.2	872.4	888.2	929.5	938.3	940.6
8	822.1	848.8	884.9	832.1	881.4	910.0	860.6	820.2	796.7	835.3	835.1	825.8	885.3	885.5	901.6	943.4	952.3
9	939.0	916.4	950.9	996.2	936.8	992.3	1024.5	959.3	914.3	888.1	933.9	933.7	923.3	989.8	990.0	1008.0	1054.8
10	924.3	948.5	921.0	955.7	1001.2	941.5	997.3	1029.7	964.2	918.9	899.7	946.1	945.9	935.3	1002.7	1003.0	1021.2
11	837.8	792.1	812.7	789.2	818.9	857.9	806.8	854.6	882.3	826.2	789.7	773.2	813.1	813.0	803.9	861.8	862.0
12	642.1	749.9	709.0	727.5	706.5	733.1	768.0	718.6	761.2	785.9	738.1	705.6	690.8	726.4	726.3	718.2	769.9
Total	**10,673**	**10,726**	**10,693**	**10,711**	**10,796**	**10,923**	**11,036**	**11,059**	**11,123**	**11,148**	**11,208**	**11,328**	**11,483**	**11,662**	**11,812**	**11,960**	**12,121**
Change	-140	52	-32	18	85	127	113	23	63	25	60	120	155	178	150	149	161
% Change	-1.3%	0.5%	-0.3%	0.2%	0.8%	1.2%	1.0%	0.2%	0.6%	0.2%	0.5%	1.1%	1.4%	1.6%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
K-5	4818.3	4795.9	4749.1	4677.5	4737.9	4854.0	4991.1	5074.5	5166.2	5269.9	5338.8	5412.4	5478.1	5508.3	5534.0	5561.8	5590.0
6-8	2511.7	2522.9	2550.5	2565.2	2595.2	2544.6	2448.5	2422.6	2434.6	2459.1	2507.4	2556.9	2632.2	2688.9	2754.8	2807.8	2823.2
9-12	3343.2	3406.9	3393.7	3468.7	3463.4	3524.9	3596.6	3562.3	3522.0	3419.1	3361.4	3358.6	3373.1	3464.5	3522.9	3590.9	3707.9

School Forecasts

School Projections Methodology

- School enrollments were projected for the period from 2024 to 2028. It should be noted that school projections beyond a few years are less reliable and should be used with caution.

- School projections are less reliable than District projections because the school forecasts are based on smaller numbers and are subject to greater error. Nevertheless, these forecasts should show which schools are likely to trend up, trend down, or stay at about the same over the next few years.

- At the entry grades (K, 6, and 9) each school's average share of the District's enrollment at the appropriate grade over the past three years was calculated. This percentage was multiplied by the projected District total at each entry grade for subsequent years. These numbers were then adjusted as necessary for projected housing and population growth within each service area.

- At the continuing grades, students were rolled up for each subsequent year based on the average roll up rate of the past three years. Adjustments were then made for projected new housing growth within each school's attendance area. This adjustment was based on data provided by the City of Bellingham and some long range estimates from regional planning agencies and the State of Washington. The data was coded into attendance areas so that we could see which areas have the potential for growth from new housing.

School Projections Methodology

- The housing data for this analysis was provided by the City of Bellingham. The City provided recently permitted units as well as units that are in the process of development. We did not have specific data for unincorporated areas of the District so it is possible we are underestimating growth in those areas.

- In order to determine how many students might come from new housing we used student generation rate estimates provided by the City analyst based on work that was completed this past Spring.

- We assumed that most of the housing in the pipeline would impact the schools between 2024 and 2028. Since we do not know the location of future housing we did not carry the forecasts out beyond 2028.

- The school projections were balanced to the medium range district projection.

School Projections

October Projections

Projection Summary by School (October Headcount 2023-2028)

Medium Range Projections

	Oct21	Oct22	Oct23	Oct24	Oct25	Oct26	Oct27	Oct28
Alderwood	244	272	270	260	254	250	236	240
Birchwood	310	370	360	333	333	329	321	320
Carl Cozier	293	322	342	321	303	298	290	303
Columbia	250	235	216	194	186	190	180	186
Cordata	327	377	330	316	309	311	304	316
Geneva	418	430	425	411	417	402	397	403
Happy Valley	428	446	449	453	470	474	480	463
Lowell	274	302	312	336	337	344	343	354
Northern Heights	343	410	415	407	400	386	379	377
Parkview	352	398	385	401	414	418	402	404
Roosevelt	342	376	369	341	326	312	312	321
Silver Beach	391	323	308	287	286	268	267	277
Sunnyland	258	309	309	284	293	300	293	295
Wade King	342	345	316	308	302	303	311	316
	4572	**4915**	**4804**	**4651**	**4631**	**4584**	**4515**	**4575**
Fairhaven	624	598	588	613	595	600	602	610
Kulshan	643	626	606	607	594	602	606	613
Shuksan	542	579	589	598	613	620	625	631
Whatcom	668	602	620	611	637	644	646	654
	2477	**2405**	**2402**	**2429**	**2439**	**2466**	**2479**	**2508**
Bellingham	1112	1168	1124	1115	1146	1138	1162	1158
OPTIONS	164	171	176	174	183	181	185	186
Sehome	1100	1104	1088	1065	1095	1082	1105	1102
Squalicum	1199	1209	1183	1193	1207	1209	1235	1233
	3575	**3652**	**3572**	**3547**	**3631**	**3610**	**3687**	**3679**
Alternative	505	294	291	290	290	290	290	291
Total	11129	11266	11069	10917	10991	10950	10971	11054

Numbers may not add to exact total due to rounding.

Appendix A

Census Age Group Forecasts

Forecast Based of the Bellingham School District Population Using Census Age Group Trends

Bellingham School District											Rates of Change												
		Male			Females			Totals			Male Rates			Female Rates			Project 2030			Project 2040 (Assume Similar Trends		
		2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020	2000	2010	2020	00-10	10-20	Avg	00-10	10-20	Avg	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
	0 to 4 yrs	2,390	2,552	2,344	2,220	2,363	2201	4,610	4,915	4,545							2,796	2,606	5,402	2,355	2,384	4,739
	5 to 9 Yrs	2,340	2,471	2,607	2,205	2,256	2457	4,545	4,727	5,064							2,935	2,722	5,656	2,562	2,731	5,293
	10-14 yrs	2,190	2,449	2,670	2,205	2,381	2471	4,395	4,830	5,141	1.02	1.05	1.04	1.07	1.05	1.06	2,427	2,331	4,758	2,926	2,725	5,651
	15-19 yrs	3,260	4,076	4,026	4,055	4,504	4586	7,315	8,580	8,612	1.74	1.63	1.69	2.04	2.03	2.04	4,394	5,007	9,401	4,781	5,533	10,314
	20-24	6,385	7,470	7,005	6,535	7,454	7784	12,920	14,924	14,789	3.41	2.86	3.14	3.38	3.27	3.32	8,372	8,216	16,588	6,942	7,621	14,563
	25-29	3,535	4,457	4,871	2,770	3,942	4419	6,305	8,399	9,290	1.37	1.20	1.28	0.97	0.98	0.98	5,158	4,479	9,637	5,251	4,913	10,164
	30-34	2,925	3,267	3,968	2,540	3,134	3549	5,465	6,401	7,517	0.51	0.53	0.52	0.48	0.48	0.48	3,653	3,720	7,373	4,447	3,912	8,359
	35-39	2,560	2,956	3,654	2,890	2,812	3481	5,450	5,768	7,135	0.84	0.82	0.83	1.02	0.88	0.95	4,033	4,194	8,227	4,229	3,955	8,184
	40-44	3,055	2,912	3,195	3,045	2,881	3193	6,100	5,793	6,388	1.00	0.98	0.99	1.13	1.02	1.08	3,915	3,821	7,736	3,572	3,790	7,362
	45-49	3,115	3,003	2,917	3,385	3,126	2979	6,500	6,129	5,896	1.17	0.99	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.07	3,946	3,726	7,672	3,980	4,443	8,423
	50-54	2,770	2,963	2,748	2,865	3,250	2882	5,635	6,213	5,630	0.97	0.94	0.96	1.07	1.00	1.03	3,057	3,301	6,358	3,695	3,822	7,517
	55-59	1,810	3,130	2,774	1,810	3,527	3168	3,620	6,657	5,942	1.00	0.92	0.96	1.04	1.01	1.03	2,813	3,061	5,874	3,645	3,776	7,421
	60-64	1,240	2,899	2,848	1,305	2,994	3348	2,545	5,893	6,196	1.05	0.96	1.00	1.05	1.03	1.04	2,759	2,990	5,749	2,938	3,401	6,339
	65-69	1,085	1,872	3,051	1,215	2,061	3608	2,300	3,933	6,659	1.03	0.97	1.00	1.14	1.02	1.08	2,787	3,424	6,211	2,742	3,131	5,873
	70-74	1,170	1,229	2,622	1,340	1,405	2983	2,510	2,634	5,605	0.99	0.90	0.95	1.08	1.00	1.04	2,699	3,470	6,169	2,495	2,979	5,474
	75-79	1025	969	1,590	1,350	1,186	1880	2,375	2,155	3,470	0.89	0.85	0.87	0.98	0.91	0.94	2,658	3,407	6,065	2,367	3,123	5,490
	80-84	550	789	930	1230	1,168	1185	1,780	1,957	2,115	0.67	0.76	0.72	0.87	0.84	0.86	1,876	2,558	4,434	2,042	2,927	4,969
	85 and over	570	737	813	1045	1,476	1,446	1,615	2,213	2,259	0.34	0.33	0.33	0.41	0.38	0.39	1,116	738	1,854	1,891	2,630	4,521
		41,975	**50,201**	**54,633**	**44,010**	**51,920**	**57,620**	**85,985**	**102,121**	**112,253**							**61,393**	**63,771**	**125,164**	**62,860**	**67,797**	**130,657**
								Change	**16,136**	**10,132**								**Change**	**12,911**		**Change**	**5,493**
								% Change	**18.8%**	**9.9%**								**% Change**	**11.5%**		**% Change**	**4.4%**
								Annual %	**1.9%**	**1.0%**								**Annual %**	**1.2%**		**Annual %**	**0.4%**
					2000	2010	2,020	*Averages*	*Male*	*Female*							Male	Female				
C/W	0-4	10.9%	10.3%	8.7%	10.2%	9.6%	8.1%		9.5%	8.9%						0-4	8.0%	8.1%				
C/W	5-9	11.1%	10.6%	10.3%	10.4%	9.7%	9.7%		10.4%	9.7%						5-9	9.1%	9.7%				

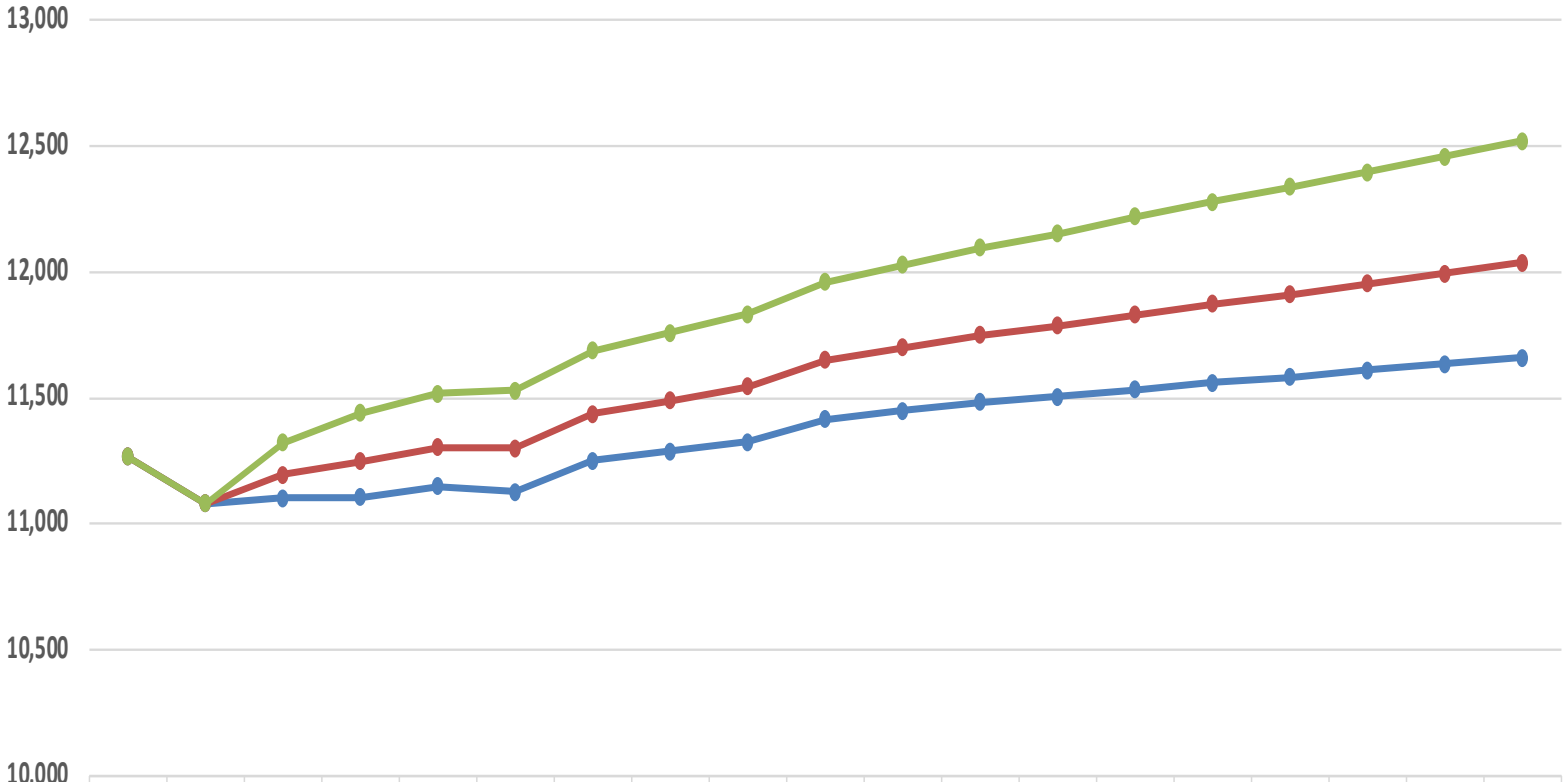
Census Based Forecast of the K-12 Bellingham Population								
					Forecast			
		2000	2010	2020	2030	2040		
Total Population		85,985	102,121	112,253	125,164	130,657		
Population Change			16,136	10,132	12,911	5,493		
Age 5-19		16,255	18,137	18,817	19,815	21,258		
	% 5-19	18.9%	17.8%	16.8%	15.8%	16.3%		
Bellingham K-12		**10,228**	**10,720**	**11,089**	**11,198**	**12,263**		
Public K-12 % of Age 5-19			59.1%	58.9%	56.5%	57.0%		
		Change	-1.1%	-1.0%	-0.9%	0.4%		
K-12 % of Total Population			*10.5%*	*9.9%*	8.9%	9.4%		

Appendix B

Linear Model Regression Forecasts

Using Births and Population to Predict Total Enrollment

Population and Birth Based Forecasts
Using the Low, Medium, and High Population Forecasts



	2022	2023 Estim.	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040
Pop, Low and Births	11,266	11,082	11,102	11,107	11,149	11,128	11,250	11,287	11,325	11,416	11,450	11,484	11,504	11,534	11,560	11,583	11,610	11,635	11,661
Pop. Medium and Births	11,266	11,082	11,195	11,247	11,305	11,299	11,437	11,490	11,544	11,650	11,700	11,749	11,785	11,831	11,873	11,912	11,954	11,995	12,037
Pop. High and Births	11,266	11,082	11,321	11,440	11,516	11,529	11,687	11,760	11,834	11,959	12,028	12,097	12,153	12,219	12,279	12,337	12,398	12,459	12,521

Appendix C

Forecast Based on the State Growth Management Forecast of the Population by Age Group

Forecast Based on Projected Change in the County Age 5-19 Population

			2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
	Whatcom Population		226,847	240,323	254,160	267,463	280,272
		Age 5-19	40,134	41,827	43,604	46,353	49,427
	Age 5-19 % of Total		17.7%	17.4%	17.2%	17.3%	17.6%
		Change		-0.3%	-0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
Assume the school district population follows the same trend as the County Age 5-19 population							
Bellingham Sch. District Population			112,253	118,124	124,149	130,482	137,817
		K-12 Enroll	11,089	11,329	11,599	12,418	13,536
	% of Total Population		9.9%	9.6%	9.3%	9.5%	9.8%