

Chapter 2. PROJECTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

The U.S. population – which numbered 311.6 million in 2011, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates – has grown by almost 4 percent in the five years since the last edition of the *Knocking* projections.¹ Natural increase (the extent to which births exceed deaths) and net immigration are the two principal components of the change. Longer life spans are reducing death rates, but the U.S. also experienced a protracted period of rising births, beginning in the early 1990s and extending through 2007. This surge in births led to large increases in school enrollments and, ultimately, graduates. But just as the economic recession unfolded, the number of babies born nationwide began to fall and continued to drop through 2011.² Net immigration also has a significant impact on the U.S. population and student and graduate numbers. And the number of immigrants is also in flux: some 1.1 million legal immigrants entered the U.S. in 2009, compared to 1.3 million in 2006, and evidence suggests the number of illegal immigrants may be falling as well.³

As the children born during the birth surge progress through our schools, it is vital that our nation and its states be prepared for the future demands they will place on those schools. Previous projections predicted that the size of the nation's high school graduating classes would reach a crest in 2007-08, a pattern that was expected for most of the states as well.⁴ Updated data used for these projections mostly bear out our previous forecast but with some important differences. Most significantly, the data show that graduate numbers most likely peaked in 2010-11, after which they began a steep decline. As we previously projected, we again predict that they will reach a low point in 2013-14, followed by slower rates of growth that will lead to a new all-time high of high school graduates in 2024-25. In the last years of our projections, high school graduates are predicted to decline and may even drop below the 2010-11 high point, due largely to the decline in births since 2008 and slowing immigration during our current recession.

But the national picture is only a part of the story. The populations of our states and regions are also changing, often in dramatic ways. Sources of data about population change from migration indicate that in the years between 1995 and 2004, there was significant internal migration among the regions and states of the U.S., as well as immigration from foreign countries. More recent data seem to suggest that longstanding

patterns of mobility, which tended toward the West and the South, may be shifting; and so may be migration between the U.S. and other countries, particularly Mexico, the primary source of migrants to the U.S. over the past four decades.⁵ These data may reflect differences in underlying definitions and measurements – or they may portray a new reality, one that is still not understood, as we continue to emerge from an economic crisis that has affected the population of our states and regions and their mobility.⁶

Much of the growth in population and in school enrollments continues to occur in the South and the West (although at slower rates than before) at the expense of the Midwest and Northeast. Some states in the two faster-growing regions, such as Utah and Texas, will see mostly consistent increases in enrollments and high school graduates throughout the projection period. Clearly, the wide variation in the educational demand facing individual states will require very different policies, to ensure both adequate capacity and high quality. Many states will also confront a rapidly diversifying school-age population, which will only add to the challenge. (Projected changes in enrollments and high school graduates by race/ethnicity are the subject of Chapter 3.)

This chapter describes in broad strokes the changes in the number of school enrollments and the number of graduates for the nation and for each of the four geographic regions. Each section also addresses how the number of births will influence future projections. Finally, the regional analyses also include information about projected changes in high school graduating classes in individual states, plus the degree to which each state's projected changes will contribute to regional changes. (For detailed state tables, see Appendix A.)

National Trends

Our projections indicate that the U.S. is seeing the first overall decline in the number of its high school graduates in more than a decade.⁷ In many states education agencies and postsecondary institutions, used to planning for ever-larger demand, will face a new reality. Data indicate the contraction in the national supply of high school graduates began with the class of 2012. After that, even returns to growth will be minor and temporary. The graduating classes between 2018 and 2023 will see only small increases, their numbers hovering below the high of 3.4 million that our model

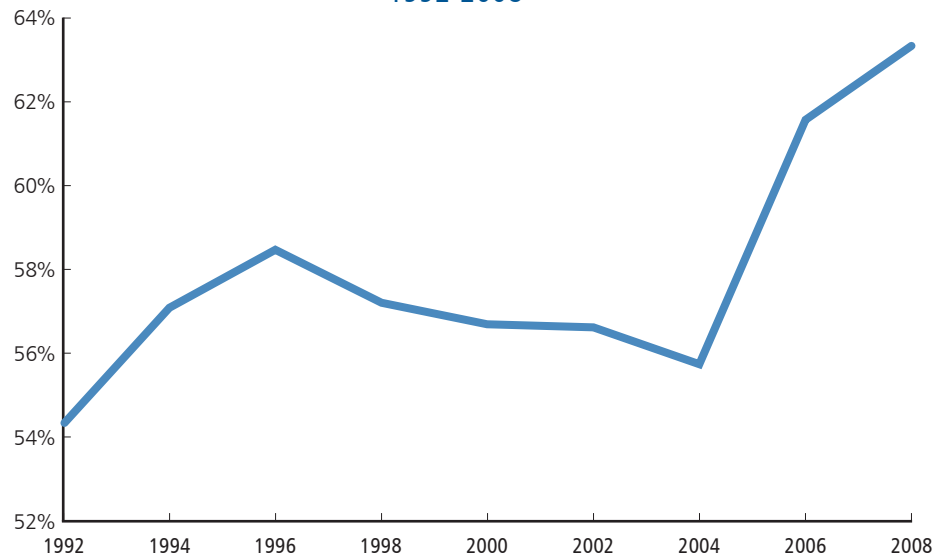
suggests occurred with the class of 2011. Even in the outer years of our projections, there will only be a brief period, between 2024 and 2026, when graduating classes will exceed that peak. And in the next peak year, 2025, the numbers will only be 3 percent higher than the class of 2011 – a difference of only about 100,000 graduates nationally. After that, graduating classes are predicted to consistently decline, matching the drop in births that began with the 2007 recession.

Postsecondary institutions will likely face greater competition for fewer recent high school graduates because of absolute declines in the size of that group. And this will hold true despite increasing rates of enrollment in recent years. Figure 2.1 shows the changes between 1992 and 2008, highlighting a key determinant of demand: the college-going rate of recent high school graduates. After ranging between 54 and 59 percent in the 12 years between 1992 and 2004, the college-going rate increased rapidly to 63 percent by 2008. (WICHE provides this additional information merely to help readers evaluate the possible impact of future demand; projected future college-going rates were not calculated.)

Demand for postsecondary education is driven only in part by the number of graduates emerging from the nation's high schools. Those institutions that have not already turned greater attention to nontraditional enrollments may be compelled to do so – and they are likely to find growing demand among older adults, as the jobs of the future will require more education and skills mastery. At the same time these changes unfold for postsecondary institutions, many schools and school districts will need to be prepared for growth in higher grade levels, as students born during the final years of the Baby Boom Echo progress through the grades. But they'll experience reduction in earlier grade levels in years farther in the future due to recently declining birth rates.

National trends are less important than regional, state, and local ones, however. While some regions, states, and localities will follow some variation of the national pattern, others will face conditions very unlike those seen countrywide. In particular, states in the Northeast

Figure 2.1. College-going Rate of Recent U.S. High School Graduates, 1992-2008



Source: National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), www.higheredinfo.org, accessed November 2012.

will generally see a severe contraction in demand, while the most populated states in the South and West will barely notice any changes in the pattern of growth that has already strained capacity in schools and colleges for many years. See the section on regional and state projections below for more detail.

Elementary and Secondary Enrollments

While this publication has always concentrated on high school graduates (a sensible focus, given that WICHE's mission is specifically directed to issues involving postsecondary education), it is apparent that many users – particularly schools, school districts, and statewide K-12 education agencies – also make use of these projections for analytical and planning purposes. Moreover, tomorrow's high school graduates are enrolled today somewhere in grades one to 12. For these reasons this publication also includes coverage of first through 12th grade enrollment trends and projections.

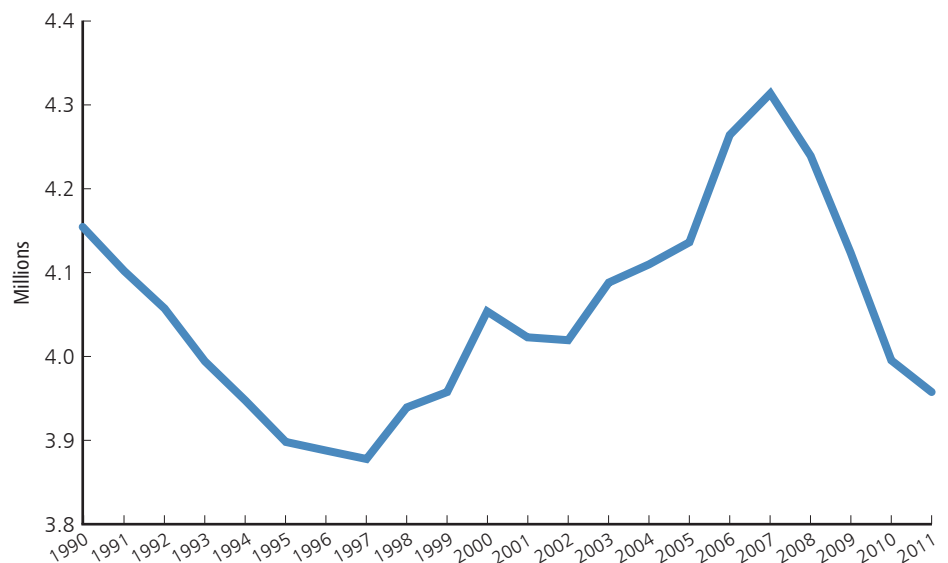
Nationally, public school enrollments increased steadily in the decade between 2000-01 and 2010-11, the last year for which enrollments data were available. K-12 enrollments grew by 4.5 percent over that timeframe, with total public enrollments reaching just over 44.4 million by 2010-11 (Table 2.1). That year, there were nearly 14.9 million students in public high schools (grades nine to 12), reflecting an increase of almost 11 percent over 2000-01. The large difference in growth rates between these years is partially explained by the declining number of births throughout most of the

1990s: births fell by 6.7 percent between the peak year of 1990 and 1997, before climbing again (Figure 2.2).

Immigrants also account for a portion of the difference in enrollment growth rates. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, immigrants accounted for about 35 percent of population change in the United States between 2000 and 2009.⁸ Immigration trends can particularly affect high school enrollments – and, subsequently, graduates – because there are more years during which an individual can enter the country in time to be counted as being enrolled in high school. Furthermore, immigration is more likely to take place among older children and adolescents than it is among younger children.⁹

Adding in estimates of nonpublic school enrollments brings total enrollments in all grades nationally up

Figure 2.2. Births in the U.S., 1990-2011



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
Note: 2011 births are considered preliminary.

Table 2.1. U.S. Public and Nonpublic School Enrollments

	School Enrollments (Grades 1-12)			High School Enrollments (Grades 9-12)		
	Public	Nonpublic	Total	Public	Nonpublic	Total
2004-05	43,924,042	4,539,645	48,463,687	14,495,524	1,310,036	15,805,560
2005-06	44,131,673	4,498,032	48,629,705	14,788,672	1,327,565	16,116,237
2006-07	44,319,998	4,478,228	48,798,226	14,970,959	1,336,163	16,307,122
2007-08	44,369,593	4,463,905	48,833,498	14,994,666	1,351,248	16,345,914
2008-09	44,241,435	4,303,094	48,544,529	14,892,541	1,323,258	16,215,799
2009-10	44,284,586	4,153,288	48,437,874	14,894,739	1,305,982	16,200,721
2010-11	44,437,790	4,069,302	48,507,092	14,850,710	1,273,551	16,124,261
2011-12	44,468,460	4,001,394	48,469,854	14,688,861	1,236,153	15,925,014
2012-13	44,660,037	3,948,356	48,608,393	14,601,063	1,198,139	15,799,202
2013-14	44,939,878	3,895,020	48,834,899	14,605,472	1,158,430	15,763,902
2014-15	45,275,517	3,848,385	49,123,901	14,785,674	1,122,796	15,908,470
2015-16	45,462,661	3,809,228	49,271,889	14,920,569	1,086,751	16,007,320
2016-17	45,478,258	3,769,225	49,247,483	14,975,735	1,048,565	16,024,300
2017-18				15,030,021	1,011,354	16,041,375
2018-19				15,051,188	1,002,072	16,053,259
2019-20				15,122,480	1,003,961	16,126,441
2020-21				15,345,385	1,022,149	16,367,534
2021-22				15,570,460	1,047,848	16,618,308
2022-23				15,695,193	1,051,116	16,746,309
2023-24				15,657,827	1,047,158	16,704,985
2024-25				15,390,325	1,029,638	16,419,962

Note: Shaded area indicates the projected period.

to 48.4 million by 2009-10, the last year of reported public and nonpublic data on enrollments.¹⁰ About 16.2 million of these enrollments were in the high school grades alone. Nonpublic enrollments for that year accounted for an estimated 8.6 percent of total enrollments and 8.1 percent of high school enrollments. Those shares were slightly lower than in preceding years. While sampling error may play a part in this decline, it appears that nonpublic school enrollments have been consistently falling over the last decade as a portion of all enrollments. Catholic schools, in particular, report that changed demographic and geographic trends could be contributing to this decline.¹¹ Furthermore, private education may have become less feasible for more families, particularly during the two major recessions of this decade, due to the costs of K-12 private education combined with the increasing cost of postsecondary education, as families consider costs over the enrollment continuum. The increasing availability of viable public alternatives to private education, including charter and magnet schools, probably also contributed to the declines in nonpublic enrollments.

Table 2.1 shows enrollment projections. Since all projections begin with actual birth data, it is possible to project high school enrollments out farther into the future than it is for earlier grades. Projections indicate that enrollments in all grades nationwide will not change substantially in the short term. In the public sector, enrollments are projected to climb by about 2.3 percent, or just over 1 million students, between 2010-11 and 2016-17. Projected enrollments in the nation's public high schools show a similar, relatively stable pattern out to 2024-25, with high school enrollments varying at most by 268,000 students across any two consecutive years, and usually by much less. The net positive increase is projected at 3.6 percent, or about 540,000 high school students, by the last year of projected enrollments. On the other hand, nonpublic schools' total enrollments are projected to continue to decline, by about 9 percent between 2009-10 and 2016-17, or about 384,000 students. And nonpublic high school enrollments are projected to decline at an even greater rate than public ones will – 21 percent between 2009-10 and 2024-25.

High School Graduates

Nationally, the number of public high school graduates in 2008-09 stood at just over 3 million – an increase of 8.5 percent in the five years since 2004-05, which marked the last year of actual data in our previous edition of these projections. Nonpublic schools added an estimated 309,000 graduates, for a total of 3.35 million

public and nonpublic high school graduates in 2008-09 (Table 2.2). There were 15 years of sustained growth in the number of graduates nationally from both public and private high schools, which we project to have continued to increase through 2010-11. The graduating class of 2009, the last year of reported data, was 21.3 percent larger (588,000 students) than the class of 1999 a decade earlier (Figure 2.3).

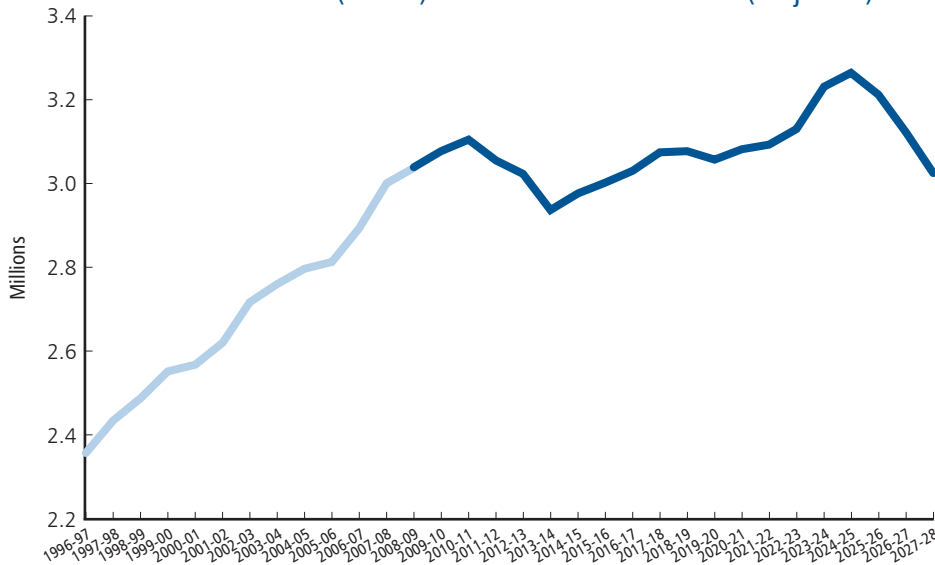
In the five years between the last edition of projections and our 2010-11 peak projections in this edition, the nation's public high school graduating class grew by 10 percent, or about 288,000 students. After this high point, the number of public high school graduates will

Table 2.2. U.S. Public and Nonpublic High School Graduates

	Public Total	Nonpublic Total	Public and Nonpublic Total
1996-97	2,358,903	253,837	2,612,740
1997-98	2,440,048	265,070	2,705,118
1998-99	2,485,630	274,339	2,759,969
1999-00	2,553,844	279,043	2,832,887
2000-01	2,569,200	280,806	2,850,006
2001-02	2,621,534	289,141	2,910,675
2002-03	2,719,947	299,287	3,019,234
2003-04	2,759,889	300,041	3,059,930
2004-05	2,799,250	296,168	3,095,418
2005-06	2,813,412	302,099	3,115,511
2006-07	2,893,045	303,059	3,196,104
2007-08	3,001,337	314,100	3,315,437
2008-09	3,039,015	308,933	3,347,948
2009-10	3,074,608	312,256	3,386,863
2010-11	3,101,815	307,346	3,409,160
2011-12	3,053,966	299,104	3,353,070
2012-13	3,023,991	291,932	3,315,923
2013-14	2,937,575	281,632	3,219,207
2014-15	2,975,411	272,586	3,247,997
2015-16	3,001,872	263,587	3,265,460
2016-17	3,031,082	255,882	3,286,964
2017-18	3,075,229	248,427	3,323,656
2018-19	3,076,517	239,119	3,315,636
2019-20	3,056,399	228,424	3,284,823
2020-21	3,081,361	221,452	3,302,813
2021-22	3,090,971	238,306	3,329,277
2022-23	3,128,459	239,694	3,368,153
2023-24	3,228,089	244,929	3,473,018
2024-25	3,262,503	246,001	3,508,504
2025-26	3,207,111	241,760	3,448,871
2026-27	3,118,880	236,726	3,355,606
2027-28	3,021,810	229,210	3,251,020

Note: Shaded area indicates the projected period.

Figure 2.3. U.S. Public High School Graduates, 1996-97 to 2008-09 (Actual) and 2009-10 to 2027-28 (Projected)



decline by about 164,000 students to some 2.9 million in 2013-14, followed by relatively stable output of between 2.9 and 3.1 million graduates per year through 2022-23. After that, there will be a few years of increase in the number of public graduates, whose numbers will rise to about 3.26 million by 2024-25, in large part due to the increases in births between 2000 and 2007. This will be succeeded by a drop in the outer years of these projections, related to the decline in births that began in 2008. Overall, the average annual rates of change for these three distinct periods are: 1.8 percent decline in the two years after the high point of 2010-11; about 0.7 percent growth between 2013-14 and 2022-23; and a 2.1 percent growth in 2023-24 and 2024-25.

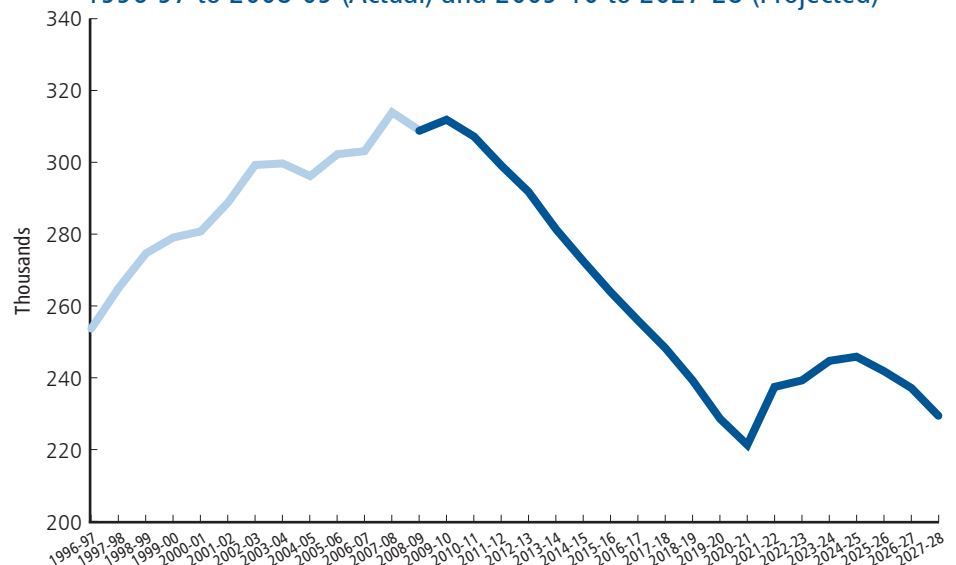
According to these projections, the number of graduates from nonpublic schools peaked in 2007-08 at more than 314,000 graduates nationally (Figure 2.4), about 9.3 percent of the total graduates in that year. Projections indicate that after this high point, the number of nonpublic graduates will steadily decline to a low of about 221,000 graduates in 2020-21 (a 29 percent drop), before making a small recovery (rising to 246,000 graduates) and then dipping again, mirroring the years of increases a sharp decreases in births between 2000 and 2010. By

the outer years of these projections, nonpublic schools' share of total high school graduates will be only about 7.1 percent. This decline in graduates, presaged in the seventh edition, is due in large part to declines in nonpublic school enrollments, beginning in 2001-02 and continuing to the present, especially at the elementary school level.

Associations representing nonpublic schools report that they see similar decreases in students as those indicated by our analysis. About 43 percent of nonpublic school students are enrolled in Catholic schools. According to the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA), 1,942 schools were reported closed or consolidated (23.8 percent

of the total) between the 2000 and 2012 school years, and the number of Catholic school students declined by almost 622,000 (23.4 percent). Elementary schools have seen the most serious impacts.¹² And while one would expect recent rates of decline to slow, the NCEA anticipates further declines for a variety of reasons, including changes in historical predictors of enrollments and an increasing range of public school options, such as charter schools.¹³ The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) member schools account for

Figure 2.4. U.S. Nonpublic High School Graduates, 1996-97 to 2008-09 (Actual) and 2009-10 to 2027-28 (Projected)



Note: Since the Private School Universe Survey (PSS) is biennial, alternate years are estimates based on data from the PSS.

a smaller section of the private school sector, about 14 percent of private school enrollments in 2008-09.¹⁴ NAIS confirms that their member schools did see enrollment declines coincident with the recession; returns to growth are happening but at slower rates than previously.¹⁵

Combining the projections of graduates from both public and nonpublic schools gives a more complete picture of the national changes in supply and demand among traditional-age college students and young workers. Figure 2.5 illustrates how the total number of graduates is expected to change in the coming years. Because public schools supply the vast majority of graduates (and an increasing proportion in years going forward), this figure looks very similar to the one for public school graduates alone (Figure 2.3). It indicates that high school graduates will top out with the class of 2011 at almost 3.4 million, before going into almost a decade of relatively stable production, with between 3.2 and 3.3 million students graduating annually in the decade between 2011-12 and 2021-22. Thereafter, a brief increase is predicted, with a new high point of 3.5 million graduates in 2024-25, followed by a drop back to about 3.3 million by 2027-28, mirroring the change in national birth trends in recent years.

As with any national perspective on demographic change, this one obscures considerable shifting that is happening regionally and in individual states. The next section addresses differences in the projected supply of high school graduates in the four major regional divisions of the country and the states within them.

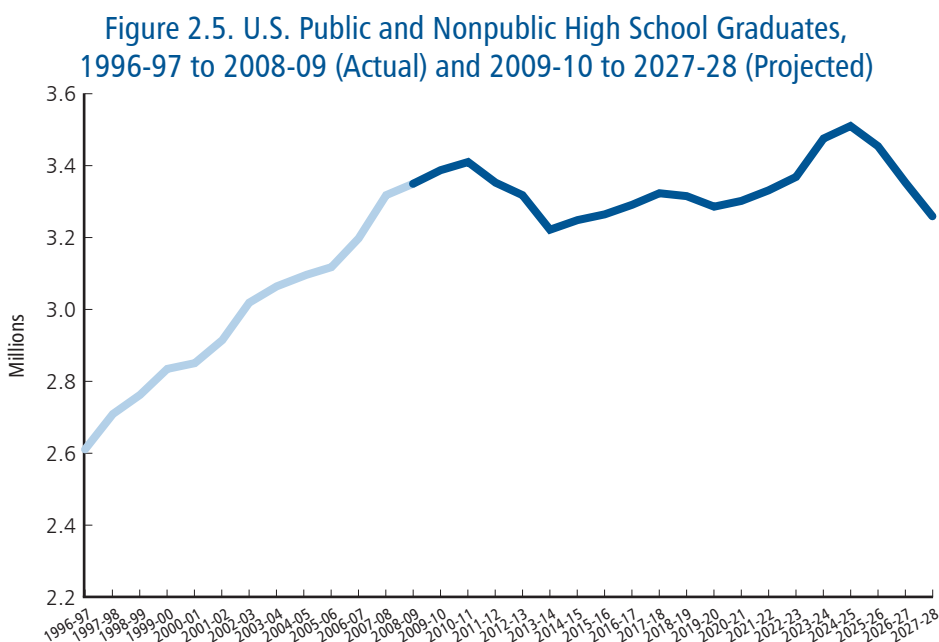


Figure 2.5. U.S. Public and Nonpublic High School Graduates, 1996-97 to 2008-09 (Actual) and 2009-10 to 2027-28 (Projected)

Note: Since the Private School Universe Survey (PSS) is biennial, alternate years include nonpublic graduate estimates based on data from the PSS.

Regional and State Trends

The four regions of the country (shown in Figure 2.6, as we define them for this publication) face very different demographic futures. Figure 2.7 shows changes in the number of graduates from both public and nonpublic high schools for all four regions. It indicates that by the end of the projected time period, the Northeast and Midwest will produce fewer graduates but the West and particularly the South will experience growth.

The Northeast will see a general decline over virtually the entire period, from its predicted peak in 2010-11, with almost 644,000 graduates, to the end of the projections in 2027-28, with 576,000 graduates. This is a loss of about 1 percent per year on average, though the region will see a couple of years of mild growth. The Midwest, which produces about 100,000 more graduates than the Northeast in any given year, is predicted to face a similar but slightly steeper decline. The number of Midwest graduates peaked earlier, in 2007-08, with 772,000 graduates, before beginning a basically uninterrupted projected decline over the next two decades, diminishing the graduating class size by almost 96,000 graduates (about 12.4 percent) by 2027-28.

High school graduates in the West were basically neck and neck with the Midwest through 2008-09 but are projected to surpass the region every year thereafter, throughout the projection period. The number of graduates in the West is forecast to have peaked in 2010-11 at almost 808,000 graduates, followed by several years of small declines and almost a decade of relatively stable production. After a couple years of increase around 2023-24, the Western region's graduating class of 2027-28, the end of the projection period, is projected to be about 6 percent smaller than that of its peak year, with about 48,000 fewer students. Compared to the other regions, the trend in the South is upward. Our projections indicate that the South peaked in 2010-11, with almost 1.2 million graduates, an increase of 239,000 (25 percent) over 2000-01. While there are uneven annual changes, the South is projected to be the only region with net growth by the end of the projection period, 2027-28: 64,000

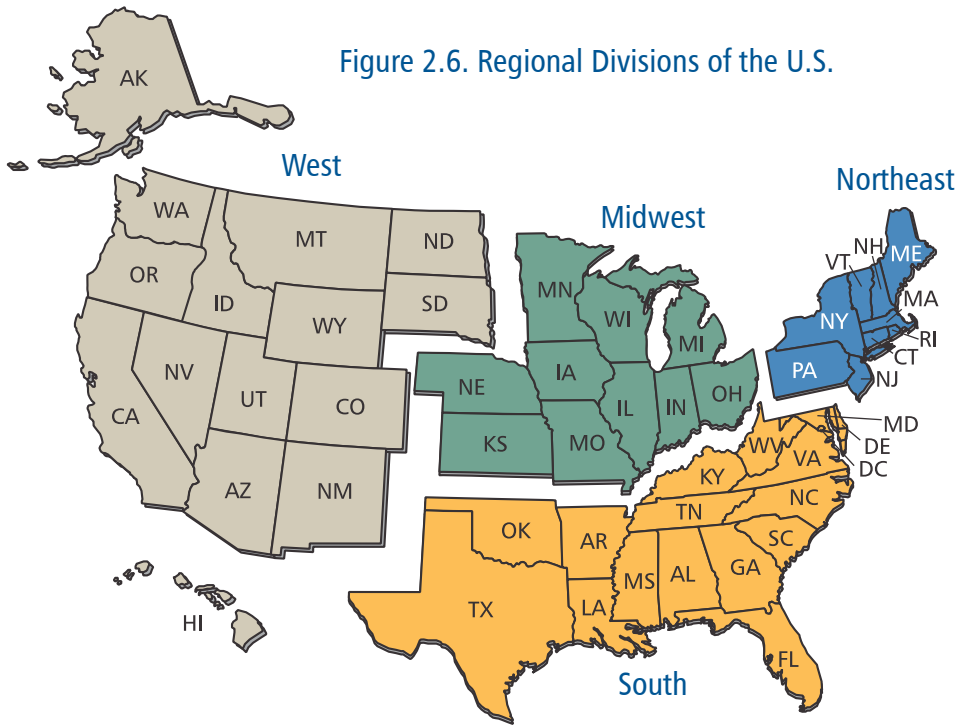
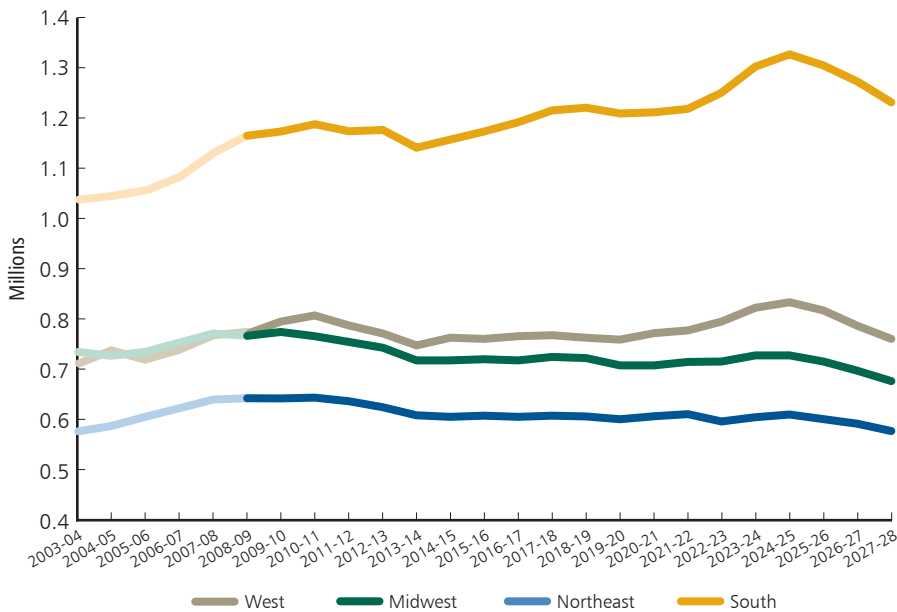


Figure 2.6. Regional Divisions of the U.S.

Note: These regional divisions are consistent with those established by the U.S. Census Bureau, with the exception of North Dakota and South Dakota, which are included in the Western region, as they face many of the same conditions and share a number of attributes with neighboring Western states, such as Montana and Wyoming, and are WICHE member states.

Figure 2.7. Public and Nonpublic High School Graduates, by Region, 1996-97 to 2008-09 (Actual) and 2009-10 to 2027-28 (Projected)



more graduates, a 5.5 percent increase.

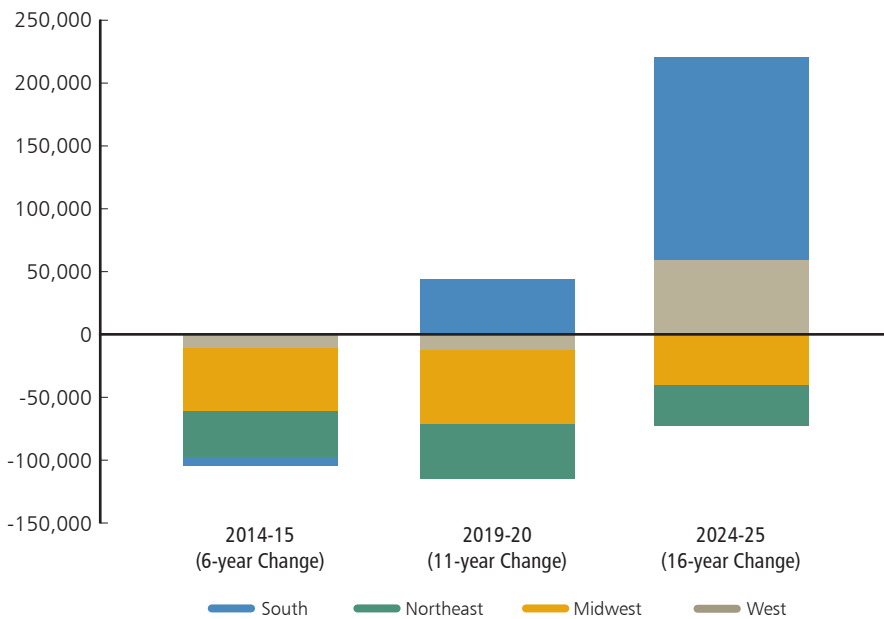
Figure 2.8 provides a view of projected national change in the number of total high school graduates for three different time frames: short term (six years), medium term (11 years), and long term (16 years). It also shows the total change disaggregated by region. The figure illustrates how changes in the projections of total high school graduates for each of the regions contribute to the projected overall national change. As indicated by the left column, in 2014-15 all four regions are expected to have declined compared to 2008-09, with drops in graduates from the Midwest and Northeast constituting the bulk of the downturn for the nation. By 2019-20 there is a small increase nationally in the number of graduates, composed almost entirely of graduates in the South, while the other regions continue to experience declines. By 2024-25 there is sustained if modest growth nationally, coming from both the West and the South, while the Midwest and Northeast continue to decline.

Just as the regional picture can differ from the national perspective, so too the view in individual states often varies from the regional pattern, sometimes dramatically. The following sections take a closer look at each region and its states.

The West

In many ways the West might be called the least homogenous of all the nation's geographic regions. Western states are characterized by diverse economies, ranging from Alaska and Wyoming, which are heavily dependent on natural resource extraction industries, to Colorado and California, which are more in step with globalized high

Figure 2.8. Contributions to the Nation’s Change in Total High School Graduates (Relative to 2008-09), by Region



technology industries, to Hawaii, which is dominated by tourism and a U.S. military presence. Demographically, there is also great variety. The West includes states with very little racial and ethnic diversity and a stable or declining population, as well as states that can already be characterized as majority-minority (where those who are not White non-Hispanics outnumber those who are) and others that have seen their populations explode in recent years, both in terms of total numbers and diversity.

Because it is home to California, the most populous state in the nation, as well to some of the most sparsely populated states, the West occasionally appears to mirror demographic trends that are prevalent in its largest state. It is important to be sensitive to how trends in California affect regional patterns, as well as to point out differences faced by its neighbors.

In addition to migration, births are also a major contributor to overall population change. Figure 2.9 shows how the West experienced sustained growth in births between 1997 and 2007: births increased by 15 percent over these 10 years. Annual births in the West declined sharply beginning in 2008,

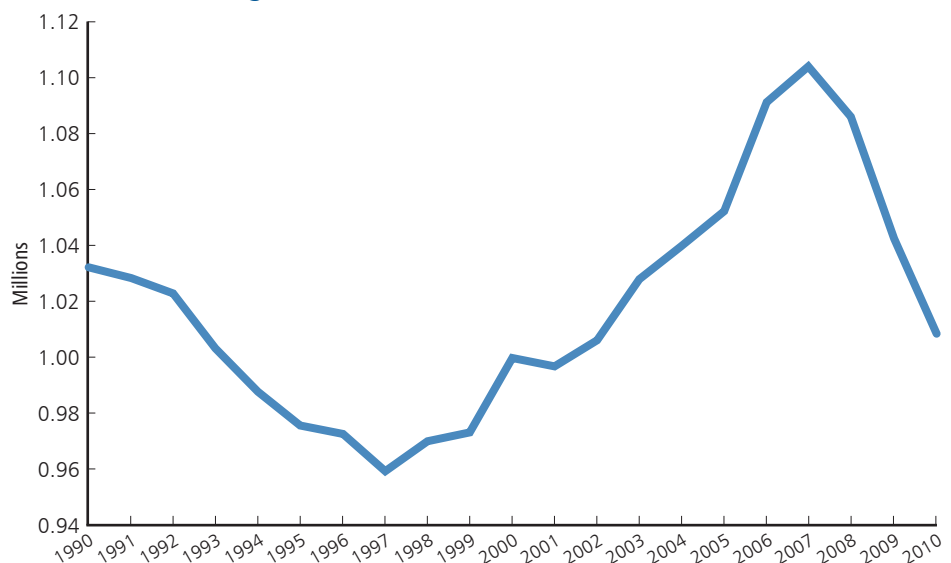
simultaneous with the national decline in births. The number of births in 2010 was almost the same as in 2002. Births in the West accounted for 33 percent of the increase in births nationally between 1997 and 2007 and 30 percent of the decline between 2007 and 2010. On the other hand, the West is the only region that saw a smaller decline in births between 2009 and 2010 than over the two previous years (in other words, a slowdown in the decline).

Elementary and Secondary Enrollments

Table 2.3 displays enrollments and graduates in the West. It shows that school enrollments in grades one to 12 increased steadily through 2007-08, after which there were several years of relatively small declines and a leveling out of enrollments. Total enrollment is projected to surpass the previous peak by 2014-15 and continue growing, so that enrollments in the last year projected, 2016-17, will be slightly higher than those of the last available year of reported enrollments, 2010-11 (233,000 students in grades one to 12, an increase of 2 percent).¹⁶

High school enrollments will expand slightly (2.3 percent) by 2024-25, the last year for which high school enrollments could be projected, after several years of decline and then moderate growth. High school enrollments in the West began declining in 2008-09,

Figure 2.9. Births in the West, 1990-2010



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

after years of steady growth. This decline – slightly less than 1 percent per year on average – is projected to continue through 2013-14, by which time there will be 163,000 fewer high school students than the all-time high of over 4 million in 2007-08, a decline of about 4 percent. High school enrollments are then projected to grow slowly beginning in 2014-15, increasing in pace until reaching and surpassing 4 million by 2020-21 and topping out at around 4.2 million by 2022-23. Projections indicate that enrollment patterns in nonpublic schools in the West will mirror those at the national level, with declines in overall enrollments, driven in large part by declines in elementary school enrollments.

High School Graduates

Between 1996-97 and the last year of actual data in 2008-09, public schools in the West graduated an additional 176,000 students, an overall growth rate of 32.5 percent and average annual growth of 2.7 percent. Between 2008-09 and 2010-11, the year when graduates peak regionally, the West is expected to add another 36,300 public graduates, for a total change of 39 percent. The period of rapid growth is projected to come to a halt after 2010-11. According to the projections for total graduates, which are driven by public graduates, the West will see a decline from the peak of 808,000 graduates in 2010-11 to about 749,000 by 2013-14, followed by moderate growth for

Table 2.3. Public and Nonpublic School Enrollments and Graduates, West

	School Enrollments (Grades 1-12)			High School Enrollments (Grades 9-12)			Graduates		
	Public	Nonpublic	Total	Public	Nonpublic	Total	Public	Nonpublic	Total
1996-97	9,748,541			3,008,776			540,035	44,559	584,594
1997-98	9,947,392	844,355	10,791,747	3,098,082	214,504	3,312,586	563,681	46,576	610,257
1998-99	10,123,227	857,711	10,980,938	3,168,591	219,853	3,388,444	585,011	46,649	631,660
1999-00	10,271,858	874,447	11,146,305	3,235,839	225,536	3,461,375	608,396	49,037	657,433
2000-01	10,409,763	900,225	11,309,988	3,281,013	235,876	3,516,889	617,425	49,305	666,730
2001-02	10,574,613	912,572	11,487,185	3,343,262	243,898	3,587,160	634,682	50,356	685,038
2002-03	10,721,950	898,746	11,620,696	3,447,429	243,327	3,690,756	656,150	51,685	707,835
2003-04	10,867,342	882,097	11,749,439	3,541,591	242,133	3,783,724	657,671	52,957	710,628
2004-05	10,955,595	884,588	11,840,183	3,639,669	249,520	3,889,189	681,870	54,471	736,341
2005-06	11,033,955	887,256	11,921,211	3,729,361	257,081	3,986,442	663,934	55,499	719,433
2006-07	11,069,194	879,371	11,948,565	3,745,440	256,873	4,002,313	682,065	55,557	737,622
2007-08	11,134,691	873,795	12,008,486	3,786,620	258,974	4,045,594	711,636	58,231	769,867
2008-09	11,109,191	827,579	11,936,770	3,776,901	249,284	4,026,185	715,591	56,731	772,322
2009-10	11,058,675	784,546	11,843,221	3,758,310	242,768	4,001,078	737,042	58,031	795,074
2010-11	11,122,234	763,764	11,885,998	3,764,149	232,514	3,996,663	751,903	55,909	807,812
2011-12	11,132,407	747,280	11,879,687	3,714,504	222,137	3,936,641	734,879	51,919	786,798
2012-13	11,192,523	735,889	11,928,412	3,681,146	214,037	3,895,183	720,802	50,810	771,612
2013-14	11,275,090	723,071	11,998,161	3,678,021	204,903	3,882,924	700,086	48,402	748,487
2014-15	11,368,542	712,247	12,080,790	3,712,818	196,535	3,909,352	715,497	46,692	762,189
2015-16	11,413,837	702,997	12,116,834	3,727,940	187,927	3,915,867	714,947	44,732	759,679
2016-17	11,424,284	694,081	12,118,365	3,738,022	178,666	3,916,688	721,491	42,798	764,289
2017-18				3,755,395	169,894	3,925,289	726,704	40,937	767,640
2018-19				3,771,840	168,501	3,940,341	723,299	39,004	762,303
2019-20				3,814,347	169,773	3,984,120	723,789	36,559	760,348
2020-21				3,894,099	174,358	4,068,457	735,456	35,010	770,466
2021-22				3,966,361	180,221	4,146,582	739,320	39,172	778,492
2022-23				4,011,831	180,798	4,192,629	755,233	39,630	794,863
2023-24				3,995,137	179,427	4,174,564	783,618	40,562	824,180
2024-25				3,913,919	175,680	4,089,599	791,411	40,558	831,969
2025-26							777,378	39,822	817,201
2026-27							746,233	38,625	784,858
2027-28							722,493	37,361	759,854

Note: Shaded area indicates the projected period.

several years that will yield 832,000 graduates by 2024-25, and then a decline at the end of the projections period, 2027-28, to about the same graduating class size seen in 2007-08.

State Perspectives

A closer look reveals more details about variation among states and which states are driving the regional patterns discussed above. Overall, the West’s total public and nonpublic projected graduates in any year between 2009-10 and 2027-28 will vary by only 4 percent (more or fewer graduates) from the 2009 graduating class. Most Western states follow a similar trend, with projected graduating classes that are 4 to 7 percent larger or smaller than the class of 2009 in any given year. Nevada’s projections vary the most, showing as much as a 14 percent annual difference.

The five states that contributed the most students to the West’s class of 2009 total graduates were California (53 percent), Washington (9 percent), Arizona (8 percent), Colorado (7 percent), and Oregon (5 percent). By the end of the projection period, California’s contribution to the total will drop to 48 percent, while Utah’s will move up and “tie” with Oregon’s, with both contributing 5 percent to the total. In other words the states that influence trends in the West the most, by virtue of having the largest graduating classes, will remain the same throughout the projection period, with California dominating output in the West’s graduating classes.

Figure 2.10 shows the percentage change in the number of public and nonpublic graduates for each of the Western states in three selected years – 2014-15, 2019-20, and 2024-25 – compared to 2008-09. Projections indicate much less change and growth overall than in our 2008 forecast, which was completed as the number of graduates continued to rise annually by large amounts. Arizona’s public graduating classes will remain virtually the same throughout the decade after 2008-09 and well into the next, with virtually no average annual changes, or small declines, and a net decline of 6.2 percent by the end of the projection period. Nevada’s public graduating classes are projected to grow, albeit much less so than in the past, with 1

percent average annual change and an increase of 24 percent by the end of the projection period. However, even in the high years, Nevada only produces half as many graduates as Arizona does and less than a tenth the number produced by California.

Not surprisingly, given the economic circumstances in recent years, California is also projected to see slowed growth, despite continuing to contribute the highest numbers of graduates. According to these projections, California’s public graduating class peaked in 2010-11 at 395,000 graduates. By the end of the projection period, its graduating class is projected to be 6.4 percent smaller than in 2008-09, with several larger classes in the intervening years being counterbalanced by a number of smaller classes. Oregon, Montana, and Hawaii will see relatively unchanged public graduating class sizes by the end of projection period. But the other Western states can expect to see growth in their public school graduating classes by the end of these projections. Listed by their rank in the West in terms of graduating class size, these states will see the following increases: Washington (14 percent), Colorado (16 percent), Utah (33 percent), New Mexico (8 percent), Idaho (18 percent), South Dakota (18 percent), North Dakota (12 percent), Alaska (7 percent), and Wyoming (26 percent).

Figure 2.11 presents the projections in a slightly different way: state contributions to the total regional change in the number of graduates are shown for three different years, with the top five contributors specifically

Figure 2.10. Percentage Change (Relative to 2008-09) in the Total Number of Projected High School Graduates in Western States

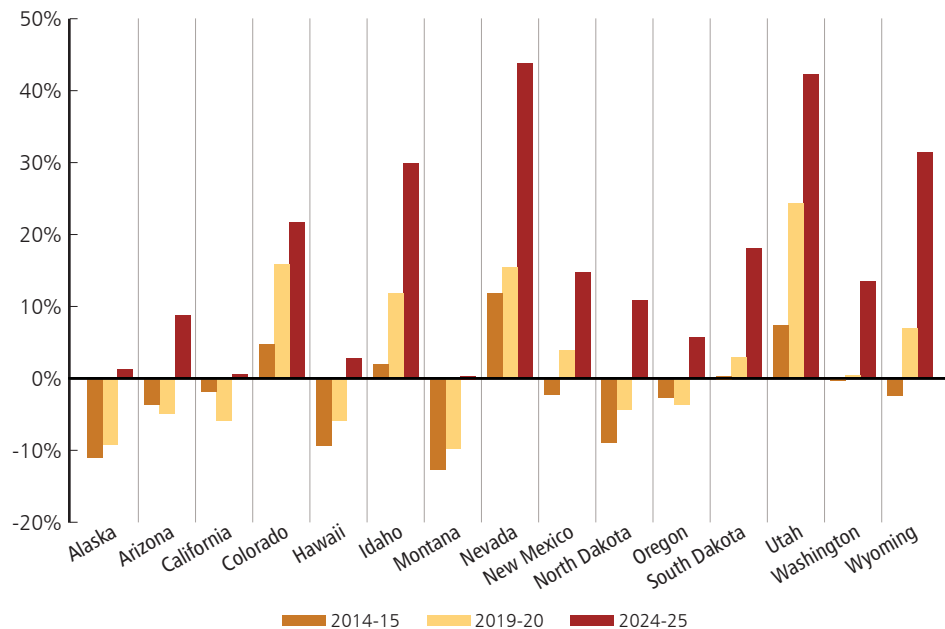
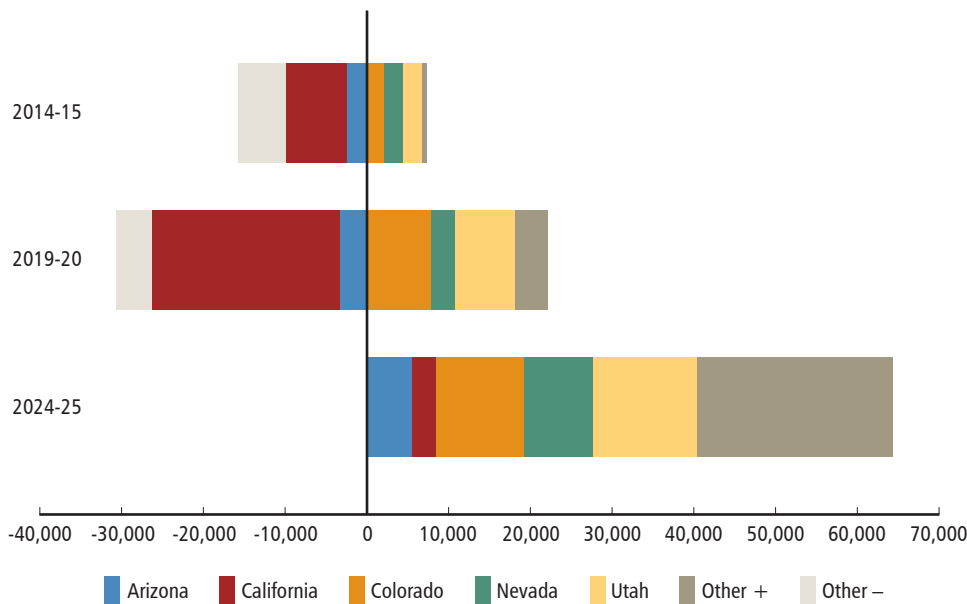


Figure 2.11. States' Contribution to the West's Change in Total High School Graduates (Relative to 2008-09)



highlighted. In summary, the same handful of states that have historically contributed most to regional change will continue to do so. However, California, which contributes overall the most graduates to the West's total, and Arizona, the third highest producing state, are projected to contribute to regional declines in the short and medium term, counterbalanced by relatively stable albeit less influential growth in smaller Western states. In the long term, all states are projected to show growth again before facing declines related to recent drops in births. And states with smaller graduating classes will become more important to growth in the West's graduate numbers.

The Midwest

Struck by the departure of a large segment of the manufacturing industries that drove the economies of many of its states, the Midwest has been experiencing out-migration and stagnant population growth for many years. Although the mass exodus from the Midwest appears to be slowing, the region's long-standing economic woes and related migration provide the context for the enrollments' and graduates' projections that follow. In addition, the region's birth rate has trended downward substantially since the

1980s, with only small fluctuations (Figure 2.12).

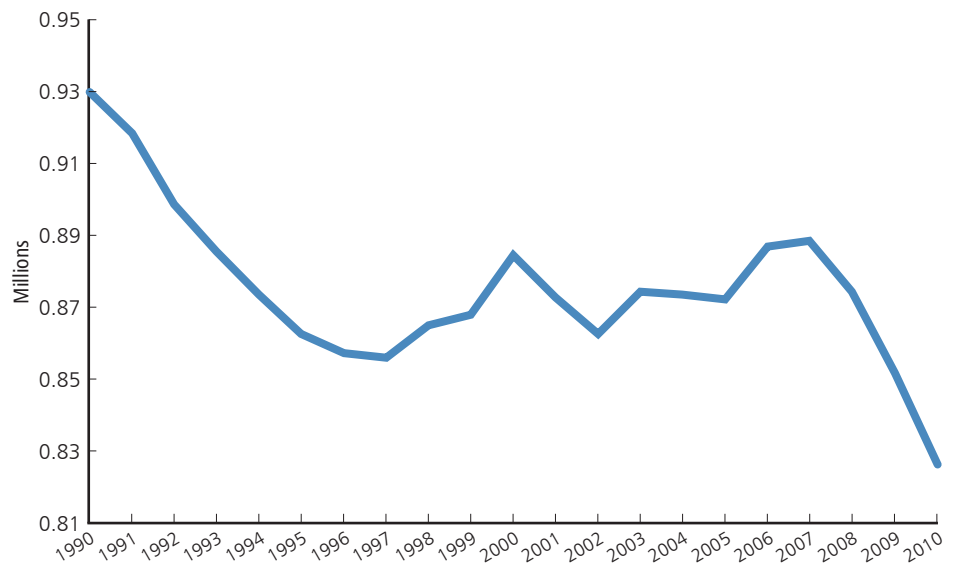
Elementary and Secondary Enrollments

Table 2.4 shows enrollments and graduates in the Midwest. It indicates that public schools in the region can expect to generally see relative stability or small drops in total enrollments during the projection period. Public school enrollments in grades one to 12 will decline by about 1.3 percent, or 120,000 students, between 2010-11 and 2016-17. Nonpublic schools, which account for about 10 percent of Midwestern total enrollments, are projected to see a deeper decline over this time period, of about 7 percent, or 72,000 students, between 2009-10 and 2016-17. Nonpublic schools are projected to have only

about 85 percent of the students they had in 2005-06 by 2016-17.

Midwestern schools, both public and private, have been seeing a steady decline in high school enrollments since 2007-08. Our projections suggest that by 2013-14 public high school enrollments will have declined by 223,000 students, or about 7 percent. High school enrollments are then projected to be relatively stable

Figure 2.12. Births in the Midwest, 1990-2010



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

throughout the rest of the years of these projections. Enrollments at Midwestern nonpublic high schools are projected to fall off even more dramatically, with an average annual decline of over 1.4 percent from 2008-09 through the end of the projection period, 2024-25.

High School Graduates

Total graduates in the Midwest peaked in 2007-08 at 772,000 and began a decline that is projected to end by 2013-14, when the graduating class is projected to be smaller by 55,000 students, or about 7 percent. Over the same years, public graduates will decline by 50,000 (7 percent); and nonpublic graduates will drop by 5,700 (8.5 percent). Following this, the region will

see variable growth and decline in total public and nonpublic graduates between 2014-15 and 2024-25, with an average annual change of less than 0.5 percent. Towards the end of the projection period, the size of the Midwestern graduating class will begin to drop again, mirroring the decline in births that began in 2008.

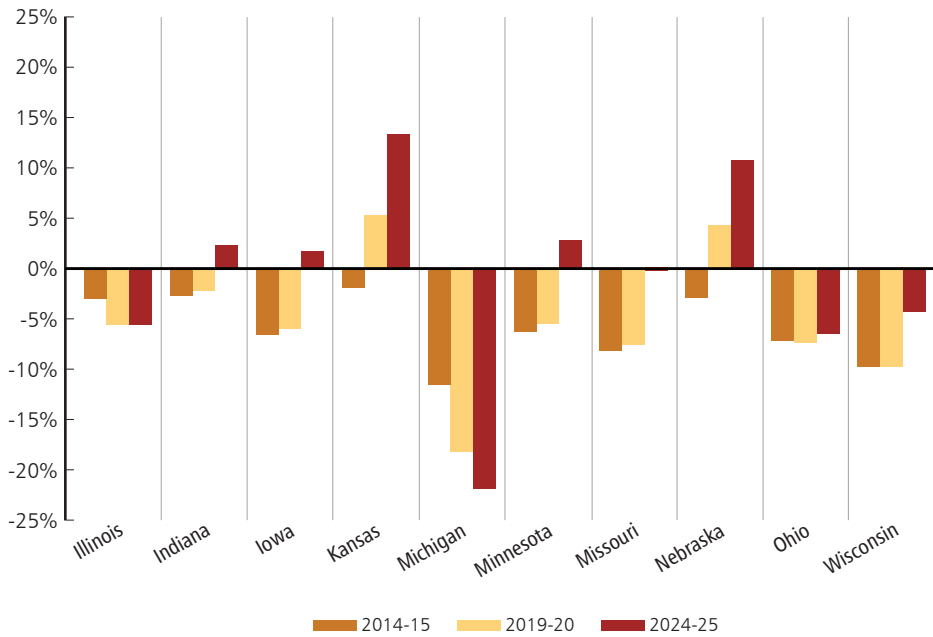
The number of graduates from Midwestern nonpublic schools peaked in 2002-03 at just shy of 71,000 and has been falling since. Despite modest growth in several of the projected years, the number of nonpublic graduates is projected to decline over the entire projection period, falling by almost 16,000 students (25 percent) from 2008-09 to 2027-28.

Table 2.4. Public and Nonpublic School Enrollments and Graduates, Midwest

	School Enrollments (Grades 1-12)			High School Enrollments (Grades 9-12)			Graduates		
	Public	Nonpublic	Total	Public	Nonpublic	Total	Public	Nonpublic	Total
1996-97	9,354,613			3,028,352			601,130	62,503	663,633
1997-98	9,362,387	1,188,989	10,551,376	3,028,008	290,503	3,318,511	623,547	65,377	688,924
1998-99	9,398,589	1,196,705	10,595,294	3,035,875	294,823	3,330,698	628,177	68,289	696,466
1999-00	9,418,161	1,204,764	10,622,925	3,053,253	299,942	3,353,195	630,136	68,771	698,907
2000-01	9,496,254	1,209,534	10,705,788	3,101,443	303,077	3,404,520	627,444	68,899	696,343
2001-02	9,527,408	1,216,651	10,744,059	3,129,030	306,997	3,436,027	634,730	69,999	704,729
2002-03	9,578,806	1,182,175	10,760,981	3,182,348	303,321	3,485,669	656,080	70,859	726,939
2003-04	9,568,112	1,144,695	10,712,807	3,210,867	298,163	3,509,030	663,756	70,501	734,257
2004-05	9,542,835	1,115,404	10,658,239	3,245,435	289,121	3,534,556	660,646	65,856	726,502
2005-06	9,557,681	1,090,089	10,647,770	3,305,286	284,060	3,589,346	668,268	65,324	733,592
2006-07	9,545,714	1,066,516	10,612,230	3,330,574	283,353	3,613,927	687,482	65,953	753,435
2007-08	9,513,037	1,043,035	10,556,072	3,334,177	282,743	3,616,920	705,639	66,456	772,095
2008-09	9,438,772	1,022,945	10,461,717	3,293,062	279,137	3,572,199	702,181	65,471	767,652
2009-10	9,403,809	1,003,217	10,407,026	3,268,493	275,883	3,544,376	707,660	65,422	773,082
2010-11	9,350,184	984,709	10,334,893	3,220,506	270,530	3,491,036	701,863	64,759	766,622
2011-12	9,301,709	967,768	10,269,478	3,167,832	264,487	3,432,320	690,162	64,078	754,240
2012-13	9,282,697	954,332	10,237,029	3,134,022	258,016	3,392,039	680,866	61,547	742,413
2013-14	9,275,928	944,637	10,220,565	3,110,844	252,647	3,363,491	656,022	60,805	716,827
2014-15	9,285,811	934,470	10,220,280	3,127,773	246,588	3,374,361	657,777	59,269	717,046
2015-16	9,272,775	924,112	10,196,887	3,141,518	240,498	3,382,015	661,983	57,987	719,970
2016-17	9,229,693	912,850	10,142,543	3,133,939	233,500	3,367,439	661,610	56,629	718,240
2017-18				3,128,521	226,860	3,355,381	669,290	55,110	724,400
2018-19				3,122,297	224,607	3,346,904	668,307	53,658	721,964
2019-20				3,115,831	223,680	3,339,511	657,031	51,554	708,585
2020-21				3,136,276	225,559	3,361,835	657,945	50,450	708,395
2021-22				3,155,922	228,300	3,384,222	663,168	52,759	715,927
2022-23				3,153,532	227,580	3,381,112	662,085	52,628	714,713
2023-24				3,132,629	225,800	3,358,429	673,583	53,245	726,827
2024-25				3,075,394	221,665	3,297,059	674,587	53,124	727,711
2025-26							662,616	52,160	714,776
2026-27							646,599	51,090	697,688
2027-28							626,516	49,498	676,014

Note: Shaded area indicates the projected period.

Figure 2.13. Percentage Change (Relative to 2008-09) in the Total Number of Projected High School Graduates in Midwestern States



Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio are all projected to consistently see declines. Illinois's total public and nonpublic graduates are projected to have peaked in 2010-11 at 151,000 graduates. While there will be several classes with small increases, the graduating class of 2028 will be 14 percent smaller than the class of 2009 (by 20,000 graduates). Ohio's projections show about the same story, although its peak is projected to have occurred earlier, in 2008-09, with 136,000 graduates. Its numbers will decline by 14 percent through 2027-28, and it will end the projections period with about 117,000 graduates. Michigan peaked with a graduating class of about 124,000 in 2007-08. Despite a couple of years of holding steady, it's projected to

State Perspectives

The number of the Midwest's total public and nonpublic projected graduates in any year between 2009-10 and 2027-28 will be only 3 percent higher or lower than the 2009 graduating class. Most Midwest states follow a similar trend, with projected graduating classes that are no more than 6 percent bigger or smaller than the class of 2009. Three states contributed a majority of graduates to the 2009 Midwestern graduating class: Illinois (19 percent), Ohio (17 percent), and Michigan (16 percent). Other Midwestern states contributed less than 10 percent each. And while the same three states will continue to contribute the most graduates, they'll see a net decline in their numbers by the end of the projection period, driving losses for the region as a whole.

begin a precipitous decline, ending with about 86,000 graduates in 2027-28, a 29 percent drop. Figure 2.14 depicts the projections somewhat differently, showing relative contribution to the total change in graduates by state at three points in the projection period – and demonstrating these three states' prominent role in the region's overall decline.

Figure 2.14. States' Contribution to the Midwest's Change in Total High School Graduates (Relative to 2008-09)

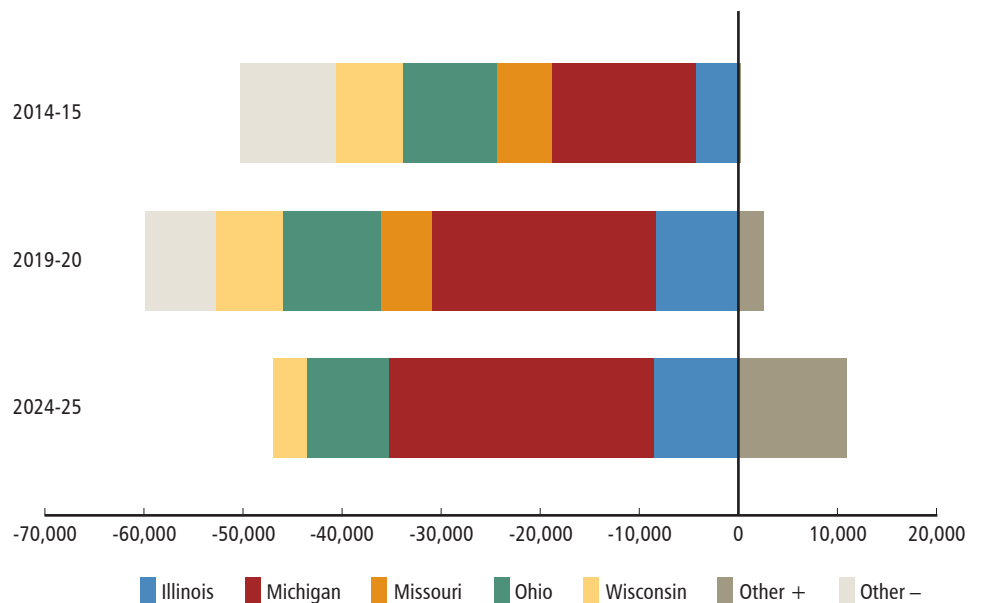


Figure 2.13 depicts the overall decline in the number of public and nonpublic graduates in the Midwestern states, in terms of percentage change in three selected years compared to 2008-09. Only Kansas and Nebraska have positive growth in most years that results in net growth by the end of the projection period (10 percent and 7 percent, respectively).

The other Midwest states – Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin – will follow a similar pattern throughout the projections, albeit with variable graduating class sizes in any given year. Most of these states have peak years in 2008-09 or 2009-10 and then see several years with no change or declines in graduating class sizes through 2020-21 to 2021-22, followed by growth through 2025-26 and then declines in the last two years of the projections period, again related to the recent reduction in births. Net declines in graduating classes by 2027-28 range from 4 to 5 percent for Indiana, Iowa, and Minnesota to 6 percent for Missouri and 10 percent for Wisconsin.

The Northeast

If the demographic future presented above for the Midwest in terms of school enrollments and graduates seems gloomy, the Northeast's is clearly more depressing: the region will also face persistent declines in school enrollments and graduates. The Northeast has struggled to retain its population. The number of births in the region went into freefall in the 1990s (Figure 2.15). Annual births fell by more than 197,000 between 1989 and 1997, a drop of 22.3 percent. Despite some leveling out since then, the region has continued on a modest downward trend – which turned steep again beginning in 2008.

Elementary and Secondary Enrollments

Public school enrollments in all grade levels in the Northeast topped out in 2004-05 at more than 7.4 million (Table 2.5), the same peak year that the seventh edition of *Knocking* projected.

Since then the region has been in a decline that shows little sign of reversing, despite several years of smaller drops and minor growth. Public school enrollments are projected to be almost the same in 2016-17 as in 2008-09, with both points seeing around 240,000 fewer students (3 percent less) than the peak year of 2004-05. A similar story is apparent when looking at high school numbers. Public high school enrollments in the Northeast peaked in 2006-07, at 2.6 million students, and are not projected to go above 2.5 million again during the projection period. By 2024-25, public high school enrollments are projected to have declined to 2.4 million, a drop of about 6 percent from the 2006-07 high point and

about 56,000 fewer students (2.2 percent) than 2010-11, the last year of reported enrollments.

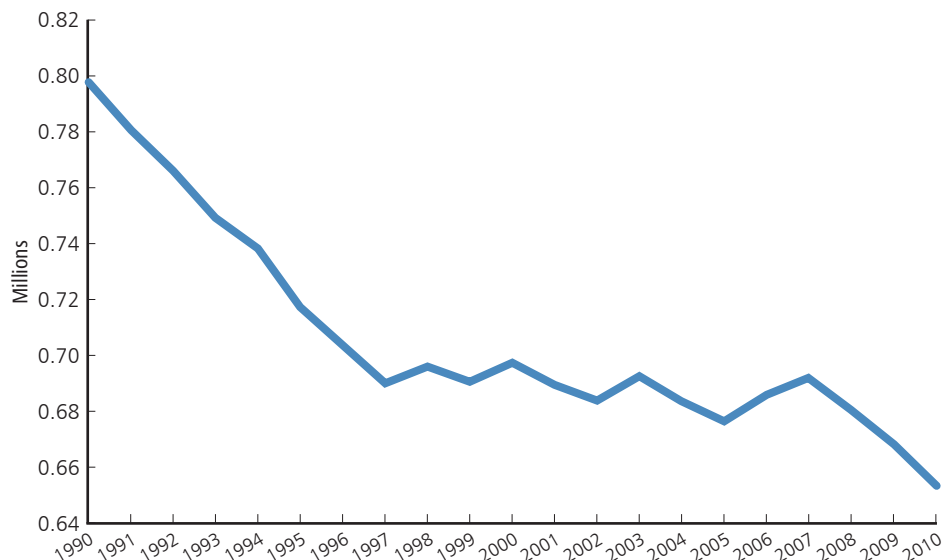
Nonpublic school enrollments in all grades also contribute to the Northeast's overall decline in graduates – dramatically so in a region that is home to a substantial portion of all private schools, and many of the most elite ones. Total nonpublic enrollments in grades one to 12 peaked in 2001-02 at 13.7 percent of total school enrollments. They fell by 183,000 students (15.5 percent) to 12.2 percent of total school enrollments by 2009-10, the last year of available data. As in other regions, nonpublic enrollments are projected to continue to decline. Total nonpublic enrollments will drop by 150,000 students (15 percent) from their 2009-10 level by 2016-17, becoming only 10.5 percent of total school enrollments.

High school nonpublic enrollments held steadier through 2009-10 and were 12.8 percent of total high school enrollments, presumably because of lower rates of migration between the public and private sectors and because the reduced levels of enrollments that began years earlier in lower grades had not yet shown up. But Northeastern nonpublic high school enrollments are predicted to decline precipitously, losing 109,000 students (29 percent) between 2010-11 and 2024-25, at which point nonpublic students will represent only 9.7 percent of total high school enrollments.

High School Graduates

The Northeast has produced more total public and nonpublic graduates each year for many years. It is

Figure 2.15. Births in the Northeast, 1990-2010



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Table 2.5. Public and Nonpublic School Enrollments and Graduates, Northeast

	School Enrollments (Grades 1-12)			High School Enrollments (Grades 9-12)			Graduates		
	Public	Nonpublic	Total	Public	Nonpublic	Total	Public	Nonpublic	Total
1996-97	7,050,478			2,167,545			428,595	74,223	502,818
1997-98	7,130,175	1,136,960	8,267,135	2,198,058	334,948	2,533,006	431,448	75,504	506,952
1998-99	7,185,479	1,142,880	8,328,359	2,211,300	340,174	2,551,474	437,156	76,782	513,938
1999-00	7,254,791	1,150,564	8,405,355	2,244,624	346,030	2,590,654	453,814	77,915	531,729
2000-01	7,311,922	1,165,442	8,477,364	2,280,813	351,936	2,632,749	457,638	79,042	536,680
2001-02	7,378,437	1,178,968	8,557,405	2,338,019	360,739	2,698,758	461,479	82,639	544,118
2002-03	7,415,942	1,152,537	8,568,479	2,393,705	360,759	2,754,464	477,241	86,229	563,470
2003-04	7,419,594	1,125,970	8,545,564	2,451,991	361,850	2,813,841	491,655	84,868	576,523
2004-05	7,426,250	1,097,582	8,523,832	2,508,719	362,393	2,871,112	503,528	83,278	586,806
2005-06	7,383,529	1,072,019	8,455,548	2,541,967	365,757	2,907,724	519,866	85,677	605,543
2006-07	7,379,854	1,069,615	8,449,469	2,599,961	368,063	2,968,024	536,697	85,417	622,114
2007-08	7,266,575	1,066,652	8,333,227	2,543,353	369,818	2,913,171	552,289	87,652	639,941
2008-09	7,181,072	1,030,547	8,211,619	2,502,750	369,646	2,872,396	552,973	88,929	641,902
2009-10	7,198,601	996,204	8,194,805	2,520,907	371,238	2,892,145	552,869	90,258	643,128
2010-11	7,234,643	969,518	8,204,161	2,499,857	362,079	2,861,936	553,381	90,143	643,523
2011-12	7,205,373	944,893	8,150,266	2,467,717	349,258	2,816,975	546,471	88,871	635,342
2012-13	7,182,558	921,258	8,103,816	2,442,784	334,737	2,777,521	536,840	87,257	624,097
2013-14	7,187,072	897,102	8,084,175	2,438,028	318,796	2,756,824	526,820	81,581	608,401
2014-15	7,204,610	877,667	8,082,278	2,456,691	306,789	2,763,480	527,126	78,389	605,514
2015-16	7,210,579	861,274	8,071,853	2,470,481	294,297	2,764,778	531,268	75,279	606,548
2016-17	7,191,302	846,508	8,037,810	2,474,018	282,184	2,756,202	533,164	71,869	605,034
2017-18				2,485,942	271,977	2,757,918	538,701	69,721	608,422
2018-19				2,493,433	266,973	2,760,407	538,242	66,373	604,615
2019-20				2,485,848	264,722	2,750,569	535,786	63,697	599,484
2020-21				2,490,102	265,554	2,755,656	544,249	62,069	606,318
2021-22				2,492,578	268,249	2,760,827	544,655	64,816	609,470
2022-23				2,483,140	266,909	2,750,050	532,503	64,135	596,639
2023-24				2,474,721	265,447	2,740,168	539,873	64,506	604,379
2024-25				2,444,241	262,153	2,706,393	545,163	64,689	609,851
2025-26							536,569	63,538	600,107
2026-27							527,251	62,744	589,996
2027-28							514,868	61,347	576,215

Note: Shaded area indicates the projected period.

projected to continue to do so through the class of 2011, which is projected to have 644,000 graduates. After this, the Northeast’s graduating class sizes are projected to be progressively smaller each year, except for a couple of years of insignificant growth. Two decades later, by the end of the projections period, the class of 2028 will be 10 percent smaller than the class of 2009 (the most recent year of reported graduates), with almost 66,000 fewer graduates. About 58 percent of the decline will be among public high school graduates, whose numbers will drop by 38,000 (6.9 percent) between 2008-09 and 2027-28. However, the impact of shrinking nonpublic high school graduate numbers will

be particularly strong in the Northeast: the nonpublic graduating class of 2028 will have about 28,000 fewer students than the class of 2009, a decline of 31 percent.

State Perspectives

Figures 2.16 and 2.17 both paint a uniformly bleak picture of the future supply of high school graduates in the Northeast, focusing on three years of interest. All states are anticipating declines over the long term – and mostly substantial ones at that. Figure 2.16 shows each state’s projected decline in percentage terms in the three selected years relative to the most recent year of reported graduates, 2008-09. Figure 2.17 highlights the

five states projected to contribute most to the overall decline in the same three years.

In 2008-09, and historically, three states contributed the most to the Northeast's total public and nonpublic graduates: New York (33 percent), Pennsylvania (23 percent), and New Jersey (17 percent). These states are projected to continue to be the top producers of high school graduates in numeric terms at the end of the projections period. However, despite several years of projected variable growth, each of these states is expected to lose graduates by the end of the projections. New York, the state with the lowest net decline by the end of the projections period (1.5 percent), is projected to gain some share within the region and produce 36 percent of the total public and nonpublic graduates by 2027-28. Pennsylvania's graduating class will be 8 percent smaller, with almost 12,400 fewer students than in 2008-09. And New Jersey's graduating class will be almost 15 percent smaller, dropping by almost 16,000 students.

Massachusetts and Connecticut, despite variable years of small declines or growth in their graduating classes, are projected to experience declines of about 16 percent by 2027-28, with 13,000 and 6,700 fewer graduates, respectively, than in 2008-09. The remaining smaller states are projected to experience even higher rates of decline in their future graduating classes: Maine's and Vermont's will drop by 22 percent (3,600 and 1,800 fewer graduates in 2027-28 than in 2008-09, respectively); Rhode Island's by 27 percent (3,200 graduates); and New Hampshire's by 28 percent (4,900 graduates).

In all the Northeastern states, relatively high rates of decline are projected for public graduates over the long term. The drops range from 2.6 percent in New York

Figure 2.16. Percentage Change (Relative to 2008-09) in the Total Number of Projected High School Graduates in Northeastern States

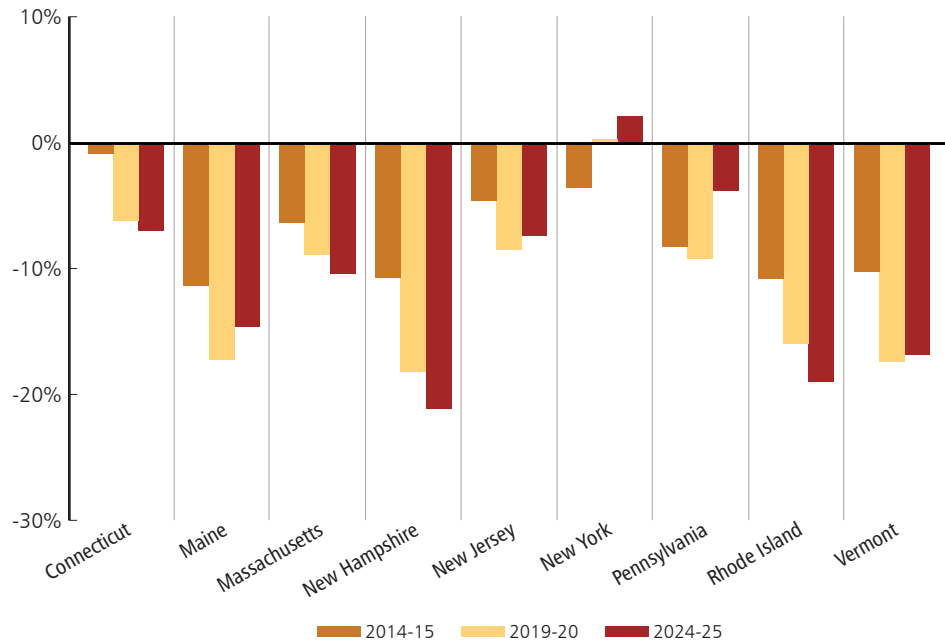
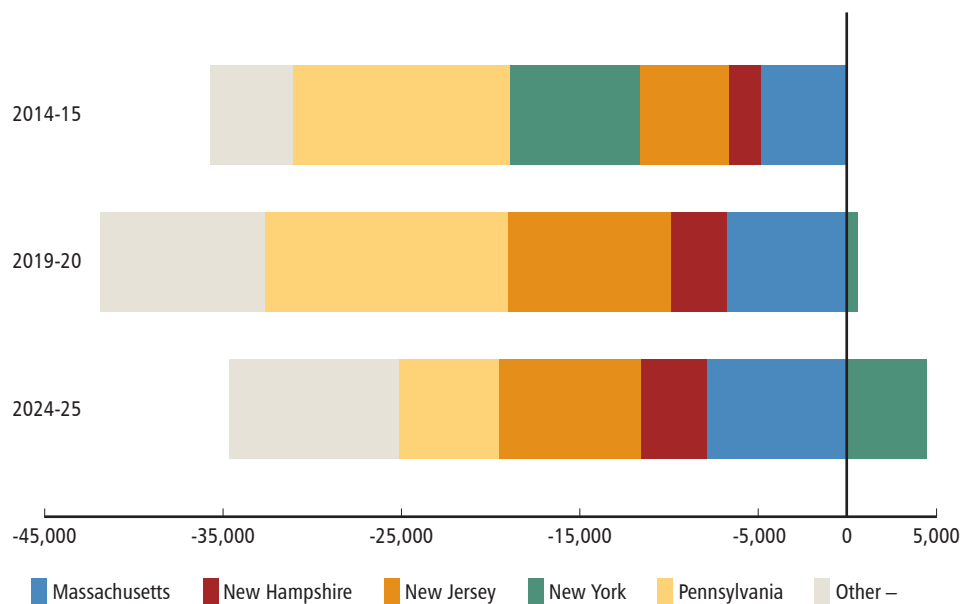


Figure 2.17. States' Contribution to the Northeast's Change in Total High School Graduates (Relative to 2008-09)



and 5 percent in Pennsylvania to as high as 23 percent in Rhode Island and 25 percent in New Hampshire. For all Northeastern states, the rates of decline among nonpublic high school graduates between 2008-09 and 2027-28 will exceed 30 percent, except for New York, which is projected to "only" lose a quarter of its nonpublic graduates.

The South

The South is the most populous region in the nation and has been adding residents at a tremendous pace, through births and migration. While the South’s growth owes much to migration patterns, the pace of births is equally important to future classes of high school graduates. The number of annual births in the South grew each year from 1995 to 2007, before declining from 2008 through 2010 (Figure 2.18). There were almost 256,000 more children born in 2007 to Southern mothers than there were in 1997, an 18 percent increase compared to a decade earlier.

Elementary and Secondary Enrollments

Rapid population growth is sure to create capacity challenges for schools and postsecondary institutions in many places throughout the South. Table 2.6 shows actual and projected enrollments and graduates for public and private schools in the region. Public schools can expect to see the continuation of a steady and rapid increase in the number of students at all grade levels through the 2016-17 academic year. Projections indicate that public school enrollments will climb by 922,000 students, an increase of 5.5 percent, between 2010-11 and 2016-17. Nonpublic school enrollments are projected to decrease by about 5 percent between 2009-10 (the last year for which observable data for this sector were available) and 2016-17. Public high schools in the South will add a projected 589,000 students between 2010-11 and 2024-25, about 11 percent, with pretty consistent annual rates of growth and a decline only in the last projected year. On the other hand, nonpublic high schools in the region will see an enrollment decrease of 13.7 percent (about 57,000 students) by 2024-25, compared to 2009-10.

High School Graduates

The increasing enrollments in the South will translate into many more high school graduates, if historical trends continue. The South is projected to have positive growth in its public graduating class sizes, with an average annual rate of growth of 1.1 percent in 10 of the 13 years between 2008-09 and 2021-22, followed by expanded growth up through 2024-25. The peak year graduating class of 2025 will be 16 percent larger than the class of 2009 (about 175,000 graduates). After this, the South’s public graduating classes are

projected to decline, coincident with the recent decline in births. Despite that projected decline, by the last year of these projections, the South’s graduating class will have expanded by almost 8 percent (83,000 graduates).

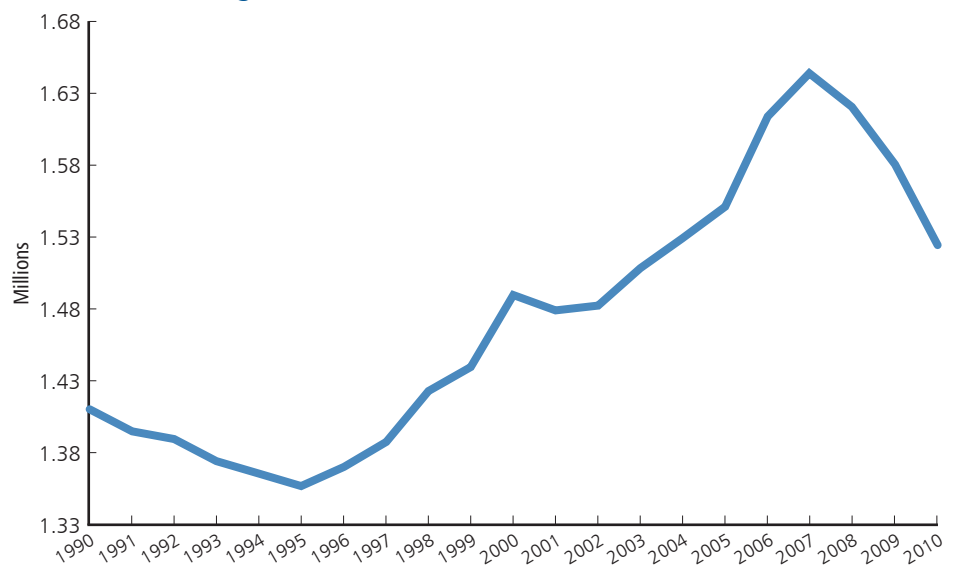
Nonpublic graduating classes will see consistent declines for most of the years of the projections: 2.3 percent on average, with the exception of a brief spike in graduates between 2020-21 and 2024-25, related in part to the birth surge in the early to mid 2000s. By the end of the projections period, nonpublic schools in the South will have experienced a net loss of almost 19,000 graduates, about 19 percent.

State Perspectives

Figure 2.19 shows the percentage change in the total public and nonpublic graduates for the Southern states and D.C. at three selected years relative to 2008-09. Figure 2.20 highlights the five states that contribute the highest number of graduates to the regional change in these three years of interest. Three of these states contributed almost half (47 percent) of the graduates in 2008-09: Texas (24 percent), Florida (15 percent), and Georgia (8 percent). These same states’ share of all Southern high school graduates will increase to 49 percent by the end of the projections period, with Texas’s share climbing to 28 percent of the total by 2027-28. As depicted in both charts, graduates from Texas will dominate the story, both in terms of numerical contribution to the regional total and percentage increase over time.

Texas’s graduating class size, which was 277,000 in 2008-09, is projected to increase by 25 to 30 percent

Figure 2.18. Births in the South, 1990-2010



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Table 2.6. Public and Nonpublic School Enrollments and Graduates, South

	School Enrollments (Grades 1-12)			High School Enrollments (Grades 9-12)			Graduates		
	Public	Nonpublic	Total	Public	Nonpublic	Total	Public	Nonpublic	Total
1996-97	14,648,584			4,436,463			789,143	72,552	861,695
1997-98	14,833,066	1,322,595	16,155,661	4,516,012	353,155	4,869,167	821,372	77,613	898,985
1998-99	14,997,235	1,357,266	16,354,501	4,565,440	364,285	4,929,725	835,286	82,619	917,905
1999-00	15,143,913	1,391,937	16,535,850	4,632,114	375,420	5,007,534	861,498	83,320	944,818
2000-01	15,316,500	1,421,070	16,737,570	4,676,673	383,380	5,060,053	866,693	83,560	950,253
2001-02	15,484,182	1,446,392	16,930,574	4,766,673	389,251	5,155,924	890,643	86,147	976,790
2002-03	15,667,855	1,440,347	17,108,202	4,881,025	392,975	5,274,000	930,476	90,514	1,020,990
2003-04	15,826,991	1,436,107	17,263,098	4,984,752	398,133	5,382,885	946,808	91,715	1,038,523
2004-05	15,999,362	1,442,071	17,441,433	5,101,701	409,002	5,510,703	953,206	92,563	1,045,769
2005-06	16,156,508	1,448,668	17,605,176	5,212,058	420,667	5,632,725	961,344	95,599	1,056,943
2006-07	16,325,236	1,462,726	17,787,962	5,294,984	427,874	5,722,858	986,801	96,132	1,082,933
2007-08	16,455,290	1,480,423	17,935,713	5,330,516	439,713	5,770,229	1,031,773	101,761	1,133,534
2008-09	16,512,400	1,422,023	17,934,423	5,319,828	425,191	5,745,019	1,068,270	97,802	1,166,072
2009-10	16,623,501	1,369,321	17,992,822	5,347,029	416,093	5,763,122	1,076,194	98,517	1,174,711
2010-11	16,730,729	1,350,770	18,081,499	5,366,198	408,674	5,774,872	1,092,516	96,624	1,189,140
2011-12	16,830,851	1,339,328	18,170,178	5,337,141	400,452	5,737,593	1,080,402	94,669	1,175,071
2012-13	17,007,829	1,331,780	18,339,609	5,339,771	390,826	5,730,596	1,083,258	92,834	1,176,092
2013-14	17,212,297	1,321,564	18,533,861	5,374,432	380,420	5,754,852	1,051,890	90,876	1,142,765
2014-15	17,431,515	1,312,276	18,743,791	5,483,472	370,620	5,854,092	1,071,169	88,101	1,159,270
2015-16	17,583,356	1,306,735	18,890,091	5,574,033	361,280	5,935,313	1,089,712	85,249	1,174,961
2016-17	17,652,589	1,299,963	18,952,552	5,620,893	351,361	5,972,254	1,109,932	83,964	1,193,897
2017-18				5,649,509	340,069	5,989,578	1,135,177	82,127	1,217,304
2018-19				5,652,511	338,429	5,990,941	1,141,065	79,441	1,220,506
2019-20				5,698,937	340,773	6,039,710	1,133,747	76,202	1,209,949
2020-21				5,821,364	349,277	6,170,641	1,137,907	73,670	1,211,576
2021-22				5,954,719	360,939	6,315,658	1,138,130	79,968	1,218,098
2022-23				6,046,148	364,307	6,410,455	1,171,598	81,079	1,252,677
2023-24				6,054,553	364,706	6,419,259	1,222,967	83,735	1,306,702
2024-25				5,955,050	359,126	6,314,176	1,243,071	84,654	1,327,725
2025-26							1,222,432	83,297	1,305,730
2026-27							1,191,682	81,819	1,273,501
2027-28							1,151,323	78,924	1,230,247

Note: Shaded area indicates the projected period.

over the long term, to almost 360,000 graduates in 2026-27, before dropping back slightly to 346,000 graduates in 2027-28, the last year of the projections. In contrast to the majority of other states in the region and across the nation, Texas will see increases among nonpublic graduates: a rise of almost 20 percent by 2027-28. Florida will see its graduate numbers shrink by 2.1 percent between the class of 2009 and 2028. With the exception of the brief spike in graduates projected for all of the Southern states between 2023-24 and 2026-27, Florida's graduating classes are projected to diminish in size after peaking in 2010-11 at 158,000 graduates, with classes hovering between 144,000

and 154,000 graduates each year. Georgia's graduate numbers peaked in 2008-09 at 88,000. Following this, Georgia is projected to have generally consistent growth, achieving a new peak graduating class of 102,000 graduates in 2024-25, a 16 percent increase over 2008-09. Its numbers are then projected to drop to 91,000 graduates by 2027-28, in response to birth declines, showing 3 percent net growth from 2008-09.

Many other Southern states are projected to see a similar pattern of peak graduating classes in the early years of the projections, followed by modest growth or decline, a brief spike to new peaks between 2023-24 and 2026-

27, and finally reductions related in large part to the recent birth declines. The dark red bar in Figure 2.19 depicts this, showing how, for the academic year 2024-25, almost all states are projected to experience growth, and at quite high rates. As shown in Figure 2.20, in 2024-25 the combined graduates from the South's smaller states number almost 52,000, or 42 percent of the total growth, a substantial addition to the graduates from top producers Texas, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida. In sum, most of the states in the South are projected to experience growth or stability in their graduating class sizes, though trends will vary. Only the District of Columbia and to a lesser extent Maryland, West Virginia, and Mississippi are projected to have generally flat or declining graduating classes throughout the period. As with the rest of the nation, nonpublic school graduating classes are projected to decline over the projections period in all Southern states, except for Texas and Delaware.

Summary

Nationally, these projections indicate that the U.S. is seeing the first overall decline in its number of high school graduates in more than a decade. While there will be small spurts of growth throughout the projection period, the graduating classes of 2018 through 2023 will hover just below the high of 3.4 million that our model suggests occurred with the class of 2011. Even in the outer years of our projections, there

Figure 2.19. Percentage Change (Relative to 2008-09) in the Total Number of Projected High School Graduates in Southern States and D.C.

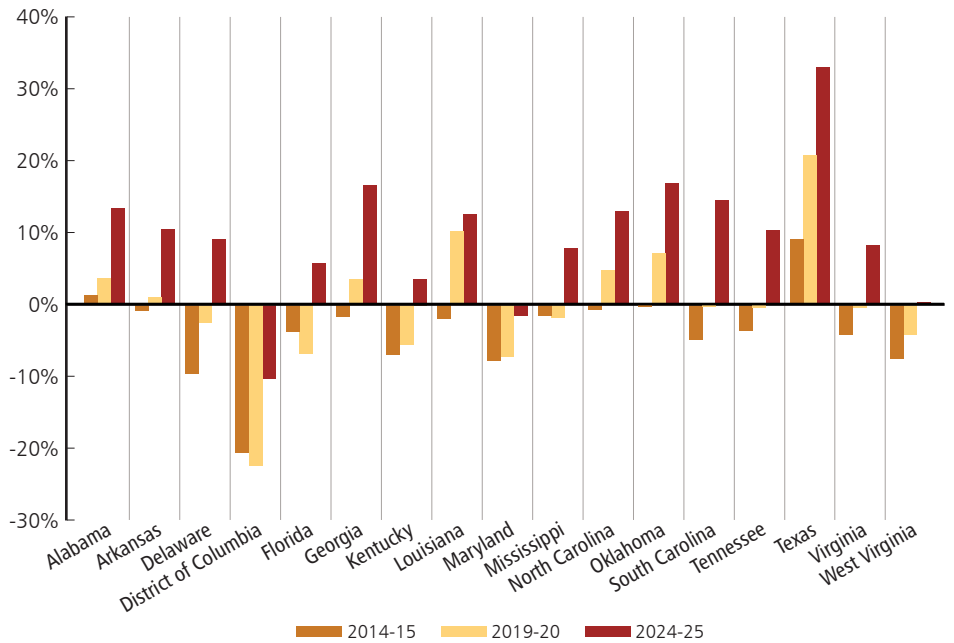
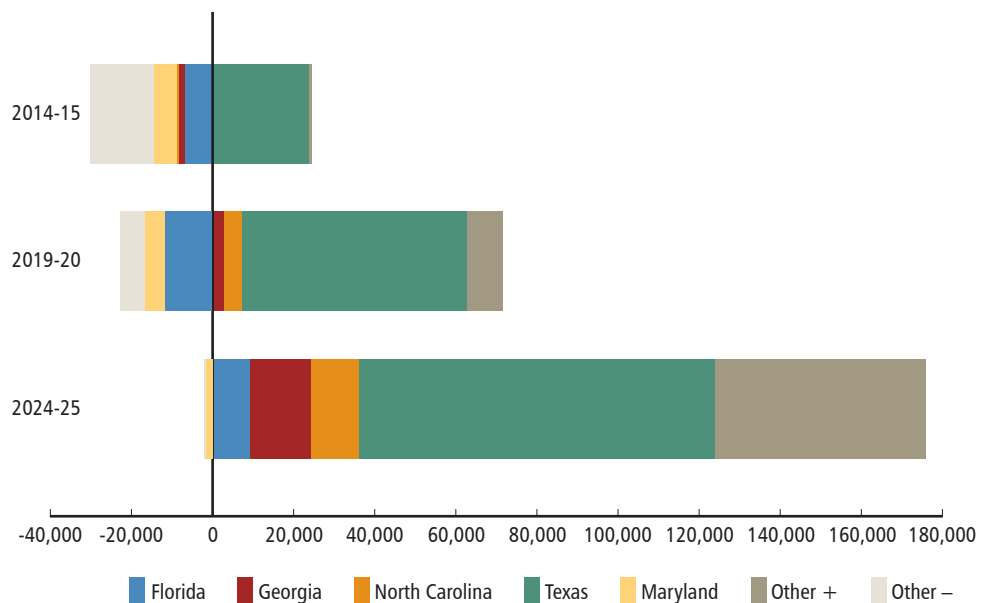


Figure 2.20. States' Contribution to the South's Change in Total High School Graduates (Relative to 2008-09)



will only be a three-year period between 2024 and 2026 when graduating classes will exceed the previous peak, before beginning a decline that pairs with the drop in births that began with the 2007 recession. Declines are projected for both public and private high school graduates, with particularly steep declines in the nonpublic sector. While these projections assume no major changes in historical trends in schooling choices, it would be surprising if such dramatic declines did not influence nonpublic schools to adjust policies, such as those relating to tuition or admissions, moves that would inevitably affect students in both sectors.

Figures 2.21 and 2.22 illustrate projected changes in the states over the short term (six years) and the medium term (11 years). Together, the two figures point to how the forecast changes from state to state and how it differs among states over the two timeframes. While the first half of the period will be characterized by less growth and moderate declines in many places throughout the country, by 2020 growth will pick up and will be fairly significant in certain states. In both cases a number of states in the West and the South stand out for their rapid growth. By contrast states in the Northeast, the upper Midwest, and portions of the West can expect to see their production of high school graduates erode.

Endnotes

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, State and County QuickFacts, data derived from Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits, and Consolidated Federal Funds Report, accessed 20 November 2012 from <<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>>.

² Brady E. Hamilton, Joyce A. Martin, and Stephanie J. Ventura, "Births: Preliminary Data for 2011," National Vital Statistics Reports 61, no. 5 (Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, 2012).

³ Philip Martin and Elizabeth Midgley, "Immigration in America 2010," *Population Bulletin Update* (Washington, D.C.: Population Reference Bureau, 2010), accessed 30 November 2012 from <<http://www.prb.org/Publications/PopulationBulletins/2010/immigrationupdate1.aspx>>; Jeffrey Passel, D'Vera Cohn, and Ana Gonzalez-Barrera, "Net Migration from Mexico Falls to Zero – and Perhaps Less" (Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center, 2012).

⁴ WICHE, *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates by State and Race/Ethnicity, 1992 to 2022* (Boulder, CO: WICHE, 2008).

⁵ Selected resources include: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, "Interim State Population Projections, 2005," accessed 20 November 2012 from <www.census.gov/population/projections/data/state/projectionsagesex.html>. David Ihrke, Carol Faber, and William Koerber, "Geographic Mobility: 2008 to 2009," *Current Population Reports*, 20-565 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011), Figure 3; U.S. Census Bureau, "Domestic Migration Across Regions, Divisions, and States: 1995 to 2000" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2003); U.S. Census Bureau, "Domestic Migration in the United States: 2000 to 2004" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006); U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey, 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011), Table 13.

⁶ For example, the previous Census long form asked about moves in the previous five years, but the more recent annual American Community Survey replaced the Census question with a question about moves within the last year.

⁷ See also William J. Hussar and Tabitha M. Bailey, *Projections of Education Statistics to 2020*, NCES 2011-026 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2011), 7.

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, "Table 5. Cumulative Estimates of the Components of Resident Population Change by Race and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009," NC-EST2009-05 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010), accessed 19 November 2012 from <www.census.gov/popest/data/national/asrh/2009/index.html>.

⁹ Luke J. Larsen, "The Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2003" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2004), Figure 4.

¹⁰ All nonpublic school enrollment and graduate numbers are estimates because the source of nonpublic data is the Private School Universe Survey (PSS), administered by NCES, and by definition survey results are estimates. Because the PSS is biennial, alternate years are imputed estimates, based on data from the PSS.

¹¹ Phone interview with Brian Gray, Communications Office, National Catholic Educational Association, 31 July 2012.

¹² Dale McDonald and Margaret Schultz, *United States Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools, 2011-2012: The Annual Statistical Report on Schools, Enrollment and Staffing* (Arlington, VA: National Catholic Educational Association, 2012), 2-12.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ WICHE calculation, based on statistic that more than 611,226 students were enrolled in National Association of Private Schools' member schools in 2008-09, information from NAIS, accessed 25 November 2012 from <www2.nais.org/indexPrint.cfm?print=Y&ItemNumber=149198>. WICHE also used data from the NCES Private School Universe Survey for 2008-09 (see Appendix B).

¹⁵ Phone interview with Myra McGovern, senior director, public information, National Association of Independent Schools, 30 July 2012.

¹⁶ 2010-11 was the last year of available reported data for public school enrollments, and 2009-10 was the last year for nonpublic school enrollments; 2010-11 is referenced as the last year of available data when referring to the total of public and nonpublic enrollments, since public school students compose more than 90 percent of the total on average.