

***Enrollment Trends in
South Coast Schools
And School Districts***

California Center for Public Policy

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Executive Summary

Enrollment in southern Santa Barbara county public schools and school districts in the coming years can be predicted. In general, enrollment will remain about stable, though in about 2016 a period of modest declining enrollment will start in elementary schools which will show up in junior highs a few years later.

As the first chapter here, "Birth Trends," examines, there has historically been a close relationship between births at Cottage Hospital and subsequent school enrollment, and births at Cottage Hospital have declined substantially in recent years. Typically, about 1 percent of students, net, move from south coast schools in any given year.

Data are available for different periods of time for different districts. The district for which the most data are available is the Santa Barbara Unified School District, where in some cases data are available for almost a century. For most other districts, data are available for about the past 30 years.

The Santa Barbara Unified School District (SBUSD) is the largest district on the south coast, with about two-thirds of total public K-12 enrollment. Elementary enrollment should increase next year and then plateau for the next two school years before beginning to decline modestly in about 2016-17. Secondary enrollment in the SBUSD will remain similar to what it currently is for the next decade. Enrollment at high schools will be particularly stable.

Enrollment in the Goleta Union School District will probably experience the largest decline in the next 5 to 10 years, unless there is renewed development in the Goleta Valley. Enrollment in the Hope School District will be relatively stable for the next five years, as will that in the Montecito Union and Cold Spring School Districts.

Carpinteria Unified School District has become increasingly diverse in recent decades. Its total enrollment will also be relatively stable in the coming years, though it will begin to experience modest declining enrollment, starting at the elementary level, in about five years.

With respect to the size of schools, the Santa Barbara Unified School District will continue to have the largest elementary schools on the south coast for the foreseeable future.

Contents

1. Birth Trends	4
2. Santa Barbara Unified School District	9
3. Goleta Union School District	13
4. Hope School District	15
5. Montecito Union and Cold Spring School Districts	16
6. Carpinteria Unified School District	17
7. Size of Schools	19

1. Birth Trends

Births drive the enrollment train in local, as all, schools. When there are more births, there is greater school enrollment starting in five years. When there are fewer births, school enrollment will eventually start to decline.

The biggest wave to go through the educational system was the baby boom generation, whose increasing numbers resulted in higher and higher enrollments throughout most of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Throughout this period, schools opened--first at the elementary level, then at the junior high level and finally at the high school level.

The baby boom was followed by the birth dearth, and enrollments began to decline in the late 1970s and through the 1980s. Locally, many schools were closed at the elementary level. Serious attempts were made to close both a local junior high and a local high school, but these efforts were unsuccessful.

Then, starting in the mid-1980s, school enrollment began to increase at the elementary level. This was followed by an increase at the secondary level starting in about 1990. The increase in enrollments paralleled, at a remove of the appropriate number of years, the increase in births which local hospitals experienced from the late 1970s through 1990s, when births stabilized.

Fortunately, data are available on births in local hospitals and subsequent enrollment for many years. Careful examination of these data reveals that, contrary to earlier state and local projections, births are declining considerably at this point--on the south coast, in the county and in the state of California.

As presented in the chart on the next pages, births in local hospitals have fluctuated significantly over the years (the figures presented here include births at the former St. Francis and Goleta Valley hospital birthing centers, as well as Cottage Hospital). In addition to births in local hospitals, kindergarten enrollment five years later in all the school districts on the south coast is provided, together with the ratio of kindergarten enrollment five years later to births:

1.1 Births in Local Hospitals, K Enrollment 5 years Later, Ratio

Year	Births	K enrol, 5 yrs ltr	Ratio
1983	2,570	1,571	.611
1984	2,561	1,590	.621
1985	2,566	1,577	.615
1986	2,652	1,620	.611
1987	2,735	1,630	.596
1988	2,936	1,692	.576
1989	3,226	1,889	.586
1990	3,466	2,012	.580
1991	3,285	1,865	.568
1992	3,160	1,898	.601
1993	3,204	1,889	.590
1994	3,127	1,754	.561
1995	2,997	1,719	.574
1996	2,988	1,708	.572
1997	2,932	1,706	.582
1998	2,866	1,685	.588
1999	2,755	1,640	.595
2000	2,805	1,675	.597
2001	2,797	1,533	.548
2002	2,600	1,535	.590

2003	2,663	1,513	.568
2004	2,910	1,642	.564
2005	2,772	1,591	.574
2006	2,703	1,602	.593
2007	2,788	1,645 (proj)	.590
2008	2,759	1,628 (proj)	.590
2009	2,591	1,529 (proj)	.590
2010	2,476	1,461 (proj)	.590
2011	2,384	1,407 (proj)	.590
2012	2,200 (proj)	1,298 (proj)	.590

Perhaps most significantly, the number of births at Cottage Hospital during the first six months of 2012 was merely 1,082, which would be a yearly total of fewer than 2,200. This would be a lower number of local births than for years and would be down more than 20 percent from the average number of births annually between 2004 and 2008.

Will the trend toward fewer local births since 2009 continue? It likely will, since it is part of a broader trend. The next chart shows births in the state of California and in all of Santa Barbara county between 2001 and 2010:

1.2 Births in California and Santa Barbara County

Year	Calif	SB Co
2001	527,371	5,612
2002	529,245	5,698
2003	540,827	5,800
2004	544,685	6,209

1.2 Births in Calif and SB County (cont'd)

2005	548,700	6,192
2006	562,157	6,166
2007	566,137	6,289
2008	551,567	6,319
2009	526,774	6,039
2010	509,979	5,819

As can be seen, there has been a drop-off in the number of births in California and all of the county. This was almost 10 percent at the state level between 2007 and 2010, and almost 8 percent in the county between 2008 and 2010.¹

Future births will be substantially influenced by the economy. Births, in general, decline during recessions and depressions. For purposes of this report, it will be assumed that the number of south coast births will decline to 2,200 in 2012, and then stabilize at that point.

This is a major change from earlier enrollment projections. In the early 2000s, the California State Department of Finance issued birth projections for the state as a whole and by county which showed births increasing by 20 to 25 percent in the period between the early 2000s and 2030. If it now were the case that births would stabilize at their present amount, this would have significant implications for future enrollment.

It is likely that at some point between now and 2030 births will resume their upward course. However, it is also likely that the trend of recent years will continue for at least some time--this trend also encompasses the influence of the economy on immigration. As a result of the down-turn in the national economy, which is particularly pronounced in California, net immigration from Mexico to

¹ This trend also exists at the national level: "The number of babies born per 1,000 women of childbearing age fell to 63 in the 12 months that ended in June of this year, the lowest since at least 1920 and well below the recent high of 69 recorded in 2007" ("America's Demographic Squeeze," The Economist [December 15, 2012], p. 31).

the United States has been at a standstill for the past several years, though immigration, too, should increase with a stronger economy. The most likely scenario is that enrollments will be somewhat lower in the period of the next ten to fifteen years than previously thought, but that in time the trend toward more births and thus higher enrollments will resume. This resumption of the trend to increased births and enrollment is, however, beyond the time horizon of this report.

The analysis here is broadly parallel to and consistent with that of the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG), which has projected school enrollment growth in northern Santa Barbara County in the coming years and a slight enrollment decline in southern Santa Barbara County: “Continued school enrollment decline in the South Coast suggests that young families may be migrating out of the area. If they continue to leave the South Coast, family size and consequent number of overall births would decline to some extent as well. Recent population estimates from the Department of Finance show a continuing decline in population growth rates for South Coast cities that seems to confirm this trend.”²

According to SBCAG, private school enrollment on the south coast has declined considerably in recent years. It is probably the case that a higher proportion of children within the boundaries of the Santa Barbara Unified School District attend public school as distinct from private school than was formerly the case.

² Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, Regional Growth Forecast, 2010-2040 (December 2012), p. 49.

2. Santa Barbara Unified School District

The Santa Barbara Unified School District (SBUSD)--comprised of the former Santa Barbara Elementary and High School Districts--is the largest school district on the south coast.

The size of the SBUSD can perhaps best be appreciated in comparison to the other school districts on the south coast, both absolutely and as a proportion of kindergarten through twelfth grade public school enrollment on the south coast:

2.1 Enrollment in South Coast School Districts (2011-12)

District	Total	Proportion
SBUSD	15,320	66.8
Goleta Union	3,681	16.1
Carpinteria	2,337	10.2
Hope	1,001	4.4
Montecito	439	1.9
Cold Spring	<u>152</u>	<u>.7</u>
TOTAL	22,930	100.0

As can be seen, approximately two-thirds of the south coast's total K-12 public school students attend SBUSD schools.

Looking to the future, enrollment in SBUSD schools will be approximately as follows at five-year intervals through 2021-22 for elementary schools and through 2026-27 for secondary schools (enrollment in elementary schools is not projected beyond 2021-22 as a result of uncertainty with respect to future births):

2.2 Elementary Enrollment Projections, SBUSD

	2011-12 (act.)	2016-17	2021-22
Adams	543	537	455
Adelante	216	250	240
Cleveland	447	450	373
Franklin	516	528	431
Harding	463	454	387
McKinley	418	402	349
Monroe	507	486	426
OAS (K-6)	133	120	100
Peabody	749	750	730
Roosevelt	562	536	470
SB Charter (K-6)	280	280	265
SB Cm Academy	296	320	310
Washington	<u>630</u>	<u>597</u>	<u>528</u>
TOTAL	5,760	5,710	5,064

Elementary enrollment increased in 2012-13 from 2011-12. Preliminarily, elementary enrollment is up about 36 students in the SBUSD.

It is likely that the increase in elementary enrollment will continue in 2013-14. Enrollment should then plateau for the next two school years and then begin declining in 2016-17. Thereafter, enrollment will continue to decline, as long as there continue to be fewer births.

There are several issues elementary schools' enrollment influences in the SBUSD that merit particular attention. The first is that there are four portable classrooms located on city land adjacent to Franklin School that should be removed. As a result of the enrollment decline that Franklin will experience in the coming years and the enrollment increase that Adelante Charter School (which is located at Franklin) will experience, it would be desirable to arrange a new configuration of classrooms at Franklin that would not require these portables.

Second, it should be possible to remove or replace with permanent classrooms many old portables currently on elementary schools. This is as a result both of declining enrollment and increased class size.

Secondary enrollment in the SBUSD will be approximately as follows:

2.3 Secondary Enrollment Projections, SBUSD

	2011-12 (act.)	2016-17	2021-22	2026-27
Goleta Valley	816	765	734	623
La Colina	828	844	811	690
La Cumbre	554	652	626	532
SB Chrtr / OAS (7-8)	53	50	50	50
SB Jr High	841	907	871	740
Dos Pueblos	2,274	2,095	2,100	2,075
San Marcos	1,798	1,778	1,780	1,760
SB High	2,168	2,124	2,125	2,100
Continuation	<u>228</u>	<u>225</u>	<u>225</u>	<u>225</u>
TOTAL	9,544	9,425	9,307	8,780

Enrollment increased in secondary schools in 2012-13 compared to 2011-12. Preliminarily, secondary enrollment is up about 146 students.

This increase will continue for several years, but then turn around before 2016-17. Thereafter, enrollment will continue moderately downward, until the middle 2020s, when the enrollment decline becomes more significant as a result of the decline in births beginning in recent years. As we will note further in the next chapter on the Goleta Union School District, the enrollment decline will be somewhat greater in Goleta than the Hope-Santa Barbara-Montecito area. It is projected that Dos Pueblos High School's enrollment will continue to be higher than the enrollment of its attendance area as a result of transfers.

Relative stability will characterize secondary enrollment in the SBUSD for the foreseeable future. High school enrollment, in particular, should be stable, with about 1,700 to 1,800 students at San Marcos, and 2,100 to 2,200 students at each of Dos Pueblos and Santa Barbara High School.

One especially positive characteristic of the Santa Barbara Unified School District is the approximately equal socioeconomic balance that has been achieved among high schools. At one time, there was a significant difference in the socioeconomic profile of Goleta schools compared to Santa Barbara. This is no longer the case.

In 1980, Santa Barbara High School was 43 percent minority when San Marcos and Dos Pueblos were 13 percent. In 2012-13, Santa Barbara High is 60 percent minority, San Marcos is 65 percent, and Dos Pueblos is 57 percent. Relative socioeconomic equality among the high schools has been achieved.

3. Goleta Union School District

The Goleta Union School District is the second largest on the south coast. About one-third of elementary students in the Santa Barbara Unified School District (i.e., excluding Carpinteria Unified and grades 7 through 12) attend elementary schools in the Goleta Union School District:

3.1 Elementary Enrollment in SBUSD (2011-12)

District	Total	Proportion
Goleta Union	3,681	33.4
Hope	1,001	9.1
Montecito	439	4.0
Cold Spring	152	1.4
SBUSD - Elementary	<u>5,760</u>	<u>52.2</u>
TOTAL	11,033	100.0

As noted in the previous chapter, enrollment will decline somewhat more in the Goleta Union School District than in the Hope-Santa Barbara-Montecito area. This continues a long range trend.

In the early 1970s, there were about 7,000 students in the Goleta Union School District at a time there were a comparable number of students in the Hope-Santa Barbara-Montecito elementary school districts.

Now, Goleta has about 3,600 students (its enrollment declined about 75 students in 2012-13 from 2011-12), while Hope-Santa Barbara-Montecito have about 7,400 students. In other words, Goleta has gone from approximate parity in total enrollment in the early 1970s to less than half the total enrollment of the other elementary schools in the SBUSD today.

As also noted in the previous chapter, at one time there was a significant difference in the socioeconomic profile of Goleta schools compared to Santa

Barbara which is no longer the case. Though ethnic data are not available for the Goleta Union School District before 1985, at that time the district was 69 percent white and 31 percent minority. In 2011-12, the district was 38 percent white and 62 percent minority. By way of contrast, the Santa Barbara Elementary School District was 38 percent white in 1985 and is 26 percent today.

Looking to the future, total enrollment in the Goleta Union School District will approximately be:

3.2 Enrollment Projections, Goleta Union

	2011-12 (act.)	2016-17	2021-22
Brandon	446	421	362
El Camino	305	288	248
Ellwood	456	431	371
Foothill	442	418	359
Hollister	437	413	355
Isla Vista	458	433	372
Kellogg	368	348	300
La Patera	432	408	351
Mountain View	<u>337</u>	<u>318</u>	<u>273</u>
TOTAL	3,681	3,478	2,991

Future housing development is more likely to add enrollment to Goleta Union than to other school districts. However, even future development is unlikely to add more than about 5 percent, about 20 students per school, to future Goleta enrollment beyond that projected here in the next 5 to 10 years.

4. Hope School District

The Hope School District consists of three schools, Hope, Monte Vista, and Vieja Valley. As with Goleta, the Hope District has considerably smaller schools than in Santa Barbara.

Enrollment in 2011-12 was as follows, together with projections for 2016-17 and 2021-22:

4.1 Enrollment Projections, Hope

	2011-12 (act.)	2016-17	2021-22
Hope	317	315	271
Monte Vista	347	345	297
Vieja Valley	<u>337</u>	<u>335</u>	<u>288</u>
TOTAL	1,001	995	856

The Hope District has become substantially more diverse socioeconomically in recent years. In 1985-86, the district was 85 percent white. In 2011-12, the district is 54 percent. This diversity extends across the district's schools--Hope is 52 percent white, Monte Vista is 50 percent, and Vieja Valley is 60 percent.

5. Montecito Union and Cold Spring School Districts

Montecito Union and Cold Spring School Districts are the two smallest elementary districts inside the boundaries of the Santa Barbara Unified School District.

In the past year, the enrollments of both Cold Spring and Montecito Union have increased substantially. Cold Spring has 180 students, up from 152 last year; and Montecito Union has 482 students, up from 439 last year. In the case of each school, it appears that families are returning from private schools or moving to Montecito since enrollment is up across grade levels.

It is particularly difficult to make enrollment projections for Montecito Union and Cold Spring, because their enrollments may fluctuate disproportionately on the basis of factors which do not influence other districts as much, particularly the state of the economy, and not as much on birth trends. Nonetheless, Montecito Union and Cold Spring enrollment are projected as follows:

5.1 Enrollment Projections, Montecito Union and Cold Spring

	2011-12 (act.)	2016-17	2021-22
Montecito Union	439	475	435
Cold Spring	152	175	150

Both Montecito Union and Cold Spring are socioeconomically isolated schools. In 2011-12, Montecito Union was 85 percent white, and Cold Spring was 89 percent. Both are vital to socioeconomic diversity at Santa Barbara Junior High and Santa Barbara High School.

6. Carpinteria Unified School District

The Carpinteria Unified School District enrolls about one-tenth of public K-12 students on the south coast. Among the most noteworthy enrollment statistics concerning the Carpinteria Unified District is that it has become the most diverse district on the south coast in recent years. In 1985-86, the district was 60.3 percent white and 39.7 percent minority. In 2011-12, the district is 22.8 percent white and 77.2 percent minority.

For all districts on the south coast, ethnicity in 2011-12 is as follows:

6.1 Ethnic Proportions in South Coast School Districts (2011-12)

	Hispanic	White	Asian	Af Am	Other
Carpinteria	72.4	22.8	2.6	.7	1.5
SBUSD	57.9	34.0	5.9	1.3	.9
Goleta Union	50.5	38.1	7.2	1.3	2.9
Hope	31.6	53.9	4.9	1.3	8.3
Montecito	8.2	84.5	3.6	.6	3.1
Cold Spring	2.6	89.5	3.9	--	4.0
TOTAL	55.7	35.7	5.7	1.2	1.7

Carpinteria is composed of three attendance area elementary schools, one alternative elementary school, one middle school, one comprehensive high school, and a continuation and an alternative high school. Enrollment in these is as projected on the following page. Carpinteria's enrollment will be slightly higher than it would have been in future years as a result of the decision of the SBUSD no longer to accept interdistrict transfers:

6.2 Enrollment Projections, Carpinteria Unified

	2011-12 (act.)	2016-17	2021-22	2026-27
Aliso	448	457	393	n/a
Canalino	509	519	446	n/a
Carp Family	78	75	70	n/a
Summerland	60	58	54	n/a
Carp Middle	499	505	475	427
Carp High	698	672	700	660
Cont/Alt	<u>45</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>45</u>	45
TOTAL	2,337	2,331	2,183	n/a

7. Size of Schools

The size of schools varies considerably across the south coast. At the junior high level, each of Goleta Valley, La Colina, and Santa Barbara Junior High in 2012-13 has between about 850 and 875 students. La Cumbre is slightly smaller at 533 students, and Carpinteria Middle School had about 500 students in 2011-12 (Carpinteria Middle School is the only 6th through 8th grade attendance boundary intermediate school on the south coast).

As previously noted, Santa Barbara and Dos Pueblos High Schools will have about 2,100 to 2,200 students for the foreseeable future and San Marcos will have about 1,700 to 1,800. Carpinteria High School will have about 660 to 700.

At the elementary level, there will be a wide spectrum of average enrollments across the districts on the south coast (figures here include only attendance boundary schools, excluding Summerland):

7.1 Average Size of Elementary Schools (2011-12)

Carpinteria	479
Cold Spring	152
Goleta Union	409
Hope	334
Montecito	439
SBUSD	537

It will remain the case that the Santa Barbara Unified School District will have the largest elementary schools on the south coast for the foreseeable future. This is particularly the case since Adelante Charter School students are not included in the above figures, though they are located on the Franklin site. If Adelante students were included in Franklin's total, then the average size of an elementary school in the SBUSD would increase to 561.