

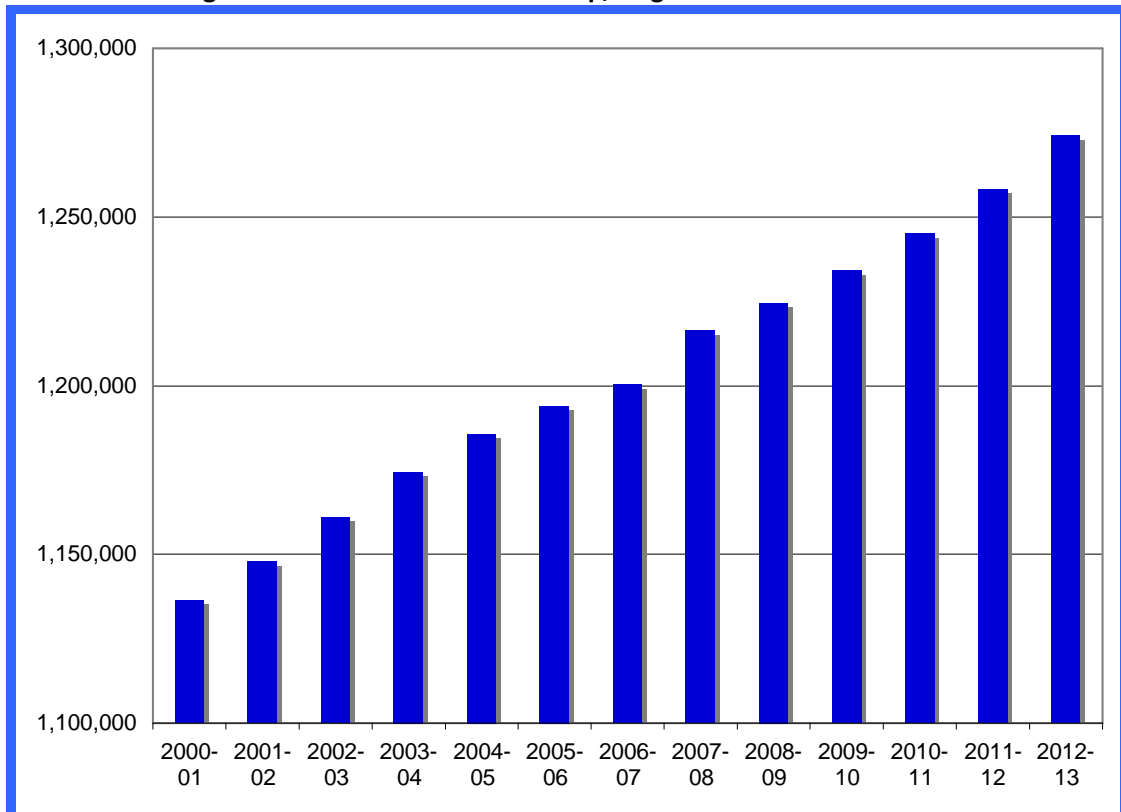
ENROLLMENT TRENDS IN VIRGINIA: 2008 TO 2012

September 10, 2008

STATEWIDE TRENDS

Public elementary and secondary enrollment in Virginia's public schools shot up by nearly 16,000 students between Fall 2006 and 2007, the largest annual increase in over 15 years. The newest projections from the Demographics & Workforce Section of UVA's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service show future enrollment increases averaging about 11,500 annually through the end of the projection period in September 2012. Student membership will increase to 1,224 thousand in September 2008, and continue climbing for the next five years, peaking at 1,274 thousand students in the fall of 2012.

Figure 1. K-12 Student Membership, Virginia: 2001-01 to 2012-13



This five-year, 58,000 student increase represents overall growth of 4.7 percent. Some grades will grow much faster, however, while others will decrease. Table 1 shows elementary grades increasing almost twice as fast as the state average. Growth in Kindergarten through the 7th grade varies from a low of 6.6 percent in the 7th grade to a high of 9.4 percent in the 3rd. The 8th and 9th grades will have small five-year increases, while the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades will decline.

Table 1. Enrollment Changes by Grade, 2007-08 to 2012-13

Grade	Fall Membership		Change	
	Current: 2007-08	Projected: 2012-13	Number	Percent
Kindergarten	90,837	98,848	8,011	8.8
First	94,260	101,971	7,711	8.2
Second	93,207	99,973	6,766	7.3
Third	91,595	100,245	8,650	9.4
Fourth	91,439	98,222	6,783	7.4
Fifth	89,893	97,956	8,063	9.0
Sixth	91,694	99,386	7,692	8.4
Seventh	93,498	99,703	6,205	6.6
Eighth	94,983	97,493	2,510	2.6
Ninth	109,298	110,160	862	0.8
Tenth	98,073	95,960	-2,113	-2.2
Eleventh	91,142	88,387	-2,755	-3.0
Twelfth	86,459	85,777	-682	-0.8
Total K-12	1,216,378	1,274,080	57,702	4.7

Tables 4 and 5 (see links at the end of the report), provide details about the Cooper Center's new fall membership forecasts. Table 4 shows fall membership for the most recent two years, and projections for the next five for the state and each school division. Table 5 presents a more detailed look at the projections, showing forecasts for each grade and projection year from 2008-09 through 2012-13.

SHORT-TERM LOCAL TRENDS

Many school divisions will have only small enrollment changes in the next year. Our projections show 52 divisions, 40 percent of the total, will have total enrollment changes of 30 students or less between fall '07 and '08. However, some school divisions will see significantly greater changes, as shown in Table 2 and Map 1.

Table 2. School Divisions with the Greatest One-Year Enrollment Changes

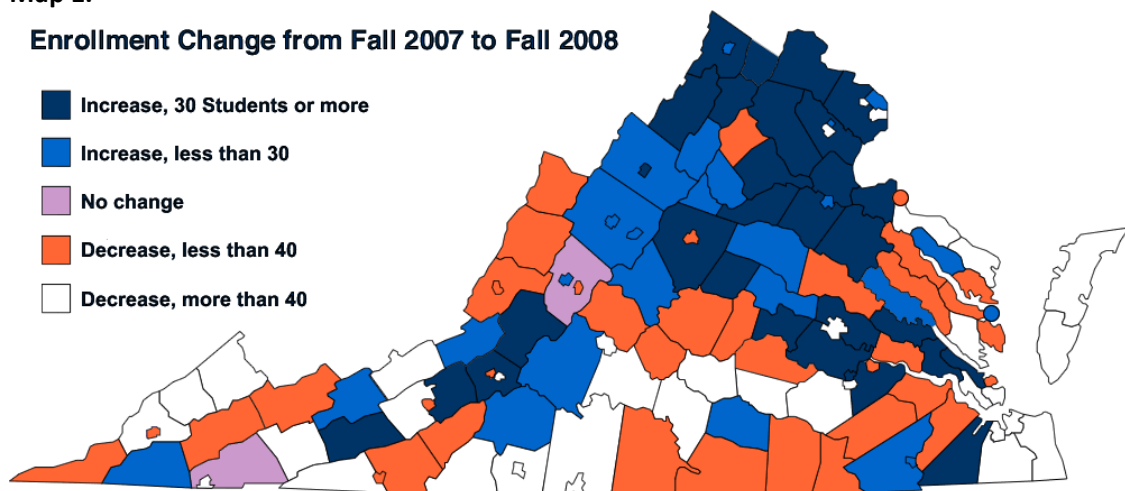
School Division	Growing: Fall 2007 to Fall 2008	School Division	Declining: Fall 2007 to Fall 2008
Loudoun County	3,668	Virginia Beach City	-1,064
Prince William County	2,321	Norfolk City	-566
Chesterfield County	810	Richmond City	-480
Fairfax County	482	Newport News City	-421
Henrico County	401	Roanoke City	-189
Spotsylvania County	381	Henry County	-183
Culpeper County	284	Portsmouth City	-172
Stafford County	277	Dickenson County	-172
Frederick County	276	Danville City	-167
Williamsburg-James City County	273	Campbell County	-142

As shown on the map, the largest membership gains are found in primarily suburban school divisions located in Northern Virginia, surrounding Richmond City, or in Tidewater. In fact, most of the school divisions showing substantial enrollment increases are located around the state's three major metropolitan areas, as well as several divisions around the Roanoke metropolitan area.

Divisions with significant losses include several cities in Hampton Roads, as well as Richmond, Roanoke, and Danville. Other divisions with enrollment losses exceeding 40 students are located in southwest Virginia, central Virginia, and the Eastern Shore.

Map 1.

Enrollment Change from Fall 2007 to Fall 2008



LONG-TERM LOCAL TRENDS

Over the next five years Virginia's K-12 enrollment will grow by 4.7 percent, increasing by 58,000 students to a total of 1,274,080. Loudoun County will have the largest 5-year growth of any Virginia school division, as shown in Table 3 and in Map 2.

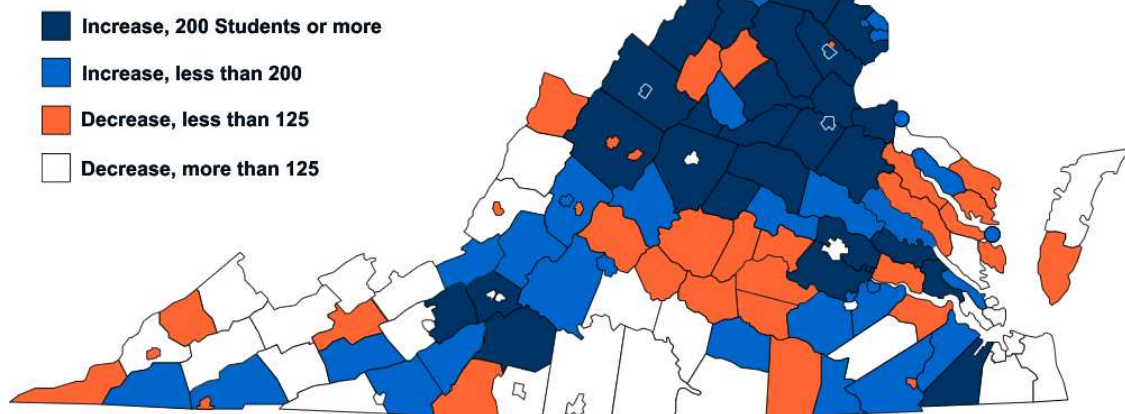
Table 3. School Division with the Greatest Five-Year Enrollment Changes

School Division	Growing: Fall 2007 to Fall 2012	School Division	Declining: Fall 2007 to Fall 2012
Loudoun County	20,789	Virginia Beach City	-3,145
Prince William County	14,495	Richmond City	-2,089
Chesterfield County	5,313	Norfolk City	-1,806
Fairfax County	3,534	Newport News City	-1,542
Henrico County	3,525	Hampton City	-1,011
Spotsylvania County	2,286	Portsmouth City	-912
Culpeper County	1,972	Petersburg City	-583
Frederick County	1,906	Roanoke City	-512
Stafford County	1,568	Campbell County	-508
Williamsburg-James City County	1,395	Buchanan County	-429

Most of the state's "high-growth" school divisions are located in either Northern Virginia or around Richmond City. The Hampton Roads area, on the other hand, contains many of the school divisions projected to have the largest losses over the next five years.

Map 2.

Enrollment Change from Fall 2007 to Fall 2012



IMPLICATIONS

Student enrollments may increase or decrease over the years, and in either case these changes have implications for local economies. For most Virginia localities, expenditures for education consume the largest share of their budgets. Increases in the school-age population and public school enrollment can, in the case of significant growth, force budgetary cuts in other areas as K-12 education consumes even more financial resources.

Beyond budgetary implications, rapid growth places additional demands on teaching and administrative staffs. Growth may also require new hiring, place a burden on existing school facilities that may result in new school construction, and increase school transportation expenses. The large student increases now forecast in grades K–5 will gradually move through the educational pipeline, placing demands on the upper grades next decade.

Declines in the school-age population not only impacts school personnel employment, but may also reflect underlying demographic trends in a community suggesting impending shortages of available workers as the number of new high school graduates declines, or as families with school-age children leave to find better employment opportunities elsewhere.

METHODOLOGY

Readers interested in learning more about how enrollment projections are made are invited to review the methodology on our webpage, at:
<http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics/SCHOOL%20FORECASTS/>

DATA TABLES

Table 4. Historic and Projected Fall Membership for Virginia's School Divisions: 2006-07 to 2012-13 is located at:
http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics/sitefiles/documents/excel/school%20forecasts/06-07_to_12-13_enroll_by_div.xls

Table 5. Fall Membership Forecasts for Virginia's School Divisions, by Grade: 2008-09 to 2012-13 is located at:
http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics/sitefiles/documents/excel/school%20forecasts/08-09_to_12-13_enroll_by_grade.xls