

Citizen Community Meeting #2

January 30, 2024

Time: 5:00 pm

Location:

Higley Unified School District

Governing Boardroom

2935 S Recker Rd

Gilbert, AZ 85295

The goal of the citizen's committee is to have thoughtful, public dialogue and provide our Governing Board with a recommendation that helps them make an educated decision on what critical needs should be addressed.

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of the Agenda
- III. Approval of the Minutes
- IV. Demographics
 - a. Presenter – Rick Brammer from Applied Economics, LLC.
- V. Survey Instrument Review
 - a. Presenter – Paul Bentz from HighGround, Inc.
- VI. Future Agenda Items
 - A. M&O Continuation
 - B. Capital Maintenance Assessment/Project List
 - C. Classroom Space Usage
- VII. Adjournment

Next meeting date February 20, 2024

Citizen Community Meeting #1

January 9, 2024

Time: 5:00 pm

Location:

Higley Unified School District

Governing Boardroom

2935 S Recker Rd

Gilbert, AZ 85295

The goal of the citizen's committee is to have thoughtful, public dialogue and provide our Governing Board with a recommendation that helps them make an educated decision on what critical needs should be addressed.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Tyler Moore, Chief Financial Officer for Higley Unified School District at 5:00pm.

II. Approval of the Agenda

III. Committee participant introductions and timeline review

The following committee members were present:

Tyler Moore	Melissa Johnson	Michelle Bugg
Gustavo Landeros	Vanessa Shepherd	Victoria Payne
Eric Braun	Melanie Shaha	Kathleen Richards
Taylor Francis	Domingo Santos	Ozzie Lewis
Robert Furneaux	Marty Bender	Scott Hamilton

The following committee member joined remotely: Christopher Sexton

Committee members not present: Jennifer Nuñez

IV. Ground Rules

V. Introduction to the Higley Unified School District & Historical Context

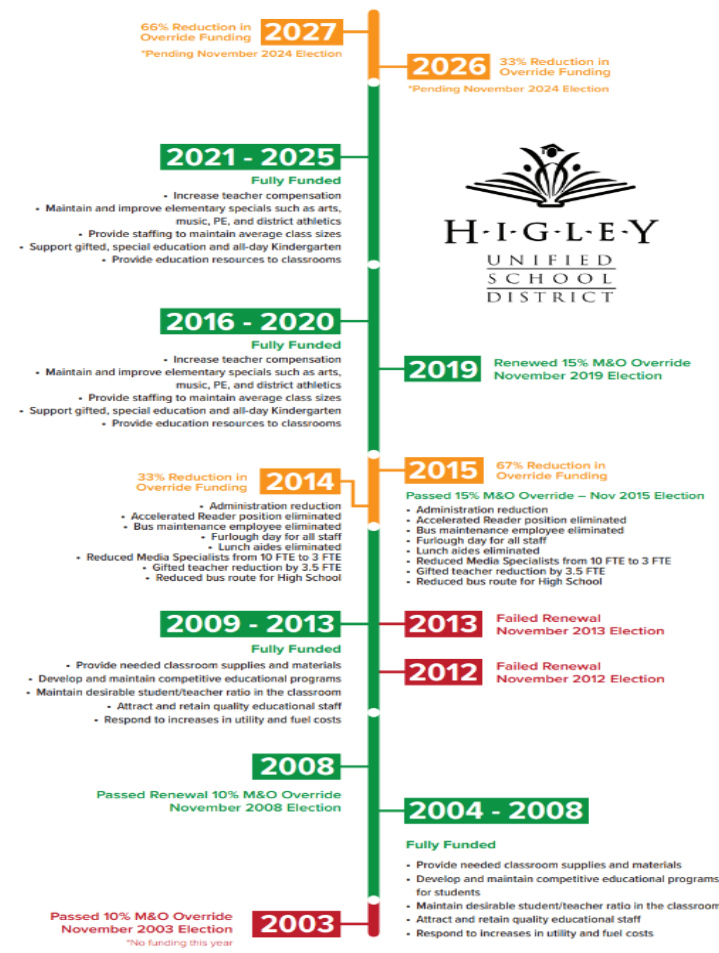
Chief Financial Officer Tyler Moore shared statistics about HUSD, including:

- 16 schools
- More than 1600 employees
- HUSD started in 1909
- 50 buildings/747 classrooms
- 149 vehicles

Melanie Shaha asked the capacity for students. Mr. Moore said he would get that number and share it later.

Higley's Override timeline was shared.

M&O Override History & Timeline



VI. School Funding 101

Chief Financial Officer Tyler Moore shared a summary of school district funds and the different accounts and how those funds can be used. Funds reviewed were Maintenance and Operations, District Additional Assistance (DAA), Federal/State grants, Adjacent Ways, Students FIRST, Debt service, Classroom Site Fund and Other special revenue funds. Mr. Moore shared how the maintenance and operation budget is calculated based on student counts and add-ons (if applicable). He shared how an Override works and the funding calculations. The District Additional Assistance (Capital) formula was shared, and how the Classroom Site Fund could be utilized. A review of Budget and Cash Controlled Funds was presented. Schools are funded 45% by Equalization Assistance, 50% by Local Property Tax and 5% by miscellaneous revenues. The Classroom Spending report was shared and how Higley compares to the rest of AZ and the United States.

Mr. Francis asked about the 70% reduction to DAA during 2008. Mr. Moore stated that in 2008 property values dropped drastically, reducing the amount schools received and that inflation increases were not granted by the state. Because of this reduction many capital needs could not be met for many years. The fund was not brought back to 100% until FY22.

Ms. Johnson asked about the use of the adjacent ways levy. Mr. Moore stated that levy funds are for needs to fix traffic issues surrounding the schools with the input of the municipality.

Mr. Bender stated that if a levy is proposed to the board and if approved, then that levy is put on the property taxes for that year. Mr. Moore confirmed that that is correct. The levy does not need to be voter approved.

Mr. Bender asked if the bond debt had any relation to the middle school leases, Mr. Moore said that the two items are not connected.

Ms. Payne asked if the state has different line items from monies from the state. Mr. Moore responded that each fund from the state is calculated differently, and each fund has its regulations as to how they can be used. Salaries are funded from the M&O Fund and Classroom Site Funds.

Mr. Francis asked about the revenue funds. Mr. Moore stated Higley has worked very hard to make sure that the revenue driven programs are self-funded and do not require additional funds.

Mr. Francis asked if funding could be reduced if the Teacher Experience Index is lower than the state average, Mr. Moore stated that the Teacher Experience Index will only add to your budget, not reduce it.

Mr. Santos asked for more information on tuition income and proposed if an override isn't passed, then suggested charging tuition. Mr. Moore stated that as a public district, tuition cannot be charged. Mr. Moore explained that for most public schools when tuition is charged it is because a smaller, neighbouring district is not equipped to provide for the needs of one of their students. That student would attend a neighbouring district that can service those needs and tuition would be paid by the smaller district to the servicing district. Ms. Johnson asked if Higley has looked at providing this service for other districts or charter schools. Mr. Moore responded that our surrounding districts are large and can provide services for their students. Charter schools' students would have to be serviced by the public district in which they live and therefore charter schools would not pay tuition to a public district.

Mr. Francis asked if Higley could charge tuition, Mr. Moore stated that there are laws that state we must provide free education.

Mr. Santos asked about the override funding percentages, Mr. Moore stated that this is the last year the current override is fully funded at 15%. It will drop to 10% in FY25 and 5% for FY26.

Ms. Richards asked if the state expects districts to attain an override to supplement their budgets. Mr. Moore shared that the state does not expect schools to be funded by overrides. There are many rural districts that cannot pass overrides.

In reference to charter schools receiving a considerable dollar amount more per student for District Additional Assistance (Capital), Ms. Shaha asked if charters must build their own facilities and do not receive additional funds from the state. Mr. Moore responded that charter schools do not have school boundaries or a tax base and thereby cannot ask the voters for an override, and that Higley still has two lease payments for the middle schools that the state did not grant additional funds to build.

Ms. Payne asked if the property tax rate that is paid is determined by where one attends school. Tax rates are determined by school boundaries, not town or county boundaries or where the student attends school.

Mr. Santos shared that Higley does not have a big commercial property tax base, that it is mainly residential.

Mr. Francis asked what monies are included in the percentages on the classroom spending report. The percent noted on the classroom spending slide included all sources of revenue; state and federal.

- VII. Future Agenda Items
 - A. Demographic report
 - B. Classroom Space Usage
 - C. Survey Instrument Review

Ms. Johnson asked if the demographic report would relate to re-zoning (re-boundaring) some schools. Drawing new boundaries is not the scope of this committee.

The demographic report will include growth projections for the future.

The committee will be able to review what was asked for the last time a bond election was held, and what the identified needs for the district will be, and what the district has recommendations for its use.

Apartment buildings are taxed at a residential rate.

A breakdown of funds from state and federal was asked for. This is difficult to provide because each fund is not granted to each student but for specific uses and students. Federal funds/grants must be reapplied for each year and are based on needs, not student count.

Ms. Shaha asked about capacity. Mr. Moore said he just finished school walkthroughs and will provide this data to the committee at a future meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 6:44pm

Next meeting date January 30, 2024

Higley Unified School District

Demographic and Enrollment Analysis

Citizen Committee Meeting

January 30, 2024

Presented by:



APPLIED ECONOMICS

Study Scope

Enrollment Trends

- Grade and level characteristics
- Geographic distribution
- Alternative providers

Demographic Characteristics

- Population characteristics
- Household type and age structure
- Housing supply and occupancy rates

Residential Development Impacts

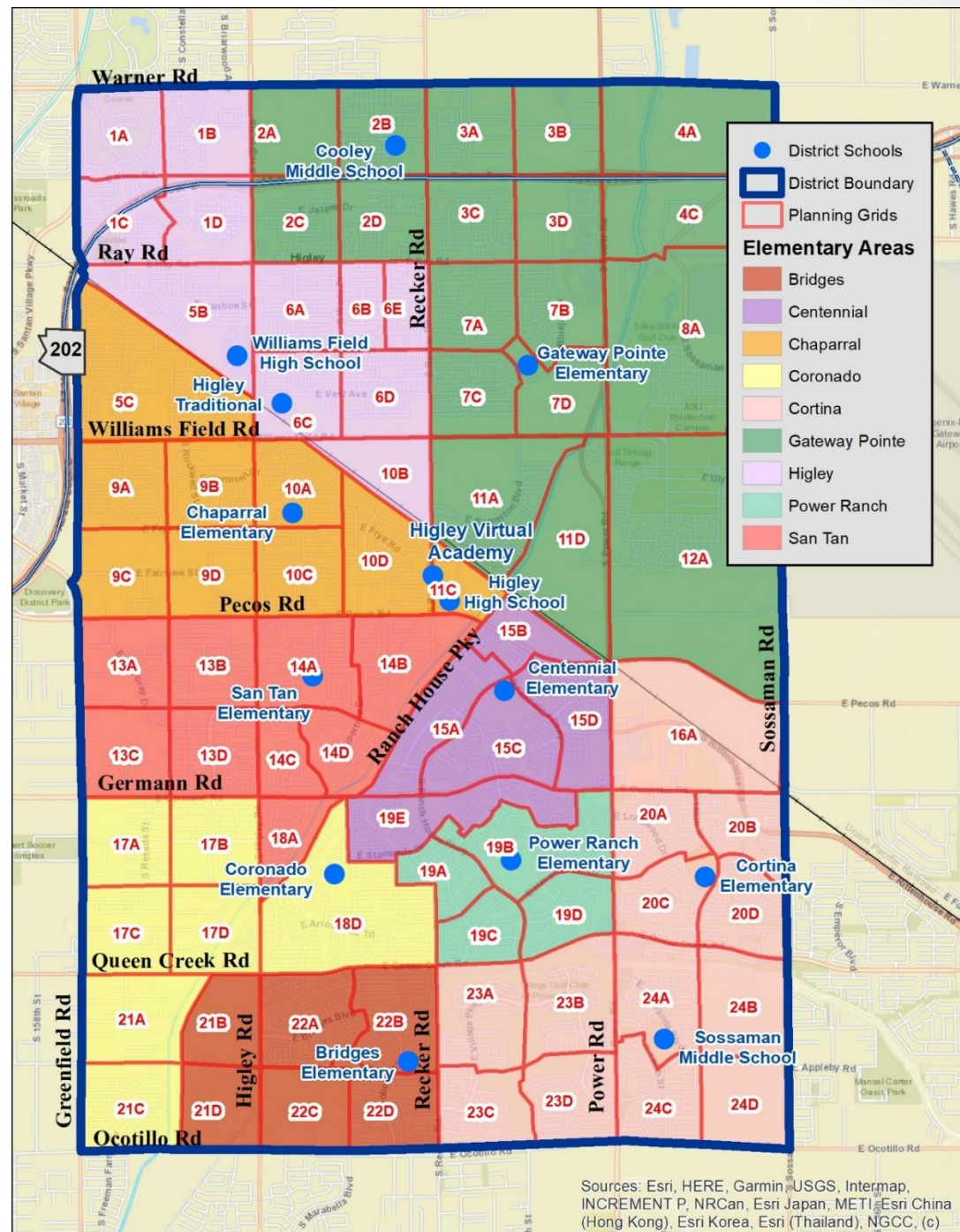
- Current development activity
- Housing market conditions
- Future development potential

Enrollment Projections

- District
- Planning Grid

Planning Geography

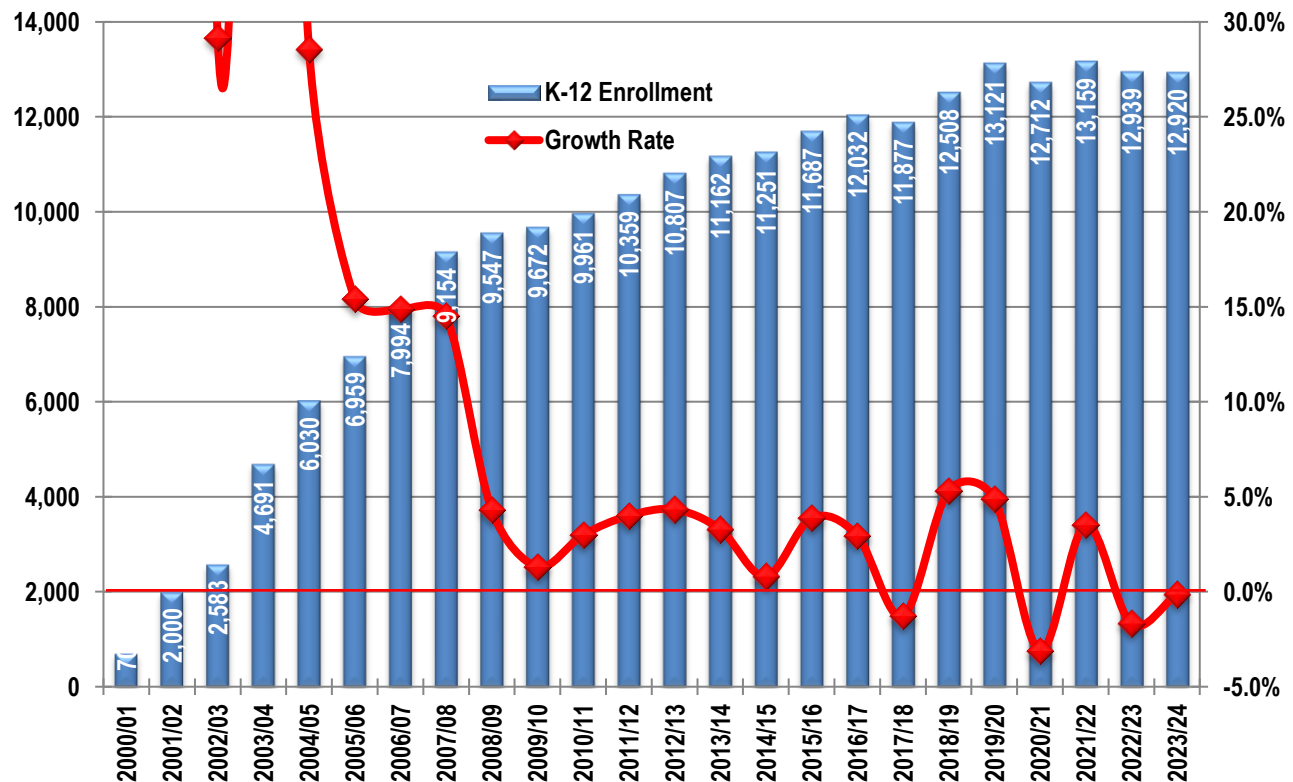
The sub-District analysis is based on 82 neighborhood-level planning areas, or “grids,” that are approximately one-quarter square mile each.



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c)

40th Day Headcount Enrollment

Enrollment skyrocketed from fewer than 1,000 students in 2000/01 to nearly 10,000 students in 2010/11, representing compound annual growth of 30% despite the Great Recession.



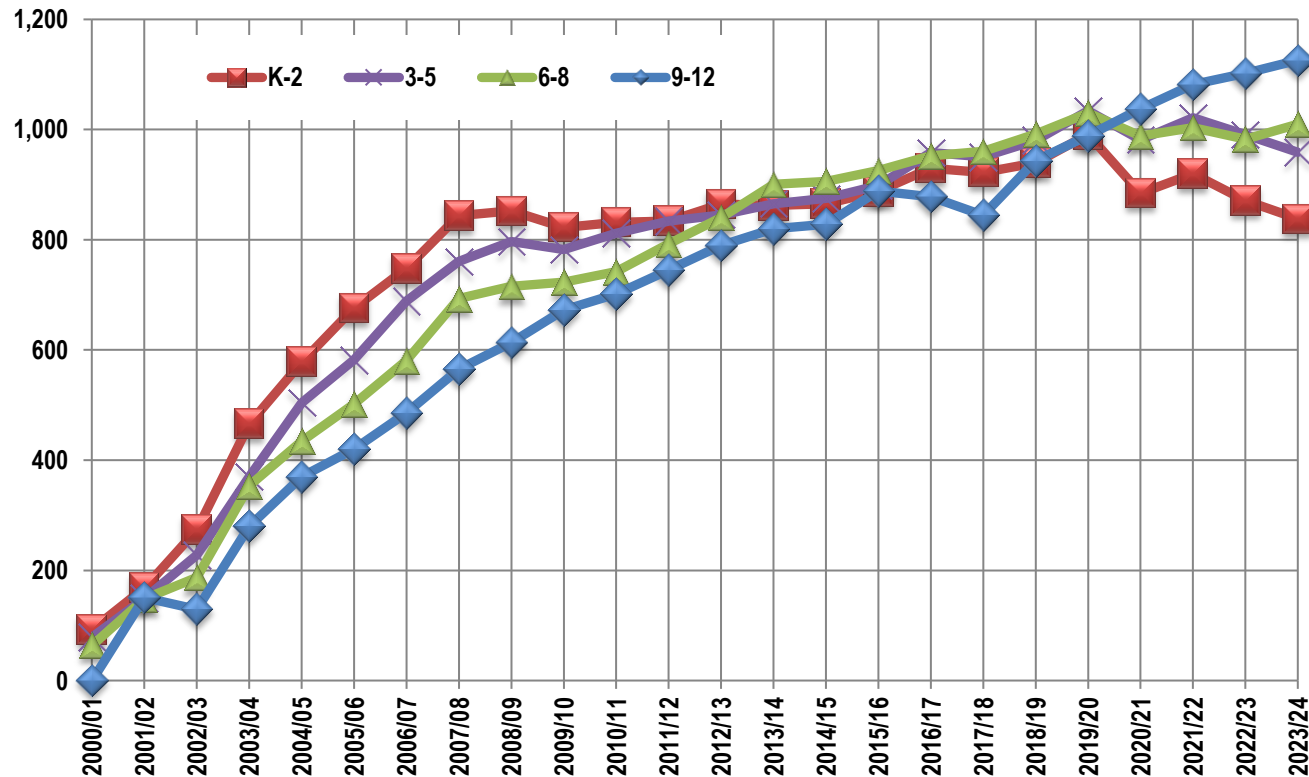
Source: Higley Unified School District.

Between 2010/11 and 2019/20, enrollment increased by about 3,200 students (3.1% per year), while charter schools located in the District have added 6,000 students.

Following a drop of 400 students (3.1%) in 2020/21 due to COVID, District enrollment rebounded to its likely peak of 13,159 students and has declined since then.

40th Day Enrollment Cohorts

Average Enrollment Per Grade



Source: Higley Unified School District.

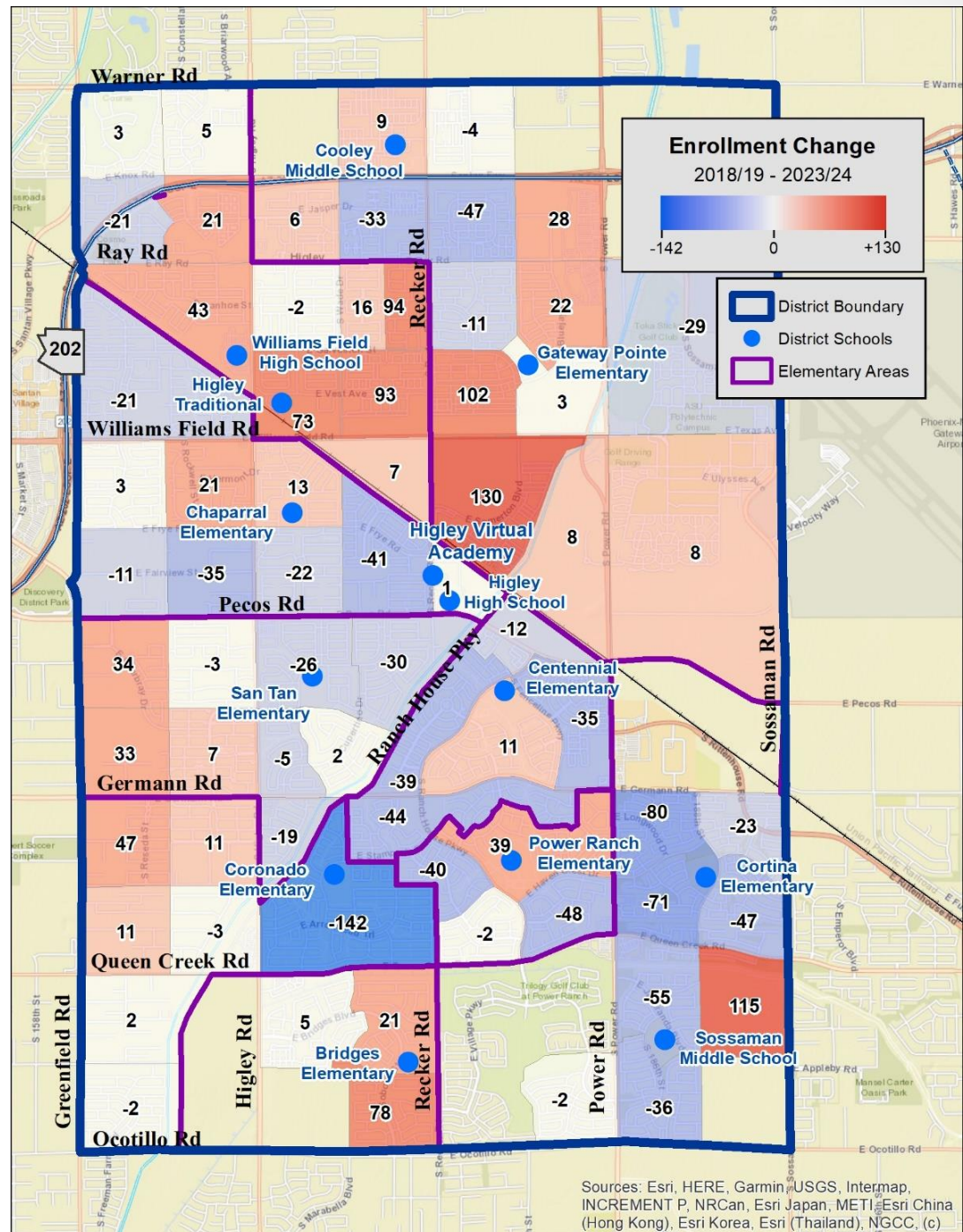
The relative sizes of the grade cohorts had been unusually consistent following the surge in growth from 2000/01 to 2007/08.

The drop in enrollment caused by COVID was most highly concentrated in grades K-2, but none of the elementary (K-8) cohorts have rebounded to their 2019/20 levels.

Enrollment Trends

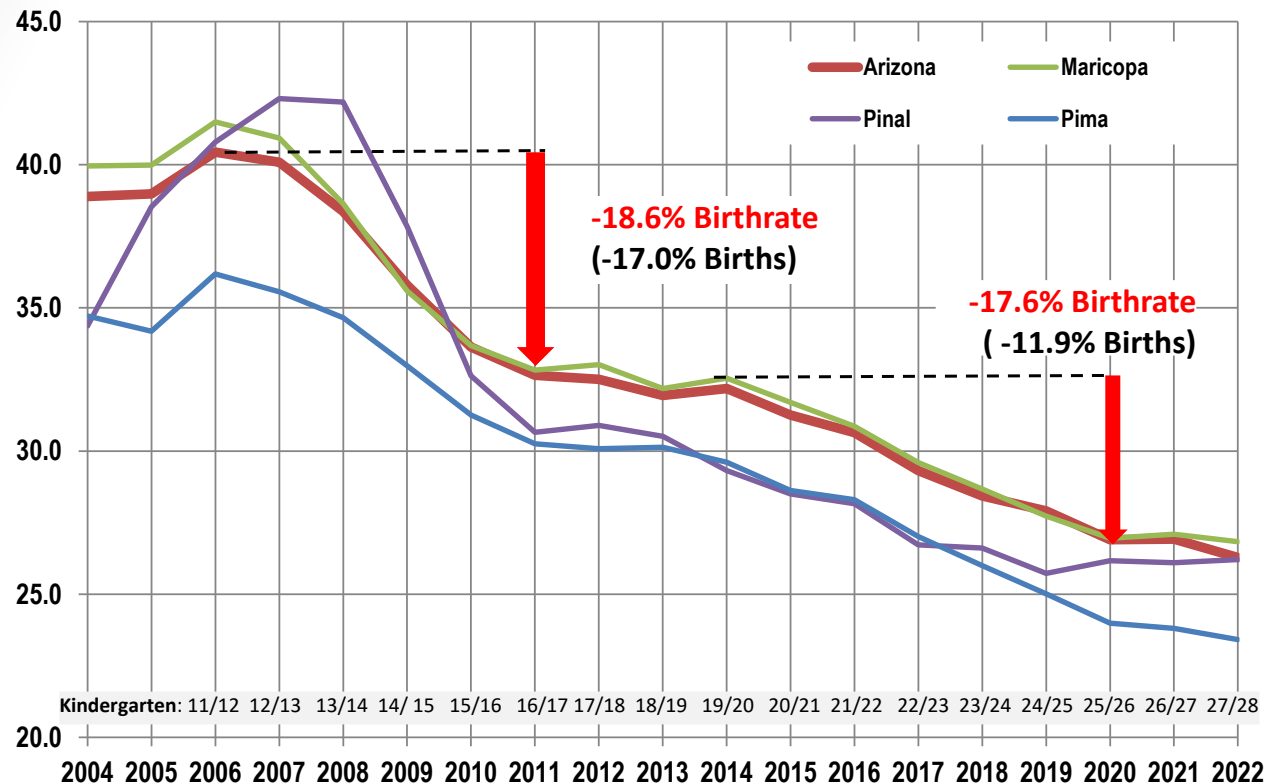
PS-12 Change 2018/19 – 2023/24

Some parts of the District have continued to experience enrollment growth, while other have experienced significant levels of decline.



Birth Rate Trends

Births per 1,000 people aged 15 to 45 years



Sources: Arizona Department of Health Services; U.S. Census Bureau; Applied Economics, 2023.

Birth rates in Arizona plummeted by nearly 19% during the Great Recession, with a 17% decline in the total number of births in the State of Arizona from 102,700 to 85,100 births per year.

Birth rates stabilized briefly after 2011 and then dropped another 16.5% through 2020 when there were 76,400 births, 11.9% fewer than in 2014.

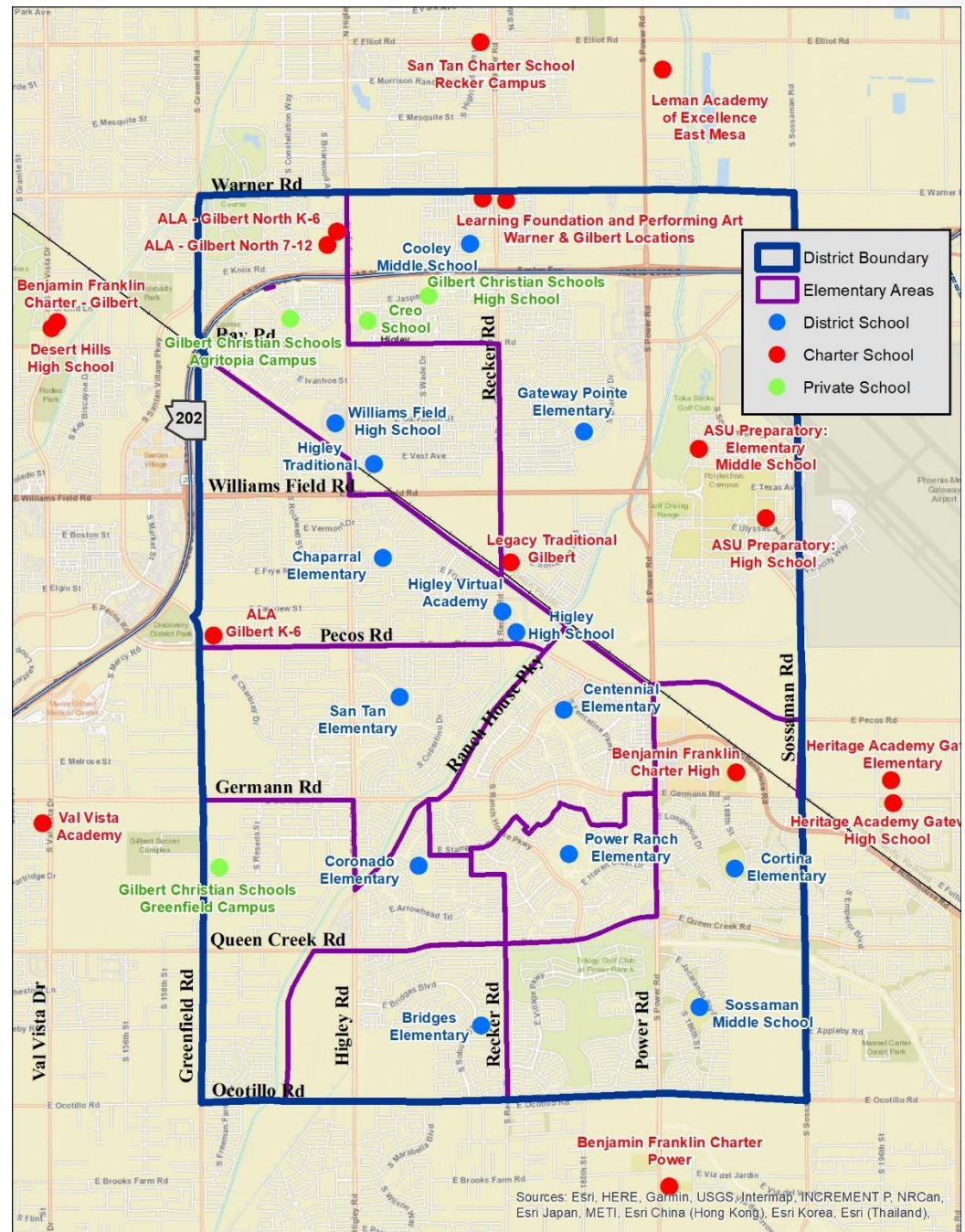
Since 2020, the number of births statewide increased slightly to 77,700 in 2021 and 78,198 in 2022, but there was still a slight decline in the birth rate.

Alternative Providers

A total of 10 charter schools are located in the District with 8 more located within one mile.

The 18 charter schools enrolled a total of 11,300 students in 2023/24, down by 400 from last year.

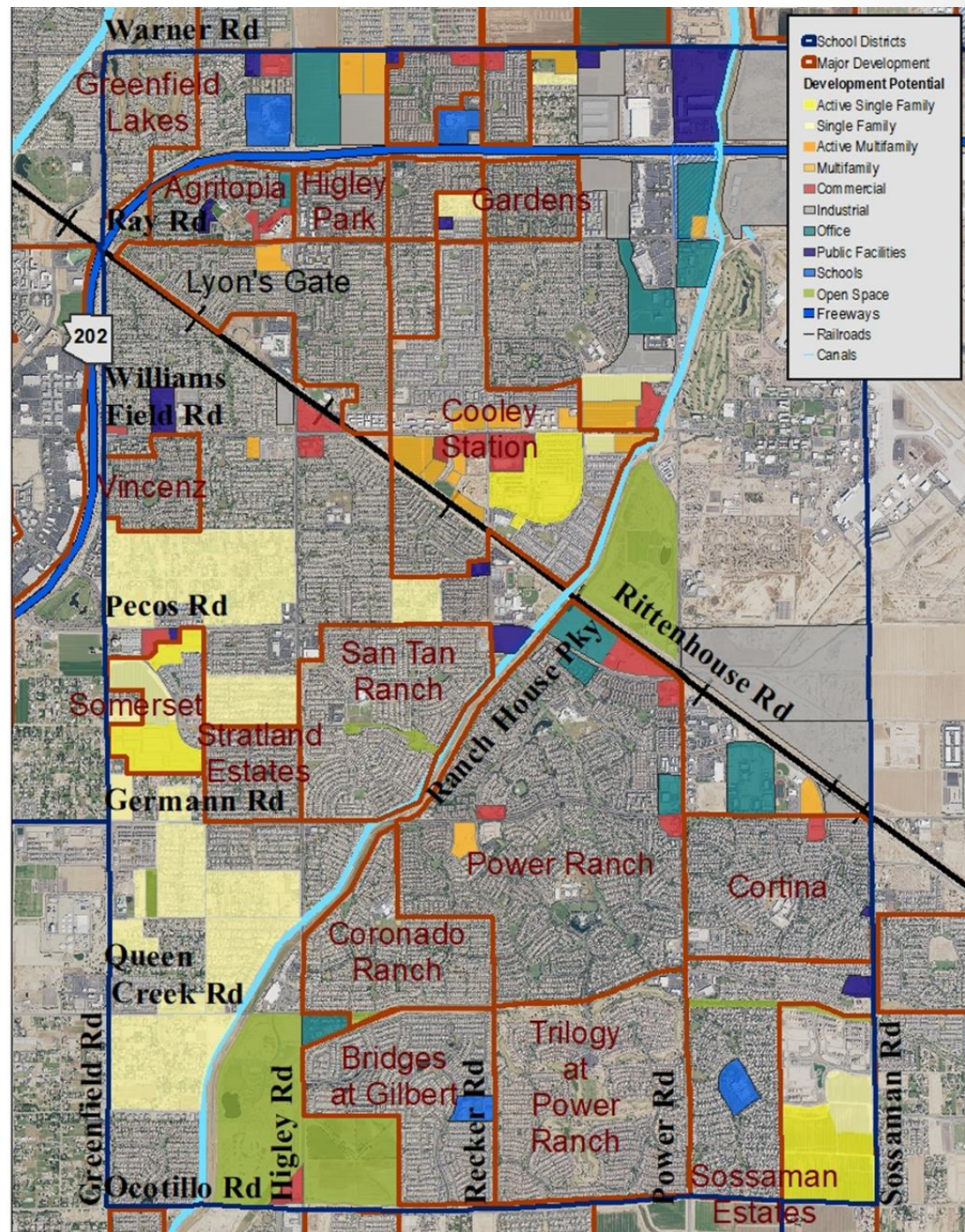
Private schools in the District enroll about 1,600 students.



Housing Potential

About 8,000 housing units have been added over the past 10 years, about 35% of which were in multifamily projects.

The current inventory shows the potential for about 7,300 additional units, however about 85% will be multifamily.



Projections : Housing and Population

Year	Population	Total Units	New Units (Lagged)	New Units		Occupancy Rate	Vacant Units	Households	Pop/HH
				SF	MF				
2000/01	6,097	2,757				71.2%	793	1,964	3.104
2010/11	64,676	23,233	930	930	0	90.3%	2,259	20,974	3.084
2011/12	67,065	23,874	641	625	16	90.8%	2,200	21,674	3.094
2012/13	70,609	24,931	1,057	1,020	37	91.3%	2,169	22,762	3.102
2013/14	73,664	25,805	874	797	77	91.8%	2,112	23,693	3.109
2014/15	76,669	26,628	823	797	26	92.3%	2,041	24,587	3.118
2015/16	79,572	27,390	762	762	0	92.9%	1,957	25,433	3.129
2016/17	82,421	28,118	728	728	0	93.4%	1,862	26,256	3.139
2017/18	84,828	28,675	557	557	0	93.9%	1,747	26,928	3.150
2018/19	87,502	29,329	654	609	45	94.4%	1,631	27,698	3.159
2019/20	90,433	30,044	715	458	257	95.0%	1,511	28,533	3.169
2020/21	90,433	31,420	1,376	368	1,008	93.5%	2,033	29,387	3.139
2021/22	95,923	33,126	1,706	685	1,021	93.0%	2,319	30,807	3.114
2022/23	96,849	33,662	536	216	320	92.5%	2,525	31,137	3.110
2023/24	96,915	33,840	178	58	120	92.0%	2,707	31,133	3.113
2024/25	97,821	34,152	312	115	197	92.0%	2,732	31,420	3.113
2025/26	100,615	35,152	1,000	180	820	92.5%	2,636	32,516	3.094
2026/27	103,504	36,200	1,048	160	888	93.0%	2,534	33,666	3.074
2027/28	106,273	37,149	949	189	760	93.5%	2,415	34,734	3.060
2028/29	108,487	38,112	963	165	798	93.5%	2,477	35,635	3.044
2029/30	109,818	38,663	551	69	482	93.5%	2,513	36,150	3.038
2030/31	111,771	39,232	569	61	508	94.0%	2,354	36,878	3.031
2031/32	113,051	39,748	516	71	445	94.0%	2,385	37,363	3.026
2032/33	114,088	40,167	419	19	400	94.0%	2,410	37,757	3.022
2033/34	115,083	40,564	397	17	380	94.0%	2,434	38,130	3.018
2024/25 - 2033/34			6,724	1,046	5,678			6,997	

Source: Applied Economics, 2024.

Bolding indicates historical information.

The addition of about 6,700 new housing units and 7,000 new households will propel the total population of the District to just over 115,000 persons over the next 10 years.

Population per household is expected to decline as the population ages, however it will likely remain above the metropolitan area average of about 2.6.

Projections : School-Age Population and Enrollment

Year	Households	School-Age Population *		K-12 Enrollment		Net Difference	Enrollment - Population Ratio	Out of District	In District	Service Rate
		Total	Per Household	Total	Per Household					
2007/08	18,529	12,907	0.697	9,154	0.494	3,753	70.9%	511	8,643	67.0%
2008/09	19,549	13,782	0.705	9,547	0.488	4,235	69.3%	545	9,002	65.3%
2009/10	20,073	14,322	0.713	9,672	0.482	4,650	67.5%	581	9,091	63.5%
2010/11	20,974	15,145	0.722	9,961	0.475	5,184	65.8%	619	9,342	61.7%
2011/12	21,674	15,733	0.726	10,359	0.478	5,374	65.8%	660	9,699	61.6%
2012/13	22,762	16,609	0.730	10,807	0.475	5,802	65.1%	704	10,103	60.8%
2013/14	23,693	17,379	0.734	11,162	0.471	6,217	64.2%	750	10,412	59.9%
2014/15	24,587	18,130	0.737	11,251	0.458	6,879	62.1%	862	10,389	57.3%
2015/16	25,433	18,853	0.741	11,687	0.460	7,166	62.0%	991	10,696	56.7%
2016/17	26,256	19,565	0.745	12,032	0.458	7,533	61.5%	1,140	10,892	55.7%
2017/18	26,928	20,171	0.749	11,877	0.441	8,294	58.9%	1,311	10,566	52.4%
2018/19	27,698	20,857	0.753	12,508	0.452	8,349	60.0%	1,508	11,000	52.7%
2019/20	28,533	21,712	0.761	13,121	0.460	8,591	60.4%	1,467	11,654	53.7%
2020/21	29,387	22,257	0.757	12,712	0.433	9,545	57.1%	1,496	11,216	50.4%
2021/22	30,807	23,222	0.754	13,159	0.427	10,063	56.7%	1,621	11,538	49.7%
2022/23	31,137	23,361	0.750	12,939	0.416	10,422	55.4%	1,740	11,199	47.9%
2023/24	31,133	23,247	0.747	12,920	0.415	10,327	55.6%	1,839	11,081	47.7%

Source: Applied Economics, 2024.

* Population age 5 through 17, corresponds with Kindergarten through 12th grade.

The school-age population per household has begun to fall but the school-age population has continued to increase slightly due to new home construction.

District enrollment has been relatively stable over the past few years, as increases from out-of-District enrollment have offset losses from within the District; the implied decline in the service rate being of most concern.

Projections: Service Rate Scenarios

Year	Service Rate			Enrollment			Enrollment Change		
	Trend*	Mid	Stable	Trend	Mid	Stable	Trend	Mid	Stable
2013/14	59.9%	59.9%	59.9%	11,162	11,162	11,162			
2014/15	57.3%	57.3%	57.3%	11,251	11,251	11,251	89	89	89
2015/16	56.7%	56.7%	56.7%	11,687	11,687	11,687	436	436	436
2016/17	55.7%	55.7%	55.7%	12,032	12,032	12,032	345	345	345
2017/18	52.4%	52.4%	52.4%	11,877	11,877	11,877	-155	-155	-155
2018/19	52.7%	52.7%	52.7%	12,508	12,508	12,508	631	631	631
2019/20	53.7%	53.7%	53.7%	13,121	13,121	13,121	613	613	613
2020/21	50.4%	50.4%	50.4%	12,712	12,712	12,712	-409	-409	-409
2021/22	49.7%	49.7%	49.7%	13,159	13,159	13,159	447	447	447
2022/23	47.9%	47.9%	47.9%	12,939	12,939	12,939	-220	-220	-220
2023/24	47.7%	47.7%	47.7%	12,920	12,920	12,920	-19	-19	-19
2024/25	46.8%	47.2%	47.7%	12,823	12,922	13,021	-97	2	101
2025/26	46.0%	46.8%	47.7%	12,778	12,977	13,178	-45	55	157
2026/27	45.1%	46.4%	47.7%	12,737	13,038	13,344	-41	61	166
2027/28	44.3%	46.0%	47.7%	12,658	13,060	13,471	-79	22	127
2028/29	43.4%	45.5%	47.7%	12,520	13,020	13,536	-138	-40	65
2029/30	42.6%	45.1%	47.7%	12,269	12,861	13,476	-251	-159	-60
2030/31	41.7%	44.7%	47.7%	12,281	12,869	13,481	12	9	5
2031/32	40.9%	44.3%	47.7%	11,832	12,602	13,413	-449	-268	-68
2032/33	40.0%	43.8%	47.7%	11,567	12,416	13,319	-265	-185	-94
2033/34	39.2%	43.4%	47.7%	11,306	12,232	13,224	-261	-184	-95
2024/25 - 2033/34							-1,614	-688	304

Source: Applied Economics, 2024.

Bolding indicates actuals.

* Based on average rate of decline from 2013/14 through 2023/24.

The decline in the service rate brings greater uncertainty to the enrollment projections.

To understand the range of possibilities, projections are prepared for three service rate scenarios: Trend (since 2013), Stable (current rate), Mid (1/2 trend decline).

Projections : Enrollment by Grade Level Trend Service Rate

	Enrollment by Level				K-12 Enrollment	Change	Percent Change
	PS	K-6	7-8	9-12			
2010/11	379	5,685	1,471	2,805	9,961	289	3.0%
2011/12	404	5,860	1,520	2,979	10,359	398	4.0%
2012/13	432	6,003	1,646	3,158	10,807	448	4.3%
2013/14	473	6,040	1,843	3,279	11,162	355	3.3%
2014/15	71	6,122	1,816	3,313	11,251	89	0.8%
2015/16	69	6,257	1,876	3,554	11,687	436	3.9%
2016/17	100	6,603	1,917	3,512	12,032	345	3.0%
2017/18	68	6,637	1,862	3,378	11,877	-155	-1.3%
2018/19	751	6,798	1,937	3,773	12,508	631	5.3%
2019/20	785	7,139	2,027	3,955	13,121	613	4.9%
2020/21	502	6,597	1,965	4,150	12,712	-409	-3.1%
2021/22	719	6,825	2,008	4,326	13,159	447	3.5%
2022/23	722	6,599	1,933	4,407	12,939	-220	-1.7%
2023/24	674	6,405	2,013	4,502	12,920	-19	-0.1%
2024/25	667	6,329	2,013	4,482	12,823	-97	-0.8%
2025/26	669	6,262	2,030	4,486	12,778	-45	-0.4%
2026/27	678	6,183	2,053	4,501	12,737	-41	-0.3%
2027/28	687	6,121	2,039	4,498	12,658	-79	-0.6%
2028/29	691	6,003	2,018	4,499	12,520	-138	-1.1%
2029/30	689	5,896	1,943	4,430	12,269	-251	-2.0%
2030/31	702	5,918	1,892	4,471	12,281	12	0.1%
2031/32	689	5,743	1,819	4,270	11,832	-449	-3.7%
2032/33	687	5,669	1,768	4,131	11,567	-265	-2.2%
2033/34	683	5,582	1,732	3,992	11,306	-261	-2.3%

Source: Applied Economics, 2024.

Bolding indicates historical information.

K-6 enrollment peaked in 2019/20, while 7-8 enrollment has remained stable.

High school (9-12) enrollment has continued to increase, but that is likely about to change.

School Enrollment

	Actual						Projected						2018/19- 2023/24	2023/24- 2028/29	2028/29- 2033/34
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	...2033/34			
Elementary															
Bridges Elementary	704	746	722	725	757	768	781	786	802	804	801	818	64	33	17
Centennial Elementary	852	840	706	761	684	637	628	608	605	584	566	490	-215	-71	-75
Chaparral Elementary	944	936	877	875	830	772	747	715	658	649	621	573	-172	-151	-47
Coronado Elementary	609	653	606	641	599	567	542	515	504	478	452	454	-42	-115	2
Cortina Elementary	892	896	784	778	715	685	668	661	638	617	590	534	-207	-95	-56
Gateway Pointe Elementary	753	832	746	761	749	750	773	774	810	834	847	729	-3	97	-119
Higley Elementary	695	732	709	718	708	737	729	749	736	736	753	638	42	16	-115
Power Ranch Elementary	535	598	601	623	634	593	581	591	585	583	552	525	58	-41	-27
San Tan Elementary	789	892	826	876	900	892	877	859	840	831	816	816	103	-76	-1
Other	25	14	20	67	23	4	4	4	5	5	5	6	-21	1	1
Total	6,798	7,139	6,597	6,825	6,599	6,405	6,329	6,262	6,183	6,121	6,003	5,582	-393	-402	-421
Middle School															
Cooley Middle School	868	923	886	878	869	838	797	774	814	813	782	662	-30	-56	-120
Sossaman Estates	1,056	1,095	1,070	1,100	1,046	1,025	1,071	1,086	1,065	1,042	1,043	888	-31	18	-156
Other	13	9	9	30	18	150	145	170	175	184	192	182	137	42	-11
Total	1,937	2,027	1,965	2,008	1,933	2,013	2,013	2,030	2,053	2,039	2,018	1,732	76	5	-286
High School															
Williams Field HS	1,883	1,994	2,004	2,023	2,139	2,220	2,281	2,255	2,216	2,182	2,109	1,827	337	-111	-282
Higley HS	1,874	1,935	2,122	2,214	2,216	2,233	2,152	2,186	2,240	2,270	2,341	2,107	359	108	-234
Other	16	26	24	89	52	49	48	45	45	46	49	59	33	0	10
Total	3,773	3,955	4,150	4,326	4,407	4,502	4,482	4,486	4,501	4,498	4,499	3,992	729	-3	-507
Total	12,508	13,121	12,712	13,159	12,939	12,920	12,824	12,778	12,737	12,658	12,520	11,306	412	-400	-1,214

Sources: Higley Unified School District; Applied Economics, 2024.

Enrollment is expected to decline at nearly all of the elementary schools, while the impact on the middle and high schools is likely to be less pronounced or consistent.

Conclusions

In-District enrollment rebounded nicely in 2021/22 after COVID, but has declined since and now shows signs of further decline as smaller classes advance through the upper grades.

Active and planned developments will add a number of housing units to the District during the projection period, leaving almost no vacant land for additional development.

With the declining rate of new home construction, the future trend in the service rate will be the most important factor in determining District enrollment.

Utilizing the most conservative service rate assumptions, District enrollment could fall by about 1,600 students over the next 10 years, but a smaller loss is possible.

The distribution of enrollment by grade is expected to continue to reflect the District's gentrifying housing market and established population.

Higley Unified School District Survey

Draft 2

Age Group:		Party:	1	Republican
1	29 and under		2	Democrat
2	30 to 39		3	PND
3	40 to 49		4	Ind/Other
4	50 to 64			
5	65 Plus	Area		
			1	85142
Sex:	1	Male	2	85295
	2	Female	3	85296
			4	85297
FROM FILE			5	85298

Hello, may I speak to_____ **[Speak Only to Voter on List]**. Hello, my name is _____. I'm calling from_____. We are not selling anything, but are conducting a survey on some important community issues and would like to ask you a few questions. Your name was chosen at random by computer and your answers are completely confidential.

Q1. In general, would you say that your local community is heading in the right direction, or the wrong direction? **[Definitely/Probably]**

- 1 Definitely right direction
- 2 Probably right direction
- 3 Probably wrong direction
- 4 Definitely wrong direction
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

Q2. In general, would you say that K-12 education in your community is heading in the right direction, or the wrong direction? **[Definitely/Probably]**

- 1 Definitely right direction
- 2 Probably right direction
- 3 Probably wrong direction
- 4 Definitely wrong direction
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

Q3. How would you rate Higley Unified School District overall job performance in offering education to students in our community? Excellent, Very Good, Ok, Poor, or Failing?

- 1 Excellent
- 2 Very Good
- 3 Ok
- 4 Poor
- 5 Failing
- 6 Undecided
- 9 Refused

[DO NOT READ]

[DO NOT READ]

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I would like to give you a little bit of background information. Next November, Higley Unified School District may consider an election for local funding for education.

[Rotate Parts 1 and 2]

[PART 1]

Q4. **PRE-TEST: [One/Another]** issue that may be on the ballot is a budget continuation election. Here is the ballot question:

Shall the Governing Board of Higley Unified School District adopt a General Maintenance and Operation Budget which includes an amount that exceeds the revenue control limit specified by statute by 15% for fiscal year 2025/2026 and for six subsequent years?

Knowing just what you know right now, would you vote yes or no on this budget continuation?

[Definitely/Probably]

- 1 Definitely Yes
- 2 Probably Yes
- 3 Probably No
- 4 Definitely No
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

On a scale of 1 to 5, on which 1 means not at all important, 2 means not very important, 3 means neutral, 4 means somewhat important, and 5 means very important, please rate the following items that are typically a part of a maintenance and operations budget continuation. **[Randomize Q5 to Q13]**

- Q5. Increase teacher compensation
- Q6. Maintain class sizes
- Q7. Arts programs
- Q8. Music programs
- Q9. Physical education
- Q10. Athletics
- Q11. Gifted programs
- Q12. Special education
- Q13. All-day kindergarten

- 1 Not at all important
- 2 Not very important
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Somewhat important
- 5 Very important
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

Next, I am going to read you a series of statements regarding the budget continuation.

[Rotate Sections A and B]

SECTION A. These are statements that you might hear as reasons to **SUPPORT the Proposal**. Please tell me if, after hearing each, you agree or disagree with the statement. If the statement doesn't make any difference to you one way or another, just tell me that too. **[Randomize Q14 to Q15]**

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- Q14. The “A-Rated” Higley Unified School District is one of the best in the state and nationally recognized for their fiscal responsibility. They offer a quality, competitive education that not only excels academically, but is also focused on ensuring students are good citizens. We need this local funding to make sure it stays that way.
- Q15. The budget continuation is NOT a tax rate increase – it is a continuation of the local funding that has been in place since 2015. If it is not renewed, the district would be forced to cut \$13 million from its budget.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Somewhat Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Somewhat Agree
- 5 Strongly Agree
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

SECTION B. These are statements that you might hear as reasons to **OPPOSE the Proposal**. Please tell me if, after hearing each, you agree or disagree with the statement. If the statement doesn't make any difference to you one way or another, just tell me that too. **[Randomize Q16 to Q17]**

- Q16. Schools in our country are out of control, pushing a progressive agenda and indoctrinating our children. Our schools don't deserve another penny of taxpayer dollars until they get back to teaching academics and American values.
- Q17. Higley has had its fair share of problems such as its controversial dress code, conflicts with teachers' groups, and disagreements over textbooks. We shouldn't renew this funding until the district gets its act together.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Somewhat Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Somewhat Agree
- 5 Strongly Agree
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

I would like to ask you again:

- Q18. **POST-TEST:** Higley Unified School District are considering a budget continuation election to be held in November of this year. Knowing just what you know right now, would you vote yes or no on this budget continuation? **[Definitely/Probably]**

- 1 Definitely Yes
- 2 Probably Yes
- 3 Probably No
- 4 Definitely No
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

[END OF PART 1]

[PART 2]

Q19. **PRE-TEST: [One/Another]** issue that may be on the ballot is a bond election. Here is the ballot question:

Shall Higley Unified School District be authorized to issue and sell general obligation bonds of the School District in the form of class B general obligation bonds in the principal amount of not to exceed \$xx million for the purpose of raising monies for school safety, renovation and repairs, and modernization, and other general capital expenses?

Knowing just what you know right now, would you vote yes or no on the bond?
[Definitely/Probably]

- 1 Definitely Yes
- 2 Probably Yes
- 3 Probably No
- 4 Definitely No
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

On a scale of 1 to 5, on which 1 means not at all important, 2 means not very important, 3 means neutral, 4 means somewhat important, and 5 means very important, please rate the following items that are typically a part of a bond program. **[Randomize Q20 to Q34]**

- Q20. School safety and security improvements
- Q21. Security cameras
- Q22. Fire alarm and control panel improvements
- Q23. Secure Front Office Renovations
- Q24. Flooring replacement
- Q25. HVAC and Air conditioning
- Q26. Roof repairs
- Q27. Playground replacement
- Q28. Higley High School modernization
- Q29. Williams Field High School classroom addition
- Q30. Williams Field High School modernization
- Q31. New Transportation and Maintenance Facility
- Q32. Energy Efficient Lighting Upgrades
- Q33. School Buses
- Q34. Renovation of an elementary school

- 1 Not at all important
- 2 Not very important
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Somewhat important
- 5 Very important
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

Next, I am going to read you a series of statements regarding the bond.

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[Rotate Sections C and D]

SECTION C. These are statements that you might hear as reasons to **SUPPORT the Proposal**. Please tell me if, after hearing each, you agree or disagree with the statement. If the statement doesn't make any difference to you one way or another, just tell me that too. **[Randomize Q35 to Q36]**

- Q35. Higley serves some of the fastest growing communities in the United States. In the last decade, Gilbert's population has grown by 25% and Queen Creek has a growth rate of 121%. We need to add classrooms, modernize facilities, and ensure that our schools can keep up with growth.
- Q36. We need to continue to invest in school security to make sure that our students are safe. These bonds would pay for safety and security upgrades including secure entries, security cameras, and other improvements. The safety and security of our students and staff should be our number one priority.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Somewhat Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Somewhat Agree
- 5 Strongly Agree
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

SECTION D. These are statements that you might hear as reasons to **OPPOSE the Proposal**. Please tell me if, after hearing each, you agree or disagree with the statement. If the statement doesn't make any difference to you one way or another, just tell me that too. **[Randomize Q37 to Q38]**

- Q37. We are taxed enough already. Taxes go up, they never go down. Taxes hurt our economy and kill jobs. We simply can't afford another tax.
- Q38. Inflation is out of control and interest rates are high. Now is not the time for the schools to be issuing bonds and committing to projects that will have ever increasing price tags.

- 1 Strongly Disagree
- 2 Somewhat Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Somewhat Agree
- 5 Strongly Agree
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

I would like to ask you again:

- Q39. **POST-TEST:** Higley Unified School District are considering a bond election to be held in November of this year. Knowing just what you know right now, would you vote yes or no on this bond? **[Definitely/Probably]**

- 1 Definitely Yes
- 2 Probably Yes
- 3 Probably No
- 4 Definitely No
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

[END OF PART 2]

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Q40. If both a budget continuation and bond issue were on the ballot, which of these opinions comes closest to your own? **[Rotate Options]**

- 1 I would likely vote yes on both.
- 2 I would likely vote only for the budget continuation.
- 3 I would likely vote only for the bond.
- 4 I would likely vote no on both.
- 9 Don't Know, Refused

[DO NOT READ]

Now, a few questions to help us tabulate our data better:

Q41. Do you have children under 18 living at home with you?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Refused

[DO NOT READ]

Q42. In politics, do you consider yourself to be conservative, moderate, or liberal? **[Wait for response. If conservative or liberal, ask:]** Would that be very conservative/liberal or just somewhat conservative/liberal?

- 1 Very Conservative
- 2 Somewhat Conservative
- 3 Moderate
- 4 Somewhat Liberal
- 5 Very Liberal
- 6 Don't Know
- 9 Refused

[DO NOT READ]

[DO NOT READ]