II. District Enrollment Trends

The Olathe Public Schools experienced continued enrollment growth from unification in 1965 till 2019. Due to the impacts of the Covid pandemic, the district's enrollment in 2020 declined by 1,055 students (3.5%). Enrollment has not recovered from the pandemic decline and is currently at levels closer to those seen in 2014.

Olathe Public Schools has grown from 3,687 students served in 9 buildings to nearly 29,000 students served in 60 buildings in its 57 years. Recently enrollment growth in the District has slowed, resulting from a decrease in live birth rates and subsequent students enrolling in the district five years later. The District is anticipating a slow but steady decline in enrollment over the next three years.

Enrollment projections for Olathe Public School are based primarily upon historic enrollment information and new residential building permit information. Historic enrollment information would include District growth rate, program growth rate, student location and promotion rates. Enrollment data has been maintained since unification in 1965, with particular weight given to information in the past 3-5 years. This information is supplemented with residential building permit reports. The school district is broken down into 91 study areas (map grids). Building permits are mapped each quarter and information about the permit [the type of housing product (single family or multi-family), the developer of the subdivision and the price of the unit] is entered and analyzed with geographic information system (GIS) software. Changes within fully developed areas of the District are estimated based on promotion rates by grade.

This process has created enrollment estimates that are within 1.0% of the actual enrollment of the District over the past 4 years, leading to a great deal of confidence in the methodology.

While the District's methodologies have proven extremely accurate in projecting enrollment for the short-term, the District uses information from Mid-American Regional Council (MARC) for long-term enrollment projections. MARC is a non-profit association of city and county governments and the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the bi-state Kansas City region. MARC provides long-term enrollment estimates for the metro area and individual cities. Previous long-term forecasts had estimated a District population of over 40,000 students at full build-out. However, with the declining birth rate and increasing average age of the population within the district boundaries, the likelihood of reaching that level is diminishing.
II. District Enrollment Trends

The following chart provides actual enrollment information since 1965 and projected enrollments through 2025-2026. All numbers represent student headcounts not FTE.

Note: Years prior to 2015 are 5-year averages. This is a format change for the 2022-23 Annual Budget Book.

As demonstrated above, the District is anticipating a slower but steadily decreasing enrollment over the next three years.