

**DULUTH**  
**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT # 709**

**DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

***OVERVIEW***



**November 27, 2006**

**Duluth Public Schools Enrollment Projections**  
**Demographic Analysis: Overview**  
**November 2006**

*Part of the Long Range Facilities Planning Process*

**The planning process so far**

The Duluth Public Schools' Long Range Facilities Planning Process began in Spring 2006, as a partnership between the schools, Duluth citizens and Johnson Controls, a nationally-recognized expert regarding facilities management.

Our shared goal is to do an in-depth analysis of school facilities and futures needs to ensure we're providing the very best for our community in the coming decades.

A Citizens Group, representing all aspects of Duluth, has been meeting frequently during the past few months to ask questions and provide input. The Citizens Group has also held dozens of meetings with groups all over the city to get further input on this important planning process.

During that same time, Johnson Controls conducted three comprehensive studies:

- Analysis of how population changes will impact school enrollment in future
- Analysis of the physical condition of all buildings and spaces
- Analysis of the educational adequacy of all school buildings and spaces

The first report, on Duluth's population and school enrollment projections, is now completed.

**Experts providing solid data**

Before the Duluth Public Schools and the community can determine the best locations and structure for their schools in the future, we need to know how many students will be living in Duluth, and in which neighborhoods they'll be living.

To gather this information, Johnson Controls has teamed up with national experts who have developed demographic studies and enrollment projections for 65 school districts in Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota and Illinois.

Dr. Hazel Reinhardt, president of Hazel Reinhardt Consulting Services in Edina, is leading this effort. A former Minnesota State Demographer, Dr. Reinhardt is also head of market research at the Media Management Center at Northwestern University, in Evanston, Illinois.

Also providing valuable information is Dick Carlstrom, a Geographic Information Systems Specialist, who's a consultant with Technology Information and Education Services (TIES).

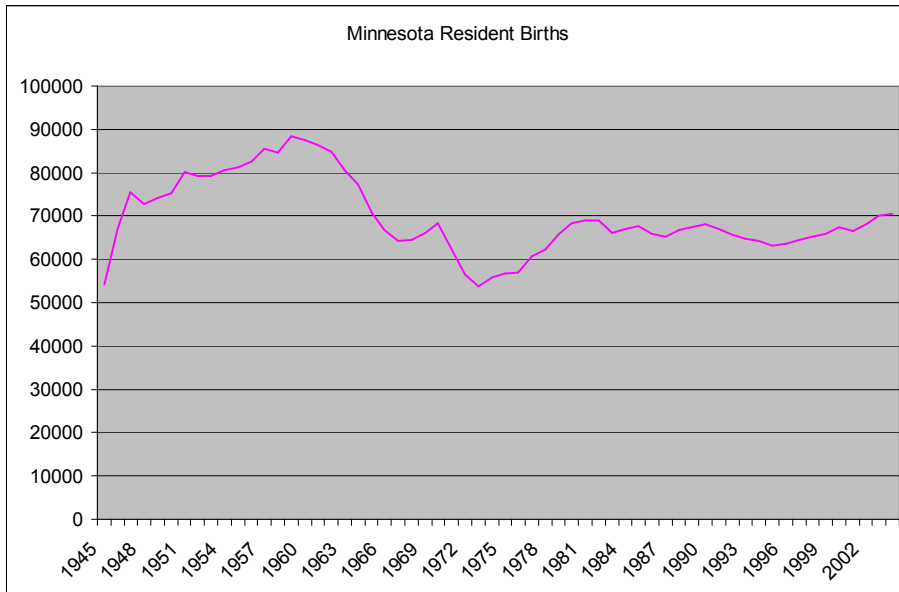
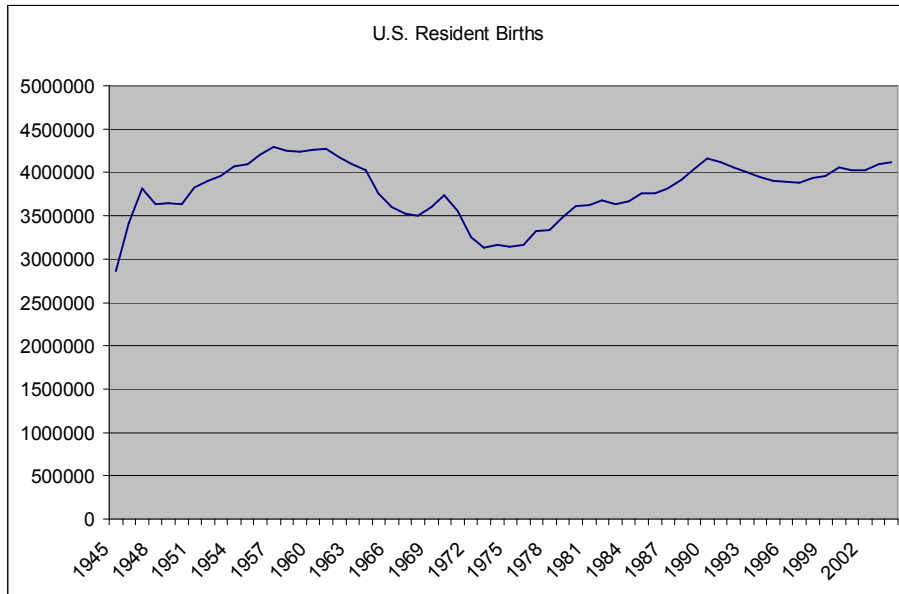
During the past few months, they have used two trusted methodologies to arrive at their conclusions: the Cohort Survival Method and the Housing Unit Method. The results of both methodologies were nearly identical, meaning their projections can be considered quite valid.

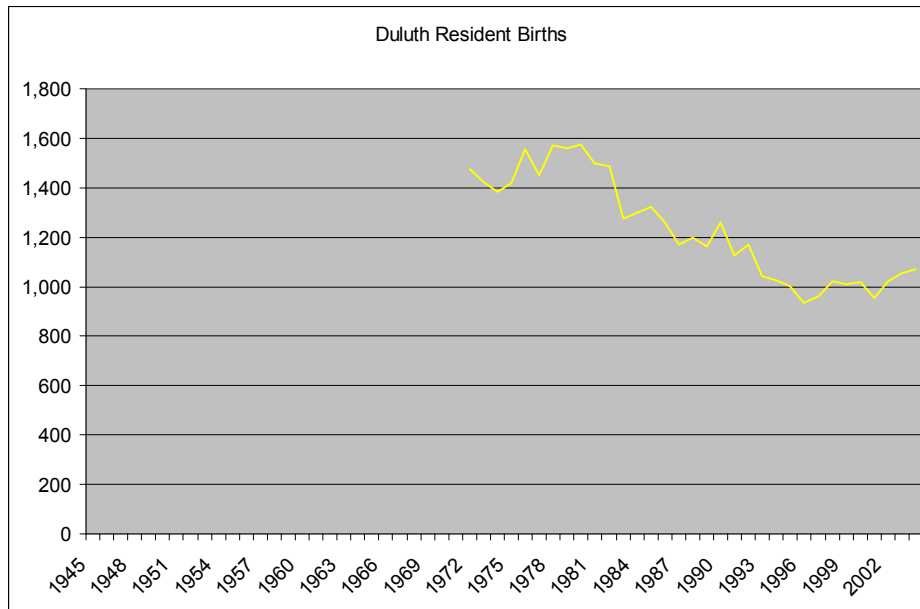
**How to review the entire report**

Below is an overview of the report created by our experts. The entire report can be viewed at [www.duluth.k12.mn.us](http://www.duluth.k12.mn.us), and also in Room 213 of Historic Old Central High School, at 215 N. First Avenue East.

**National, state and local comparisons**

K-12 enrollment has declined in recent years on national, state and local levels due in large part to Generation X being smaller than previous generations. The graphs below compare the births in the United States to that of those in Minnesota and Duluth.





**Two reasons for declining enrollment**

The two reasons for Duluth’s declining enrollment are the size of the different generations and competition.

First and foremost, Duluth’s enrollment has declined because there are fewer young adults to have children. The current generation, Generation X, is 60% smaller than the previous generation. This trend has caused the median age of our population as a whole to increase, which has decreased the number of school-age children per household. Statewide, school-age children per household is expected to decrease from 0.51 in 2005 to 0.41 in 2015. In Duluth, the number of school-age children per household will shrink from 0.39 in 2005 to 0.30 in 2015, a 25% decrease.

Duluth’s lower number of school-age children per household is related to the median age in Duluth being significantly higher than the State average. At first glance, Duluth’s median age appears identical to the State average of 35 years. However, the large college/university population artificially lowers the median age. If Duluth had the same percentage of 18-24 year-olds as Minnesota, the median age would be 40 years. The higher median age shrinks the pool of women of childbearing age, which reduces the future pool of students.

Another reason for declining enrollment, yet to a lesser extent, is the emergence of competition, specifically charter schools. Statewide, 20,608 attended charter schools in 2005. Of those, approximately 5,000 were from the St. Paul Public School District and 6,000 were from the Minneapolis Public School District. In 2005, charter schools served 1,064 students in Duluth. Compared to urban areas like Minneapolis and St. Paul, Duluth loses a smaller percentage of students to charter schools.

**Factors not contributing to declining enrollment**

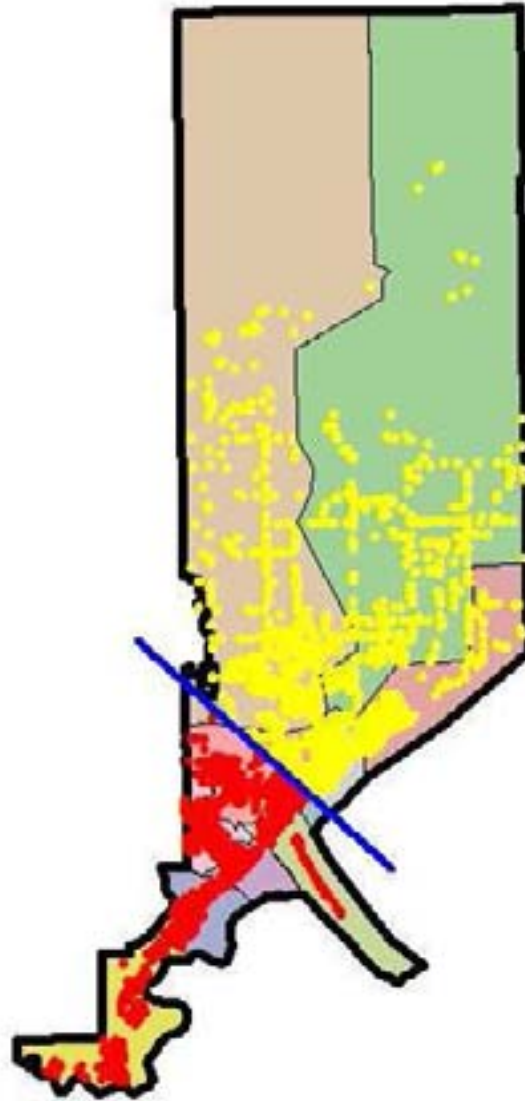
Enrollment in Duluth's traditional non-public schools has also been steadily declining over the last five years. As of 2005, 1,383 or 10% of the school-age population in the Duluth Public School District enrolled in traditional non-public schools. On a percentage basis, this is consistent with the State average of 9%. All evidence indicates traditional non-public schools will not contribute to the future decline in the Duluth Public School District's enrollment.

Home schooling also has not significantly contributed to the decline in enrollment. In 2005, 266 district residents were home-schooled. This represents two percent of the district school-age residents, which is comparable to the State average of 1.9 percent. Although the percentage of home-schooled children is likely to increase both in Duluth and across Minnesota, the sheer number is not material for long-range planning purposes.

Finally, there is no evidence to support that enrollment has been significantly impacted (since 1997) by local industry growth or decline. In fact, between 2000 and 2005, the number of households in Duluth School District increased from 37,897 to 38,615. During that same time period, the district enrollment declined every year.

**Where Duluth students currently live**

Duluth's 10,144 K-12 students are spread across the community as you can see on this map. Each dot on the map represents one student.



The midway mark of where Duluth students live is at 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue East. If you extend a line along 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue East to northern border of district, you find that half of the students live west of that line, and half live to the east of it. This tool allows us to study even more detailed information as part of this long-range planning process.

**School enrollment to increase after 2013**

**COMPARISON OF ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS  
2007-2017**

<b>Fall</b>	<b>Low K Net Out Migration</b>	<b>High K Net Out Migration</b>	<b>Low K Net In Migration</b>	<b>High K Net In Migration</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>10,144</b>	<b>10,144</b>	<b>10,144</b>	<b>10,144</b>
<b>2007</b>	9,826	9,842	9,845	9,861
<b>2008</b>	9,586	9,619	9,669	9,702
<b>2009</b>	9,392	9,442	9,530	9,580
<b>2010</b>	9,205	9,274	9,393	9,462
<b>2011</b>	9,064	9,153	9,279	9,368
<b>2012</b>	9,006	9,115	9,218	9,327
<b>2013</b>	8,998	9,127	9,200	9,329
<b>2014</b>	9,030	9,179	9,242	9,391
<b>2015</b>	9,080	9,250	9,300	9,470
<b>2016</b>	9,130	9,320	9,356	9,543
<b>2017</b>	9,231	9,441	9,470	9,674

*Note: Projections do not include Early Childhood*

After years of declining enrollments, the trend is projected to reverse after 2013 and continue with modestly increasing enrollments in Duluth through approximately 2022. This will be due primarily to the emergence of Generation Y as parents. All available data indicates that after this time, the enrollment will most likely fluctuate around 9,600 students or 750 per grade.

**Factors in forecasting future enrollments**

Some may wonder how anyone can predict how many students will be in Duluth in 2022, and that's a valid question. But modern methods allow demographers and other experts to make such predictions with more confidence.

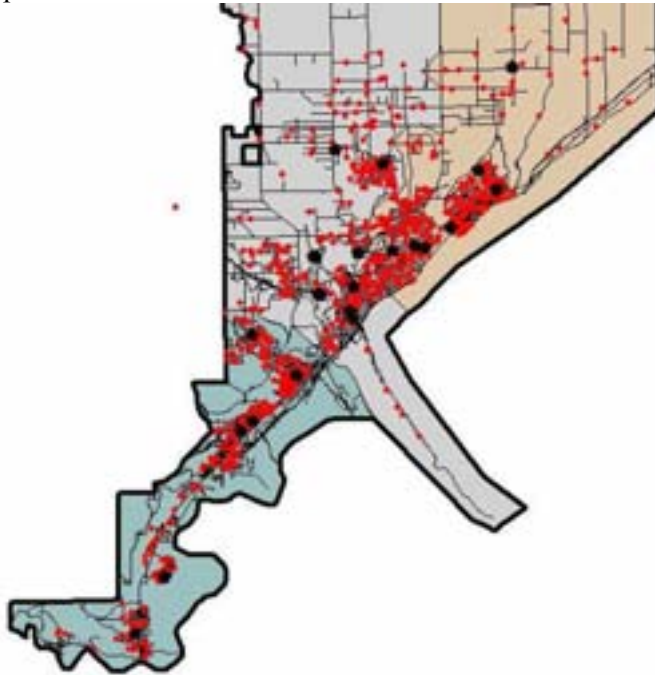
Even though 1,450 new houses are projected to be constructed in the next 10 years, the fact that each household will have an average of 0.30 school-age children again means there will be minimal impact on these statistics.

Our projections, however, do take into account some variances in these areas, as well as in the impact new-business development could have on the community.

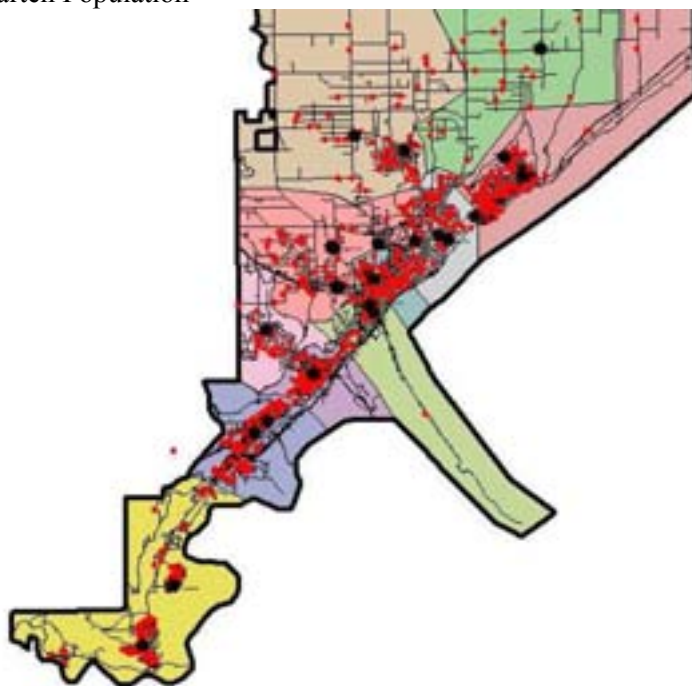
**In which Duluth neighborhoods will students be located?**

The following two maps show where Duluth 12<sup>th</sup> graders and kindergarten pupils – who'll be 12<sup>th</sup> graders in 12 years – live today.

2006 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Population



2006 Kindergarten Population



Alone, the maps above are not enough information on which to base decisions. For example, today's kindergarten pupils may move elsewhere in Duluth or out of town before they graduate. However, the maps are examples of the technology and expertise that the Duluth Public School District is utilizing to accurately plan for future school locations. This will allow us to keep our schools as close to our children as possible.

### **Demographics, only part of the long range facilities planning process**

Analyzing Duluth's demographics with scientific forecasting methods still does not provide enough information for the community to base decisions on. As mentioned previously, the findings of two other major reports are coming up:

- December 5, review data from assessments of all school buildings and spaces
- December 12, review data of educational adequacy of all school buildings and spaces

Then in January 2007, various community meetings will be held for citizens to review and ask questions about data from all three reports. After that, in February, discussions will begin regarding possible long-range plans and financial implications.

### **Summary**

Since 1997, enrollment in the Duluth Public School District has declined 25%, from 13,517 students to 10,144. The district's enrollment will continue to decline until 2013, when it will bottom-out between 8,998 and 9,329, or about 700 per grade level (K-12). From 2013 to 2022, the enrollment is projected to increase, modestly. After that, enrollment will most likely fluctuate around 9,600 students, or 750 per grade. All long-range facilities plan options will include allowances to account for potential fluctuations in enrollment projections.