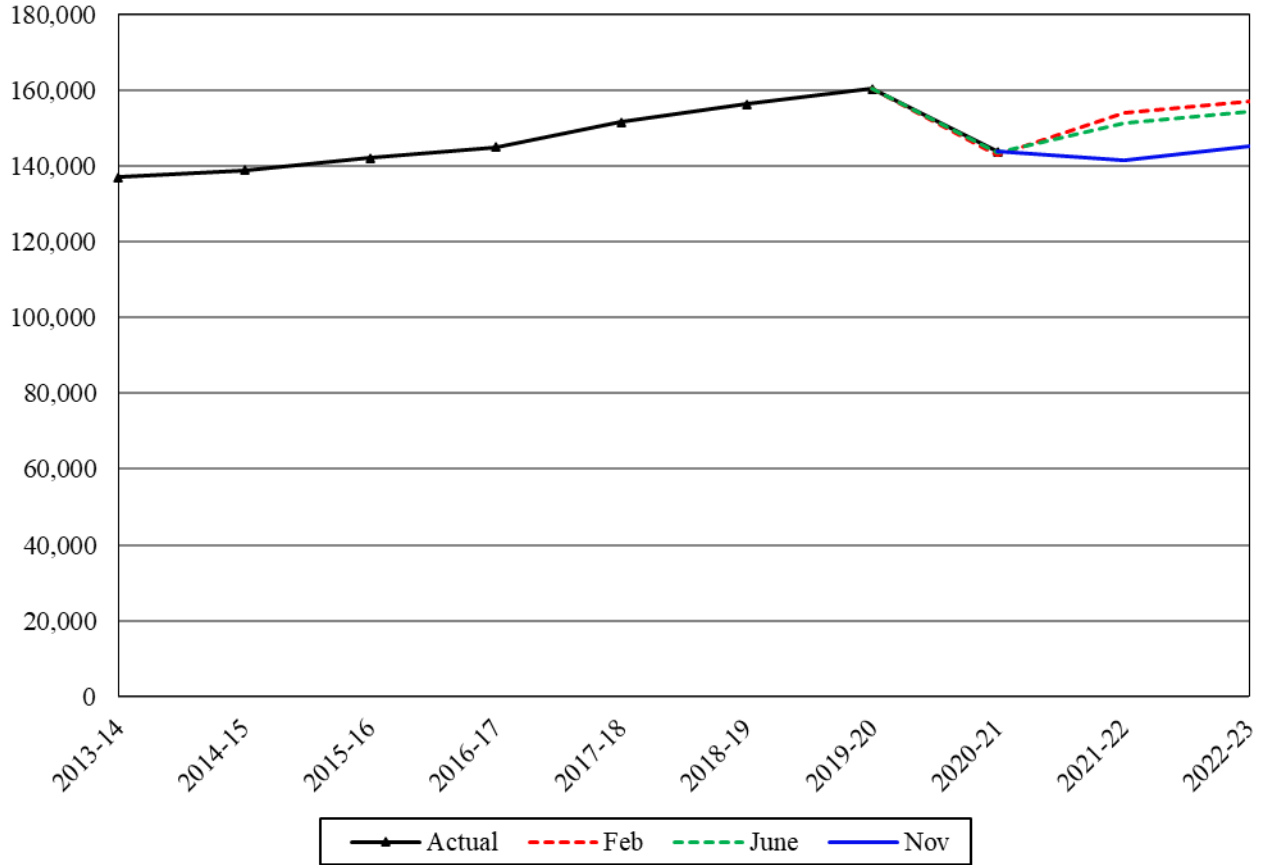


Common School Special Education

Caseload Forecast Council
November 09, 2021

**Special Education Average Annual Enrollment (HC)
(Age 3-PreK and State Funded Age K-21)**



The Common School Special Education forecast consists of two programs: a separately funded Age 3-Pre-Kindergarten program, and the Age K-21 school-based Special Education program, indexed to 13.5 percent of each school district’s total full-time equivalent enrollment. Up until the 2020-21 school year, Special Education also included the Age 0-2 Infant and Toddler program.

Forecast Comparisons (Academic Year Averages)

| Academic Year | Feb-21 Forecast | Jun-21 Forecast | Nov-21 Forecast | Feb to Nov Difference | Percent Difference | Jun to Nov Difference | Percent Difference |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 2021-22 | 153,851 | 151,408 | 141,455 | -12,396 | -8.1% | -9,953 | -6.6% |
| 2022-23 | 156,866 | 154,457 | 145,167 | -11,699 | -7.5% | -9,291 | -6.0% |

The November 2021 forecast is, on average, 12,048 students or 8.1 percent lower than the February forecast, and 9,622 students or 6.3 percent lower than the June forecast for the 2021-23 Biennium.

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Tracking the Current Forecast

| | Jun-21 | | | Percent |
|--------|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| | Forecast | Actual | Variance | Variance |
| Oct-21 | 154,384 | 144,835 | -9,549 | -6.2% |

*Special education reported program headcount (Age 3-21)

The reported Special Education enrollment is tracking 6.2 percent below forecast. However, Special Education 3-PreK enrollment is tracking 14.9 percent below forecast, while the tracking of K-21 is 5.6 percent below forecast. The tracking data is of reported Special Education enrollment. These numbers are slightly different from the forecasted caseload which, for those in the K-21 program, includes only students funded under the Special Education basic funding target.

Academic Year Caseload Change

| | Academic Year | Caseload | Change from Prior Year | Percent Change |
|-----------------|---------------|----------|------------------------|----------------|
| Actual | 2013-14 | 136,983 | | |
| | 2014-15 | 138,909 | 1,926 | 1.4% |
| | 2015-16 | 141,992 | 3,083 | 2.2% |
| | 2016-17 | 145,006 | 3,014 | 2.1% |
| | 2017-18 | 151,515 | 6,509 | 4.5% |
| | 2018-19 | 156,201 | 4,686 | 3.1% |
| | 2019-20 | 160,361 | 4,160 | 2.7% |
| | 2020-21 | 143,761 | -16,600 | -10.4% |
| <i>Forecast</i> | 2021-22 | 141,455 | -2,306 | -1.6% |
| | 2022-23 | 145,167 | 3,711 | 2.6% |

The Special Education forecast declined in 2020-21 for two reasons. First, the state-funded Birth to Age 2 Special Education program shifted from OSPI to the Early Support for Infant and Toddlers program at DCYF. This reduced the 2020-21 forecast by 10,381. Second, Special Education enrollment declined due to concerns about COVID-19 and remote/hybrid schooling.

In 2021-22, the Special Education enrollment continued to decline, both in 3-PreK and K-age 21, rather than rebound as assumed in the February and June forecast. The 3-PreK participation rate is expected to rebound once children under 5 have access to vaccination. However, due to declining birth rates, this younger group will not rebound to pre-pandemic levels. The Special Education K-21 caseload, like Common Schools, will shift and follow a slower growth trajectory than pre-pandemic. However, it is assumed that trajectory will be slightly higher than Common Schools.

Risks to the Forecast

The risks to the Special Education enrollment forecast are high. Special Education enrollment is subject to the same risks as the Common Schools forecast during this period of uncertainty.

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