Enrollment Update

October 2020

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Enrollment Report
October 2020

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Overview

This report provides enrollment data based on the October Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Count. The data reflects students enrolled on October 6, 2020. The number of students who attend the City Schools of Decatur is connected to the operations of the school district (Policy 4.1D). It is important to track patterns and changes in enrollment and utilize this information in our planning process.

General Observations

Our enrollment has declined by 52 students. The number of students who never attended school is more than 140 students lower than in previous years. We anticipate that many of these students will end up enrolling in CSD after the pandemic has eased either later this school year or next school year. The greatest difference between enrollment projections and actual enrollment was seen in Kindergarten in a shortage of 69 students. The number of students added at first grade is 28 students less than in previous years. Similarly, we have not seen the typical growth at 6th and 9th grade.

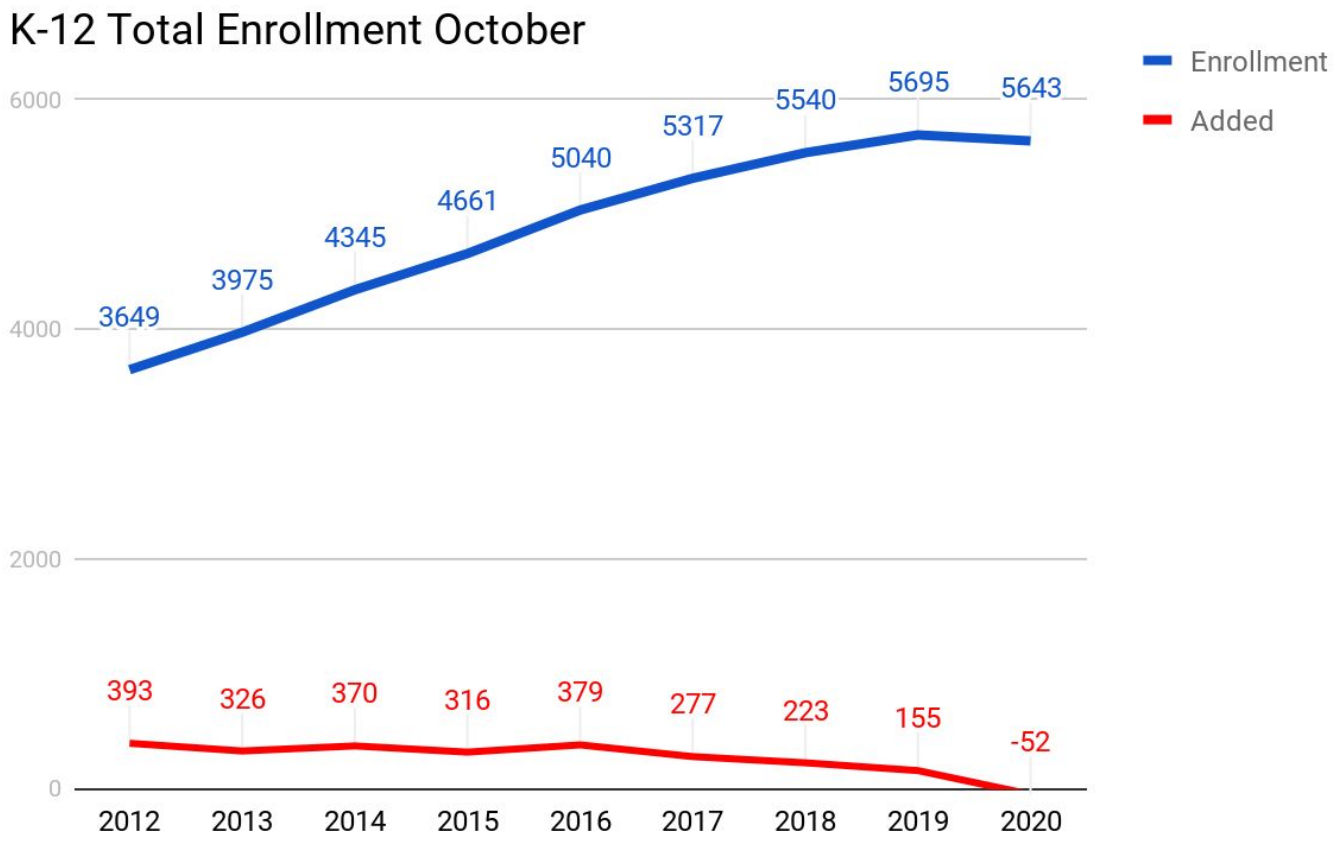
Most grade levels maintained a class size above 400 students. Enrollment is up in grades 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 and down in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 from 2019 to this school year. While the number of students new to the district is significantly down, the number of students who withdrew from CSD is similar to past years. The lower enrollment in CSD this year is due more to new students not enrolling rather than students withdrawing from CSD. Also, the students who withdrew are not leaving the city, but choosing homeschool or private school.

School districts across Georgia and the United States are seeing similar patterns of declining enrollment numbers. Here are a few examples of this phenomenon:

- Broward County, Florida : 1 in 10 Kindergarten Students didn't show up.
- San Diego Unified School District, California: down 2,474 students from Pre-pandemic enrollment projections
- Houston Independent School District, Texas : experienced a 7.5% decrease in enrollment, about 3,400 students, mostly in pre-K and kindergarten

K-12 Total Enrollment

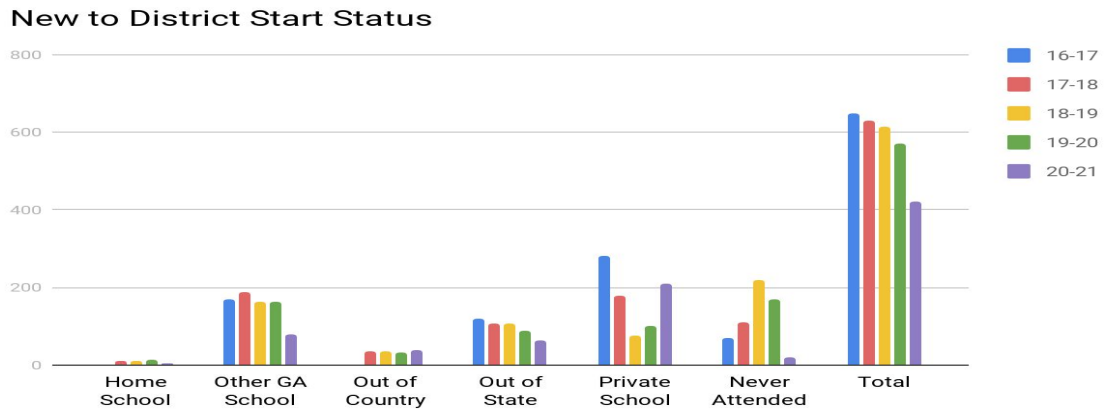
K-12 total Enrollment in October is 5,643. Historically, total enrollment has grown each year in the City Schools of Decatur (CSD). Over the past three years, the number of new students added to CSD has declined each year. This year CSD's total enrollment for new students to CSD is 52 students less than it was in October 2019.



New to District Students

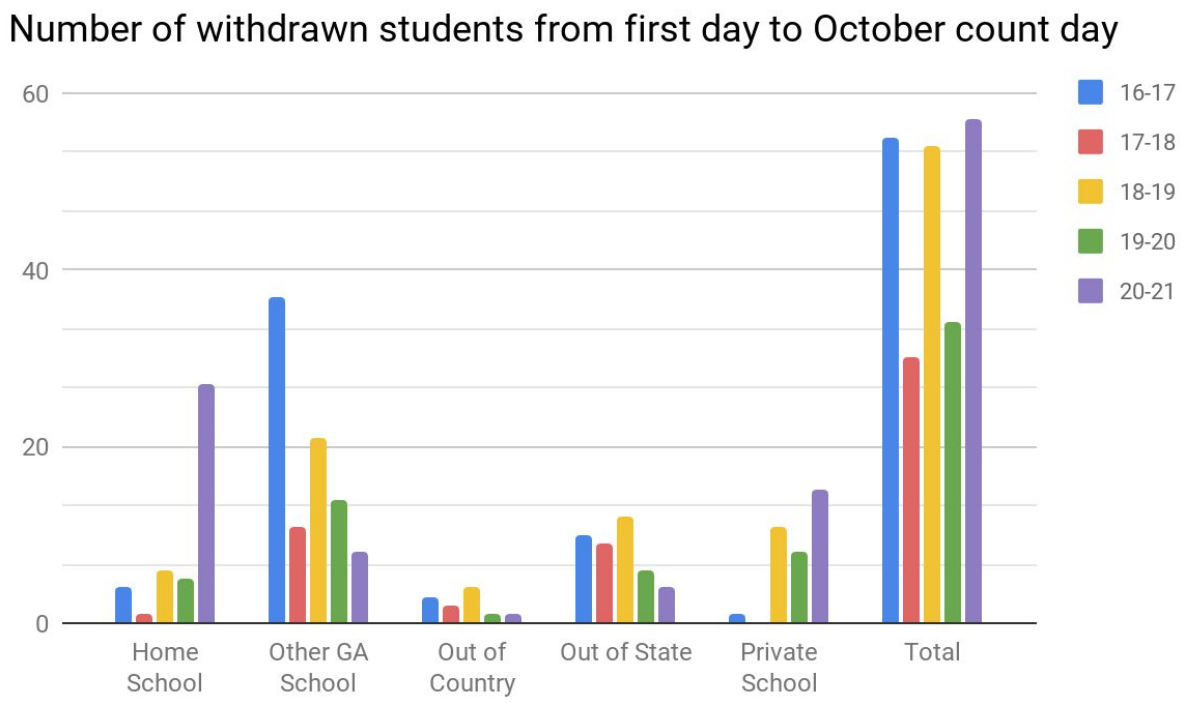
Each year students enroll and withdraw in the district and tracking this data can help reveal trends in enrollment. In 2018-19 we had 616 students enroll "new to the district" from the first day of school to the count day, 572 in 2019-20 and 421 in 2020-21. In Fall 2020, 373 students began kindergarten in CSD, of which, 194 new kindergarten students enrolled and 179 were promoted from Pre-K. Based on enrollment projections 442 kindergarten students were expected. However, we enrolled 69 less Kindergarten students than projected. Every year between the first day of school and the October FTE count date there is a typical shift in enrollment numbers.

Over the past 5 years the number of students enrolling new to CSD has decreased. The majority of these students typically come to us from three categories, having never attended school, enrolling from private schools, or from other Georgia public schools. The remaining are students who come to us from out of state, out of the country, or from homeschool. This year, the number of new students (21) who never attended school is dramatically lower than the 162 to 187 students in two previous school years. Numbers from other Georgia districts and out of state are also lower this year. The majority of new to district students in 2020 have entered from private schools.



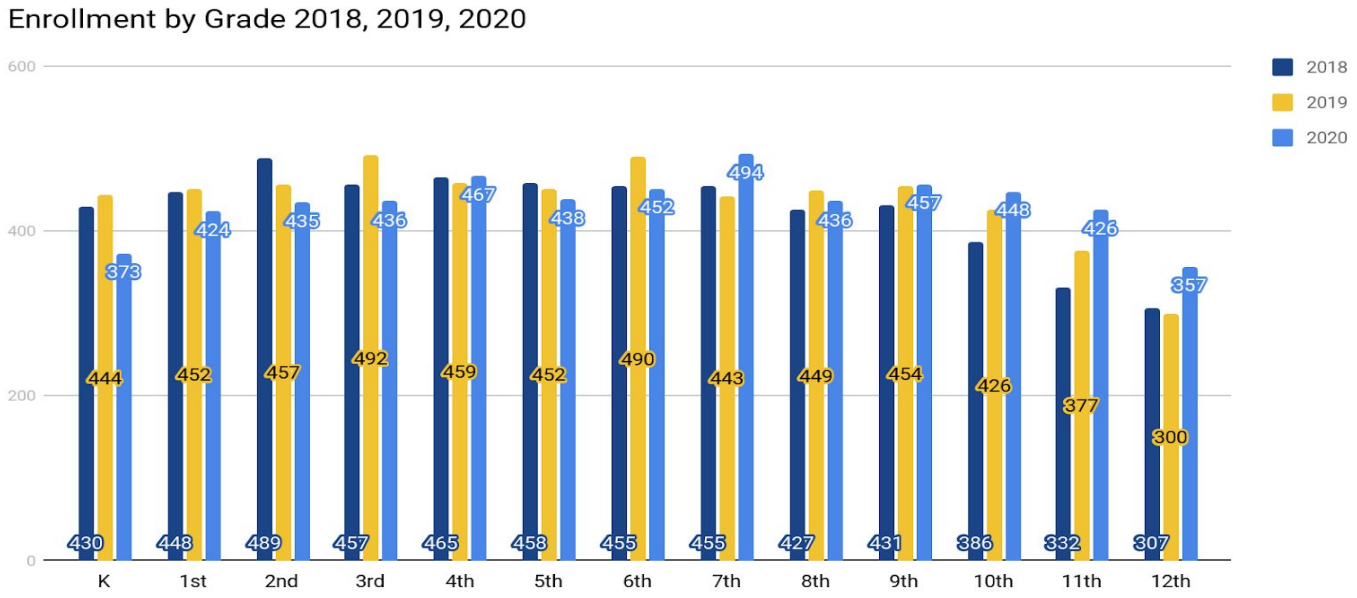
Withdrawn Students

The number of students who withdraw from the first day of school to the October count date typically varies from year to year. The past five years this number has been 55, 30, 54, 34 and 57 respectively. Withdrawal numbers in 2020 are commiserate with withdrawal numbers from 2016 and 2018. The significant difference seen in the reason selected for withdrawal this school year with the previous years is a clear increase in the number of students attending home school or private school instead of moving out of state or moving to other public schools in Georgia.



Three Year Comparison K -12 Enrollment by Grade

In 2020, all classes from 1st to 11th grade are above 424 students. This year's senior and Kindergarten classes are the only classes below 400 students. Incoming classes of 400 plus students in the past ten or so years fueled our continued growth. As larger cohorts entered CSD the smaller cohorts graduated a wave of increased enrollment was evident as enrollment was examined. An average cohort size between 425 and 460 seems to be the new norm in CSD. This year the number of students per grade has increased for grades 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12 and decreased for grades K, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8.

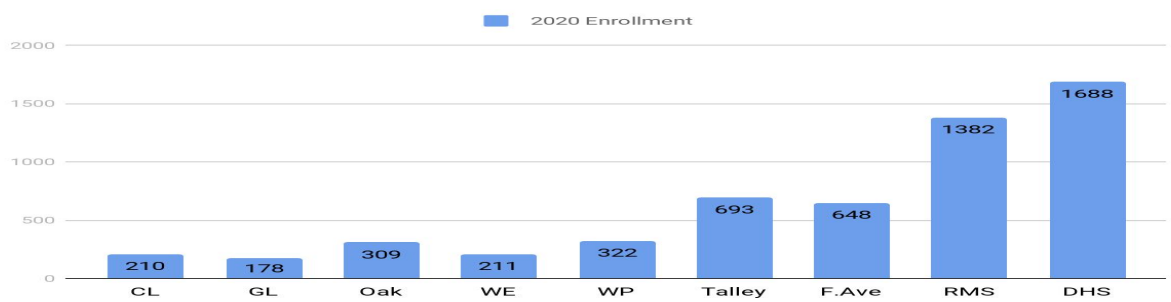


Enrollment Changes by Grade Band

Numbers of students have decreased most significantly at the lower elementary level. Enrollment continues to grow at Decatur Decatur High School. Renfroe Middle school has the same number of students as last . Overall we have decreased our total enrollment by 52 students.

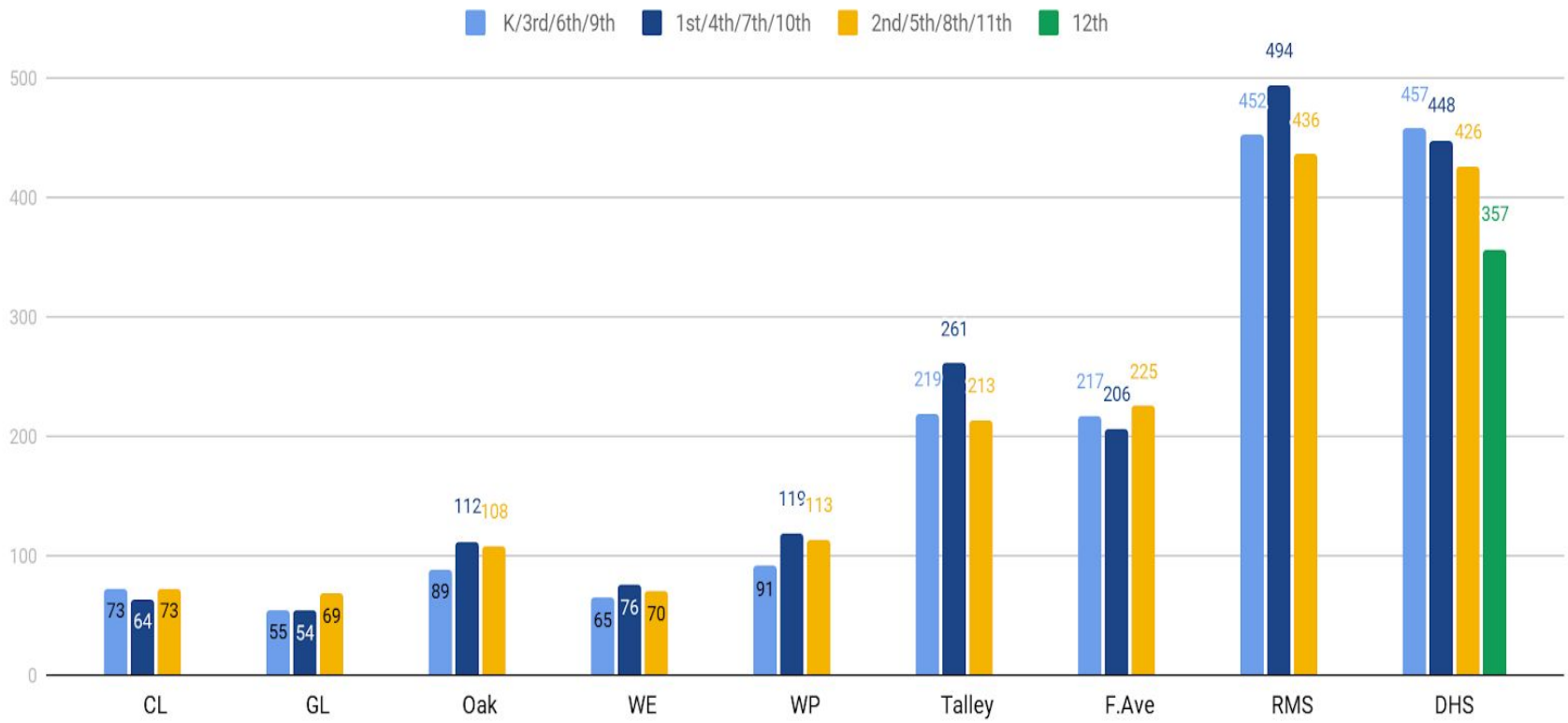
Lower Elementary (K-2)	↓	Decrease by 121 students
Upper Elementary (3-5)	↓	Decrease by 62 students
Middle School (6-8)	=	Same as last year
High School (9-12)	↑	Increase by 131 students

Glenwood, Westchester and Clairemont remain our smallest schools in terms enrollment



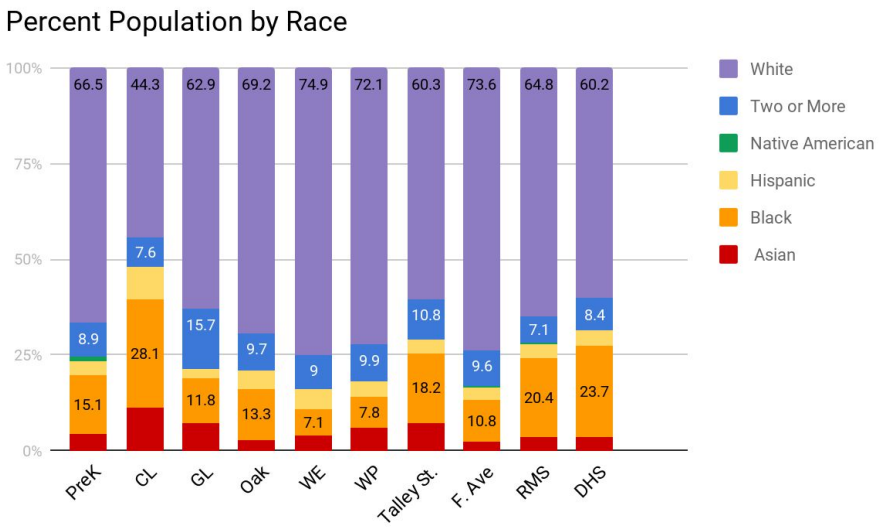
Enrollment by School and Grade

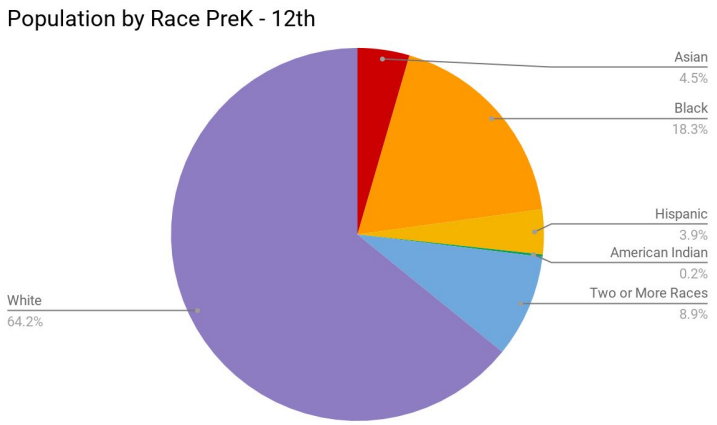
The graph below represents the number of students at grade level at each school. The most significant change is evident in Kindergarten.



Student Enrollment by Race

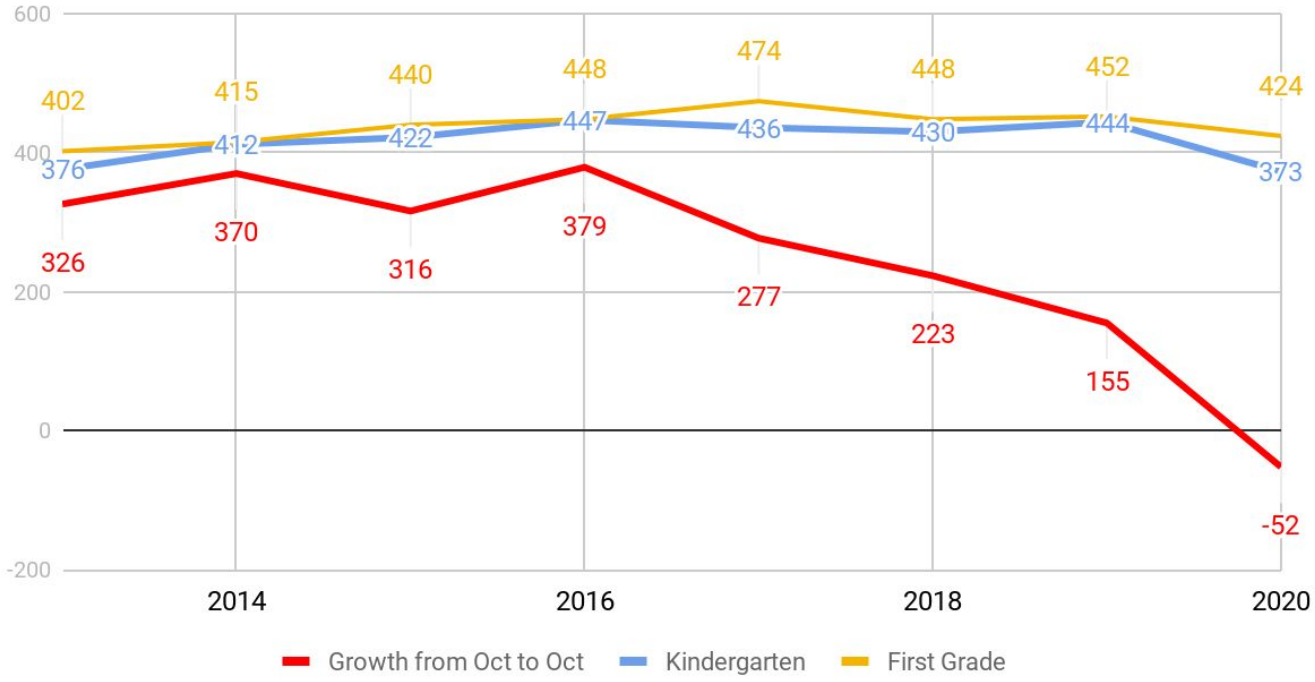
As a district we are 64.2% Whiite, 18.3% Black, 8.9% two or more races, 4.5% Asian, 3.9% Hispanic and less than 1% American Indian. The distribution varies from school to school. White students comprise the majority at all schools. The second largest group are Black students at all schools except for Westchester and Winnona Park where their second largest group of students is two or more races.



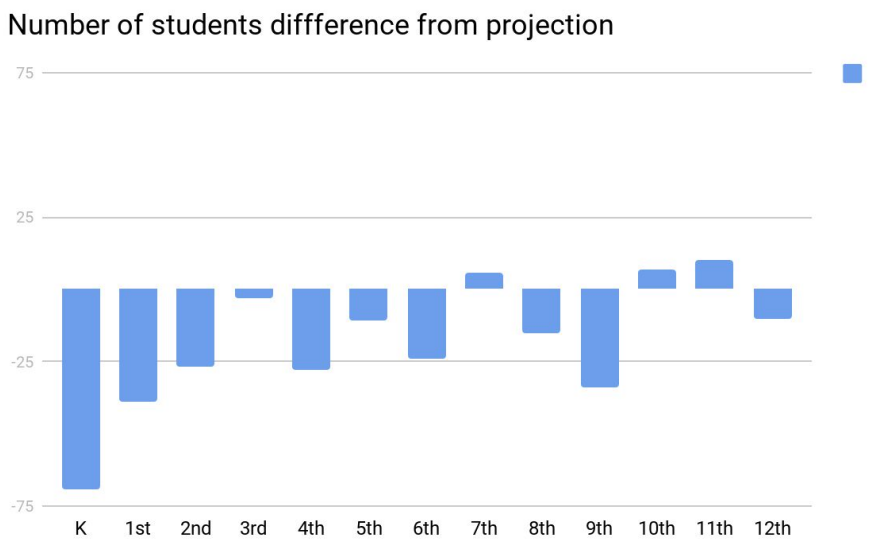


Total Growth Compared to K and 1st

Enrollment numbers in kindergarten and first grade are key indicators in projecting future enrollment. Typically when we have small kindergarten classes, we will see less future growth across the district. Even though our Kindergarten enrollment is smaller than it has been in previous years, we anticipate that the kindergarten students who did not enroll this school year, will in fact enroll in CSD next year.



Comparison to Projections

The table and graph below represent the difference between the enrollment projections and the actual the number of students who are currently enrolled. Overall there 235 fewer students enrolled than were anticipated based on enrollment projections. We attribute this to the fact that the projections were calculated before the impact of the pandemic was fully realized. Kindergarten has been the most significantly impacted as we are 69 students below projections. While we have fewer students than projected in all grades except 7, 10 and 11, the difference between projected enrollment and actual enrollment ranges from about 30 to 5 fewer than projected.

Grade Band	Projection	Actual	Projection Accuracy	Number of Student Difference
K-2	1,365	1,232	10.7% high	133
3-5	1,383	1,341	3% high	42
6-8	1,415	1,382	3% high	33
9-12	1,715	1,688	2% high	27
Total	5,878	5643	4% high	235