

Projecting Public School Enrollment in Wisconsin, 2025

The Applied Population Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin-Madison prepares statewide enrollment projections regularly. This two-page brief provides an update of the public school projections completed in 2025. Projections are provided in total and for elementary, middle, and high school for the 2025-26 school year through the 2034-35 school year.

Figure 1 shows the statewide enrollment projections for 4K-12 public school students. Public school enrollment is projected to decline by 6.2% to 7.7% in five years. Grades K-5 are expected to decrease by 8.7% to 9.7%, grades 6-8 by 2% to 5%, and 9-12 by 5.7% to 7%. School projections are most reliable over a five-year time horizon because most future students have already been born or are already in school. Nonetheless, by trending births forward and extending the projections time frame, total 4K-12 enrollment may fall by 13% to 15%, grades K-5 by 14% to 15%, grades 6-8 by 12% to 14%, and grades 9-12 by 11% to 14% in ten years. Table 1 shows the projected numerical enrollment for grades 4K-12 and by grade grouping over the next ten years.

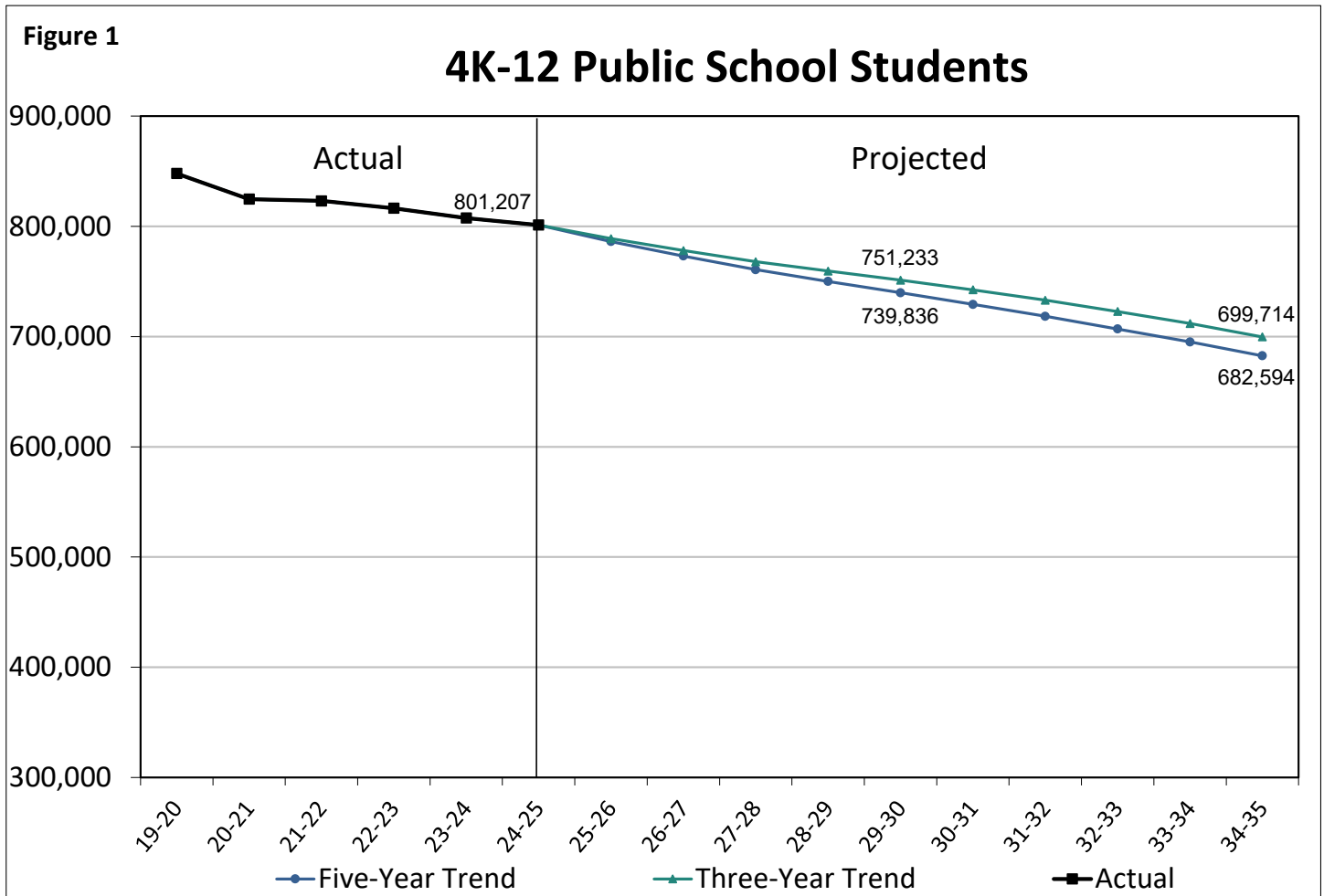


Table 1: School Enrollment Projections by Grade Grouping

	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35
4K-12 Projections										
Five-Year Trend	786,210	773,155	760,732	750,092	739,836	729,246	718,424	706,885	695,159	682,594
Three-Year Trend	788,898	778,065	767,895	759,441	751,233	742,424	733,086	722,724	711,844	699,714
K-5 Projections										
Five-Year Trend	319,862	313,385	306,278	299,903	295,127	291,125	288,182	284,581	280,880	277,085
Three-Year Trend	321,208	315,733	309,274	303,203	298,405	293,947	290,985	287,353	283,624	279,801
6-8 Projections										
Five-Year Trend	171,803	170,548	169,854	167,913	164,635	159,982	154,914	151,659	149,140	147,785
Three-Year Trend	172,578	172,170	172,385	171,394	169,050	165,399	160,563	157,241	154,221	152,823
9-12 Projections										
Five-Year Trend	253,635	248,834	244,738	242,647	240,933	239,603	237,399	233,320	228,420	221,610
Three-Year Trend	253,620	249,198	245,807	244,653	244,080	243,995	243,069	240,275	236,758	230,464

As Wisconsin faces the demographic realities of an aging population, declining births, and fewer public school students due to other educational options, many traditional 4K-12 school districts will face challenges in the coming years. Decline will likely occur at all grade levels. The total statewide public school projections may be viewed with confidence over the next few years. As with nearly all types of forecasts, reliability in these enrollment projections decreases over time.

The Applied Population Laboratory (APL) is a group of research professionals at the University of Wisconsin-Madison specializing in population studies and geographic data analysis. For almost thirty years, the APL has been working with Wisconsin's individual school districts on demographic analyses and school enrollment projections.