

AN ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHICS AND PROJECTIONS OF ENROLLMENT PROJECT REPORT

Provided to: Ocean Township Public Schools

By: Ross Haber and Associates, LLC

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Consulting

Introduction

- The project was designed to assess community growth patterns and district enrollments.
 - The district provides services to more than 3,000 students in 5 buildings.
 - There is a high school, a middle schools and 3 elementary schools.
- The analysis included a longitudinal review of community demographics including population, income, housing, and ethnicity patterns.
- School demographics and enrollment projections were developed districtwide and for each individual school.

Methodologies

Community Demographics Analysis

Community information is gathered from multiple sources including information from the United States Census Bureau, state, and local agencies, and district information. Analysis of the following areas was performed:

- Population
- Income
- Housing
- Age

This information was used to assess the impact how changes in community characteristics might impact projected student enrollments in the district.

Development of Baseline Enrollment Projections

- To develop projections the cohort survival methodology is used.
 - Cohort values greater than 1.0 indicate growth, cohort values less than 1.0 indicate declines, and values at 1.0 indicate stability.
 - Assume 100 1st graders.
 - In the next year there are 98 2nd graders.
 - The cohort survival for that year is 0.98
 - This method is applied to all grades over multiple years. The average annual cohort survival is then used to project future years.
 - Kindergarten students are estimated using the number of live births in the district 5 years prior (e.g., 2027 Kindergarten enrollment assumes 2022 births) and the number of students who enroll in Kindergarten.
 - Assume 100 births in 2014.
 - Assume 110 Kindergarten enrollments in 2019.
 - The cohort value for that year is 1.1
 - As with other grades, this value is averaged over a period of years to determine the multiple for K.
 - In the absence of complete or comprehensive data, long-term running averages can be used for Kindergarten.
- Adjustments are made for housing based on status, housing type, and expected student yield from each development.
- Results are aggregated by grade for district-wide projections and disaggregated to develop school-based projections.

Impact of Housing

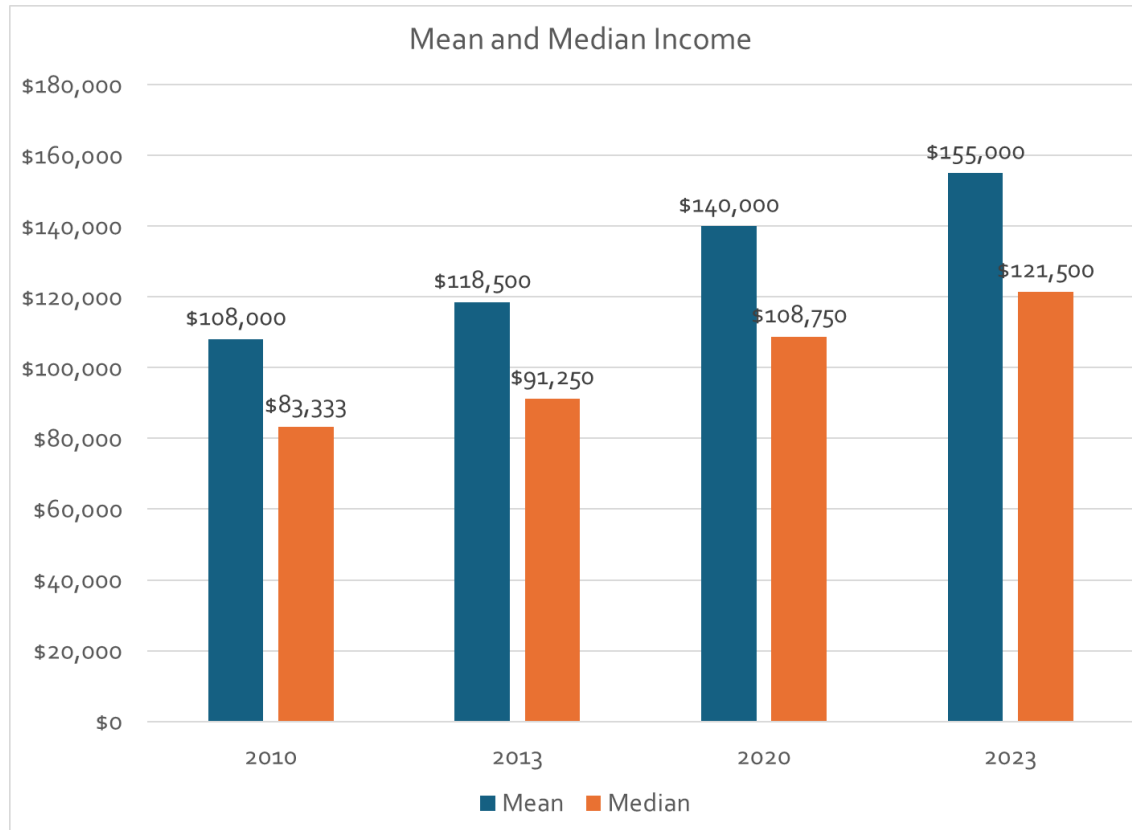
An analysis of housing typically assess the influence of new capacity on enrollment. Where new capacity becomes available, there is typically a factor that accounts for an assumed number of additional school aged children (SAC) that would enter the system.

In the district, the primary form of new capacity being created is through renovations that result in 6-to-9-bedroom houses being constructed. This type of development is unique in that housing with this number of bedrooms does not normally lead to additional students and many of the incoming families purchasing the homes are not attending the public schools.

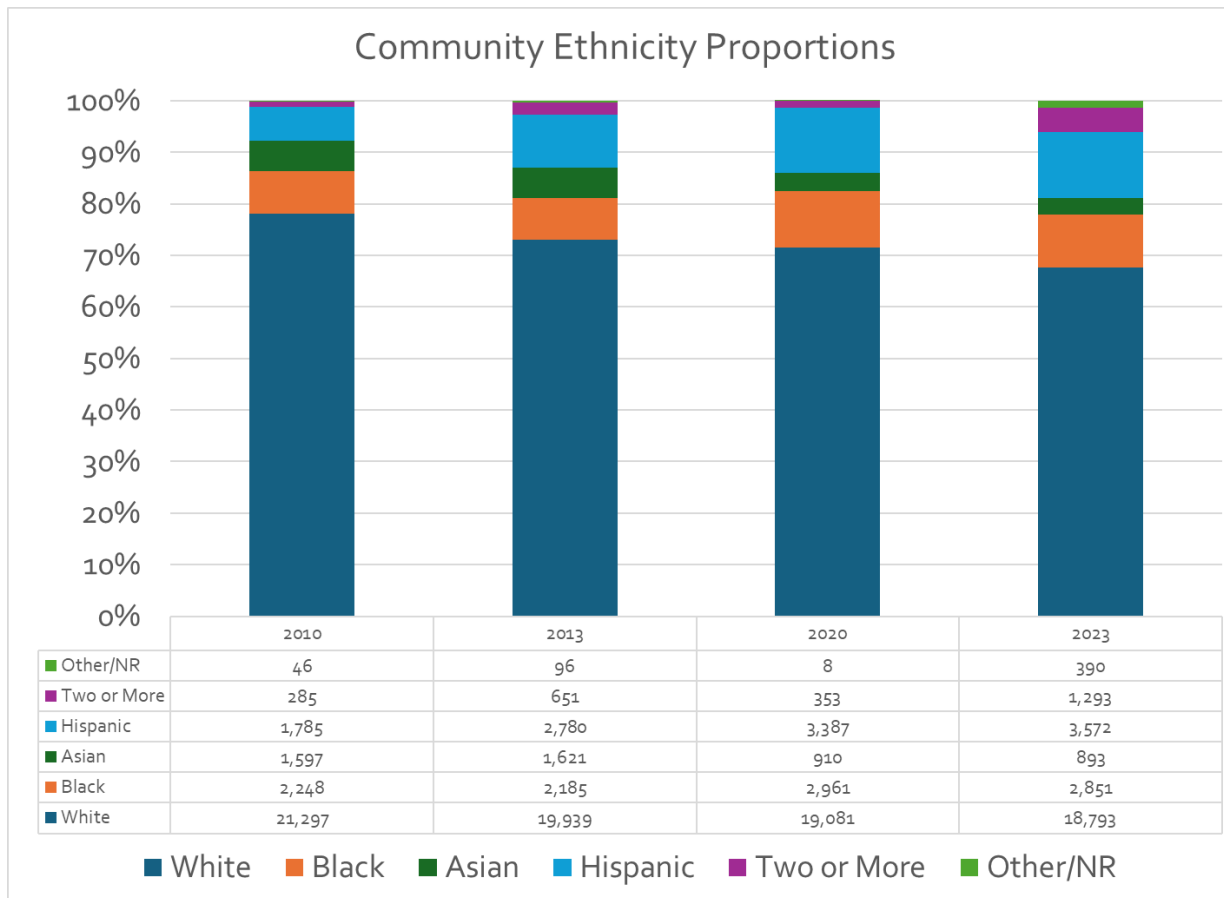
The convergence of these two factors necessitated developing multiple methods of assessing the likely floor and ceiling of the housing impact.

Community and District Demographics

Using data from the United States Census Bureau's American Community Survey, mean (average) income in the district has increase by nearly 44% while median income (the middle value) has increased by 45% between 2010 and 2023. The chart below shows significant increases in the mean between 2010 and 2020. The median differences are particularly notable between 2013 and 2023.

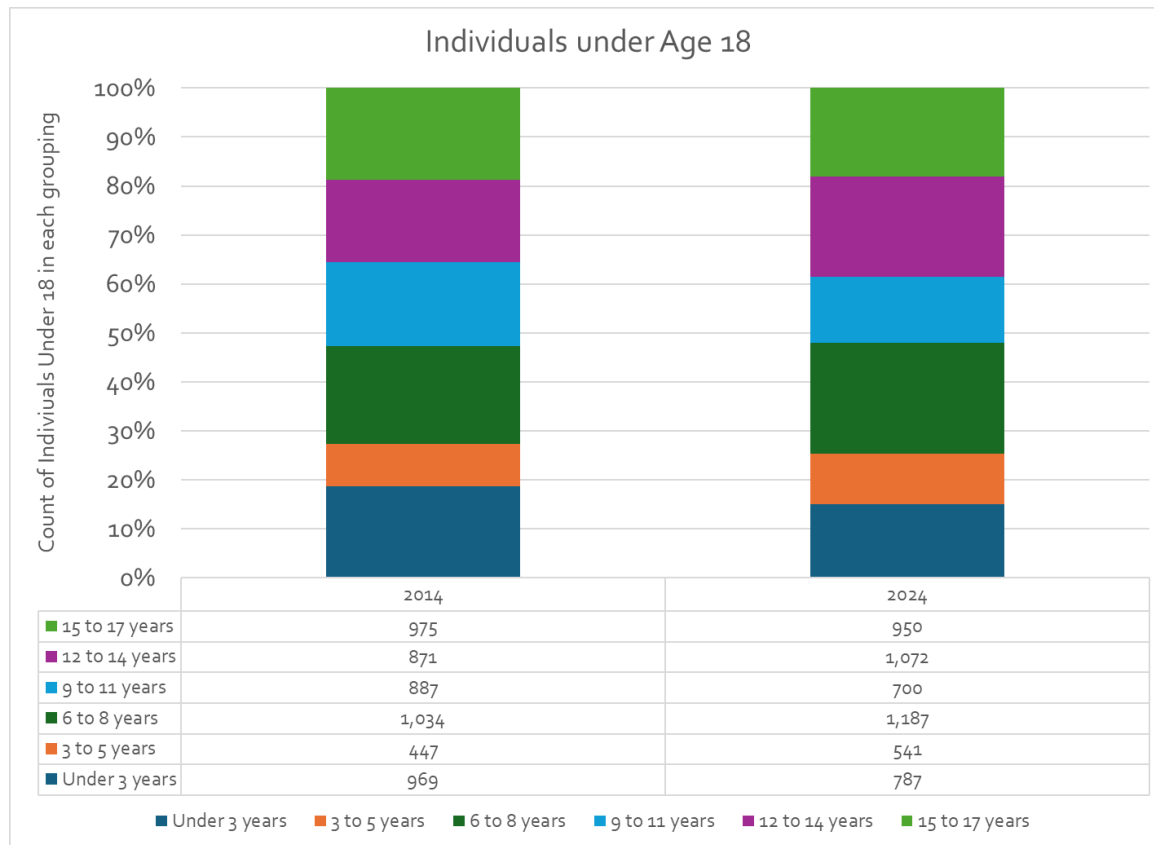


Mean and Median Income



Based on information provided by the American Community Survey, the proportion of individuals identifying as White and Asian have decreased steadily since 2010 but remain the dominant ethnicity. The number of individuals identifying as Hispanic has increased 100% over 10 years and their proportion of the population has nearly doubled.

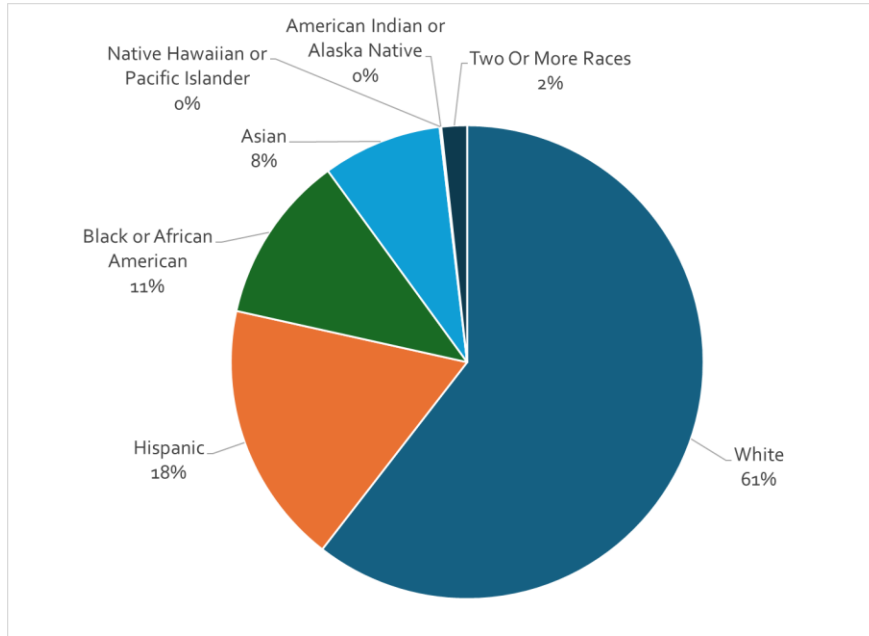
Community Demographic Changes



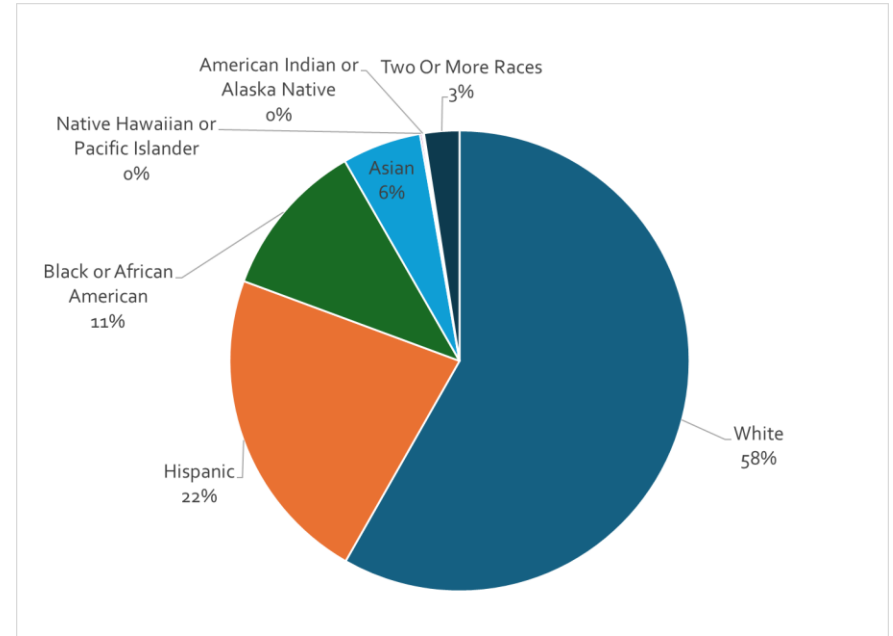
American Community Survey data also provides insights into the population in the community under the age of 18. The chart shows stability in the total population of individuals under 18 between 2014 and 2024, which is somewhat inconsistent with enrollment reductions of approximately 15% over a similar time period. The projection data shown later in the report continues to show a limited decline in enrollment.

Community Demographic Changes

2019-20 Student Ethnicity

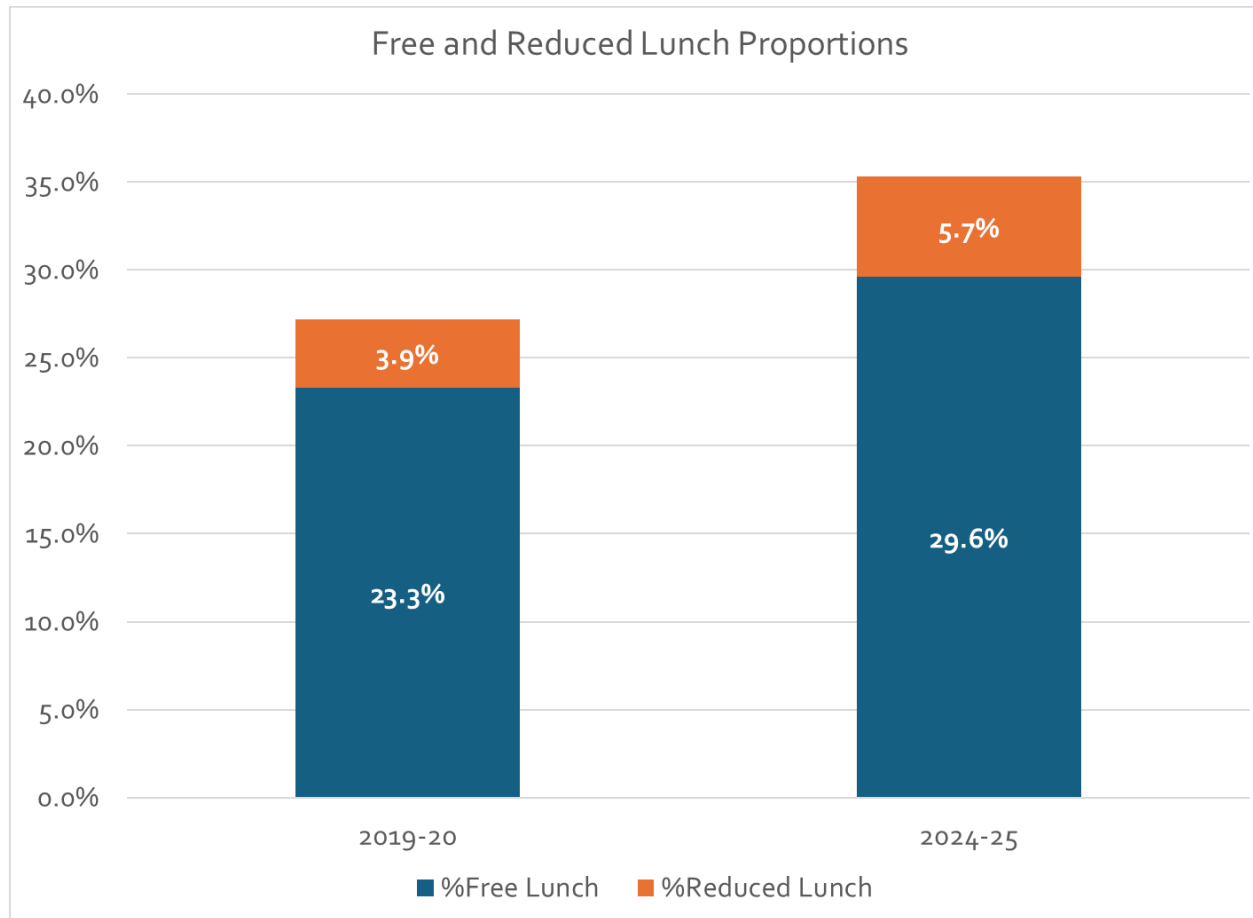


2024-25 Student Ethnicity



Over the previous 5-year period, the proportion of students who identify as Hispanic has increased 4% and the population of students identifying as white has decreased by 3%. This is part of a longer-term trend that mirrors community changes since 2010. Over a similar timeframe the proportion of multi-language learners has increased by nearly 4%.

Student Demographic Changes

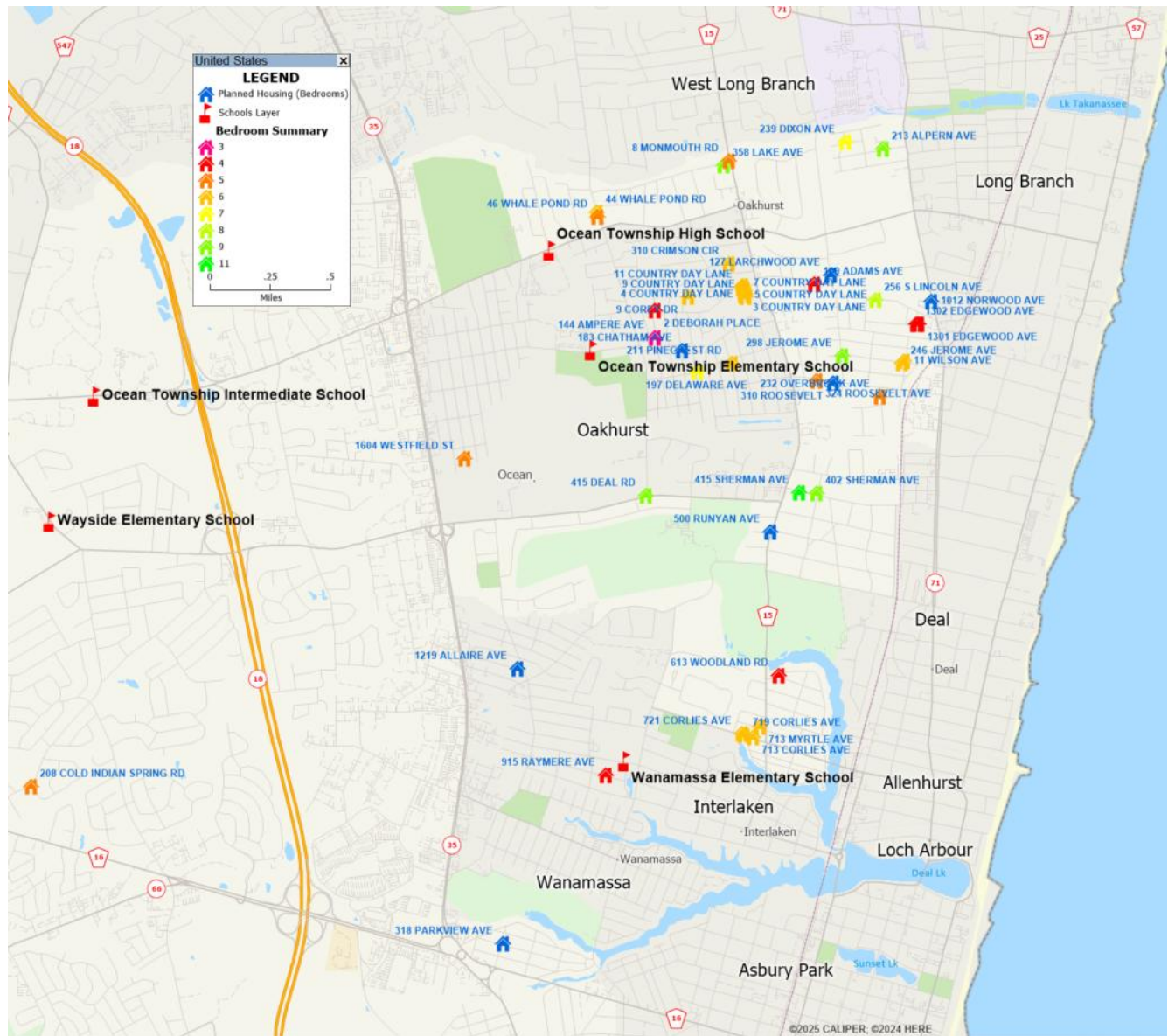


Over a 5-year period ending in 2024-25, there has been an increase in the proportion of students receiving free and reduced lunch. The nearly 8% increase is significant and represents a distinct change in characteristics when compared to the changes in mean and median income in the district.

Student Demographic Changes

Housing Considerations

The map shows locations of permitted construction with bedrooms sizes. The impact will be disproportionately significant for Ocean Township Elementary.



Proposed Development Summary

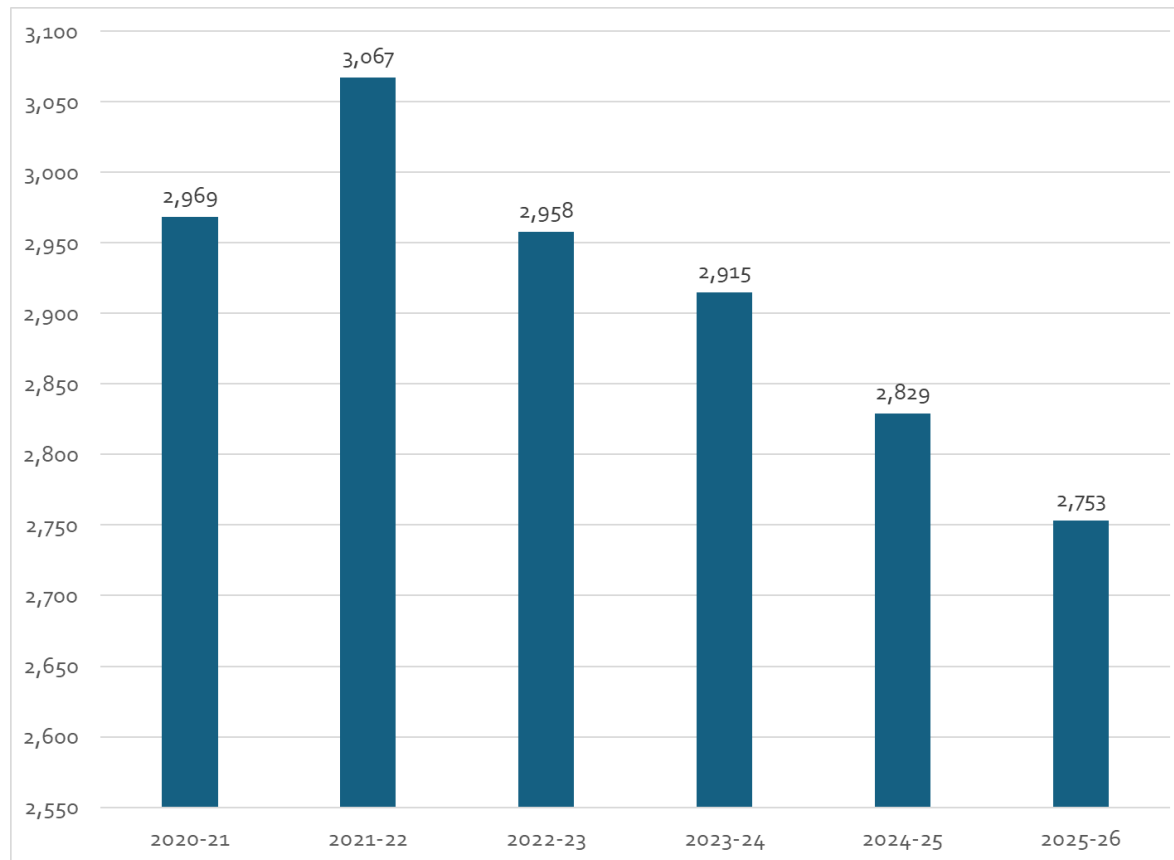
Housing Analysis Options

- Two models for housing impact considerations.
 - Traditional considerations of school age children yield that would assume the development yields students.
 - For purposes of this analysis, we have treated the units as single family detached housing that are expected to yield 1.5 school-aged children per house.
 - A total of 100 students are anticipated spread over 13 grades.
 - 40 students were allocated to elementary schools
 - 30 students were allocated to the middle school
 - 30 students were allocated to the high school
 - An alternative option that assumes that the proposed housing would result in a net loss of students due to turnover that would divert students from the schools.

Enrollment Projections

Analysis of Enrollment

- A five-year history of districtwide enrollment by grade was combined with current year enrollment to understand the trending of student counts by school and grade.
- The enrollment history was then used to develop five-years of projected enrollments (through the 2030-31 school year using the cohort methodology detailed previously.
- Both the history and the projections indicate some volatility with a limited increase (88 total students) in projected students over the five-year period.

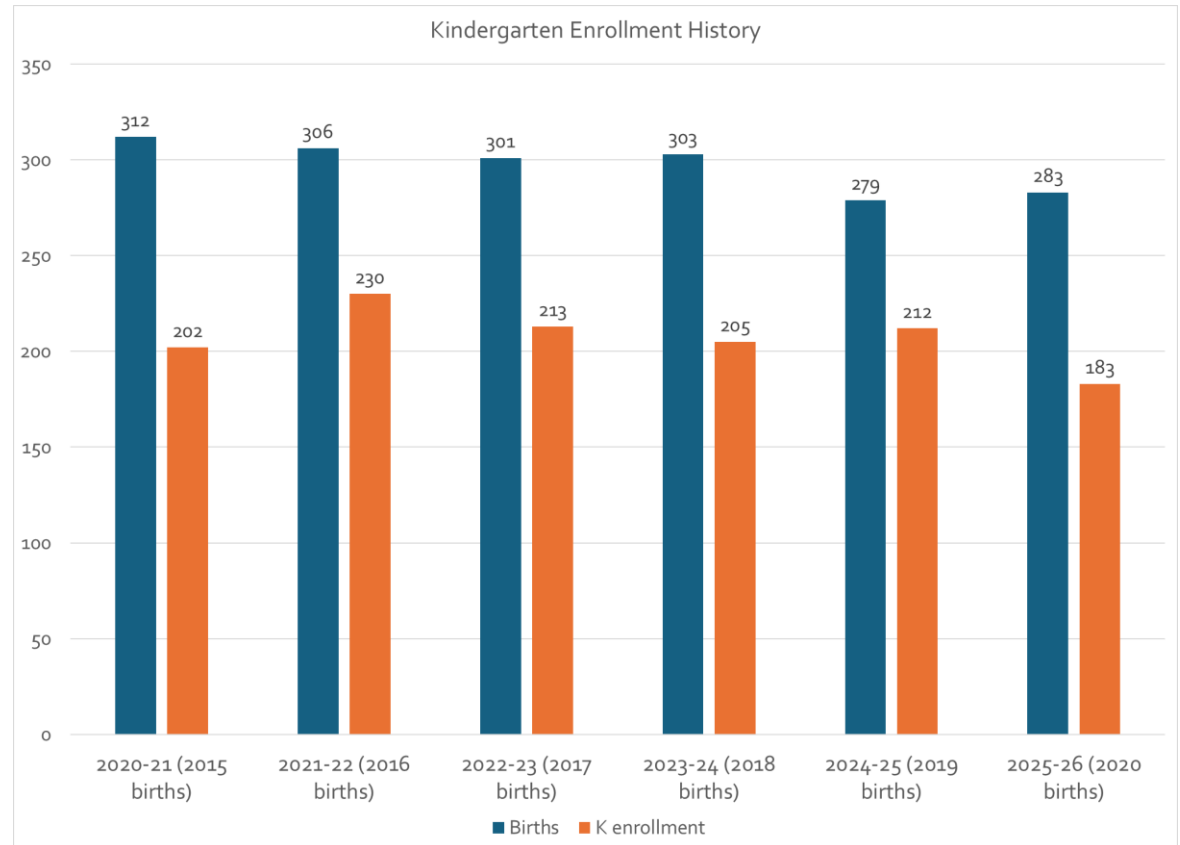


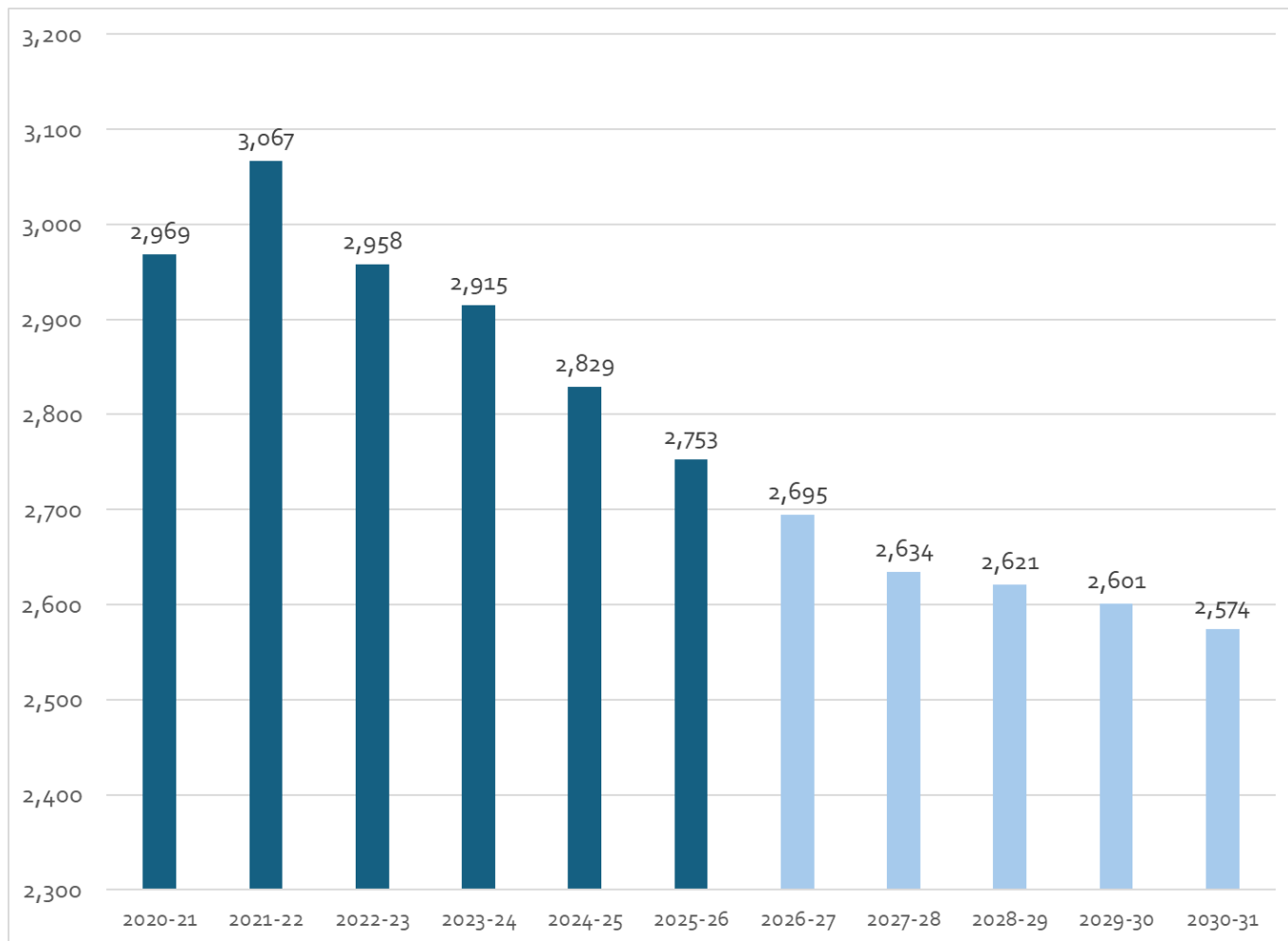
District enrollment, exclusive of PK and self-contained students, has been on a consistent decline over the previous 5-years. An end-to-end comparison indicates with a decline of 216 total students (7.2%). However, the peak-to-trough difference between 2021-22 and 2025-26 is 314 students (nearly 10%).

Enrollment History

Birth History

- An evaluation of birth history in the district is used to evaluate Kindergarten enrollment.
- A key consideration is that it is necessary to look back 5-years to determine *potential* kindergarten enrollment versus *actual* enrollments.
 - For example, 2020-21 Kindergarten enrollment is compared to 2015 birth values.
- The enrollment data demonstrates that approximately 65 to 75% of births enroll in Kindergarten.



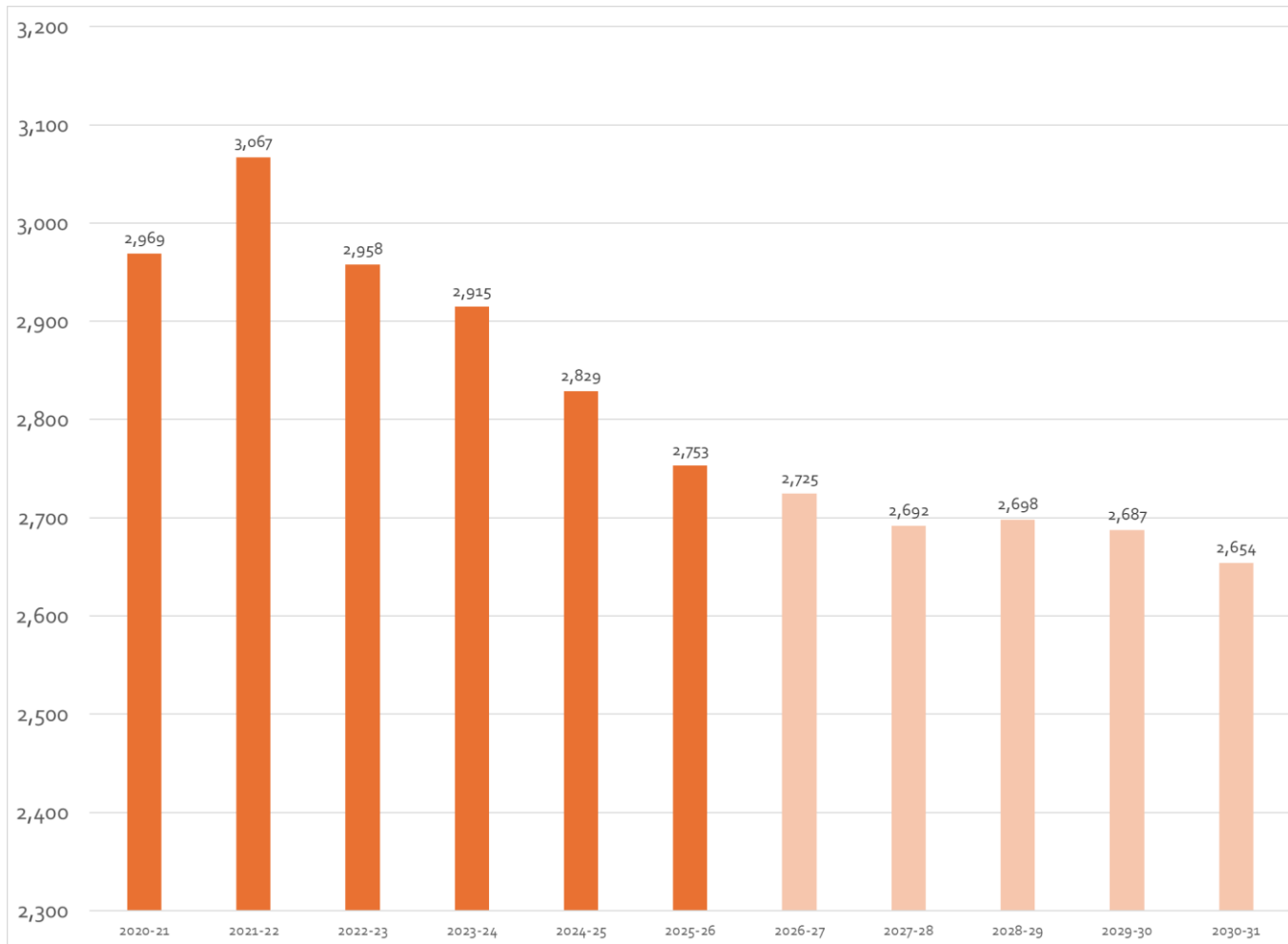


The chart shows the historical enrollments (in dark blue) and projected enrollments for Kindergarten through Grade 12, exclusive of Pre-K and self-contained students. The 2030-31 projections represent a 6.5% decrease over the 2025-26 value. This represents a 179 student reduction in the district.

Baseline Enrollment Projections

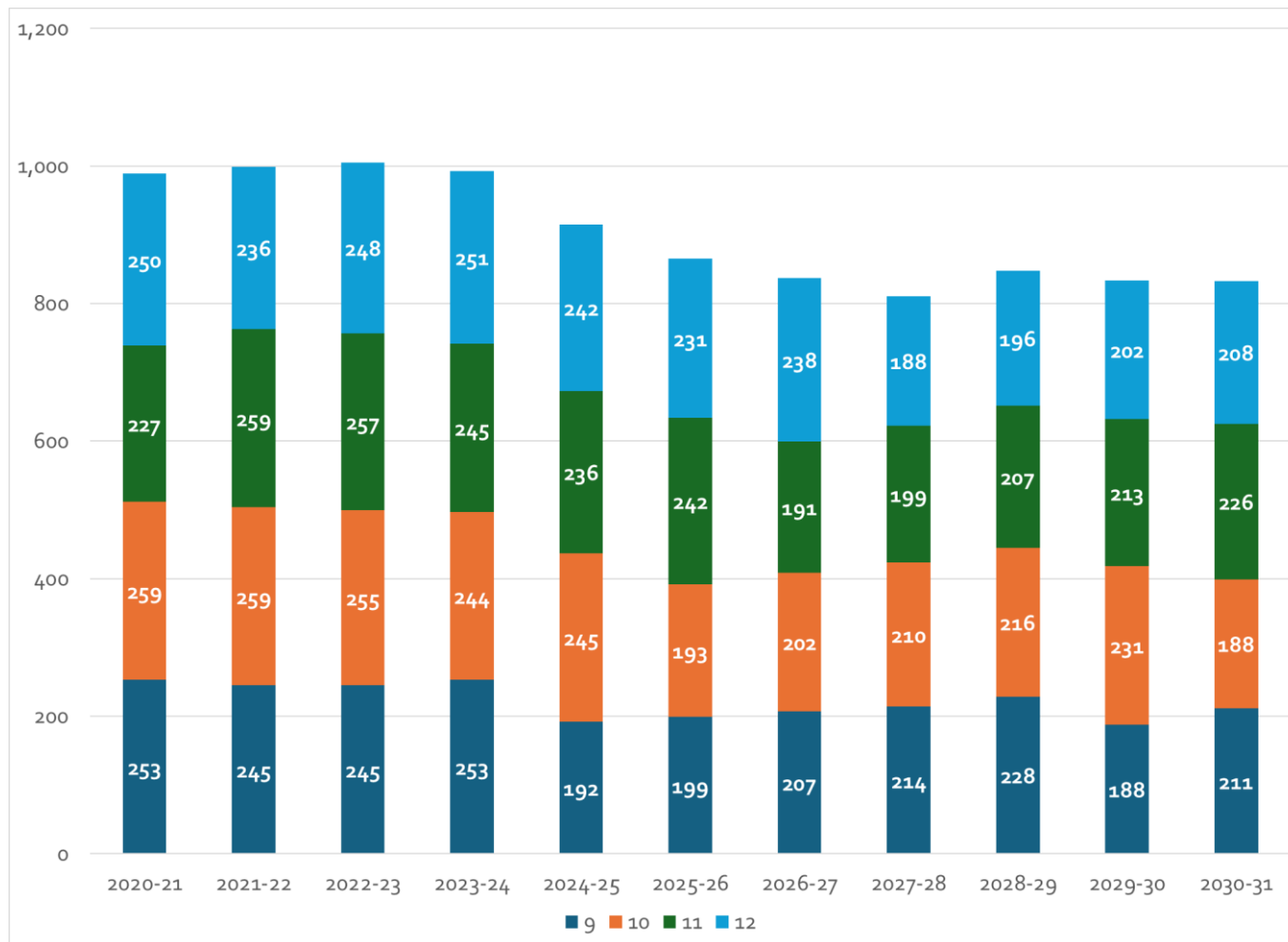
Enrollment Projections Assuming A Traditional Housing Impact Analysis





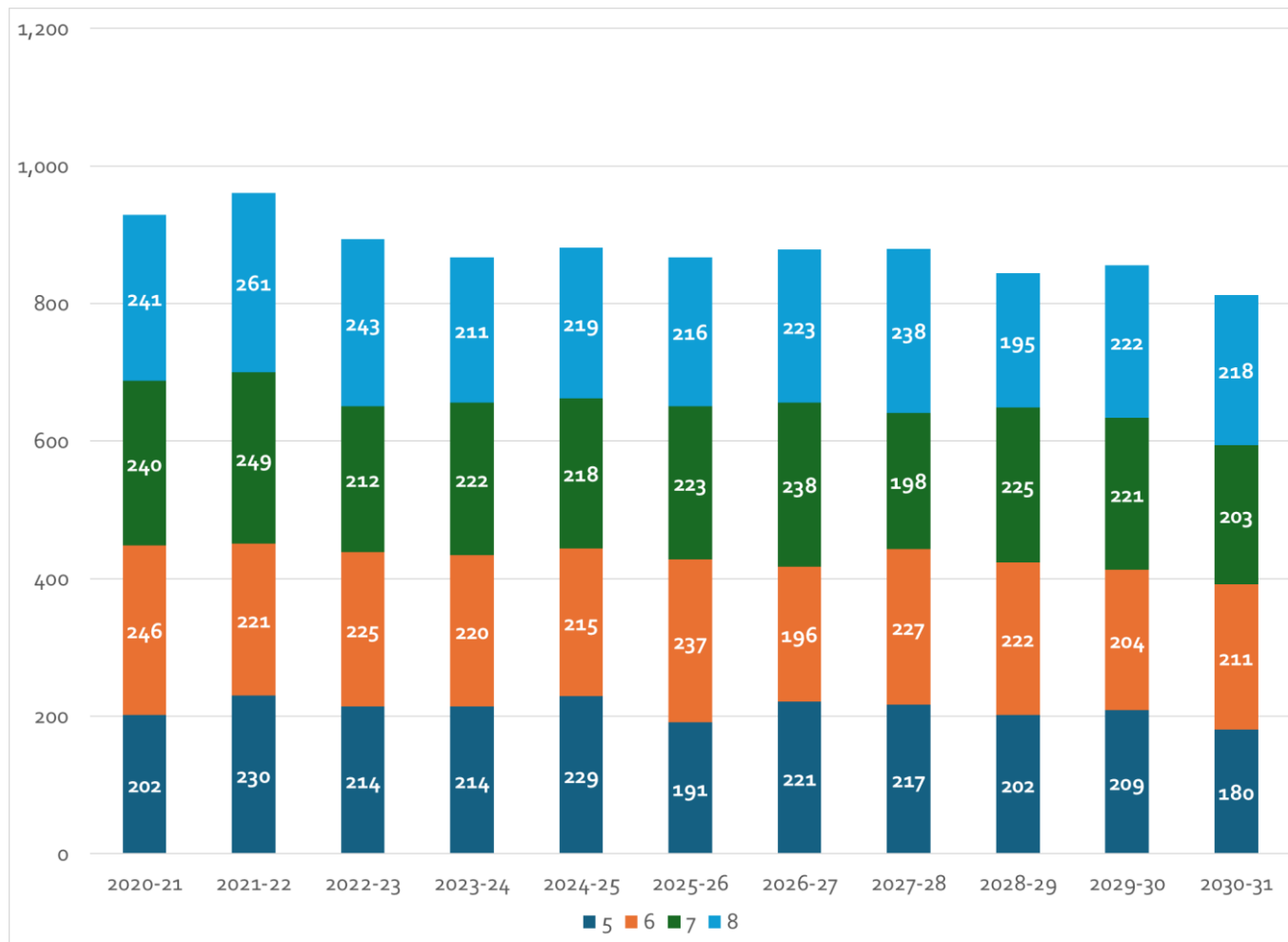
The projected housing impacts mitigate the expected enrollment decrease somewhat. The expected reduction in enrollment is reduced to 140 over the projection period. However, it is clear that even with additional housing impacts there will be continued enrollment declines.

Housing Adjusted Enrollment Projections



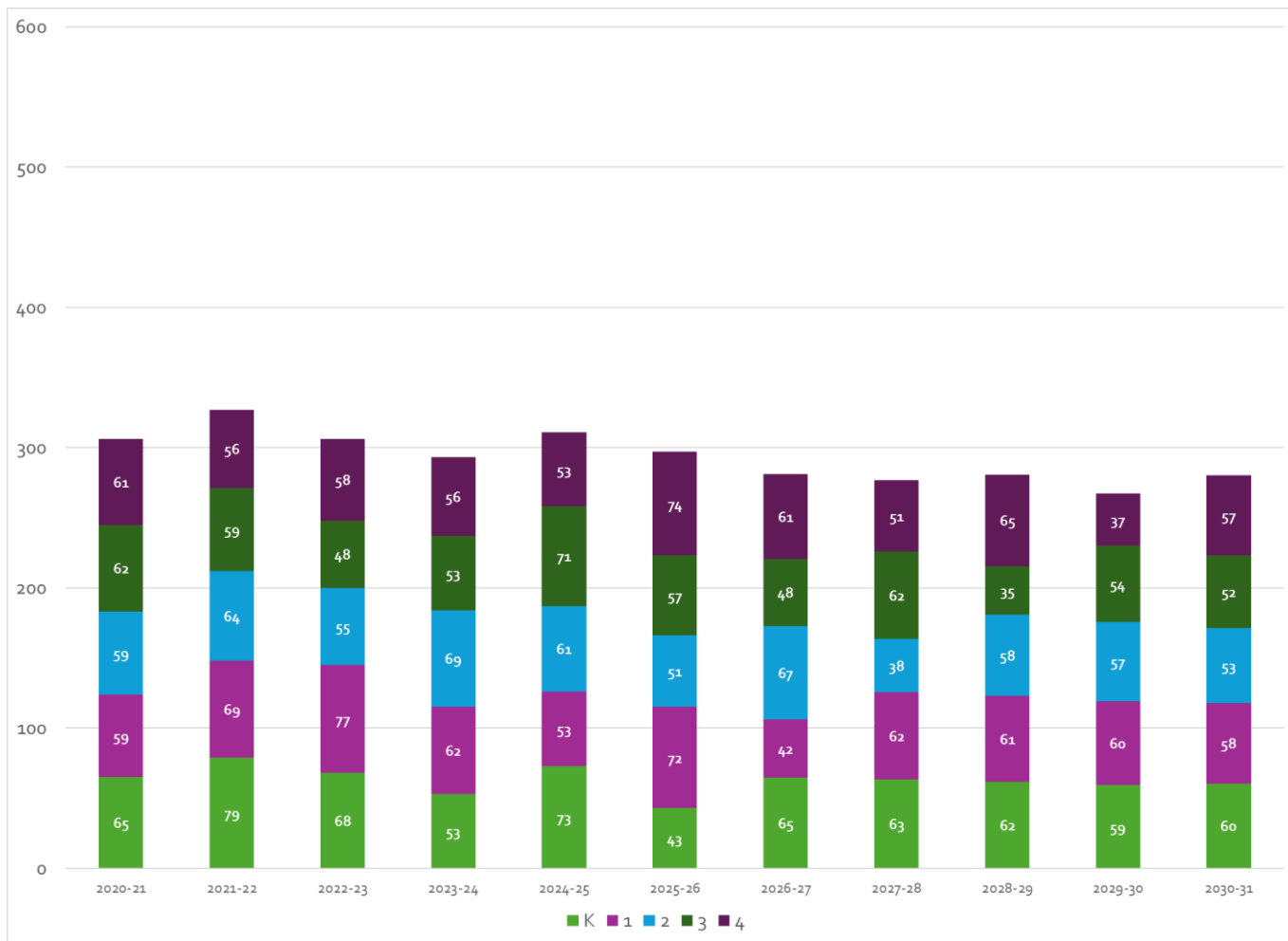
Smaller than average 9th and 10th grade classes are causing a decline in high school enrollments over the projection period. Smaller than historical norm elementary and middle school classes will result in marginally smaller high school cohorts.

High School Enrollment Projections



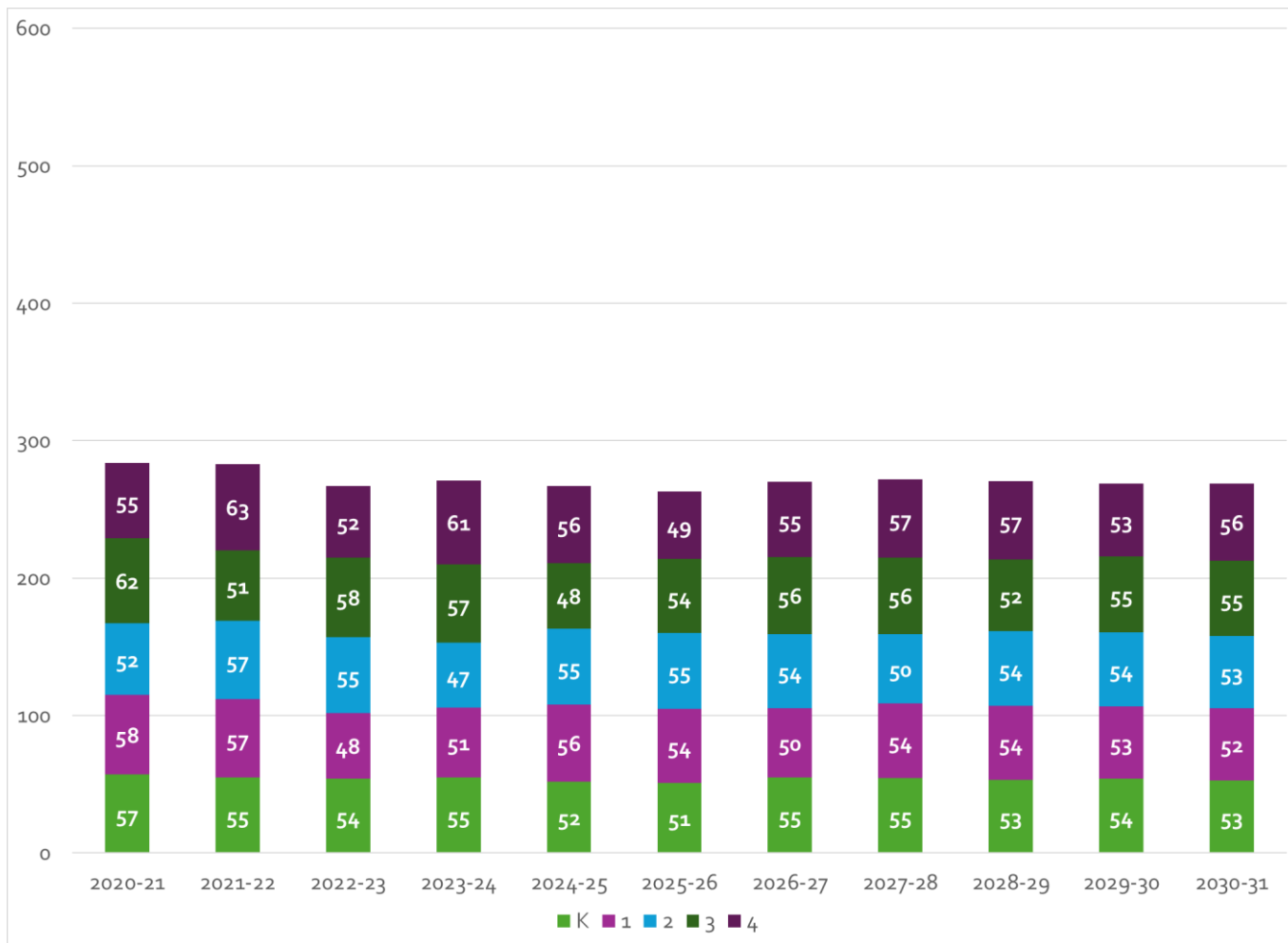
Middle School enrollment is projected to experience an approximate 100 student decline over the projection period due to a smaller than average current 5th grade class. The remainder of the grades maintain at or near historical norms over the projection period.

Middle School Enrollment Projections



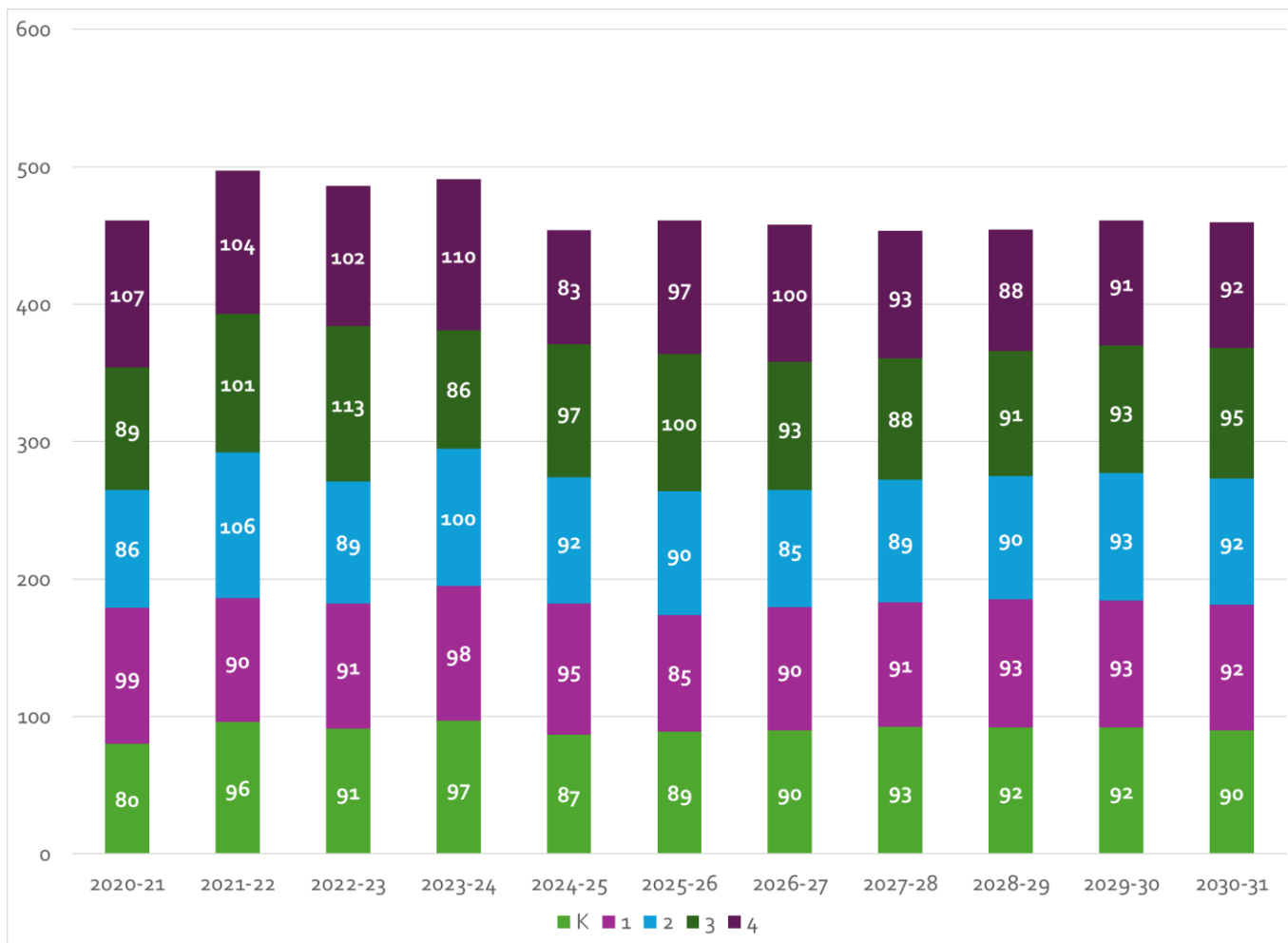
OTES will experience some volatility due to a comparatively small Kindergarten class. However, the expected return to more normal Kindergarten enrollments will provide general stability in overall enrollment over the projection period.

OTES Enrollment Projections



Wanamassa is expected to maintain relatively stable grade levels and total enrollment over the projection period.

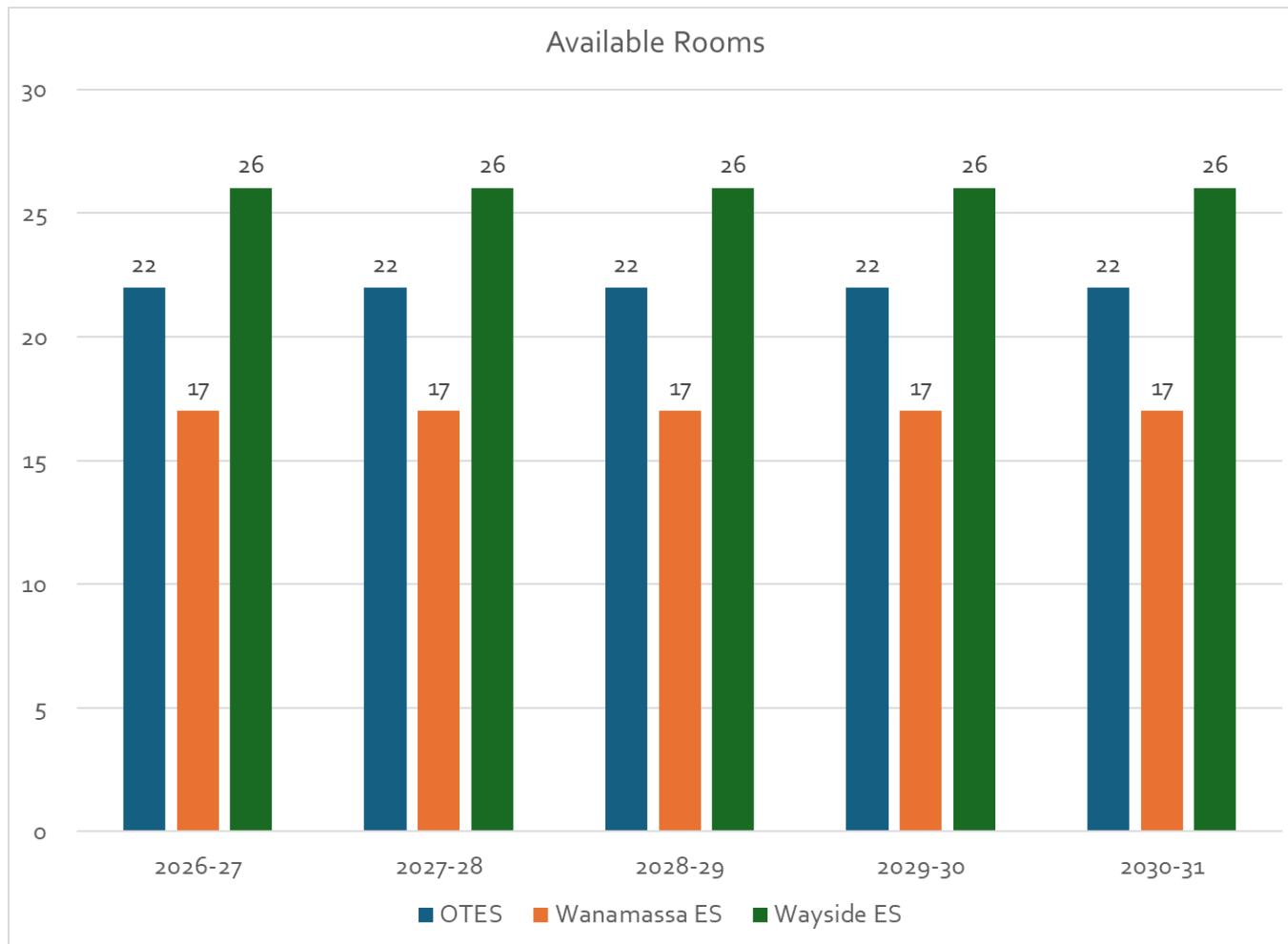
Wanamassa ES Enrollment Projections



As the largest elementary school, Wayside has experienced some volatility in enrollment. However, over the projection period enrollment is expected to remain stable.

Wayside ES Enrollment Projections

Facility Analysis Based on the Traditional Housing Impact Analysis



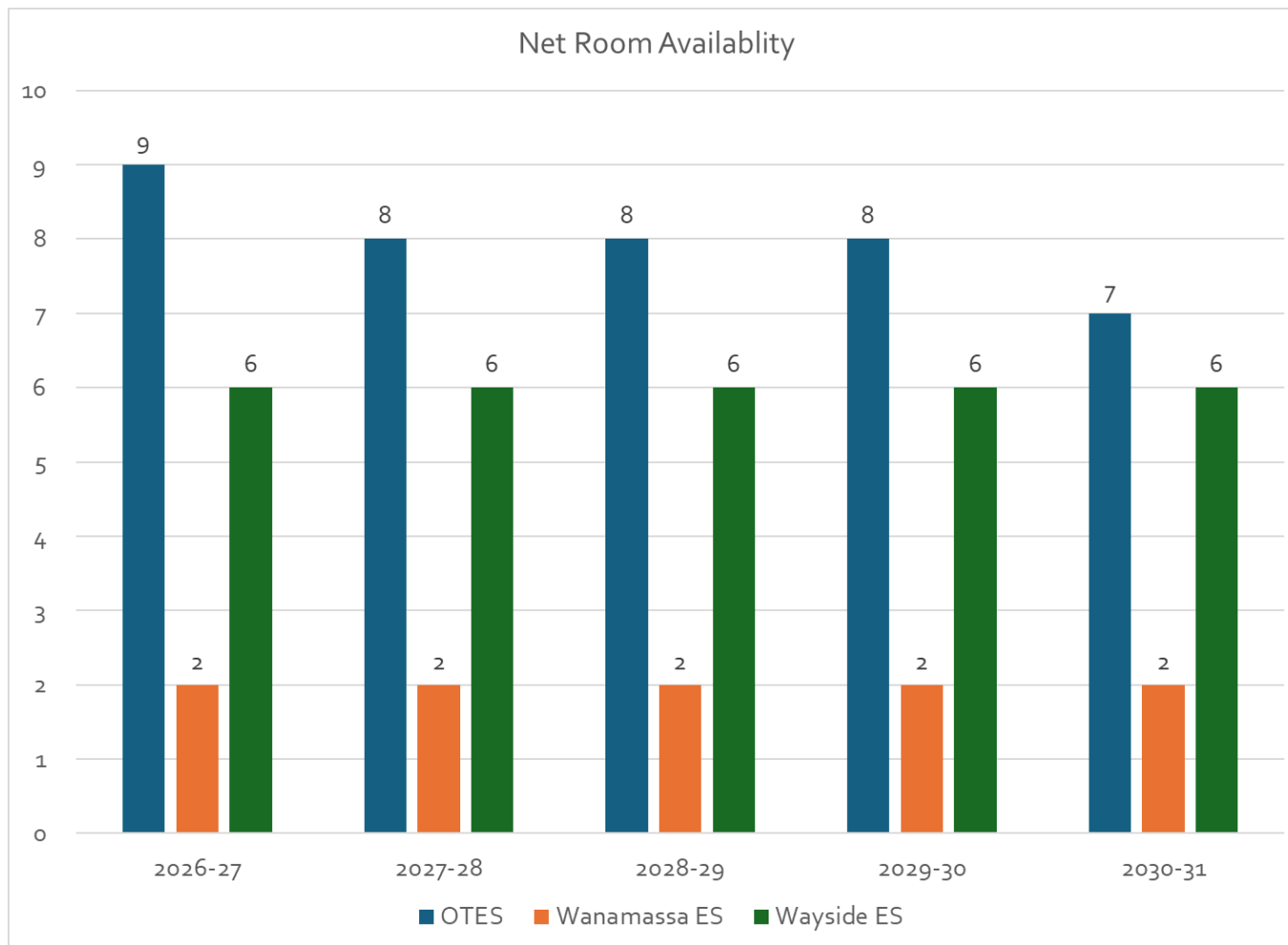
The number of available rooms was determined using the district's Long Term Facility Plan and available floor plans. For purposes of this assessment, only general education classrooms were considered.

Available Rooms for Elementary Schools



The number of rooms required is determined by dividing the projected enrollment by target class size values. The target class sizes were based on district provided information and standardized across the grades at 25 students per room.

Required Rooms for Elementary Schools



The net number of rooms represents the number of available classrooms minus the required number of rooms. The values are highly sensitive to projected student count, target class sizes, and designation of available rooms. As can be seen there is notable capacity available at both Wayside and OTES.

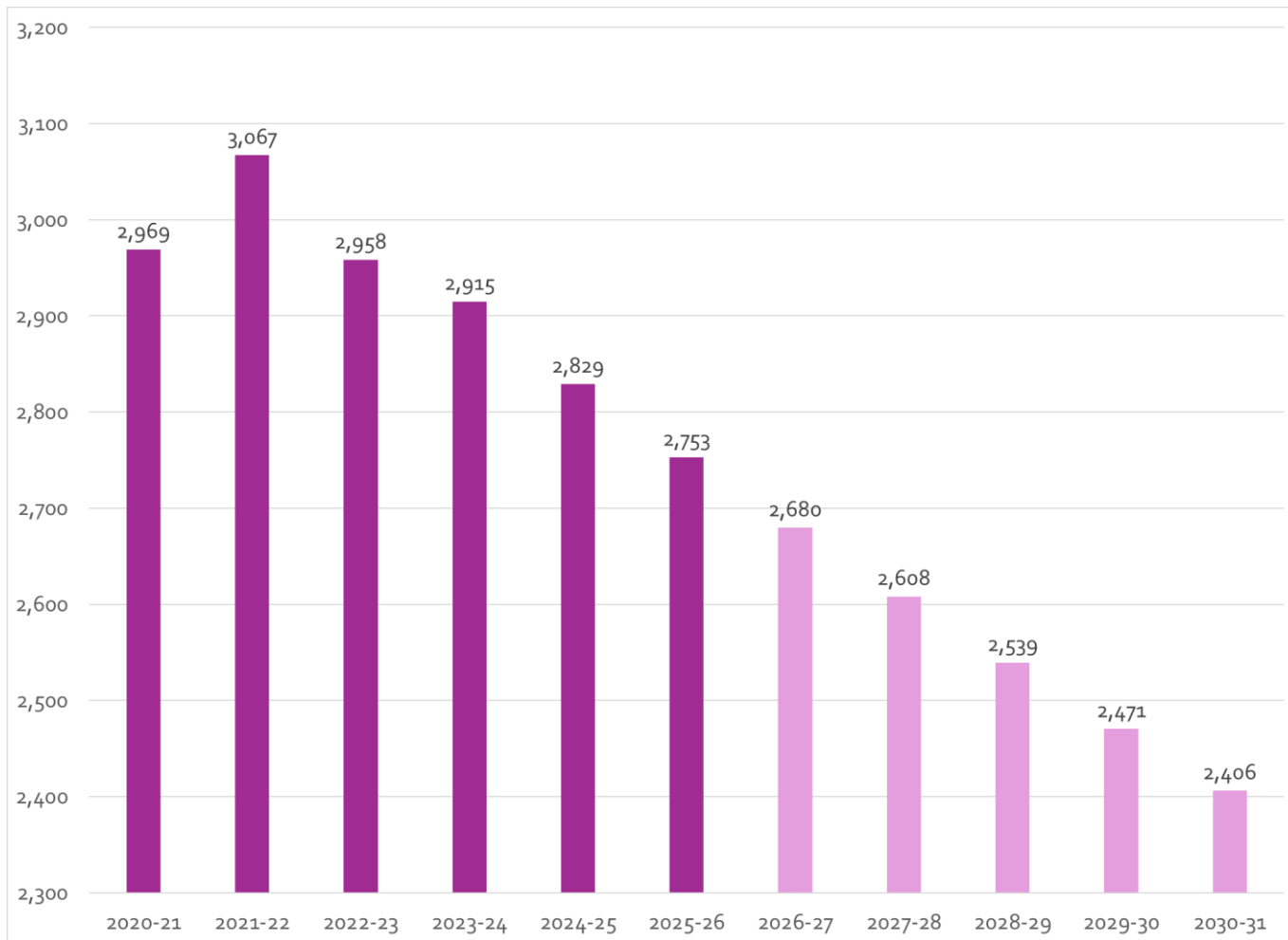
Room Surplus or Deficit for the Elementary Schools

Enrollment Assuming Housing Has A Negative Enrollment Impact



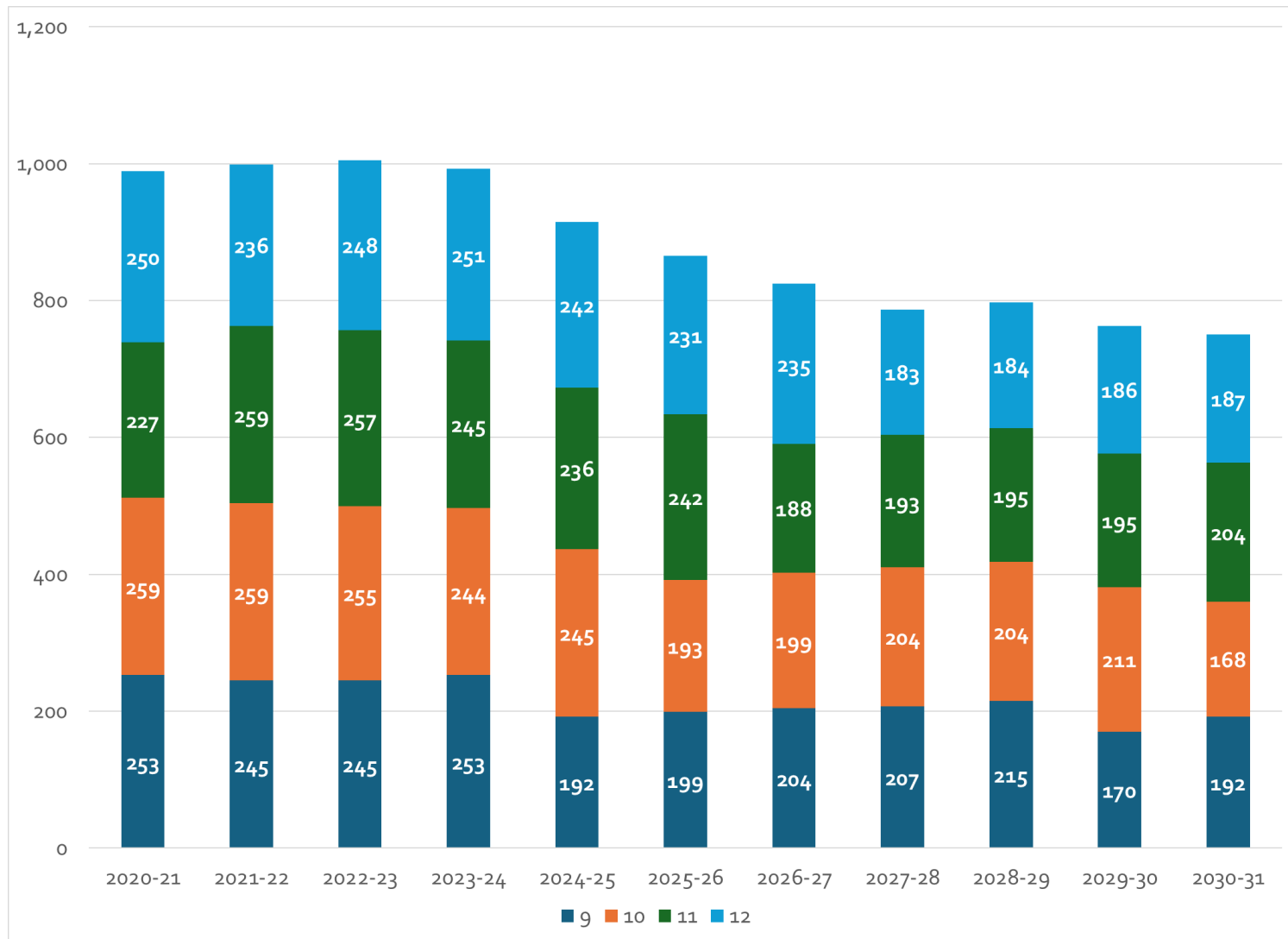
Impact of a Negative Enrollment Impact

- The average annual decline in enrollment between 2020-21 and 2025-26 was 2.66%.
- This value was used to calculate the projected enrollment impact if the level of decline continued annually over the projection period.
- The baseline projection established a 179-student decline between 2025-26 and 2030-31. Assuming a 2.66% decline annually over the projection period would result in a 347-student decline.
 - The net result would be a near doubling of the projected decline from the baseline.
- School-based projections were adjusted to reflect this overall decline and were further weighted to reflect a likely disproportionate impact on OTES.

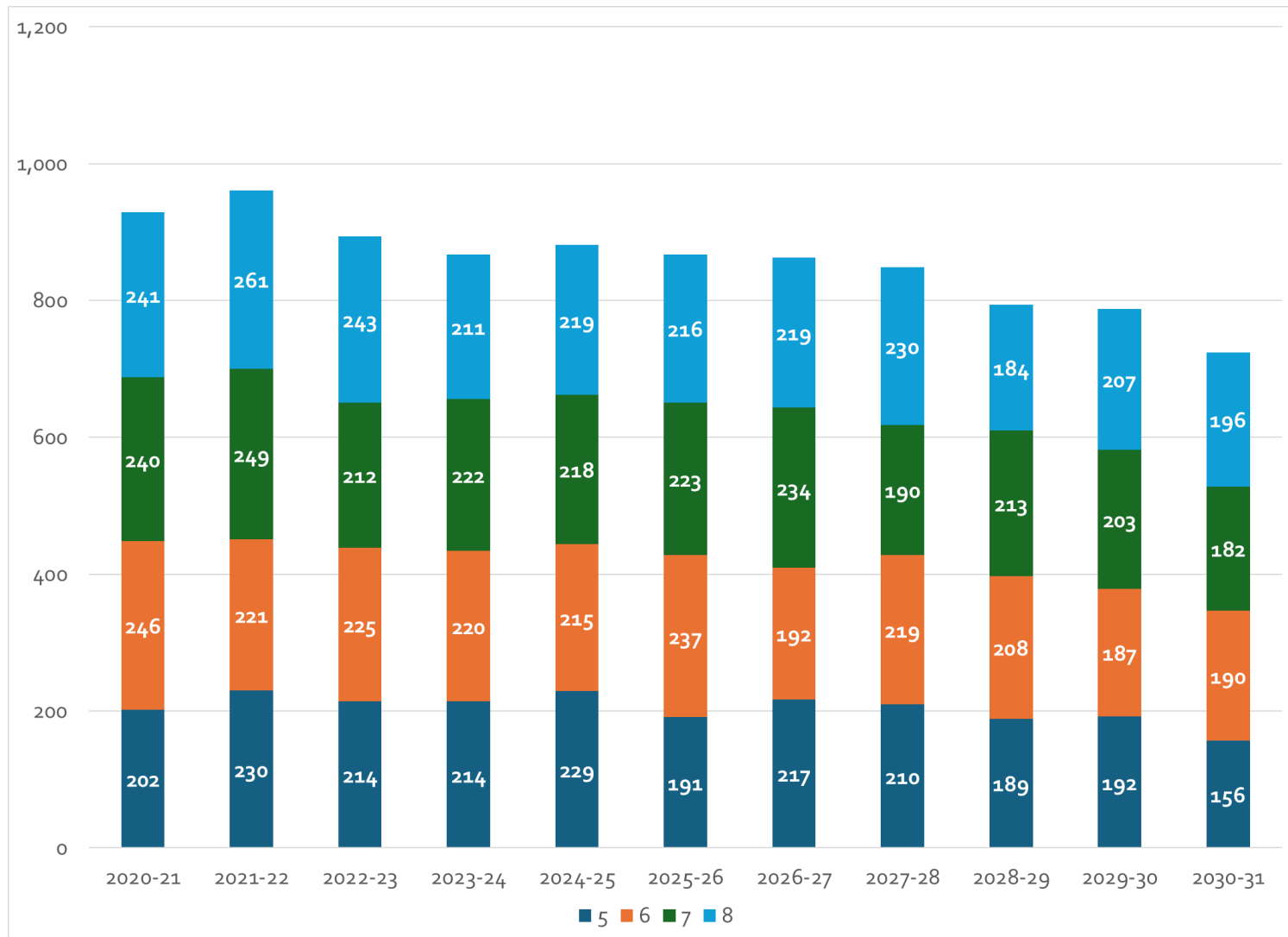


A negative housing impact would result in a 169 fewer students when compared to the baseline projection and a 248 fewer students when compared to the 2030-31 projection using the traditional housing impact method calculation.

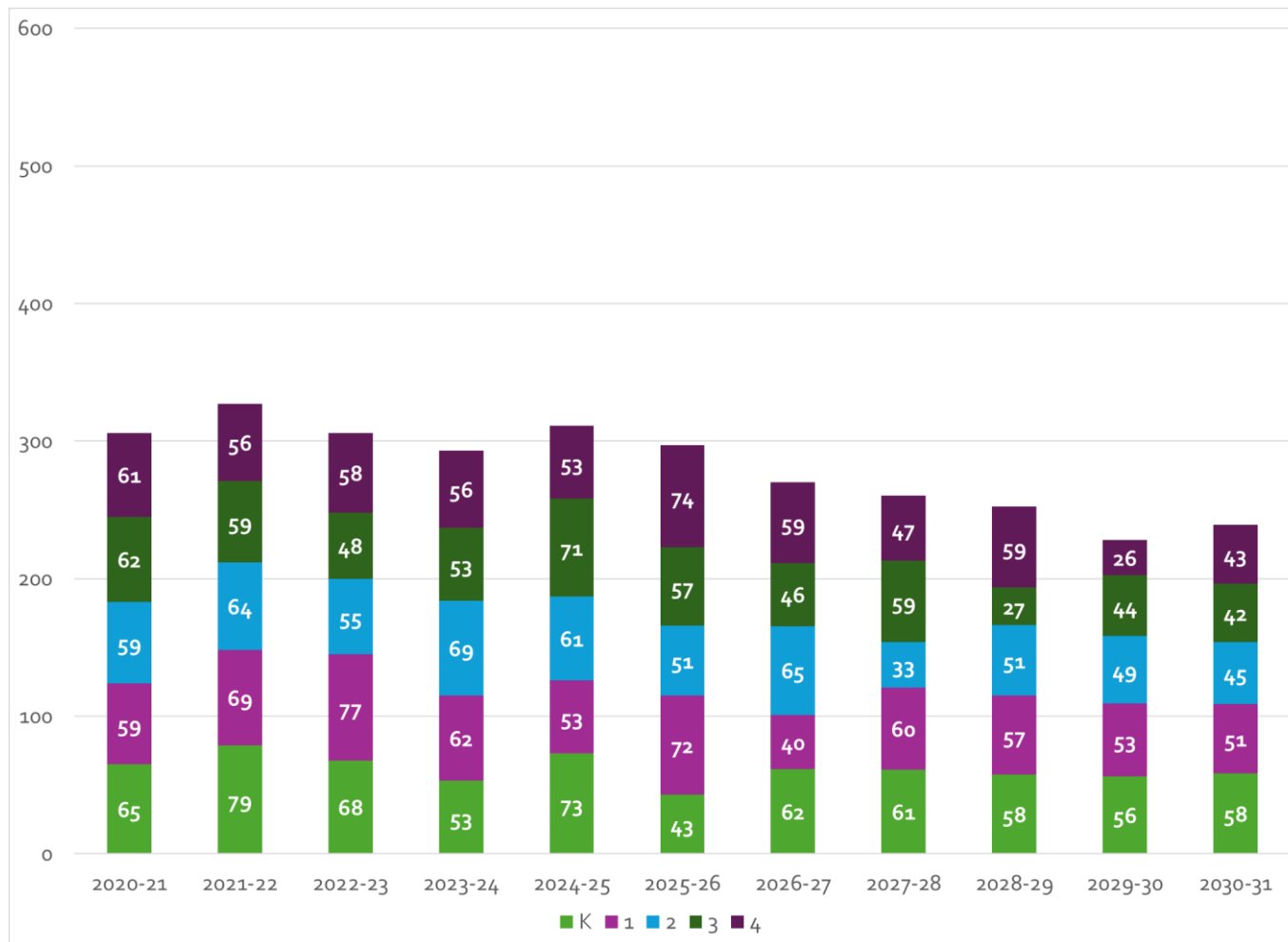
Negative Housing Impact Enrollment Projections



High School Enrollment Projections
(assuming a negative housing impact)

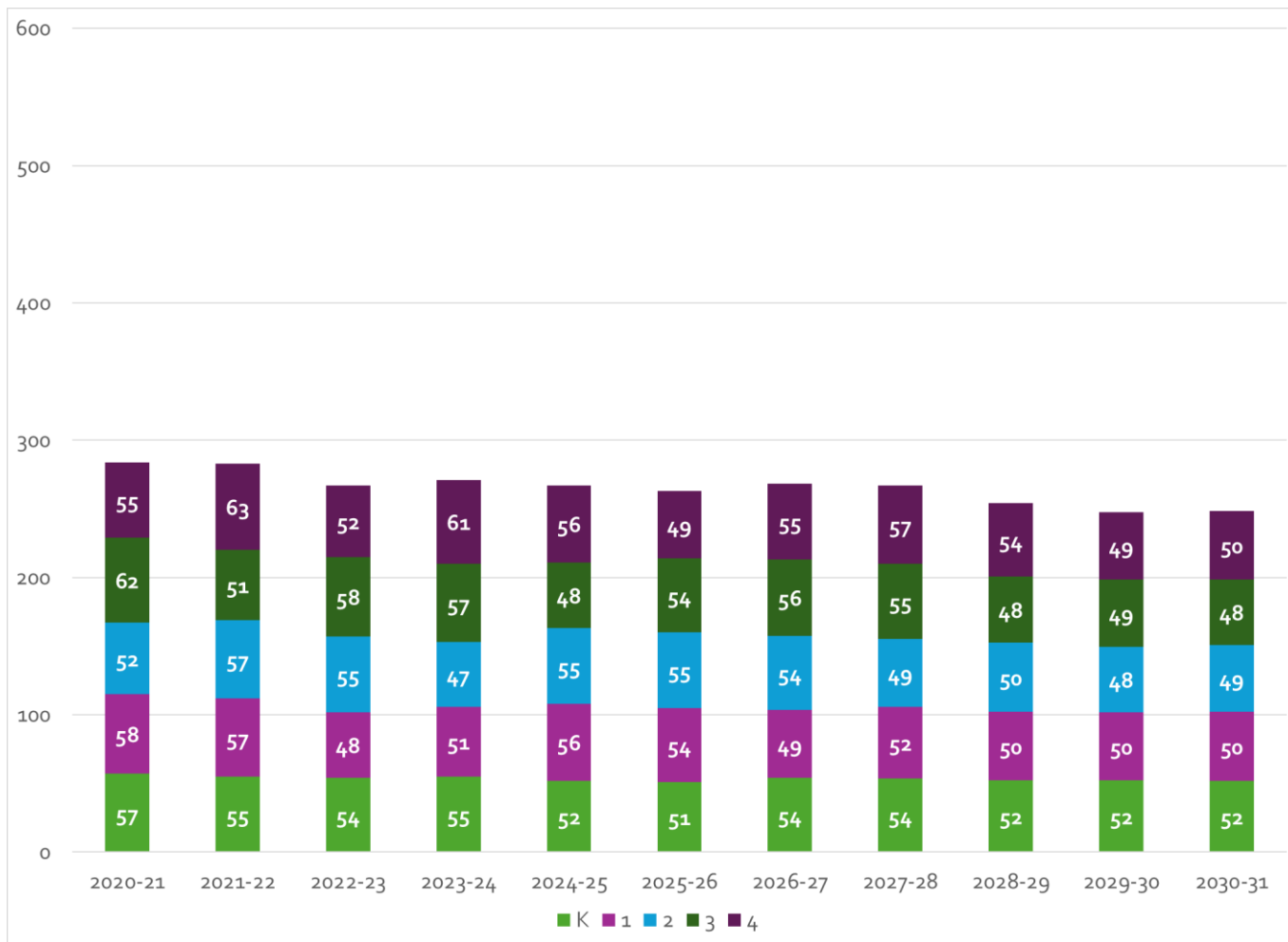


Middle School Enrollment Projections
(assuming a negative housing impact)



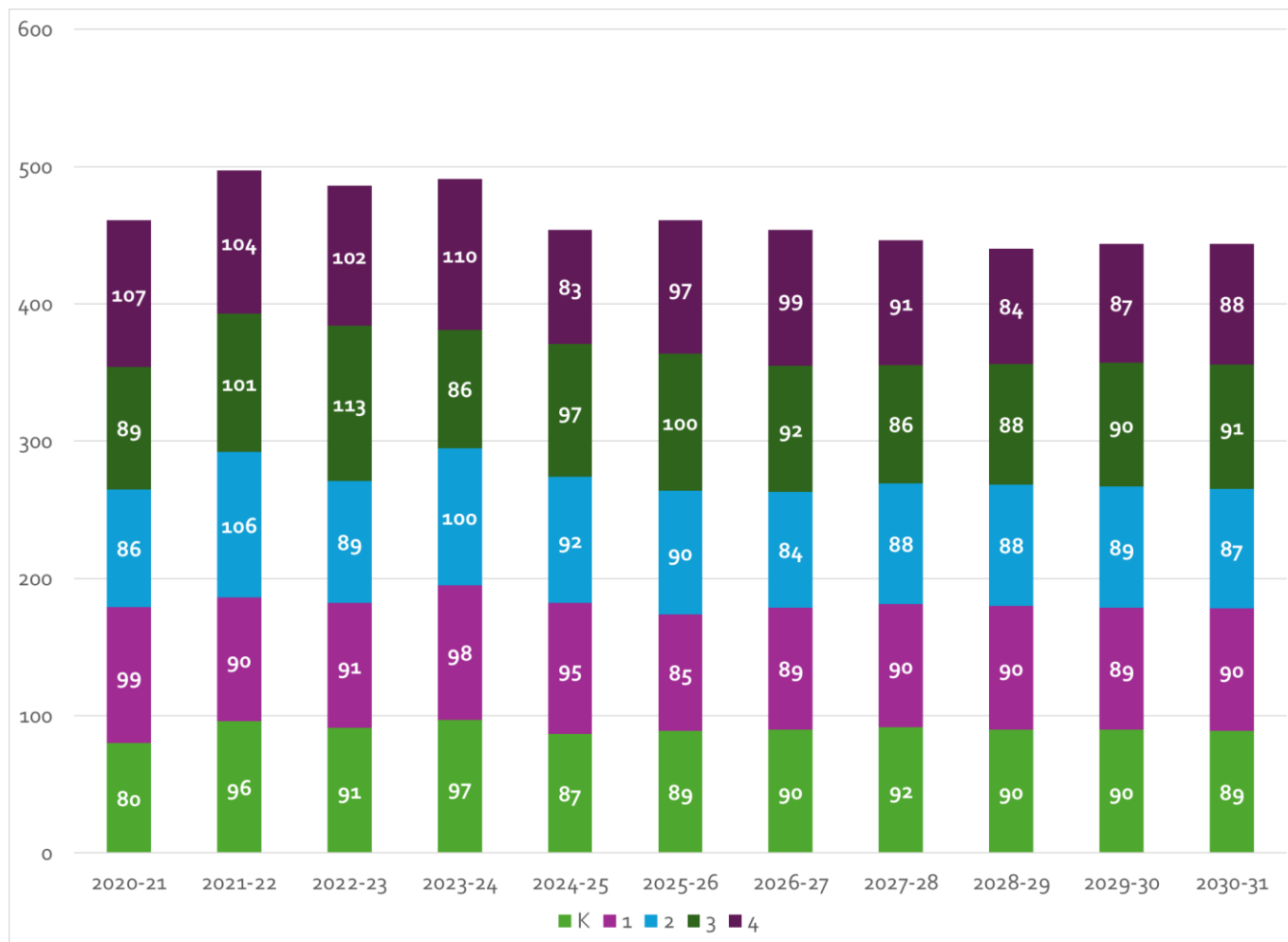
OTES will experience some volatility due to a comparatively small Kindergarten class. However, the expected return to more normal Kindergarten enrollments will provide general stability in overall enrollment over the projection period.

OTES Enrollment Projections (assuming a negative housing impact)



Wanamassa is expected to maintain relatively stable grade levels and total enrollment over the projection period.

Wanamassa ES Enrollment Projections (assuming a negative housing impact)



As the largest elementary school, Wayside has experienced some volatility in enrollment. However, over the projection period enrollment is expected to remain stable.

Wayside ES Enrollment Projections (assuming a negative housing impact)

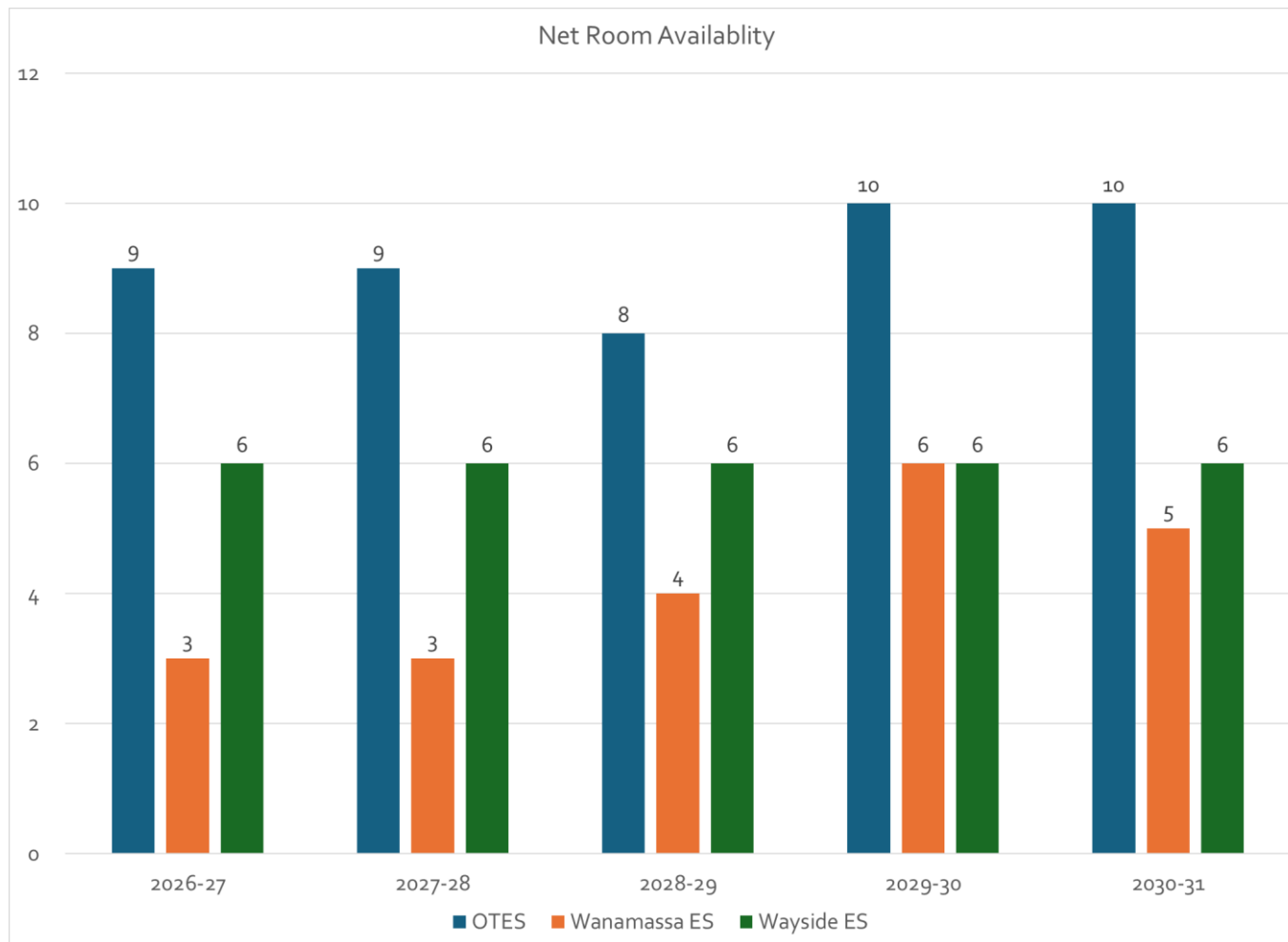
Facility Analysis Based on a Negative Housing Impact Analysis





In both scenarios, the number of available rooms are the same. However, the number of required rooms are reduced as a result of the lower enrollments are shown in this chart in comparison to the previous required rooms chart. By 2030-31, 6 fewer rooms are required.

Required Rooms for Elementary Schools
(assuming a negative housing impact)



The net number of rooms available and the disproportionate impact on OTES is shown in this chart along with the compounding effect of the enrollment declines in the later years. An additional 5 to 6 rooms per year become surplus due to the differences in enrollment.

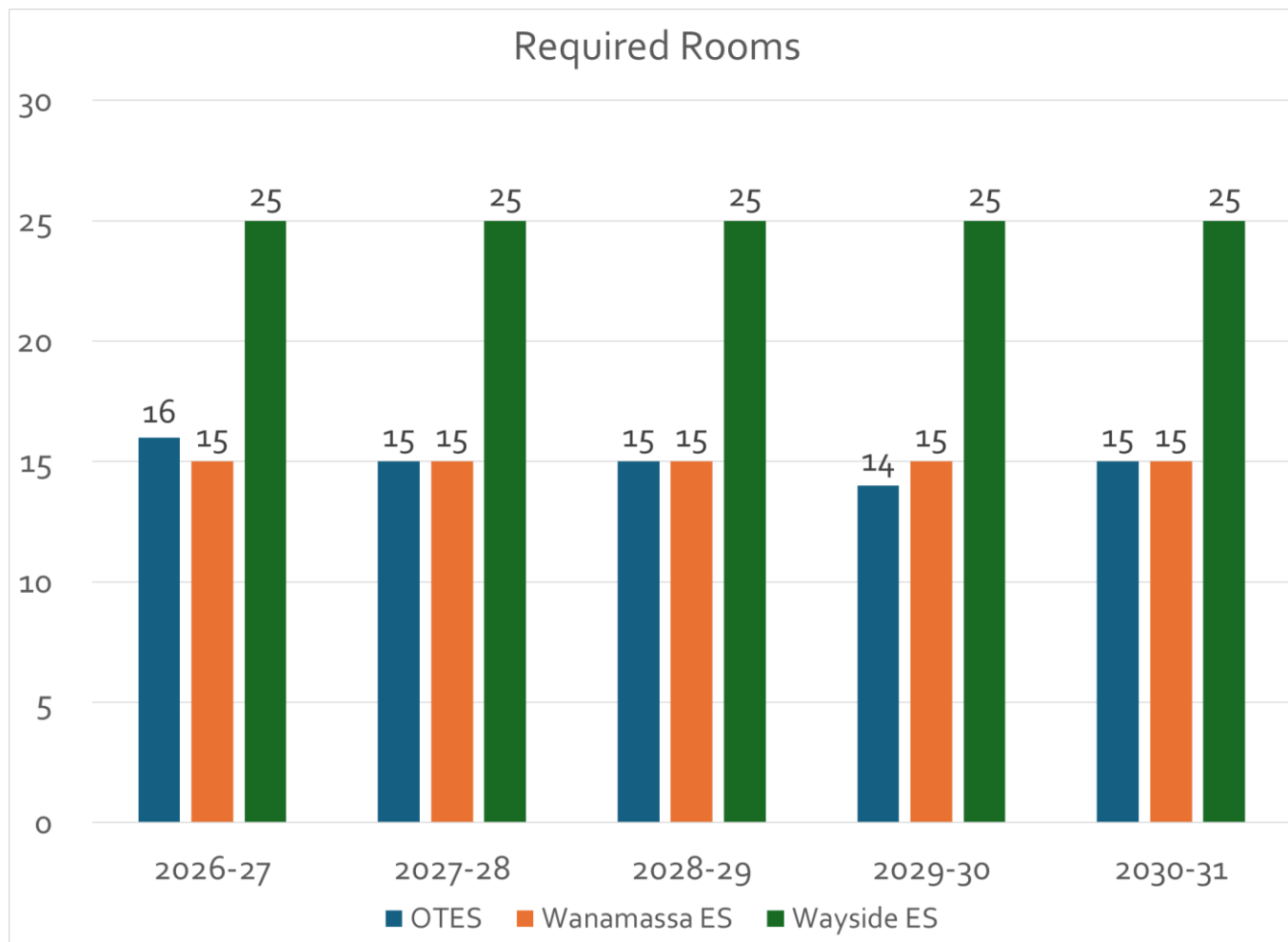
Room Surplus or Deficit for the Elementary Schools
(assuming a negative housing impact)

Facility Analysis with Revised Class Size Targets



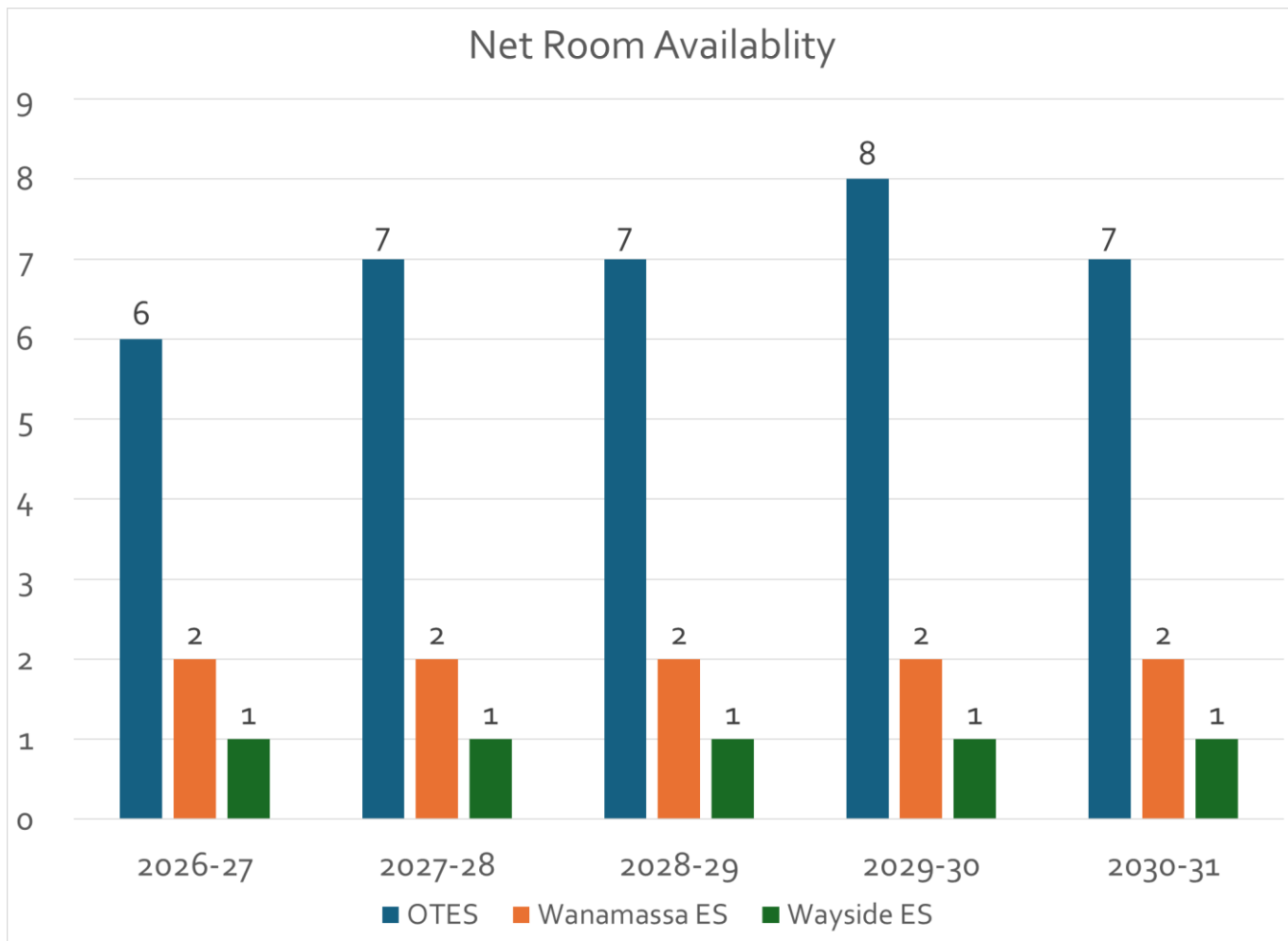
Summary of Analysis

- Using a revised class size target of 21 students (from the 25 students in the initial analysis) at the elementary school level, an assessment of facility capacity was performed.
- Smaller class sizes will increase the demand for classroom space.
- All baseline inputs including enrollment projections and available rooms have remained the same across all analyses.
 - Two scenarios were assessed:
 - Baseline organic projections
 - Negative impact of development projections



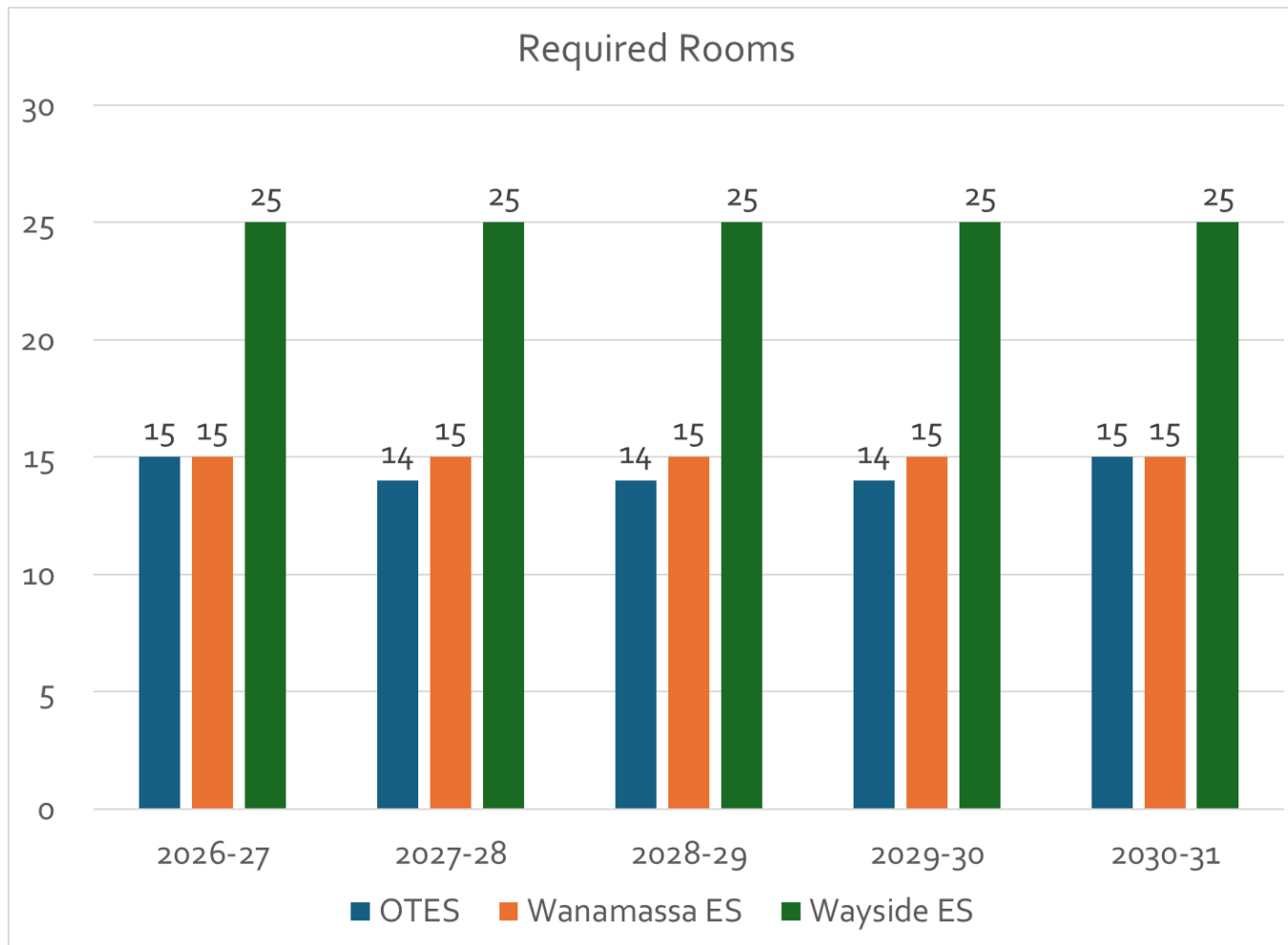
Unsurprisingly, smaller class size increase the number of rooms required. Assuming 21 students per class, there is an approximately 9 to 11 room increase in the annual requirements when compared to the high class size target of 25.

Required Rooms for Elementary Schools (Baseline Projections)



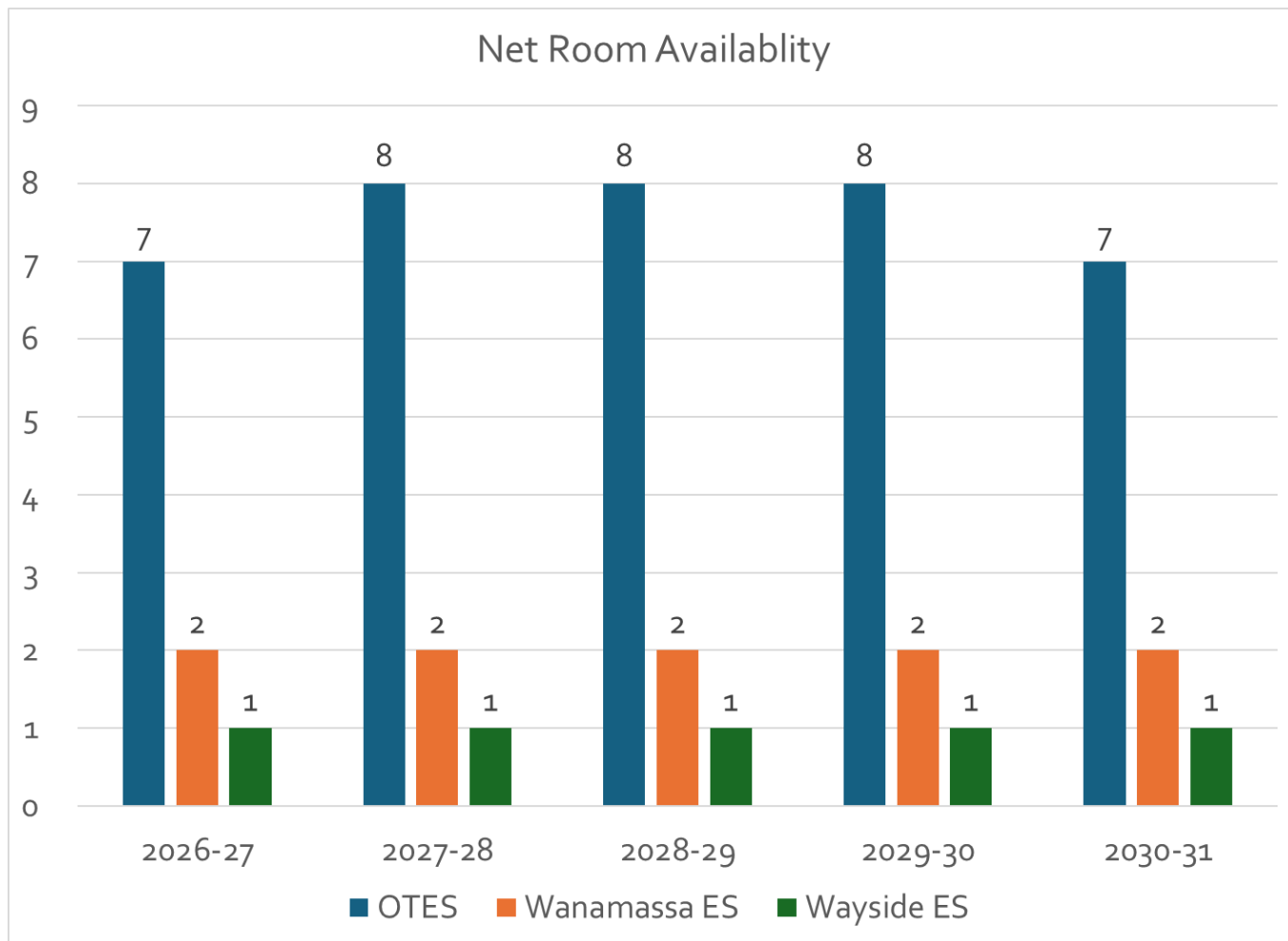
The net number of rooms remains substantial at OTES but is reduced significantly at both Wanamassa and Wayside relative to the initial calculation using 25 students per class as a target.

Room Surplus or Deficit for the Elementary Schools (Baseline Projections)



The interaction between declining enrollment and the smaller class size results in a similar number of rooms being required under this scenario as under the organic projections.

Required Rooms for Elementary Schools (Negative Housing Impact Projections)



As expected, given the indications in room demand, the net available rooms remains similar under both scenarios due to the declining enrollment.

Room Surplus or Deficit for the Elementary Schools (Negative Housing Impact Projections)

Impact of Revised Class Size Target

- A smaller class size target increases the number of rooms required over the baseline scenario.
 - The total impact is the need for an additional 9 to 11 elementary classrooms annually when compared to the baseline model.
- The approximately 180 student change over the projection period between the baseline and negative housing impact scenario is material but has a small influence on the rooms required because it is spread across schools and grades.
 - This results in the baseline projections and the negative housing impact projections having a similar impact on total room requirements and the availability of surplus space in each elementary school.



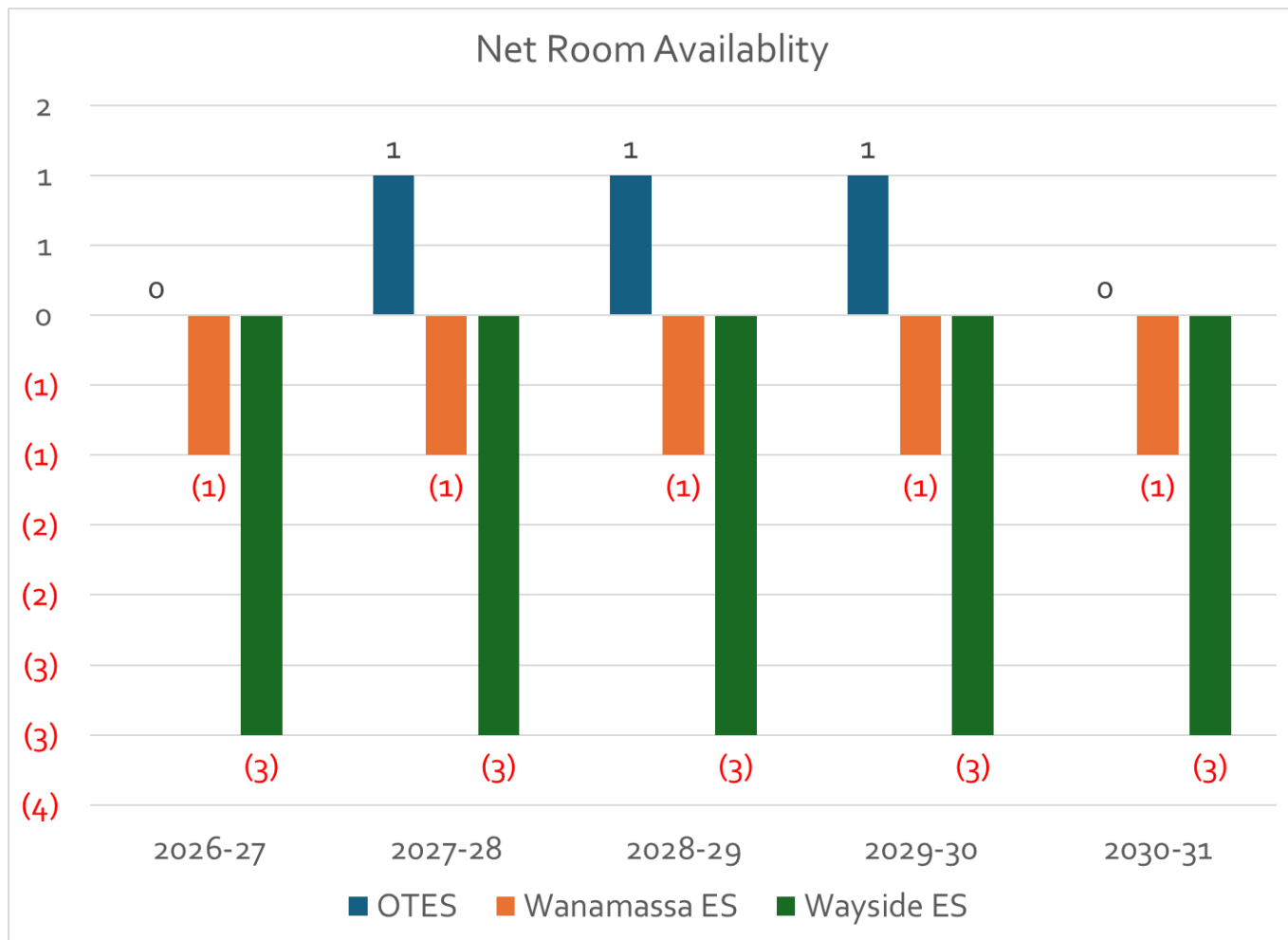
Impact of Revised Room Count

Room Count Comparison

The updated room count by school had a notable impact on the results. The table below summarizes the difference between the original and updated counts.

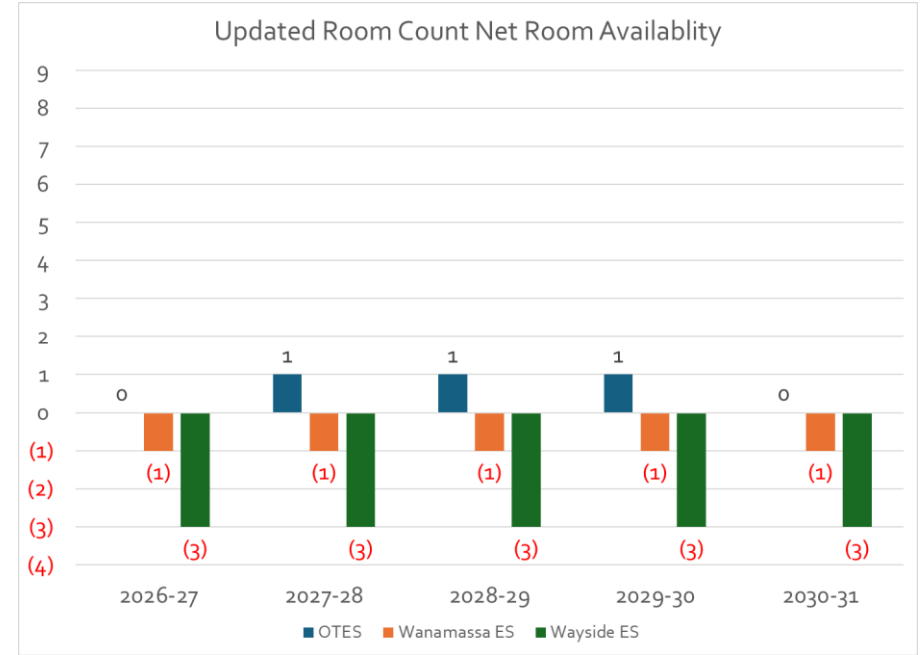
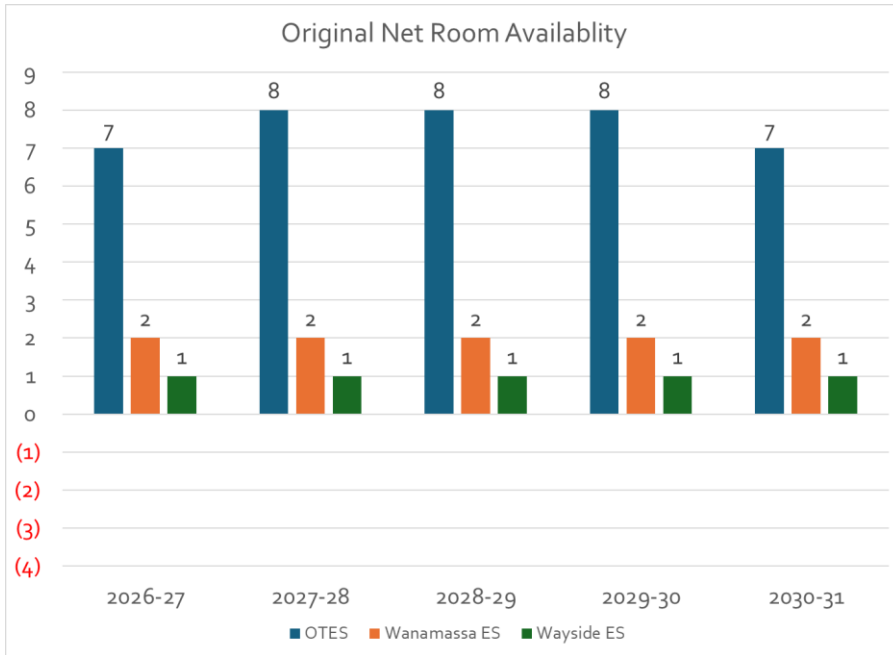
Available Rooms			
	Original	Update	Net Change
OTES	22	15	(7)
Wanamassa ES	17	14	(3)
Wayside ES	26	22	(4)
Total	65	51	(14)

The 14 room reduction results in a material change in the deficit or surplus of rooms within each school.



In the previous scenario there were surplus rooms in each building. The revision results in deficits at both Wanamassa and Wayside.

Room Surplus or Deficit for the Elementary Schools
Based on Revised Room Counts
(Negative Housing Impact Projections)



The significant change at OTES results in the largest difference in room availability and has a material impact on the options and considerations to resolve the room deficit concerns. In scenarios such as this a reconsideration of room allocations is usually coupled with consideration of redistricting.

Room Availability Comparison (Negative Housing Impact Projections)

Summary

Conclusions

- The district has experienced a notable drop in enrollment over the previous 5 years.
- There has also been notable changes in the proportion of students receiving free and reduced lunch.
- Class size targets could be redefined to clarify facility space across the district. However, adequate space is available across the projection period including notable surplus space at Wayside and OTES.
- The enrollment drop is expected to continue under a baseline scenario with a more significant drop under one housing scenario and a slight increase under a traditional method for calculating impacts.
- The revisions to room availability at each school has a material impact on the options and considerations to resolve the room deficits.





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Appendices – Enrollment Comparisons



	Elementary Schools			Middle School			High School			Districtwide		
	Negative Housing Model	Baseline	Traditional Housing Model	Negative Housing Model	Baseline	Traditional Housing Model	Negative Housing Model	Baseline	Traditional Housing Model	Total Negative Housing Model	Total Baseline	Total Traditional Housing Model
2026-27	991	998	1,008	863	867	879	825	829	837	2,680	2,695	2,725
2027-28	973	984	1,002	849	857	880	787	793	810	2,608	2,634	2,692
2028-29	948	982	1,006	794	818	845	798	821	848	2,539	2,621	2,698
2029-30	920	970	998	788	829	856	763	802	834	2,471	2,601	2,687
2030-31	931	989	1,009	724	783	812	750	802	833	2,406	2,574	2,654

The table above shows the total enrollment by grade grouping under the three methods used to project enrollment.

Summary of Enrollment Projections Under 3 Methods

	Elementary School Range of Differences			Middle School Range of Differences			High School Range of Differences			Total Differences		
	Negative Housing Model Difference from Baseline	Traditional Housing Model Difference From Baseline	Traditional Housing Model Difference From Negative Housing	Negative Housing Model Difference from Baseline	Traditional Housing Model Difference From Baseline	Traditional Housing Model Difference From Negative Housing	Negative Housing Model Difference from Baseline	Traditional Housing Model Difference From Baseline	Traditional Housing Model Difference From Negative Housing	Negative Housing Model Difference from Baseline	Traditional Housing Model Difference From Baseline	Traditional Housing Model Difference From Negative Housing
2026-27	(7)	10	17	(4)	12	16	(4)	8	12	(15)	30	45
2027-28	(11)	18	29	(8)	23	31	(7)	17	24	(26)	58	83
2028-29	(34)	24	57	(24)	27	51	(24)	26	50	(81)	77	158
2029-30	(50)	28	78	(41)	27	68	(39)	32	71	(131)	86	217
2030-31	(58)	19	77	(59)	29	88	(51)	31	83	(168)	79	248

The table above shows the total differences in enrollment by grade grouping and in total under the three methods used to project enrollment. The assumptions around housing impacts have a material impact in that a negative assumption would result in 168 fewer students from the baseline or 79 more students under the traditional model. There is also a 248 student range from the minimum to the maximum projection.

Summary of Enrollment Differences Under 3 Methods