

## Minnesota school enrollments projected to peak in 1999 – 2000

Minnesota K-12 public school enrollment has grown substantially in the 1990s, but current projections suggest that total enrollment will soon peak and then begin a moderate decline. Though falling, enrollments are projected to remain above the levels of the early 1990s. Total enrollment grew from 731,992 in the 1989-1990 fall count to 844,410 in the 1997-1998 data. After peaking at about 848,000 in 1999-2000, enrollments are projected to decline to about 815,000 in

the 2008-2009 school year. The gradual decline results from falling births as the baby bust generation moves into its childbearing years.

**Minority enrollments have risen much faster than white enrollments.** From 1989-1990 to 1997-1998, Hispanic enrollment count grew 133 percent, black by 96 percent, Asian by 69 percent and American Indian by 39 percent. Black and Asian students are most concentrated in the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts, while Hispanic and Indian students are more dispersed throughout the state.

**Enrollment data suggest that Minnesota has experienced net in-migration of families with children throughout the 1990s.** In-migration appears to have tapered off somewhat since the early 1990s. It continues at a high rate for minority families, but has reached near-zero levels for white families.

**The Census Bureau may have underestimated the growth in the number of black, Asian and Hispanic children in Minnesota.**

Data on enrollment by race provide a tool for evaluating the Census Bureau age, race and sex estimates. The Census Bureau method, which relies on matched income tax records to measure migration, may undercount movement of recent immigrants and people with low incomes.

The enrollment data support the belief that Minnesota has experienced a surge in immigrant population in the 1990s. Enrollment in limited English proficiency programs grew 158 percent between the 1989-1990 and 1996-1997 fall counts.

The number of low-income students appears to have grown as well. The number of students receiving free or reduced price meals rose 46 percent between 1989-1990 and 1997-1998, compared to a 15 percent gain in total K-12 enrollments.

Published by the State Demographic Center at Minnesota Planning, this issue of *PopBites* summarizes findings from Martha McMurry's working paper that describes enrollment trends and what they show about Minnesota's changing child population. Upon request, *PopBites* will be made available in alternate format, such as Braille, large print or audio tape. For TTY, contact Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529 and ask for Minnesota Planning. To receive a copy of *PopBites* or for other population information, contact the Minnesota State Demographic Center Helpline at 651-296-2557 or via e-mail at [helpline@mnplan.state.mn.us](mailto:helpline@mnplan.state.mn.us).

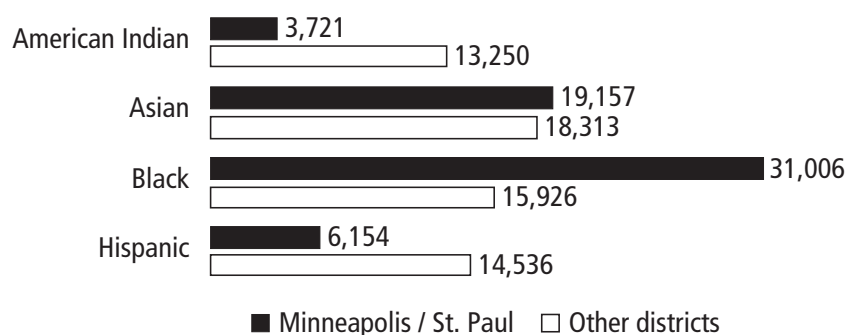


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### Minority enrollments in combined Minneapolis and St. Paul districts compared to all other districts, 1997 – 1998



Source: Department of Children, Families and Learning