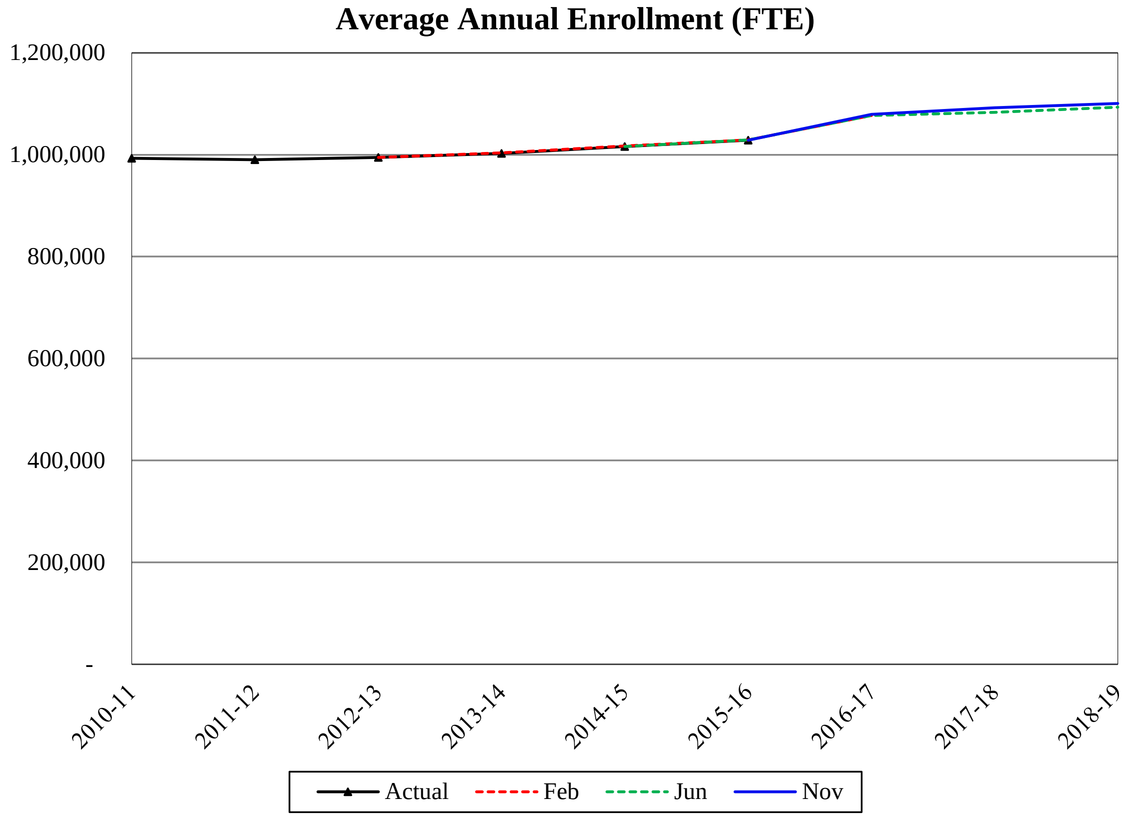
Common Schools Enrollment

Caseload Forecast Council
November 16, 2016



The Common School enrollment forecast is composed of general grade level enrollments and Running Start enrollments, as well as enrollment generated by the University of Washington Transition Program, Open Door Dropout Reengagement Program, summer school, and private and home-schooled students receiving ancillary services from public schools. Enrollment has historically been forecast in terms of a nine month (September – May) average of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) enrollments. Due to changes adopted in the 2012 Legislative Session, beginning with the 2011-12 academic year, the caseload is now measured as a ten month average (September – June). Running Start is forecast as a nine month (October – June) average.

Forecast Comparisons (Academic Year Averages)

Academic Year	Feb-16 Forecast	Jun-16 Forecast	Nov-16 Forecast	Feb to Nov Difference	Percent Difference	Jun to Nov Difference	Percent Difference
2016-17	1,077,126	1,076,753	1,078,964	1,838	0.2%	2,211	0.2%
2017-18		1,083,086	1,091,901			8,815	0.8%
2018-19		1,093,409	1,100,722			7,313	0.7%

For the 2016-17 academic year, the November forecast is within 0.2 percent of the June forecast. For the FY 17-19 Biennium, the November forecast is, on average, within 0.7 percent of the June forecast.

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Tracking the Current Forecast

	Jun-16 Forecast*	Actual	Variance	Percent Variance
Jun-16	1,015,686	1,015,561	-125	0.0%
Jul-16	NA	NA	NA	NA
Aug-16	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sep-16	1,049,456	1,051,121	1,665	0.2%
Oct-16	1,079,650	1,082,082	2,432	0.2%

*K12 and Running Start FTEs

Since June, the variance in actual enrollments to forecasted enrollments has been 0.2 percent or less. Due to a Supreme Court ruling on charter schools, the majority of these schools were absorbed into the Mary Walker school district and were run as Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) programs. As a result, their enrollment continues to be reflected in the forecast of common school enrollment for the 2015-16 academic year. Beginning in the 2016-17 academic year, however, charter school enrollment is forecasted separately in response to a proviso included in the enacted supplemental operating budget.

Academic Year Caseload Change

	Academic Year	Caseload	Change from Prior Year	Percent Change
Actual	2009-10	988,501		
	2010-11	992,905	4,405	0.4%
	2011-12	990,422	-2,483	-0.3%
	2012-13	994,836	4,414	0.4%
	2013-14	1,002,769	7,933	0.8%
	2014-15	1,016,069	13,300	1.3%
	2015-16	1,028,594	12,525	1.2%
Forecast	*2016-17*	*1,078,964*	*50,370*	*4.9%*
	2017-18	*1,091,901*	*12,937*	*1.2%*
	2018-19	*1,100,722*	*8,821*	*0.8%*

From academic years 2002-03 through 2010-11, the caseload had grown annually by 0.6 percent, on average. In the 2011-12 academic year, enrollment declined for the first time in two decades. This decline was partially a result of the change in calculating annual FTE enrollment from a nine month to a ten month average as well as additional policy changes, including requirements for ALE programs, the 1.2 FTE limitation applied to Running Start enrollment, a decline in net migration, and private school crossover. In academic year 2014-15, enrollment increased by 1.3 percent due to a combination of effects including increases in the Running Start program, increases in the Open Door Dropout Reengagement program, and effects of net migration on the caseload as a result of a recovering economy.

Enrollment in the 2015-16 academic year increased by an additional 12,525 FTE enrollments, or 1.2 percent. Roughly 32 percent of this increase can be attributed to higher rates of migration due

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to an improving economy while another 12 percent is from increases in Running Start enrollments. The remaining growth is due to overall changes in general enrollments.

The 2016-17 academic year is anticipated to increase by about 50,370 FTE enrollments (or 4.9 percent), most of which is directly attributable to implementation of full day Kindergarten.[1] Additionally, the November forecast assumes that with higher employment, forecasted by the Economic and Revenue Forecast Council, the higher rates of migration will continue. The remaining growth can be attributed to increases in Running Start enrollments as well as other changes in general enrollments.

Approximately 3,400 of the increased enrollment in 2017-18 is due to a technical error in the June forecast. The majority of the remaining growth anticipated in the 2017-19 biennium is attributable to continued increases in migration and Running Start.

Risks to the Forecast

The risks to the Common Schools enrollment forecast (K-12 and Running Start) are high primarily due the changing economic picture which impacts net migration and transfers, creation of the College in the High School Program (which may continue to shift enrollment from Running Start to general enrollments), and policy changes regarding charter schools.

It is also worth noting that the increase in annual births that began in 2000 stalled in 2009, when for the first time in a decade the number of births in the state declined. State births declined further in 2010 and have remained fairly constant through 2012. Should this mark the end of the ten year period of increasing annual births, the impact on K-12 enrollment will begin to be felt in 2015 and 2016 when the 2009 birth cohort enters first grade. Given the five to six year delay from birth to school enrollment, any continued decline in births will result in a longer term reduction in enrollment growth.

[1] Pursuant to RCW 28A.150.1981, full day Kindergarten is not considered an entitlement until fully implemented.

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