EVANSTON/SKOKIE SCHOOL DISTRICT 65

Every Child, Every Day, Whatever it Takes

TO: District 65 School Board

CC: Dr. Eric Witherspoon, Interim Superintendent

FROM: Reeshemay Bennett, SARRS Manager, Chris Koutavas, Director of RAAD

DATE: November 9, 2026

RE: Five-Year Enrollment Projections

Objective: __X_ Information ___ Discussion ____ Follow-up ____ Decision

Background

Each year, District 65 assesses current-year enrollments and five-year projections to inform future staffing, transportation, expenditure, revenue, et. al. needs. The five-year projection is calculated using the average of the number of actual enrolled students from the previous three years to develop the projections from kindergarten and sixth grade. Current year students are rolled forward to the next grade. Historical enrollment and projections reports can be found on our District website.

Limiting the enrollment projections to a five-year window greatly decreases the error rate to the less than 5% we've been able to maintain over the years. Of note, kindergarten error rates tend to be higher.

As is noted below, administration has provided limited projections due to changing boundaries.

Enrollment Analysis for 2026-2027 (Count Date 10/1/26)

The enrollment numbers for the 2026-27 school year are based on the actual number of students attending a District 65 school on October 1, 2026. District 65 enrollment (excluding Park, Rice, JEH, Family Center and SEES students) is 5,406 in comparison to the District 65 projected enrollment of 5,489 (Table 2 in the Appendix). The variance between our actual to projected students represents an error rate of 1.5%. Actual enrollment was 83 students lower than our forecasted enrollment. The average error rate over the past five years is 2.0% but that is inflated due to the pandemic. The average error rate over three years is more accurate and is 1.4%.

The data tables capture data for the past five years and it should be noted that the COVID move to remote teaching was in March, 2020 prior to the 2020-21 school year which opened with remote learning. The 2021-22 school year and the 2022-23 school year appear to capture the impact of COVID and remote teaching with enrollment decreasing in all grades except first grade. The 2022-23 school year number captures any students who left District 65 after October 1, 2021 up until September 30, 2022..

Noted trends in the enrollment to projections include:

- District 65 has failed to make enrollment projections over the past five consecutive years. The

largest error rate has been in kindergarten, potentially indicating that the projections model which uses a three year running average may need review in a period of decreasing birthrates.

- Seven of the nine grade levels reported actual enrollments lower than projected and for the third consecutive year at least six of nine grades did not meet forecasted values.
- For the second year in a row, the largest variations of actual to projected were kindergarten and fourth grade.
- The District exceeded projections in first grade for the fifth year in a row.

To maintain consistent methodology with previous enrollment and projections reports, the projections and actuals in District tables below do not include students at Rice Children's Center, Park School, Family Center or our Early Childhood Center. We share this data separately here.

Table 1: JEH ECC, Park and Rice Enrollment Overtime (As of 10/1/26)					
	22-23	**23-24**	**24-25**	**25-26**	**26-27**
Family Center & JEH ECC	354	309	309	294	258
Park	61	57	58	52	54
Rice	17	20	20	21	20
Total	**432**	**386**	**387**	**367**	**332**

Table 2: ECC by Program (As of 10/1/26)	
Course/Program	**Enrollment**
Family Center (Birth to Three)	21
Headstart (Half Day	19
Headstart (Full Day)	88
Pre-School For All (Half Day)	105
SEED (Half Day)	25

Park and Rice maintain consistent enrollment over the past five years. Enrollment in the Early Childhood Center has decreased over the past five years.

Five-Year Enrollment Projections

The board is currently engaged in conversations about potential school closures. As a result, the

administration is providing the grade projected values for overall and grade level enrollments. Administration is not bringing forward a detailed school projection report since FY28 school boundaries are not finalized.

Once a final decision is made on school closures and boundaries for next year, District 65 will define the forecasting model and deliver projections at the school level.

Table 3 | 5-Year Future Year Projections (by grade)										
Fiscal Year	**Grade K**	**Grade 1**	**Grade 2**	**Grade 3**	**Grade 4**	**Grade 5**	**Grade 6**	**Grade 7**	**Grade 8**	**Total**
FY27	529	558	538	601	612	638	601	651	678	5406
FY28	542	529	558	538	601	612	638	601	651	5270
FY29	543	542	529	558	538	601	612	638	601	5162
FY30	538	543	542	529	558	538	601	612	638	5099
FY31	541	538	543	542	529	558	538	601	612	5002
FY32	541	541	538	543	542	529	558	538	601	4931

Summary

It has become increasingly evident that District 65 is experiencing decreasing enrollments on an annual basis. The eight grade class this year has 701 students and is the only grade level with over 700 students. The kindergarten and first grade levels have less than 600 students. This trend, while impacted by COVID, remote learning and other possible factors is found in State and national data on birth rate data (IDPH Birth Rate Data).

Chart 1 shares the enrollment by grade level on October 1, 2026 with a trendline to illustrate enrollment decreases by grade level.

Appendix 1: Current Enrollment by School as of October 1, 2026

Middle Schools				
School	**Grade 6**	**Grade 7**	**Grade 8**	**Total**
Chute	185	206	197	588
Haven	181	210	210	601
Nichols	192	168	210	570
Middle School Total	558	584	617	1759

Elementary Schools and K-8 Magnet										
School	**Grade K**	**Grade 1**	**Grade 2**	**Grade 3**	**Grade 4**	**Grade 5**	**Grade 6**	**Grade 7**	**Grade 8**	**Total**
Dawes	40	44	42	48	59	51				284
Dewey	47	56	45	52	64	50				314
King Arts	41	39	37	55	54	46	43	67	61	443
Foster	45	42	62	77	57	70				353
Lincoln	57	69	51	43	65	55				340
Lincolnwood	48	60	54	42	48	79				331
Oakton	68	55	58	54	68	63				366
Orrington	40	35	41	51	26	54				247
Walker	45	58	42	63	66	44				318
Washington	58	57	63	63	60	79				380
Willard	40	43	43	53	45	47				271

Appendix 2: 5 Year Enrollment by Grade

	2022-23				2023-24				2024-25				2025-26				2026-27			
Grade	**Projected**	**Actual**	**Difference**	**Error Rate**	**Projected**	**Actual**	**Difference**	**Error Rate**	**Projected**	**Actual**	**Difference**	**Error Rate**	**Projected**	**Actual**	**Difference**	**Error Rate**	**Projected**	**Actual**	**Difference**	**Error Rate**
K	678	597	-81	-11.9%	622	589	-33	-5.3%	607	546	-61	-10.0%	577	546	-31	-5.4%	560	529	-31	-5.5%
1	635	664	29	4.6%	597	638	41	6.9%	589	607	18	3.1%	546	552	6	1.1%	546	558	12	2.2%
2	636	624	-12	-1.9%	664	671	7	1.1%	638	642	4	0.6%	607	607	0	0.0%	552	538	-14	-2.5%
3	697	690	-7	-1.0%	624	631	7	1.1%	671	665	-6	-0.9%	642	630	-12	-1.9%	607	601	-6	-1.0%
4	706	695	-11	-1.6%	690	677	-13	-1.9%	631	625	-6	-1.0%	665	648	-17	-2.6%	630	612	-18	-2.9%
5	754	718	-36	-4.8%	695	687	-8	-1.2%	677	662	-15	-2.2%	625	616	-9	-1.4%	648	638	-10	-1.5%
6	795	661	-134	-16.9%	718	700	-18	-2.5%	687	681	-6	-0.9%	662	652	-10	-1.5%	616	601	-15	-2.4%
7	773	748	-25	-3.2%	661	657	-4	-0.6%	700	700	0	0.0%	681	678	-3	-0.4%	652	651	-1	-0.2%
8	763	719	-44	-5.8%	748	724	-24	-3.2%	657	655	-2	-0.3%	700	701	1	0.1%	678	678	0	0.0%
Total	6437	6116	-321	-5.0%	6019	5974	-45	-0.7%	5857	5783	-74	-1.3%	5705	5630	-75	-1.3%	5489	5406	-83	-1.5%