

**Enrollment/Forecasts Demographics Subcommittee Meeting
of the Long Range Educational Facilities Planning Work Group
Meeting #2
City Hall, 301 King Street, Room 2000
Thursday, July 18, 2013, 6:30-8:00pm
Meeting Summary**

Meeting notes are recorded by City Staff to provide a written record of principal items of discussion, key comments, decisions of the Work Group, and comments from the public. They are not intended to be a verbatim transcription of the meeting.

Meeting Attendees

Subcommittee Members

Herb Berg
Ken Billingsley
Chris Hartman
Justin Wilson

Members Not in Attendance

Yvonne Folkerts

Other Work Group Members

Dr. Tammy Mann

ACPS

Laurel Hammig

City of Alexandria

Steve Chozick
Pat Mann
Chris Bever
Katherine Carraway
Ariel Giles
Ryan Price
Dana Wedeles (attending for Ron Kagawa)

Community Members

James Durham
Ann Marie Hay

Welcome and Introductions

Steve Chozick, Division Chief GIS, welcomed attendees and invited members of the Enrollment/Forecasts Demographics Subcommittee (Subcommittee), Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS), City of Alexandria (COA) and the public to introduce themselves.

Enrollment Forecasts/Demographics Subcommittee Work Plan

Mr. Chozick reviewed the [Draft Work Plan for this subcommittee](#), describing the group's goals and timetable for the next four months. The Draft Work Plan contains the main elements involved in developing an enrollment forecast: cohort survival, birth, kindergarten capture, and generation rates. Other elements that the group thinks will be of value will be addressed as well.

The draft plan is divided into two parts: *Predictors* (factors that may show where enrollment is going and can be quantified in forecasts); and *Influencers* (actions that may have an impact on enrollment long-term, e.g. changes to educational programs, etc.).

The subcommittee continued to review the three factors scheduled for July: housing stock affordability, historic cohort survival rates, and birth rate trends.

Housing Affordability Program

Pat Mann, Department of Planning and Zoning, reported on the highlights of the [Housing Affordability memo](#) which covers initial findings from student generation analysis of public and other subsidized housing based on 2012-2013 student enrollment. Consistent with previous analysis, public housing units were found to generate more students per unit than any other category of housing unit in the city. New analysis reported on in this memo concluded that other subsidized and income-restricted units generate nearly as many students per unit as public housing, and substantially more students per unit than market-rate units. In spite of their high generation rates, the small number of such units means that the public housing and other subsidized and income-restricted units evaluated were found to generate only about 20% of all ACPS students.

Additional affordability analysis to be undertaken and reported on at the next meeting of the group includes student generation of projects that accept Section 8 rent subsidy vouchers, and student generation of market-rate rental and ownership housing in different categories of affordability.

Justin Wilson asked for clarification on what constitutes public and other income-limited housing, specifically whether it includes housing choice. Mr. Mann confirmed that vouchers are not included – only 'brick and mortar' affordable housing projects/tax-credit projects. He indicated that we do know which projects accept vouchers as rent subsidy and plans to conduct a separate analysis on what those projects generate.

Dana Wedeles asked for confirmation that senior housing was not included in the public housing data Mr. Mann presented. He confirmed that senior housing was removed from all data relevant for this meeting.

Chris Hartman asked Mr. Wilson about the city's commitment to maintaining the existing proportion of subsidized housing; and if some percentage of subsidized housing being built in new development will be of one type or another. Mr. Wilson explained that for public housing (ACC/HUD-supported housing) the city enforces a one-for-one replacement. Other unit types are handled on a case by case basis. For example, the Beauregard project dealt with market-rate units. In normal development, the city has a commitment from the developer to the community to make a provision of units or cash into the trust fund.

Mr. Wilson asked if the rate in affordable units is changing to the extent that we're seeing the rate changing in our non-affordable units. Mr. Mann believes they're about the same.

Mr. Hartman asked if this data is consistent with data from 10-years ago. Mr. Mann does not believe it would be possible to recover this type of data from 10 years ago, but that it is most likely about the same.

Historic Cohort Survival Rates

Laurel Hammig, ACPS Facilities Planner/GIS Specialist, presented [data on historic cohort survival rates](#) (CSR). CSR tracks the number of students continuing from one grade to the next.

CSR data was collected by region of attending school, grade, home or neighborhood school (all 3 by aggregate numbers); and by tracking individual students – as this data is still being analyzed, Ms. Hammig will provide more information in the August meeting.

1. Average CSR by region of attending school (lower and upper elementary, middle and high-school grades). Ms. Hammig noted that this data showed variability among regions with more stability in the upper elementary grades.
2. Average CSR by grade (division-wide) – elementary, middle and high-school. Data shows the city is gaining children for grades 8-9 and 9-10; possible reasons for increase in enrollment in these grades: kids are enrolling after leaving private school in 8th grade, the economy could have played a role in the enrollment spike, or the opening of TC may have coincided with a spike in enrollment.
3. Average CSR by home or neighborhood school at elementary level – Rates have grown differently among the home schools FY2010-2013. There is capacity excess in the east and central regions with deficits on the west side. When broken down by neighborhood, central and east regions are relatively more stable than the west side's neighborhoods.
4. Average CSR by individual student –tracked individual students by unique I.D. Data for this meeting focused on students who were elementary-aged between 2011-12, who were enrolled in ACPS for both school years and who moved between school year 11 and school year 12. The data was averaged by region and showed grade, race/ethnicity, and free/reduced lunch status. Future work will include the number of students new to ACPS, students who were in ACPS and didn't return; and the number of students who moved.

Ms. Hammig further noted that division-wide, of the movers: over 40% of students were Hispanic, over 35% were African-American, and over 70% qualified for free/reduced lunch. These figures possibly support the theory that students of lower socio-economic status who are moving are residents of rental housing and have a higher propensity to move than owners.

Tammy Mann suggested that an address change doesn't necessarily mean students have actually moved.

Mr. Hartman proposed that taking elements from Mr. Mann's and Ms. Hammig's presentations would help to capture the trends and dynamics of each individual region and helps the group back into facility needs.

The subcommittee discussed various aspects of migration trends that could affect school enrollment. Mr. Wilson pointed out that the group might look more at *inter-* rather than *intra-*jurisdictional movement – but that without knowing the volume of students it's difficult to get a clear sense of how it may factor into drawing some conclusions about capacity.

Mr. Chozick reminded the group that future plan elements tend to look more closely at migration trends. There are many components that once are completed and compared will provide a more complete picture.

Ken Billingsley noted that the hardest part of forecasting is trying to figure out who's moving in and out – and yet it remains a big factor in figuring out the school system's makeup. Mr. Wilson shared that the statistics on turnover rates is dramatic – it's important to capture in/out migration and then try to figure out why.

Birth Rate Trends

Mr. Chozick turned the meeting over to Mr. Billingsley, Director of Information and Demographic Services at the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and Work Group member, who discussed [various factors that, in the future, could have an impact on the number of births and the size of the school-aged population in Alexandria](#). The areas he highlighted were: changes in the crude birth rate (births per 1,000 population); changes in total fertility rate (average number of births a woman has in her lifetime); structural changes in age composition affecting the relative size of the female population, 15 to 44 years of age; and changes in the racial/ethnic composition of the female, child-bearing population in the city, which could alter the mix among groups having significantly different fertility rates.

Mr. Billingsley noted that, contrary to what many may assume based on the fact that Alexandria has one of the smallest percentages of youth (0-19 years of age) of any county or city in the United States, Alexandria has birth rates that are actually higher than Northern Virginia and the nation as a whole. The crude birth rate in 2011, the last year for which data exists, was 18.3 births per 1,000 population, compared to a ratio of 14.9 in Northern Virginia and 12.7 nationally – pointing to a population dynamic that is one of the city's most unique and salient demographic characteristics: that is, the high degree of population mobility and population turnover that takes place here. Approximately 45% of the city's population turns over within a five-year period and in some areas of the city, the geographical mobility ratio approaches 70%. This is an extraordinary level of population movement, people moving in and people moving out, in numbers that few places can match. This movement has enormous ramifications for the schools.

Mr. Billingsley remarked that, in looking to the future, there is no official source to which one can turn for projections on how many births the city might expect into the next decade and beyond. But there are projections, nationally, on the direction of some of the major fertility trends. The first worth noting is the projected trend in crude birth rates – the most commonly used measure of fertility. In 2011, the crude birth rate for the United States reached its lowest level in recorded history, due in part to the lingering impacts of the recession but due more basically, to a long, slow decline in fertility among the population. The Census Bureau projects that the crude birth rate, nationally, will rebound slightly over the next year or two, but then will resume its slow, steady downward thrust for the next 40 years. This is the larger demographic context.

A second factor that will be impacting births in the future is an aging of the population, a reconfiguration of the basic age structure of the nation. One element of the change will be a reduction in the percentage of women in the population who are of childbearing age. This is a structural shift that, in conjunction with declining fertility, will lead to fewer births per capita.

Mr. Billingsley said that, while there will be strong downward demographic pressure on the number of births occurring in coming decades, much of the impact could be blunted in the city by Alexandria's unique urban profile. Foremost among the countervailing forces is the unusually large proportion of Alexandria's population that consists of young people, those 20 to 35 years of age (and slightly older) who make up a disproportionately larger share of the total population than can be found in other communities. After presenting relevant statistics, Mr. Billingsley made the point that a more relevant issue in looking to future enrollments may not be an issue of number of births occurring to Alexandria mothers, but of the number of children who appear at the public school doorstep five years later to enroll in the system.

Dr. Mann asked if there is an understanding of which demographic group(s) is accounting for the higher birth rate and to what extent that group is being impacted by the affordable housing issue.

Mr. Billingsley responded that issues surrounding housing affordability and gentrification are at play, especially in Arlington County, parts of Washington, DC and Alexandria. It's reasonable to assume that gentrification could result in a decrease in births due to the higher income levels associated with this process; however, there's also a scenario, also reasonable to assume, that could lead to increased public school enrollment if capture rates rise as well.

Because the dynamic is so complex, linking these myriad elements can be difficult. But Mr. Billingsley did feel comfortable assuming that public school enrollment in the future will continue to climb, if for no other reason than an expectation of future and healthy population growth, a powerful demographic driver.

Jim Durham stated that he believed using birth rates in Alexandria as a predictor is a futile effort. If the age structure of the Alexandria population in 2010 is viewed as CSR, the city has an abnormally low CSR because people move out of the city quickly. A large number of the population is generating births, but are moving out of Alexandria before the kids enroll in school.

Mr. Wilson pointed out that the group is not using birth rates alone – that they are being used to back into the kindergarten capture rate. He also emphasized that the city is already seeing a change in the Kindergarten capture rate. A higher number of the students in kindergarten are children who were born in the city.

Work Plan/Summary

Mr. Chozick asked the group to again consider the Draft Work Plan for the subcommittee, indicating that the data discussed at this meeting was just the first piece of the work plan. Mr. Chozick asked for feedback from the group about the plan, pointing specifically to the format and next month's work on net migration trends.

The group discussed different ideas for collecting data on migration trends.

Mr. Hartman asked if Kindergarten capture and cohort survival rates already address net migration. Mr. Chozick said the approach is to look at many elements to see if they all point to same trends, or possibly determine when trends are changing.

Mr. Wilson suggested finding other avenues to collect information on where students may be coming from or why they are leaving, i.e., DCHS, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). While that provides information from only one segment of the population, it can be added to other collected information.

Dr. Mann suggested that talking to real estate agents would focus only on people buying and selling, not renting – and perhaps there are other means to collect the information the group is looking for; otherwise, the group risks arriving at the wrong conclusions.

Mr. Billingsley suggested contacting the State of Virginia, as it attaches a unique ID to each student and may provide some additional data.

The group asked for clarification on the subcommittee's role as part of the overall LREFP Work Group. Mr. Chozick said this committee will work on a long-term forecast – what will change enrollment over the next 40 years, including what it will look like – so the overall Work Group can plan changes to facilities. The forecast will also build tools into the process to help in the future when things start to change over time.

Mr. Durham suggested that an important part of this process is not just determining the assumptions the forecast is based on so you can monitor change over time, but to also understand the 'why'.

Meeting Handouts

Agenda

Enrollment Forecasts/Demographics Subcommittee Work Plan

Housing Affordability as a Factor in Student Generation

Historical Cohort Survival Rates

Major Demographic Trends/Factors that Could Influence Public School Enrollment in Future Years