

POPULATION ESTIMATES & PROJECTIONS

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A Third Population Wave to Affect the K through 12 System

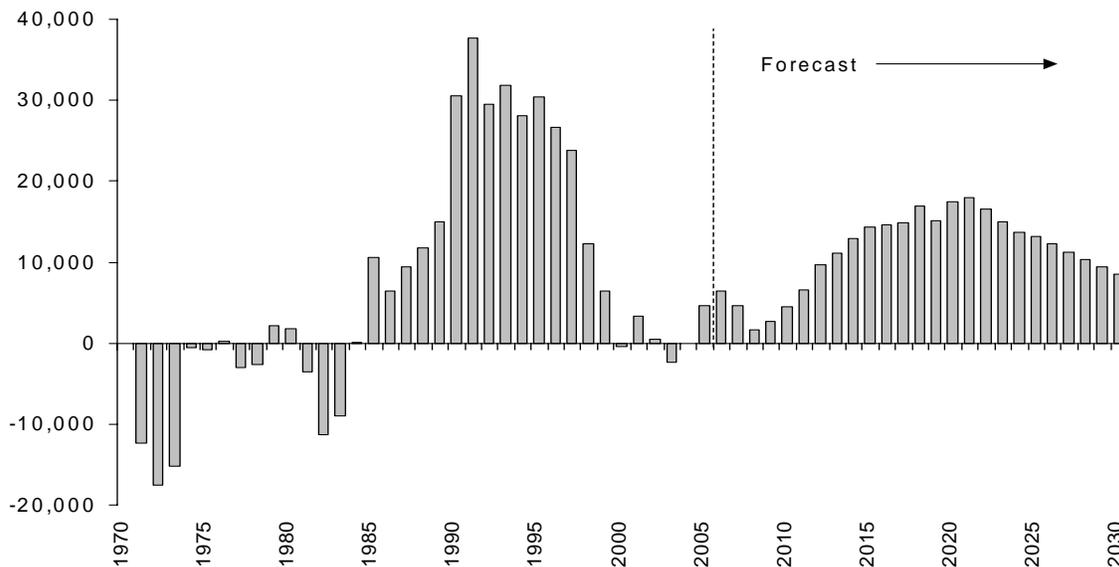
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THE Baby Boom of the 1950s and 1960s created waves of population that are rolling through the state’s age structure over time. Another wave—or population bulge—is approaching the K through 12 educational system.

From a state budget perspective, public education is a major expenditure. Moreover, because of state constitutional requirements, there is little flexibility in funding public grade K through 12 enrollments.

The graph and table below show historical and expected annual change in school children, ages 5 through 17 years.

Annual Change in School-age Population Ages 5 through 17 Years



Changes in the size of the student population in grades K through 12 are largely determined by annual births. Statistical analysis shows that 90 percent or more of the size of K through 12 enrollment in any given year is explained by prior births that would have “aged into” those grades. Additional variance in enrollment levels is due to migration into and out of the state.

The baby Boom ended in Washington when births began to decline in 1963. Annual births remained at a low level through the late 1970s. As a result—from 1969 through 1984—K-12 enrollments declined by over 70,000 students. Then, as the Baby Boomers reached childbearing age, births rose and enrollment gains averaged nearly 23,000 per year during the 1990s.

The number of school-age children has remained relatively stable since 1999. A change, however, is coming. Another wave of enrollment increases should begin in 2010 or 2011 with annual increases reaching 13,000 to 14,000 by 2015. These gains may be somewhat higher and may begin earlier, depending on the state’s economic growth and net migration.

Population Age 5-17 Fall 2004 Population Forecast

Year	Male	Female	Total	Annual Change	Year	Male	Female	Total	Annual Change
1970	450,495	430,545	881,040		2000	574,995	544,542	1,119,537	-371
1971	443,677	425,041	868,718	-12,322	2001	576,326	546,570	1,122,896	3,359
1972	434,580	416,550	851,130	-17,588	2002	576,073	547,270	1,123,343	447
1973	426,748	409,233	835,981	-15,149	2003	574,691	546,265	1,120,956	-2,387
1974	427,020	408,450	835,470	-511	2004	574,713	546,200	1,120,913	-43
1975	426,920	407,748	834,668	-802	2005	577,234	548,251	1,125,485	4,572
1976	427,126	407,762	834,888	220	2006	580,499	551,470	1,131,969	6,484
1977	425,939	405,940	831,879	-3,009	2007	582,662	553,894	1,136,556	4,587
1978	424,910	404,369	829,279	-2,600	2008	583,182	555,027	1,138,209	1,653
1979	426,675	404,776	831,451	2,172	2009	584,478	556,451	1,140,929	2,720
1980	426,900	406,337	833,237	1,786	2010	586,700	558,764	1,145,464	4,535
1981	425,361	404,311	829,672	-3,565	2011	589,768	562,305	1,152,073	6,609
1982	419,518	398,897	818,415	-11,257	2012	594,609	567,122	1,161,731	9,658
1983	414,619	394,771	809,390	-9,025	2013	600,263	572,557	1,172,820	11,089
1984	414,707	394,767	809,474	84	2014	606,732	578,946	1,185,678	12,858
1985	420,299	399,809	820,108	10,634	2015	614,063	585,929	1,199,992	14,314
1986	423,684	402,824	826,508	6,400	2016	621,470	593,185	1,214,655	14,663
1987	428,391	407,540	835,931	9,423	2017	629,065	600,445	1,229,510	14,855
1988	434,239	413,481	847,720	11,789	2018	637,554	608,825	1,246,379	16,869
1989	442,365	420,340	862,705	14,985	2019	645,311	616,215	1,261,526	15,147
1990	458,691	434,561	893,252	30,547	2020	654,231	624,716	1,278,947	17,421
1991	478,491	452,375	930,866	37,614	2021	663,444	633,500	1,296,944	17,997
1992	493,599	466,768	960,367	29,501	2022	671,931	641,578	1,313,509	16,565
1993	510,208	481,971	992,179	31,812	2023	679,636	648,911	1,328,547	15,038
1994	524,657	495,611	1,020,268	28,089	2024	686,625	655,568	1,342,193	13,646
1995	540,351	510,379	1,050,730	30,462	2025	693,385	662,003	1,355,388	13,195
1996	554,277	523,163	1,077,440	26,710	2026	699,679	668,000	1,367,679	12,291
1997	566,550	534,702	1,101,252	23,812	2027	705,468	673,500	1,378,968	11,289
1998	572,561	540,970	1,113,531	12,279	2028	710,770	678,547	1,389,317	10,349
1999	575,594	544,314	1,119,908	6,377	2029	715,603	683,145	1,398,748	9,431
2000	574,995	544,542	1,119,537	-371	2030	719,938	687,269	1,407,207	8,459