State, District, and School Declining Enrollment Analysis

5-Year Historical Trend Analysis

Comprehensive evaluation of district-wide student retention and demographic shifts.

REPORT PRESENTED BY

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ANALYSIS TIME FRAME

12-Year Scope

Tracking official Validation Day enrollment metrics from 2015–16 through 2026–27.

DISTRICT COVERAGE

All School Sites

Multi-year trend analysis across Elementary, Middle, and High spans.

Declining Enrollment- 12 Year Summary

2026–27 District Enrollment (Preliminary)

4,557 Students

Validation Day count across all schools.

Cumulative Shift

-24.57%

(-1,484 Students)

Reduced from 6,041 students in 2015–16 down to 4,557 in 2026–27.

Cohort Survival Rate

97.66%

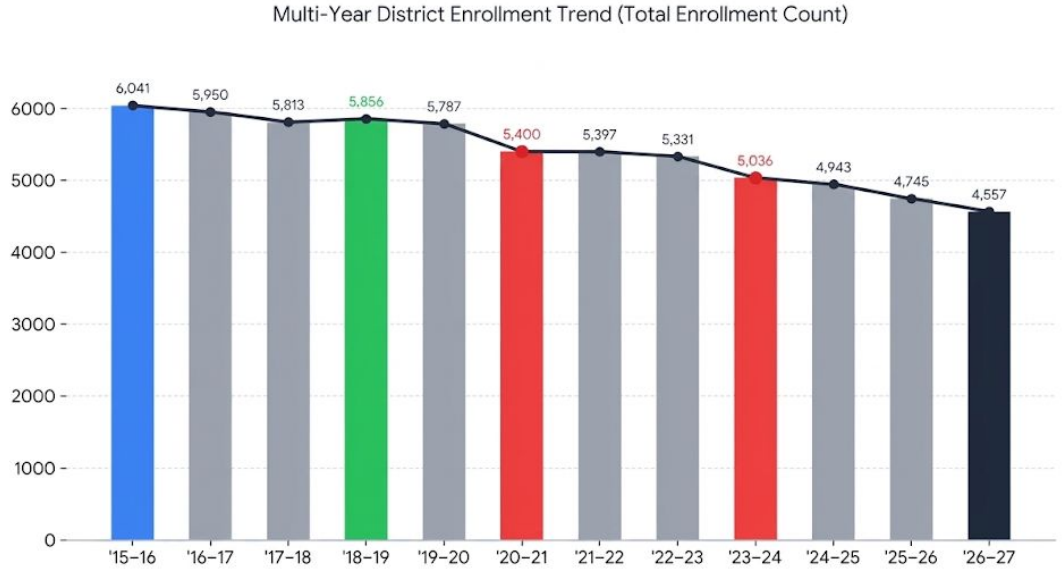
(2.5% Annual Net Attrition)

Average year-over-year retention rate across grade transitions.

*A **0.98** Cohort Survival Rate reflects an annual net attrition rate of 2.5%, compounding over 11 years into a cumulative 24.57% enrollment contraction.*

Overall District Enrollment (2015-2016 through 2026-2027)

12-Year Historical Totals & Year-over-Year Enrollment Trends



Average Annual Net Attrition

~135 Students / Year

(-1,484 Net Total Loss)

Largest Single-Year Drops

2020–21: -387 students (-6.7%) | **2023–24:** -295 students (-5.5%)

Key Timeline Takeaway:

District enrollment experienced step-down multi-year contraction, establishing a preliminary 2026–27 base of 4,557 students.

Statewide Declining Enrollment Context (FY20 to FY27)

Nevada School District Comparative Loss & Legislative Pupil Counts

Systemic Macro Trends

• **Statewide Pupil Reduction:** Total Nevada public school pupil counts declined from **427,758.6 (FY20)** to **387,959.5 (FY26 Est.)**, projected to reach **376,958.0 in FY27**.

• **Cumulative Nevada Loss:** **-50,800.6 pupils (-11.88%)** statewide.

• **Driving Forces:** Regional birth rate declines, housing cost pressures, and private/charter shifts across urban and rural counties.

County / District	FY20 Actual	FY27 Budget	Pupil Shift	Shift (%)	Rank
Douglas	5,663.2	**4,572.0**	**-1,091.2**	**-19.27%**	**#1 Loss % in NV**
Elko	9,901.5	**8,495.0**	**-1,406.5**	**-14.20%**	#2
Clark	314,756.7	**274,242.0**	**-40,514.7**	**-12.87%**	#3
Carson City	7,740.1	**6,763.0**	**-977.1**	**-12.62%**	#4
Washoe	63,953.4	**57,722.0**	**-6,231.4**	**-9.74%**	#8
Nevada Total	**427,758.6**	**376,958.0**	**-50,800.6**	**-11.88%**	**State Baseline**

Headcount vs. Legislative Count Note

Fiscal Context: *Douglas County ranks* **#1 in percentage pupil loss (-19.27%)** *statewide. Note that state PCFP funding draws from the legislative weighted projection of* **4,572.0 pupils**, *while DCSD's raw preliminary 2026–27 headcount stands at* **4,557 unweighted students**.

Specific School Site Breakdown (5-Year View)

Detailed Enrollment Shifts Across Elementary, Middle, High, and Alternative Sites (2021–22 to 2026-27)

School Site	21–22 Act.	25–26 Act.	26–27	5-Yr Shift	Shift (%)
Douglas High (DHS)	1,596	1,413	**1,374**	**-222**	**-13.9%**
Carson Valley Middle (CVMS)	655	628	**651**	-4	-0.6%
Pau-Wa-Lu Middle (PWLMS)	499	411	**390**	**-109**	**-21.8%**
C.C. Meneley Elementary*	443	419	**—***	**-443**	**-100.0%**
G.L. Scarselli Elementary*	367	295	**505***	**+138**	**+37.6%**
Minden Elementary	355	352	**399**	**+44**	**+12.4%**
Gardnerville Elementary	338	277	**347**	**+9**	**+2.7%**
Jacks Valley Elementary	437	370	**345**	**-92**	**-21.1%**
Pinon Hills Elementary	312	262	**254**	**-58**	**-18.6%**
Zephyr Cove Elementary	153	153	**155**	**+2**	**+1.31%**
George Whittell High (6–12)	160	138	**123**	**-37**	**-23.1%**
ASPIRE Academy High	68	104	**79**	**+11**	**+16.2%**
Jacobsen High School	18	16	**19**	**+1**	**+5.6%**
Douglas Adult / ALT	20	12	**16**	**-4**	**-20.0%**
District Total	**5,397**	**4,745**	**4,557**	**-840**	**-15.6%**

Key School Site Takeaways

Secondary Shift

PWLMS (-21.8%), GWHS (-23.1%), and DHS (-13.9%) demonstrate multi-year secondary contraction, while **CVMS (-0.6%)** remains stable.

Alternative Pathway Growth

Aspire Academy expanded by **+16.2% (+11 students)** over the 5-year comparison period.

Facility Consolidation Note

* C.C. Meneley Elementary was closed and consolidated into Scarselli prior to 2026–27. While Scarselli shows a nominal increase (+138), **the combined Meneley/Scarselli footprint experienced a 5-year net loss of -305 students (-37.7%)** (810 → 505). Boundary realignments also shifted students closer to town into Gardnerville (347) and Minden (399).

High School Attrition & Student Mobility Case Study

Comparative 5-Year Enrollment Dynamics & Intra-District Mobility Across DHS, GWHS, and Aspire Academy

Valley Comprehensive High School

Douglas High School

- **5-Yr Shift: -13.9%** (-222 students | 1,596 → 1,374)
- **Internal Transfer Metric: 32.4% of DHS's drop** (72 students) transferred internally to Aspire Academy.
- **Primary Drivers:** Shrinking elementary/middle feeder cohorts cascading into secondary grades, paired with internal credit recovery shifts.

Lake Comprehensive 6th-12th grade School

George Whittell High School

- **5-Yr Overall Shift: -23.1%** (-37 students | 160 → 123)
- **Internal Transfer Metric: 0% transfer impact** (<1 student/yr to Aspire).
- **Primary Drivers:** Resort economy housing costs, second-home conversions, and upperclassman out-migration in the Tahoe basin. Attrition is 100% external.

Districtwide Alternative Pathway

Aspire Academy High School

- **5-Yr Overall Growth: +16.2%** (+11 students | 68 → 79)
- **Internal Transfer Metric: 104 total W1B transfers in** (72 from DHS, 12 from MS, 20 from DNO/ALT).
- **Primary Drivers:** High demand for credit recovery and small settings; continues to serve as a vital intra-district retention safety net.

Strategic Synthesis & Board Note

Strategic Synthesis: *While comprehensive high schools contract due to demographic trends (DHS -13.9%, GWHS -23.1%), Aspire Academy (+16.2%) demonstrates an internal shift toward flexible alternative models, acting as a critical district retention safety net.*

*** Board Note (Adjusted DHS Attrition):** *Controlling for internal Aspire transfers, DHS's net external loss out of the district is* **-9.4%**.

Middle School Attrition Case Study

Comparative 5-Year Enrollment & Attrition Dynamics Across CVMS, PWLMS, Whittell (6–8), and Aspire (7–8)

Comprehensive Middle

Carson Valley Middle School

- **5-Yr Shift: -0.6%** (-4 students | 655 → 651) [Grades 6–8]
- **Primary Driver:** Relative enrollment stability sustained by steady student progression from central valley feeders (Gardnerville, Minden & Jacks Valley).

Comprehensive Middle

Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School

- **5-Yr Shift: -21.8%*** (-109 students | 499 → 390) [Grades 6–8]
- **Internal Transfer Metric: 15.6% of PWLMS's drop** (17 students) transferred internally to Aspire Academy's new middle school pathway in 25-26.
- **Primary Driver:** Sharp feeder contraction cascading directly from high-loss southern valley elementary sites (Meneley & Scarselli).

Lake & Alternative Options

Whittell Middle School & Aspire Academy Middle School

- **Whittell Middle (6–8): -11.1%** (-8 students | 72 → 64)
- **Aspire Academy (7–8): +17 students** (New Middle Pathway | 0 → 17)
- **Primary Driver:** Tahoe basin demographic contraction paired with rising demand for small-setting middle school intervention at Aspire.

Case Study Synthesis & Strategic Insight

Middle school attrition is heavily concentrated at **Pau-Wa-Lu (-21.8%)**, *directly mirroring severe contractions in its southern feeder elementary schools. The addition of middle school grades at* **Aspire Academy (+17 students)** *highlights early demand for flexible instructional models prior to high school entry. PWLMS contraction (390 students | -21.8% 5-year shift) reflects sustained multi-year elementary pipeline drops in the southern valley, now consolidated under the restructured Scarselli/PWLMS feeder zone.*

*** Board Note (Adjusted PWLMS Attrition):** *Controlling for internal Aspire transfers (+17 students), PWLMS's net external loss out of the district is* **-18.4%** *(-92 students).*

Elementary School Case Study

Comparative 5-Year Enrollment & Attrition Dynamics Across Valley and Lake Elementary Sites

South Valley Sites

CCMES & Scarselli

- **5-Yr Footprint Shift: -37.7%** (-305 students | 810 → 505)
- **Scarselli (2026–27): 505 students (Consolidated building absorbing CCMES)**
- **Insight:** Reflects significant multi-year demographic decline in the southern valley, resulting in consolidated facility operations at Scarselli.

Central Valley Sites

Gardnerville & Minden

- **5-Yr Cluster Shift: +7.6% (+53 students | 693 → 746)**
- **Gardnerville: 347** (+2.7% | 338 → 347)
- **Minden: 399** (+12.4% | 355 → 399)
- **Insight:** Redistricting successfully funneled students toward central town sites.

North Valley Sites

Jacks Valley & Pinon Hills

- **5-Yr Cluster Shift: -20.0%** (-150 students | 749 → 599)
- **Jacks Valley: 345** (-21.1% | 437 → 345)
- **Pinon Hills: 254** (-18.6% | 312 → 254)
- **Insight:** Primary candidate for future consolidation; 599 total students split across two sites.

Tahoe Site

Zephyr Cove Elementary

- **5-Yr Site Shift: +1.3% (+2 students | 153 → 155)**
- **Zephyr Cove: 155 students**
- **Insight:** Geographically insulated site with flat, stable baseline enrollment.

Strategic Synthesis & Geographic Cluster Insights

- **South Valley Footprint:** Severe organic contraction (**-21.4%** through 2025) led to facility consolidation. Following boundary realignments that shifted cohorts to Scarselli (505) and town sites, the consolidated southern footprint stands at 505 students.
- **Central Valley Buffering:** MES and GES were declining (**-9.2%**) prior to boundary adjustments. Realignments funneled southern students toward Gardnerville (347) and Minden (399), temporarily stabilizing central building utilization (**+7.6% shift**).
- **North Valley Outlook:** JVES and PHES show unmitigated organic decline (**-20.0%** / -150 students) without redistricting inflows. Split across Jacks Valley (345) and Pinon Hills (254), this 599-student cluster represents one area for future facility evaluation.

Financial & Fiscal Outlook (PCFP Impact)

Analysis of Nevada's Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP) and Multi-Year Fiscal Dynamics

STATE BASE FUNDING RATE

~$10,622 (2025–26)

~$10,701 (2026–27)

per pupil

Under Nevada PCFP baseline.

12-YEAR REVENUE SHIFT

-1,484

Cumulative Student Shift

Driving operational funding contractions across sites.

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGE

Fixed Cost Lag

facility & staffing inertia

Facility maintenance and core staffing costs do not decrease automatically at the same rate as enrollment drops.

Key Strategic Financial Takeaways

- **Direct PCFP Dependency:** Funding under Nevada's PCFP is directly tied to student enrollment counts.
- **Operational Realignment:** Multi-year staffing models and site operations must explicitly align with smaller grade cohorts.
- **Fiscal Stability:** Strategic rightsizing preserves instructional quality while maintaining long-term financial stability.

Projected Enrollment: Elementary (K–5)

5-Year Demographic Trend & Cohort Pipeline Analysis (2026–2032)

5-YEAR CUMULATIVE DROP

-186

Students (-9.9%)

ENROLLMENT TRAJECTORY

2026–27: 1,877 students

2031–32: **1,691 students**

Overall elementary footprint reflects steady multi-year contraction across district sites.

Kindergarten Contraction

Projected to drop from 305 to 240 incoming students.

Smaller entry-level cohorts establish lower baseline numbers that ripple through upper grades.

Operational Lag

Smaller cohorts reduce sections before generating facility-level fixed cost savings.

Classroom staffing scales down incrementally, while facility overhead remains constant.

Decision Prerequisite

School-level and attendance-area data is required before any consolidation or boundary actions.

Comprehensive granular analysis is essential prior to implementing policy or boundary shifts.

Projected Enrollment: Middle Schools (6–8)

5-Year Demographic Trend & Cohort Pipeline Analysis (2026–2032)

5-YEAR CUMULATIVE DROP

-228

Students (-20.3%)

Largest Proportional Decline

ENROLLMENT TRAJECTORY

2026–27: 1,123 students

2031–32: **895 students**

Middle school grades reflect the steepest proportional demographic contraction across the district.

Scheduling Friction

Subject-based schedules cause modest cohort drops to eliminate full core/elective sections.

Departmentalized instruction creates rigid staffing thresholds where small drops impact full sections.

Staffing Precision

Must model exact section counts, interventions, and shared staffing prior to finalizing contracts.

Requires granular master scheduling analysis to optimize FTE allocation across grade levels.

Facility Strategy

Current baseline trajectories do not support permanent middle school facility expansion.

Capital planning should focus on flexible space usage rather than capacity expansion.

Projected Enrollment: High School (9–12)

5-Year Demographic Trend & Cohort Pipeline Analysis (2026–2032)

5-YEAR CUMULATIVE DROP

-124

Students (-8.2%)

ENROLLMENT TRAJECTORY

2026–27: 1,513 students

2031–32: **1,389 students**

High school footprint reflects delayed demographic contraction as smaller cohorts age up.

Near-Term Stability

Enrollment holds near 1,480 students through the 2029–30 school year.

High school capacity remains stable during the initial phase while lower grades absorb reductions.

Delayed Contraction

Cohort gaps reach the high school level by 2031, driving the -8.2% drop.

Demographic contraction originating in elementary grades ultimately impacts upper secondary enrollment.

Resource Allocation

Staffing must be driven by course requests and caseloads, not generic county age proxies.

High school FTE modeling requires precise evaluation of departmental offerings and section minimums.

5-Year Projected Enrollment: All District

5-Year Demographic Trend & Cohort Pipeline Analysis (2026–2032)

K–12 BASELINE IMPACT

-538

Students (-11.9%)

ENROLLMENT TRAJECTORY

2026–27: 4,513 students

2031–32: **3,975 students**

PRE-K–12 BASELINE IMPACT

-548

Students (-11.8%)

ENROLLMENT TRAJECTORY

2026–27: 4,653 students

2031–32: **4,105 students**

Strategic Directive

Integrate this 5-year baseline as the primary planning scenario for FY 2027–28 budget development, staffing, position control, and fiscal recovery.