



January 28, 2019

**TO:** Joint City-Schools Subcommittee  
**FROM:** Erika Gulick, Senior Planner, ACPS; Karl Moritz, Director of Planning & Zoning, COA; Sierra Latham, Demographer, Planning & Zoning, COA  
**RE:** ACPS Enrollment Update

Definitions:

*Cohort Survival Rate* – the rate of change from one grade to the next; these are calculated by school and by grade annually based on final September 30<sup>th</sup> enrollment to the next final September 30<sup>th</sup> enrollment. An average of several years is used for future projections.

*Kindergarten (“K”) Capture Rate* – the percentage comparing the amount of Kindergarten students to the amount of births which occurred five years prior.

*Birth Rate* – the amount of births experienced five years prior and adjusted for the October 1 cutoff date. Data is received from the Virginia Department of Health, mapped for verifying the births occurred to mothers who live within the City of Alexandria, and adjusted for the cutoff date to project K enrollment in five years.

*Student Generation Rate* – the amount of students “generated” or expected by a particular type of development. Generation rates are calculated by different categories including age of building and type of building.

Enrollment Projections:

ACPS and the City of Alexandria have been collaborating on enrollment projections for the school division for several years and continue to evolve the process every year. Enrollment this year reached a total of 15,737 ACPS students in grades pre-K through 12. The projection from last year was 15,884, making our accuracy rate approximately 99%. While this remains within ACPS’s goal of being within 2% of projection, this still equates to a 147 student difference.

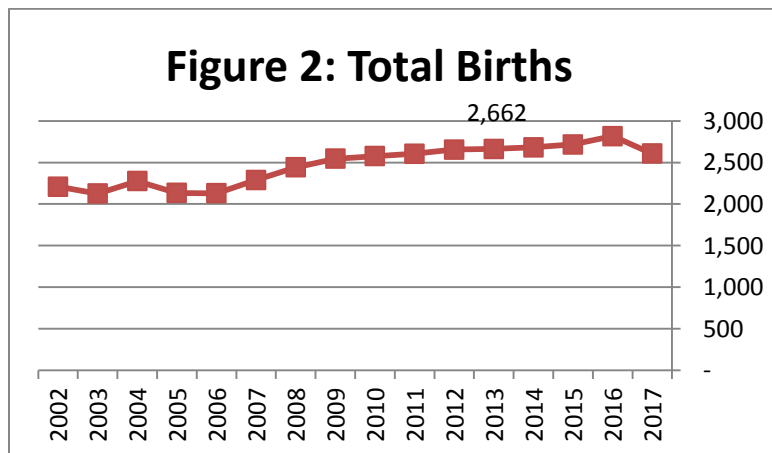
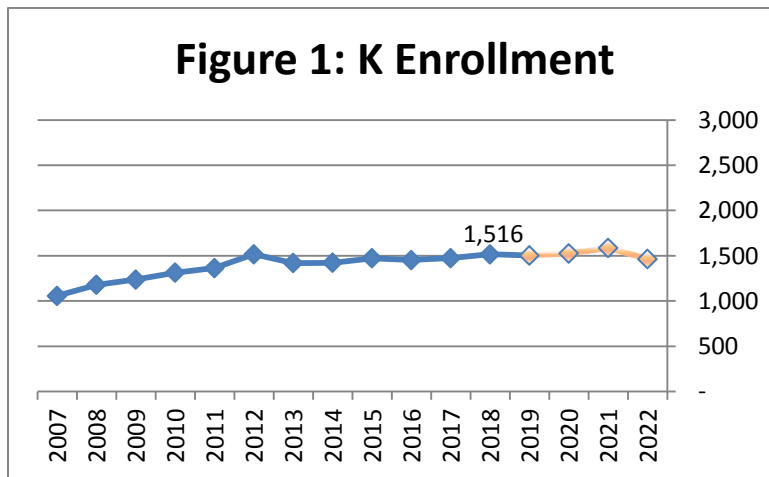
Some notable characteristics of this year’s enrollment were:

- ACPS had 1,516 Kindergarten students, the same amount as the bubble cohort experienced in 2012-2013 school year (see Figure 1).
- The Kindergarten capture rate seems to have stabilized at around 56% of birth rate.

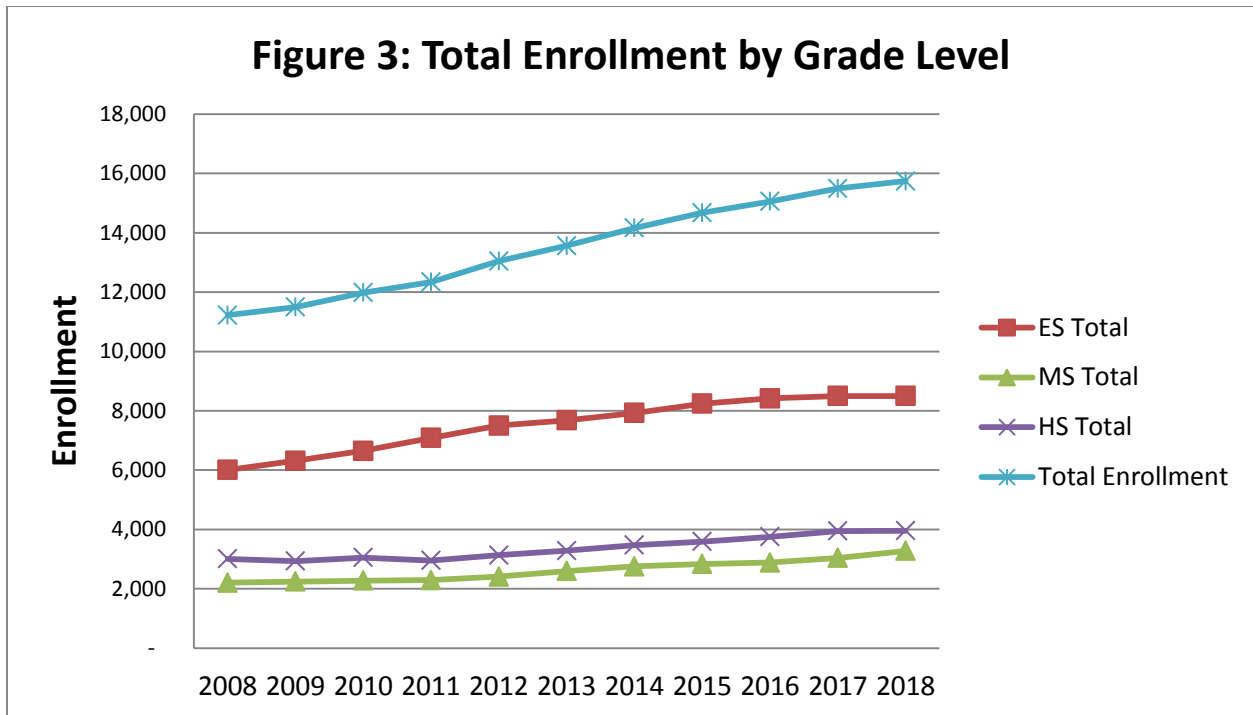
- Birth rates continue to rise through 2016; however, there was a decrease in 2017. Surrounding jurisdictions did not experience this decrease, so no trend change can be accurately expected at this time (see Figure 2).
- T.C. Williams total high school enrollment grew by only 10 students total this year; however, large increases in 9<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment remained constant (see Figure 3).

Given the relative accuracy of the projections, minimal changes were incorporated this year into the projection model for future years. These changes include:

- Using a 2 year average for the cohort survival rate at high school to reflect more recent trends.
- Cohort survival rates for elementary school were adjusted based on redistricting to only account for students who should have stayed at their schools.



Note: Pink represents projected Kindergarten enrollment based on birth data.



Enrollment projections for next year are expected to continue to grow to 15,948 students, a total increase of 212 students or 1.3%.

Student Generation Rates:

ACPS and the City of Alexandria also collaborate on the student generation rate process to be able to assess new development proposals and impacts to ACPS. Going forward, student generation rates will be updated annually and based on a rolling three year average. We intend to update the rates each spring. Generation rates currently being used are based on 2015 to 2017 enrollment. Please see Figure 4 for the latest generation rates being used.

**Figure 4: Student Generation Rate by 100 Units**

