FINAL REPORT
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS
UPDATE: 2008-2017

Prepared by
Peter Hofman
Catharine Newick
Canterbury, NH
December 31, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS UPDATE: 2008-2017
December 2007

KEY RESULTS

What a difference a year makes. Although enrollment figures don't dramatically change from one year to the next, this fall's enrollment contained surprises in the elementary schools. In fact, actual fall enrollment increased for the first time in three years and exceeded our projections by 50 students. Because the forecasting model we use looks at past enrollment over three- and five-year periods, the year-to-year changes from last year resulted in projections for 2008-2017 that are far higher than last year's. We do still forecast an overall decline in enrollment for at least most of the projection period, but the District will feel enrollment pressures over at least the next few years in both the Middle and High Schools. Broad demographic changes generally (but not totally) support a forecast of declining enrollment—which is not unique to the District.

The District's fall enrollment rose by 28 students over last year's total, with the biggest jump occurring in the Middle School (which we predicted). Actual enrollment exceeded our projections (both the high and low ranges) by even more.

- Last year's projections underestimated this fall's total District enrollment by 49 to 50 students.

- We underestimated enrollment in all four schools, with the biggest disparities occurring in the elementary schools and the least variation occurring in the High School.

This year's grade-by-grade comparison between our projections and actual fall enrollment appears in Figure 9 and we present a three-year, school-by-school comparison in Figure 10. The updated enrollment projections appear in Figures 1-6, which generally include the current year's actual enrollment along with the projections so you can better put our forecasts in context. In most of the figures we also include last year's projections for comparison purposes. All the figures appear in a separate section following the text.

OBJECTIVE

This annual update of student enrollment projections for the Shaker Regional School District provides information to enable the School Board to anticipate potential changes in student enrollment that could affect operations or facilities needs. The enrollment projection model relies on past enrollment patterns, birth rates, and population. Such factors as proposed near-term housing development in the District's towns, the state of the economy, the status of alternative schools, and the success of drop-out prevention programs could all also impact enrollment. Conducting the annual updates can help the School Board anticipate the need or opportunity for action.

METHODOLOGY

As part of our attempt to provide accurate enrollment forecasts, we tweak our methodology each year, while employing the same overall approach and key information we've used in prior years. This year is no different. To generate the projections we used historic population, births (through 2007-estimated), student enrollment data (including figures for the current school year), and projected population from the NH Office of Energy and Planning. We relied on secondary information, but also had conversations with state and town staff. As in prior years, we used a projection model provided by the NH Office of State Planning (now the Office of Energy and Planning) that calculates grade-progression ratios, then applies the ratios along with anticipated births to forecast future enrollment.

As in prior years, the projections include kindergarten (based upon historic trends) as well as readiness students (included in the first grade figures). We did not assume mandatory kindergarten nor did we include any pre-school students.

To provide as much guidance as possible to the School Board, we generated low- and high-range projections for all the District's schools. We summarize below the key assumptions we made to accomplish this.

- **Projected Births:** Historic and projected births play an important part in the projections. At the same time, the net in-migration of students, as reflected in the grade-progression ratios, is also a critical component of enrollment. Projected births are a key factor in elementary school enrollment in the second half of the projection period, and can explain projected increases in the high-range forecast. We should note that our projections of births could be on the high side because we use historic birth rates during a period when they generally appear to be declining.

    o **Town of Belmont.** Historic and projected births and population figures appear in Figure 7. As can be seen, the birth rate has been declining since the mid 1990's, although the rate in 2007 (estimated from mid-October figures) is higher than it has been for more than five years. For the low-range projections we used the average birth rate per 100 people over the past five years, which is less than the average for the full 12-year historic period covered. We also projected future population to grow at a rate slightly higher than in the recent past. For the high-range forecast, we assumed the (somewhat higher) average birth rate for the past 12 years. We also used the State's population projections, which are somewhat higher than what we used for the low range. As shown in Figure 7, the difference in projected births between the two ranges is 6 in 2008, 7 in 2009, and 8 from 2010 to 2012.

    o **Town of Canterbury.** Historic and projected births and population figures appear in Figure 8. The graph in the figure reveals how erratic Canterbury's birth rate has been, although it is still following a downward trend. As far as the town's population goes, it has tracked the state projections more closely than Belmont's. Given the Town's relatively small size and, therefore, the small number of annual births, as in years past, we decided to make one projection of future births. For this forecast we used the average birth rate per 100 people for the past five years.

- **School-by-School Projections:**
  - **Use of Different Grade-Progression Ratios.** The role of grade-progression ratios cannot be overemphasized. These ratios reflect the myriad changes that impact enrollment, from births and in- and out-migration of families with school-age children, to the rise and fall of alternative schools and the effectiveness of drop-out prevention programs. To maximize the spread between the low and high projections, we selected one of two sets of projections for each on a school-by-school basis. One set uses the average of the grade progression ratios for the previous five years. The second set uses enrollment data from the previous three years, with the grade progression ratios from the most recent year carrying a weight of three, ratios from the previous year a weight of two, and ratios from the year before that just one. The two sets of projections are, therefore, sensitive to enrollment trends over varying lengths of time. Sometimes the trends can vary significantly between these two periods, whereas at times there might be little variation. To the extent there are annual enrollment fluctuations, the starting year also affects the nature of the trend. For the low-range forecast, we used the three-year weighted average grade-progression ratios for all schools but Canterbury Elementary, for which we used the five-year average grade-progression ratios. For the high-range projections, we did the reverse, using the five-year average ratios for all schools but Canterbury Elementary and the three-year weighted average ratios for it.
  - **Other Assumptions.** The only other assumption relates to Canterbury students in fifth grade. In prior years, because of the relatively large number of Canterbury students who attended fifth grade in the Middle School, we allocated a certain portion of the projected grade 5 enrollment to the Middle School. This year, because of the small number of fifth-grade Canterbury students attending the Middle School (and our expectation that this might continue at least as long as the Middle School is crowded), we didn't do that. We kept all Canterbury students projected to be in fifth grade in the Elementary School enrollment count.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Actual Versus Projected Enrollment for the 2007-2008 School Year

As we did last year, we not only compared last year's forecast with this fall's enrollment, but also looked at the accuracy of all the prior years of projections we've made since starting to produce the annual updates. These comparisons appear in Figures 9 and 10. We also provide enrollment by school since 2001 in Figure 11.

- **District Total**: Overall for the 2007-2008 school year, we underestimated enrollment by between 49 and 50 students (for the low- and high-range projections). This is a reversal from last year's experience in which actual enrollment was less than we had forecast. Enrollment increased in all schools but Belmont High School. The biggest enrollment change by far was in the Middle School, where enrollment jumped from 447 to 476 students. Over the four years of our projections we have underestimated the District's total enrollment by an average of 12 students per year (an error rate of less than 1%).

- **Belmont Elementary School (BES)**: We underestimated BES enrollment for this fall by between 27 and 26 students, with the biggest differences (17 and 19 students) being in Kindergarten. In fact, BES accounted for over half of our projection error and its Kindergarten for more than a third. We also slightly underestimated enrollment in grades 2-4. In contrast, last year's fall enrollment was less than we had forecast. Over the four years of projections, we've underestimated enrollment by an average of five students per year (an error rate slightly greater than 1%).

- **Canterbury Elementary School (CES)**: Fall enrollment for the 2007-2008 school year increased for the first time in three years. We underestimated enrollment at CES by between 13 and 15 students. The higher than projected enrollment in first grade accounted for about half the error, although we did underestimate enrollment in all but grades one and two. One reason for underestimating fifth grade enrollment was our assumption in last year's projections (based upon enrollment figures) that 30% of Canterbury's fifth-grade students would attend Belmont Middle School, which did not happen. Over the four years of projections, our projections have averaged just two students per year below actual enrollment.

- **Belmont Middle School (BMS)**: In a reversal of our 2006 projections, we underestimated BMS enrollment this year, although the error was between just 5 and 9 students. The biggest errors were in eighth grade (where we underestimated enrollment by between 25 and 28 students) and sixth grade (where we overestimated enrollment by between 22 and 26 students. Although we included 30% of Canterbury's fifth graders in the BMS grade five projections (which, as noted, didn't occur), our forecast was still a bit low. Over our four years of projections, the school has seen some significant enrollment changes. Not surprisingly, our forecasts have been both high (for two years) and low (for two years), balancing each other out.

- **Belmont High School**: High School enrollment dropped slightly this year, but was still just barely higher than our projections (the error rate was less than 1%). Our forecast was low by about the same amount it was last year, but the pattern was the opposite. This year we underestimated enrollment in grades nine and ten, but overestimated it for eleventh and twelfth grades. Last year we wondered whether our underestimating enrollment in the higher grades reflected the success of efforts to reduce the drop-out rate, which had declined from earlier in the decade. The fact that we overestimated enrollment this year muddies the waters. For the past two years, our forecasts for BHS have been far more accurate than for the other schools. Over the four-year period we've been generating projections, we've underestimated enrollment by an average of five students per year (an error rate of about 1%).

Because our overall methodology has remained consistent over the four years and relies heavily on actual historic enrollment, relatively large projection errors—such as for Kindergarten in BES, sixth and eighth grades, and perhaps even first grade in CES and ninth grade—make us wonder if any unusual events might have affected this year's enrollment. We have made some inquiries of school staff (for example looking for any private school closings), but have not uncovered anything. Perhaps the Board or District administration is aware of some potential causes for the unexpected enrollment figures in these grades.

While still relatively small in percentage terms, our underestimating District enrollment by the equivalent of two classrooms is a concern—even if the error is largely accounted for by a few grades. Over the four years we've been doing the annual projections, the District and its schools have experienced some enrollment swings. These fluctuations do affect grade progression ratios

and will impact the results. That is one reason why each year we look at some other factors, both within and outside the District, as a reality check to what we're forecasting. And, despite the annual differences between actual enrollment and our projections, on a percent-error basis, over the four-year period, we've been fairly accurate. For the District as a whole, our error rate has averaged less than 1%; for BES, CES, and the High School it's fallen between 1% and 2%; and for the Middle School the average was right on. We do hope the Board and District administration find our annual updates useful.

The Projections for 2008-2017

Consistent with past projections, this year's updated forecast shows a decline in total student enrollment over at least most of the next ten years (see Figure 1). We must note, however, that our projections this year predict a far smaller drop in student population than was the case last year. Our low-range projections indicate a relatively steady decline, whereas our high-range projections actually show enrollment exceeding current levels in the final three years of the projection period. As noted earlier, it is likely that the assumptions we used to generate the high range of births in Belmont played a role in these results.

As discussed below and shown in Figures 2 through 6, each school in the District has a somewhat different pattern. The projections once again indicate that the Middle School will have a serious capacity issue in the short term and that the High School will be crowded for most of the next ten years.

We appreciate the Board's need to anticipate the District's facility needs. Despite the recent slowdown in the housing market, large proposed housing developments in Belmont and the conversion of seasonal homes to year-round residences in Canterbury's Sherwood Forest development are just two reasons for closely monitoring student enrollment. Whereas the annual building permit limit in Canterbury restricts year-to-year population (and enrollment) changes, the absence of land use controls in Belmont that would help the town manage its growth complicates matters. Because of the range of factors affecting the District's enrollment, the Discussion section below addresses the District's demographic and enrollment trends as well as broader demographic conditions. We hope this discussion puts our projections in a useful context and helps the Board understand their implications.

The projection results appear in Figures 1 through 6. Historic and projected births, birth rates, and projected population appear in Figures 7 and 8.

- **Total Enrollment**: As shown in Figure 1, **total enrollment will decline to 1,388 by 2017 under our low-range projections and will fluctuate close to current levels under our high-range forecast.** Although the high-range projections show student population exceeding current enrollment for the last three years of the projection period, the maximum variation in enrollment from this year's total is just 29 students. This is a far different pattern than evident in previous projections, likely influenced by recent enrollment figures and our assumptions regarding birth rates.

- **Enrollment by School.** Figure 2 presents the projections by total enrollment for each of the District's schools. Figures 3 through 6 show the forecast by grade for each school. We highlight below the projections for each school.

- o **Belmont Elementary School**: Figures 2 and 3 show that **we project a declining enrollment for the next several years, followed by an increase to either current (low-range projections) or higher/over-capacity (high-range forecast) levels.** Under both the low and high projections, enrollment bottoms out in 2011 at 46-53 students below this year's total. After that, we forecast enrollment rising to either just above this year's enrollment or sufficiently more to drive the total above the school's capacity by 2015. Note that, while this pattern is similar to what we estimated last year, the figures throughout the projection period are higher this year.

- o **Canterbury Elementary School**: Figures 2 and 4 indicate that **enrollment will either decline then rebound to current levels (low-range projections) or slowly increase to a bit more than 20% above the current total**. This year's projections are uniformly higher than last year's, reflecting such factors as recently stable enrollment and our assumption that all Canterbury fifth graders will attend CES.

- o **The Middle School**: As can be seen in Figures 2 and 5, **we forecast that enrollment could exceed the school's capacity for as many as the next four years, and then decline until 2016 when it starts increasing.** (*Note that we have assumed that no Canterbury fifth-graders will attend the Middle School; if they do, it will obviously increase enrollment.*) Unlike the case with the District's other schools, this year's projections for the Middle School are not consistently higher than last year's forecast. And unlike last year's projections, which generally declined through the projection period, this year's show a decline after several high-enrollment years, followed by a rebound to within 30 to 60 students of this year's total.

- o **The High School**: Figures 2 and 6 show that **enrollment will stay fairly high for up to several years (even exceeding the school's capacity) and then declining to 25 to 60 students fewer than today's total.** This pattern is similar to—but higher than—what we forecast last year. It is also distinct from those of the District's other schools (at least for the high-range projections), which either steadily increase (CES) or increase at the end of the 10-year projection period after a decline. As we've stated in prior reports, successfully implementing dropout-prevention programs will impact enrollment, and our projection model will pick that up if the trend continues.

DISCUSSION: WHAT THE FACTS WITHIN THE DISTRICT TELL US ABOUT ENROLLMENT, BIRTH RATES, AND POPULATION TRENDS

Although this year's projections are higher than last year's, they still show enrollment declines for at least a portion of the 10-year projection period. While total enrollment did increase over last year, it is still less than it was every other year from 2001 to 2005. Therefore, the prediction of some period of declining enrollment should not be a surprise.

The key components of the projection model base future enrollment forecasts upon data related solely to the Shaker Regional School District. Reviewing the data helps put the results in context, for better understanding of future trends. This section of the report focuses upon the reality of the three critical factors driving the results: enrollment trends, birth rates, and population changes. The report's next section discusses broader demographic trends that impact what we experience within the District, shedding further light on the projection results and their meaning for the Board and District Administration.

Because we have explained key enrollment drivers in prior reports and since the Board and District Administration have reviewed three sets of projections that predict declining enrollment, we will not go into the same level of detail as we have previously. The key factors identified in those reports are still generally applicable today.

Enrollment Trends

As presented in Figure 11, the District's enrollment is 35 students (2%) less than it was in 2001, when the combined population of the District's two towns was more than 700 people less than it is today. Clearly, student enrollment and population are not moving hand-in-hand. Indeed, **if enrollment proportionately followed population trends, the District would have 1,663 students—163 more than it does, in fact, have today.** At the same time, this fall's enrollment is about the same that it was two years ago. This relative stability increased the projections over what we had forecast last year.

But shouldn't we expect rising enrollment as the population grows? Enrollment figures (and therefore the grade-progression ratios) represent the net effect of multiple movements of students in and out of the District's schools. These movements reflect local births, families moving in and out of the District, children of residents leaving the District's schools for a variety of reasons, and students returning from private schools. Over the past several years, the net effect of these movements has—despite increasing populations—decreased enrollment. Thus, **as the District's population increases, student enrollment will not necessarily increase, and if it does, it will likely not grow as much as it has in the past.**

Birth Rates

Figures 7 and 8 show that birth rates in both towns have been dropping, at least over the past 12 years. Although Canterbury's birth rates have been far more erratic, the downward trend is clear. Note that we calculate the birth rate by dividing the number of births per year by the population and multiplying by 100 (so the birth rate represents the number of children born per 100 people). When preparing the projections, we use historic birth rates. Yet, if the downward trend continues, actual birth rates will be lower, which would reduce enrollment below what we forecast. The declining birth rates reflect broader demographic trends, which we discuss in the report's next section.

Just from the historic data from Belmont and Canterbury, the implications for the District are significant. **Declining birth rates mean that, even if population increases, the number of births—and, ultimately, school-age children—will likely not keep pace.**

Population

Our methodology uses future population to help project the number of births in each town. As noted earlier, we used two sets of population projections for Belmont to project future births. Since the District's school population is not comprised solely of children born in the two towns, children of families moving into the District are an important component of total enrollment. The grade-progression ratios reflect the impact of these new residents on enrollment. In this regard, population is indirectly considered in the process, with the projection model assuming that recent trends (ratios) will be repeated in the future. By looking at both three and five years' worth of data, we try to be reasonably sensitive to "external" factors that affect enrollment, such as population and demographic changes. But again, as noted above, increased population does not necessarily mean increased enrollment. We have experienced quite the opposite.

To help us look at near-term population growth, we obtained building permit and construction information from Belmont and Canterbury to give us some first-hand information about actual building trends in the two towns. These data show that growth has been slowing.

- Belmont: As shown in the following table, new home construction, building permit issuance, and single-family home sales have also declined from previous levels.

Year	New Housing Units Added*	Building Permits Issued	Single-Family Home Sales
2007 (to Oct. 22)	14		56
2006	36	34	83
2005	23	28	110
2004	46	47	103
2003	59	69	76
2002	50	54	94

*Does not include "adult only" housing

Sources: Town of Belmont officials; Belmont Dwelling Unit Growth Report; Multiple-Listing Service data

- Canterbury: In 2004 the town voted to reduce the cap on new building permits from four percent of the total units in town to three percent. As shown in the table below, demand for new building permits hasn't even reached those reduced levels.

Year	Number of Building Permits Issued
2007 (to mid-Oct)	10
2006	11*
2005	14
2004	25
2003	33
2002	27

*Includes one duplex
Source: Town of Canterbury

This information shows that building activity in Belmont and Canterbury has been at least temporarily slowing down. How long this trend continues will largely depend upon regional and state economic conditions, which we briefly review at the end of the next section.

While new building activity is a key driver of population growth, school enrollment can also be affected by the sale of existing homes. As noted for Belmont, these sales have been declining. However, even if they remain level, sales of exiting homes can bring new students to the District or take them away. We face the same situation with rental property. Tenant turnover can bring new students to the District or take them away. The grade-progression ratios reflect these changes. Recent enrollment trends indicate that home sales and rental turnover during the past several years have not increased student enrollment.

DISCUSSION: BROADER DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

As repeatedly noted, the District's past and projected enrollment reflects larger demographic trends. The Shaker Regional School District isn't unique. These trends are affecting districts throughout New Hampshire and the impact is evident for the state as a whole. The region, too, is affected.

Enrollment and Population Trends

- **Other NH Districts Experiencing Similar Trends:** Figure 12 shows enrollment and population changes between 2000 and 2006 for 30 school districts from every county in the state. The data come from the NH Department of Education and the NH Office of Energy and Planning. For the period covered, these districts had increasing populations yet decreasing enrollments. The 30 districts had almost 89,000 students in 2000, or about 43% of the state's total enrollment. Despite a total population growth of almost 23,000 people between 2000 and 2006, the districts lost more than 6,600 students. In some cases, the disparity between population growth and enrollment decreases is dramatic—in Concord, for example, declining enrollment and aging elementary school buildings were issues highlighted by the *Concord Monitor* prior to the November elections as challenges facing the city's new mayor. In others, it's not, but the pattern is the same. In fact, 114 of the state's 161 districts had fewer students in 2006 than in 2000, and most of them had rising populations. So, Shaker Regional School District's experience is not unique. Yet, as noted, the pattern is not universal—47 districts had increasing population *and* enrollment. The eleven districts with the greatest enrollment increases from 2000 to 2006 (totaling about 2,500 students) saw their populations rise by more than 15,000 people during this period. All these districts lie in the state's southern tier—ten are in Rockingham and Hillsborough Counties. Location isn't everything, since some of the districts with declining enrollment are in this part of the state— perhaps there are features of these districts that are attractive to families with school-age children (an examination of those features lies beyond the scope of our work).

- **Decreasing Enrollment Trends for the State as a Whole:** Figure 13 shows the impact of these district changes on the state as a whole. We've included this table in each of our reports and the trend identified three years ago is continuing as predicted. The table clearly demonstrates that, starting in the 1996-1997 school year, enrollment peaked and then dropped in consecutive grades, starting with first grade. Although the state's total student

enrollment continued to increase until the 2002-2003 school year, since then it has steadily declined. In fact, total student enrollment for the 2006-2007 school year was less than it was for the 1999-2000 school year, even though the state's total population increased by almost 80,000 people during this period. Also note that these trends apply fairly consistently across public-district-school, all-public-school, and total-school enrollment, including private schools.

- **Projected School-Age Population Decline in New Hampshire:** We get some indication of future state enrollment trends by looking at Figure 14, which presents US Census and NH Office of Energy and Planning population estimates and projections by age bracket from 2000 to 2020. This figure shows that, despite projected state population increases between 2000 and 2020, the number of school-age children is expected to decline. The school-age population remained relatively flat from 2000 to 2005 and is expected to decline over the next ten years before starting to rebound. Yet, by 2020 the population in this age bracket will still be less than it was in 2000. The data for this table was published by the State Office of Energy and Planning in November 2006. The previous report, dated September 2004, provided the data for our 2006 demographic update. It is noteworthy that the school-age population is lower from 2005 through 2020 in the 2006 State report than was forecast in its 2004 report. In other words, enrollment declines might be deeper than previously anticipated. Figures 13 and 14 depict a pattern of population and student enrollment spanning 24 years. We should not be surprised, therefore, for the Shaker Regional School District to experience the same pattern.

- **Comparable Population-Enrollment Trends for the Surrounding Region:** From a regional perspective, we also see the same trend. In last year's update we cited data from The Institute of Education Sciences, part of the National Center on Education Statistics of the US Department of Education, in the publication *The Condition of Education 2006*. The report indicated that total school enrollment in the northeastern US peaked in the 2002-2003 school year. The region's enrollment in 2005 and 2000 was the same, even though population had increased by more than 1.2 million people. The US DOE report projects that the region's enrollment will drop by almost 350,000 students between 2005 and 2015, despite a Census Bureau forecast that population will grow by almost 1.8 million people.

It should be clear that the District's enrollment trends reflect broad demographic trends affecting not only the rest of the state, but also the surrounding region. At the core they foreshadow declining student enrollment, at least for a period of time and a changed relationship between population growth and student enrollment. Can there be exceptions? Sure—we identified some such districts elsewhere in the state. The question is the extent to which the Shaker Regional School District will buck this trend, when it hasn't done so to date.

Trends in Birth Rates

As we've pointed out in prior reports, our nation is on the cusp of the "echo" generation. The child-bearing years of the "baby boomers" is over, people are getting married later and having children later, and perhaps even having fewer children. There are certainly differences among regions in the country and among different ethnic groups. The breakdown of a state's population by age bracket also affects the birth rate.

Last year we cited Discussion Paper 06-1, "New England migration trends," dated October 2006, from the New England Public Policy Center at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Analyzing data from 2003 to 2004, the author showed that Merrimack and Belknap counties overall experienced net in-migration, primarily from the rest of New Hampshire and other New England states. According to the report, "New England's population has long grown more slowly than the national average, due in equal measure to out-migration and *a slower rate of natural increase*." (Italics added for emphasis.) Thus, the new residents moving into our two counties largely consist of people who, in general, have fewer children.

On a statewide basis, the data presented in Figure 14 provide some insights. Despite a projected population increase of almost 300,000 people between 2000 and 2020, the number of children in the 0-4 age bracket remains fairly constant. This projection reflects two factors: the birth rate and the number of people in the traditional child-bearing age bracket. As noted above, the birth rate has been declining.

With regard to the state's childbearing population, Figure 14 shows that after a drop from 2000 to 2005, the number of New Hampshire residents in the 25-34 age bracket will increase well beyond the 2000 level. This projection shows a reversal in the state's trend of declining young-adult population. By coincidence, support for this projection (which was published in November 2006) exists in an October 2007 publication from the Carsey Institute of the University of New Hampshire. The "Fact Sheet on Mid-Decade Population Trends in New England" reports on the results of 2004-2006 population data which indicate that "Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont all experienced growth in their young adult populations that was greater than the U.S. average." Despite this positive event (which might or might not be the start of a new trend), the data in Figure 14 indicate it might not significantly affect school enrollment. The projection of an almost 18,000-person increase in this age bracket between 2000 and 2020 was not reflected in the number of children in the 0-4 age bracket—despite declines in the intervening years, the 2000 and 2020 totals are virtually the same.

Overall, while at least one possible demographic trend (the return of young adults) might indicate a potential increase in school enrollment, the downward trends in birth rates might still be a damper for years to come. These two forces could exert opposite pressures, which could provide a context for the smaller declines in the District's enrollment contained in this year's updated projections.

Economic Trends

It is beyond our scope to forecast long-term economic trends. Yet, we think it is appropriate to note current and short-term economic conditions that could impact district enrollment in the next year or two. The nation's economic woes—particularly those related to the sub-prime mortgage problem and its impact on credit availability and the housing market—are among the most common news and analysis topics today.

The impact of these woes on the housing market is significant. Nationally, according to the National Association of Home Builders, housing starts in July dropped to their lowest level in more than a decade. On December 28th the Commerce Department announced that the sale of new homes dropped to its lowest level since April 1995. Looking forward, the National Association of Realtors, in its November 2007 "U.S. Economic Outlook," projects that housing

starts and sales of new and existing homes will drop at least this year and next. Regionally, according to the New England Economic Partnership, new housing starts totaled about 6,000 this year, compared with 8,000 in 2004—and 18,000 in 1984. New Hampshire is feeling the pinch. A study by the Carsey Institute at UNH of the state's economic trends from 2000 to 2006 noted a drop in labor force participation, slower than historic job growth, and wage increases that weren't keeping pace with key living expenses. The October 2007 issue of *Business NH Magazine* noted that homebuilder confidence was at its lowest level since the last housing downturn in 1991—and with good reason. The Home Builders and Remodelers Association of NH reported this fall that the number of building permits issued for new housing units dropped 28 percent from 2006 (to just 2,248 units statewide), continuing a downward trend that started as far back as 2005.

Recent housing problems are impacting the entire economy. Among the hottest debates among economists is whether or not the U.S. economy will go into recession. None are forecasting near-term robust economic conditions. Even more-optimistic forecasts are relatively gloomy, as typified by the following summary survey results published by the National Association for Business Economics: "While the U.S. economy faces a higher risk of recession from credit markets, housing, and energy prices, NABE's panelists still do not see recession as the most likely outcome."

We noted earlier the slowdown in building activity in Belmont and Canterbury. We suspect the nation's housing and economic problems will extend this trend longer than might have otherwise been the case.

THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF LARGE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

Regardless of recent slowdowns in building within the District and the expectations of broader economic problems for some time, there lingers a concern that large housing developments in Belmont could dramatically increase student enrollment. The concerns stems in part from the Town's lack of land-use controls. As we have discussed in the prior two reports, we think some of the broader demographic trends might keep the impact of such developments below levels that some people fear.

Two years ago we examined state-level demographic trends to assess the potential enrollment impact of these housing developments. We cited information from reports issued by *Applied Economic Research* of Laconia. The facts and trends highlighted then apply as much this year as they did last. We will not reproduce that discussion here, but suggest that anyone who is interested should review that section in the 2005 report. We will, however, summarize below some of the key questions and our conclusions.

- Will these developments (proposed in 2005) increase Belmont's growth by raising the number of new homes built each year above recent averages? From the building permit information presented earlier, it appears the answer is no, at least in the short term.

- How quickly will these developments be completed? Initial build-out estimates cited in news articles were three to six years. Based upon recent data and current economic conditions, we expect that build out will likely take longer than six years, thereby making the impact in any one year less dramatic. To the extent that the build-out occurs when we have projected declines in school enrollment, the impact would be less immediately critical.

13

- How many children might families bring into these homes? The answer will depend upon the type and size of the new homes and the makeup of the families that move into them. Assuming a mix of housing sizes and an average distribution of family makeup, we conservatively estimated two years ago that the developments could add from 100 to 200 students to the District's schools, but we couldn't predict which schools they would enter.

Given the generally higher enrollment figures contained in this year's projections, the impact of these developments could be more dramatic than if the District were projected to experience deeper declines in enrollment. The impact will likely be mitigated by the demographic trends discussed earlier. Nevertheless, the projects' size and the lack of land use controls means that it would be wise to monitor their progress. Our annual enrollment updates will pick up changes in student population and could be an important part of this monitoring effort.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

As we have done before, we identify here key factors that could cause actual student enrollment to diverge greatly from what we've projected. The factors include new housing developments, adopting land use controls and/or growth measures in Belmont, reducing the high-school dropout rate, and the rise/fall of alternative schools (including virtual schools). It is difficult to know which of these factors will affect enrollment, by how much, and when. These uncertainties warrant regular monitoring, especially with the Middle and High Schools so close to capacity.

Within our scope and budget, we've used our best efforts to project the District's enrollment over the next ten years. We've described the key drivers that affect enrollment and highlighted broad demographic trends that clearly appear to be impacting the District. Because of the uncertainties and the consequences of being wrong, we think the District's undertaking these annual updates makes sense. Whether we're involved or not, such regular check-ups provide the School Board and District Administration with fresh, up-to-date information and insights that will help them diagnose the situation, anticipate significant changes, and act accordingly. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in this process with you.

FIGURES

(Data sources for the figures are noted in the body of the report and on selected figures.)

FIGURE 1
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
TOTAL PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2008 TO 2017
December 2007

YEAR	LOW		HIGH	
	'07 UPDATE	'06 UPDATE	'07 UPDATE	'06 UPDATE
2007 ACTUAL	1500	1450	1500	1450
2008	1447	1425	1472	1437
2009	1459	1408	1501	1432
2010	1422	1349	1473	1364
2011	1414	1355	1478	1359
2012	1403	1351	1481	1364
2013	1385	1346	1471	1385
2014	1395	1306	1496	1367
2015	1391	1264	1507	1336
2016	1387	1236	1514	1300
2017	1388		1515	

TOTAL PROJECTED ENROLLMENT
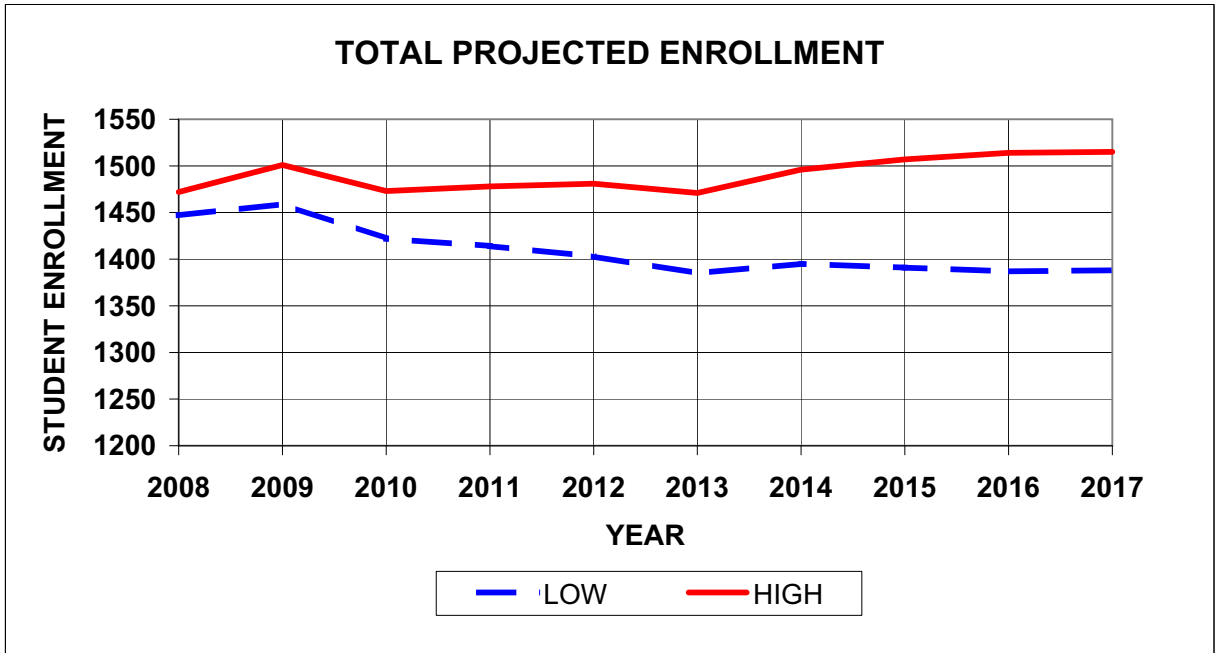
FIGURE 2
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUMMARY PROJECTED ENROLLMENT 2008 TO 2017 BY SCHOOL
December 2007

YEAR	LOW RANGE						HIGH RANGE					
	BES	CES	BMS	BHS	TOTAL	'06 UPDATE	BES	CES	BMS	BHS	TOTAL	'06 UPDATE
2007 ACTUAL	422	141	476	461	1500	1450	422	141	476	461	1500	1450
2008	393	140	456	458	1447	1425	396	149	468	459	1472	1437
2009	385	133	444	497	1459	1408	391	144	462	504	1501	1432
2010	377	129	454	462	1422	1349	384	142	475	472	1473	1364
2011	369	137	443	465	1414	1355	376	155	465	482	1478	1359
2012	396	137	408	462	1403	1351	406	159	428	488	1481	1364
2013	401	139	399	446	1385	1346	418	161	414	478	1471	1385
2014	405	140	402	448	1395	1306	430	163	421	482	1496	1367
2015	416	144	391	440	1391	1264	452	167	414	474	1507	1336
2016	431	149	406	401	1387	1236	474	173	434	433	1514	1300
2017	425	145	420	398	1388		460	172	448	435	1515	

INDICATES EXCEEDS CORE CAPACITY

Total Projected Enrollment - Low Range

Total Projected Enrollment - High Range
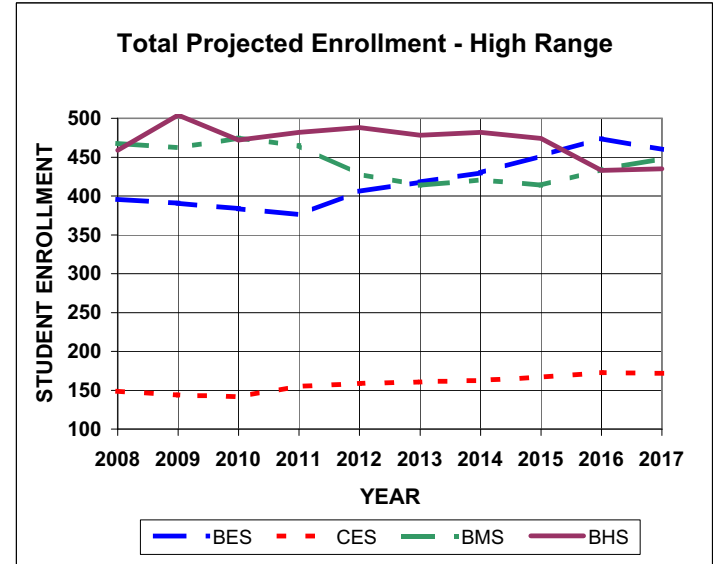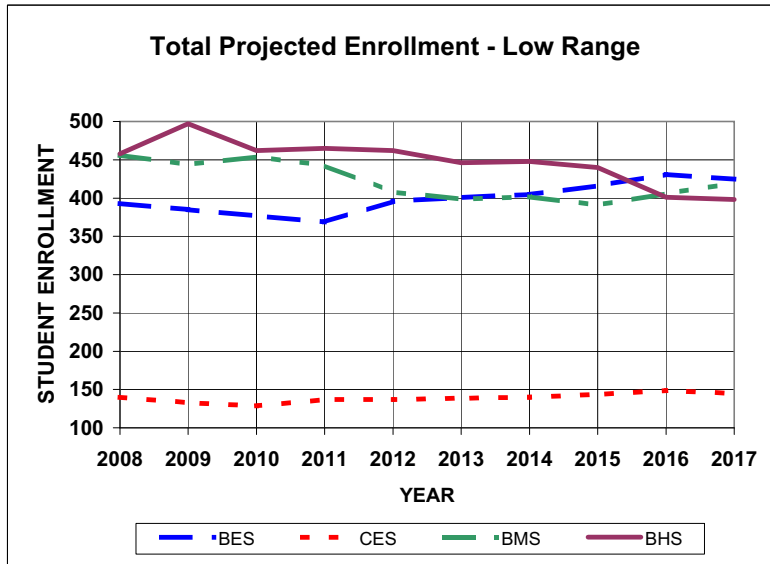
FIGURE 3
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BELMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
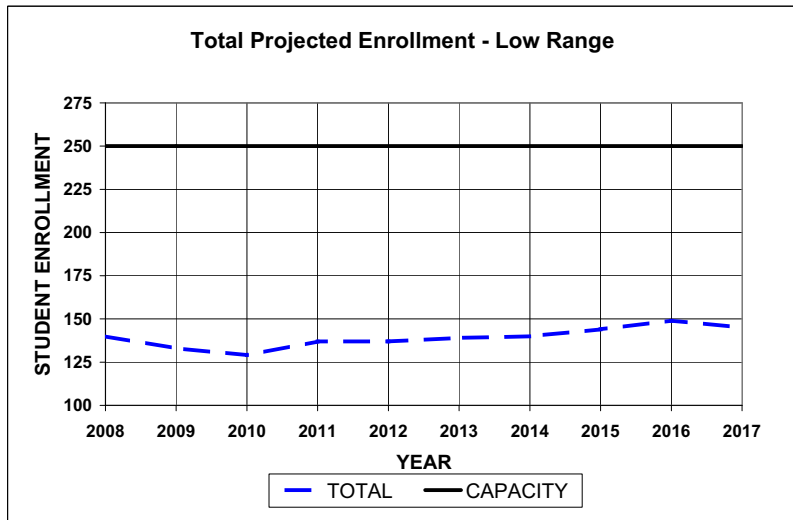## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE: 2008 TO 2017
December 2007

LOW-RANGE PROJECTIONS

|	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	'07 UPDATE TOTAL	'06 UPDATE TOTAL	CAPACITY
2007 ACTUAL	69	94	82	90	87	**422**	395	450
2008	69	69	80	82	93	**393**	383	450
2009	68	94	59	80	84	**385**	381	450
2010	63	93	80	59	82	**377**	375	450
2011	63	86	79	80	61	**369**	364	450
2012	76	86	73	79	82	**396**	383	450
2013	70	104	73	73	81	**401**	385	450
2014	72	96	89	73	75	**405**	388	450
2015	72	98	82	89	75	**416**	397	450
2016	74	99	84	82	92	**431**	404	450
2017	71	101	85	84	84	**425**		450

Total Projected Enrollment - Low Range

HIGH-RANGE PROJECTIONS

	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	'07 UPDATE TOTAL	'06 UPDATE TOTAL	CAPACITY
2007 ACTUAL	69	94	82	90	87	**422**	396	450
2008	69	70	81	83	93	**396**	387	450
2009	68	95	60	82	86	**391**	383	450
2010	63	94	82	60	85	**384**	373	450
2011	63	87	81	83	62	**376**	362	450
2012	76	87	75	82	86	**406**	390	450
2013	77	105	75	76	85	**418**	403	450
2014	79	106	90	76	79	**430**	417	450
2015	82	109	91	91	79	**452**	440	450
2016	82	112	94	92	94	**474**	441	450
2017	60	113	97	95	95	**460**		450

Total Projected Enrollment - High Range
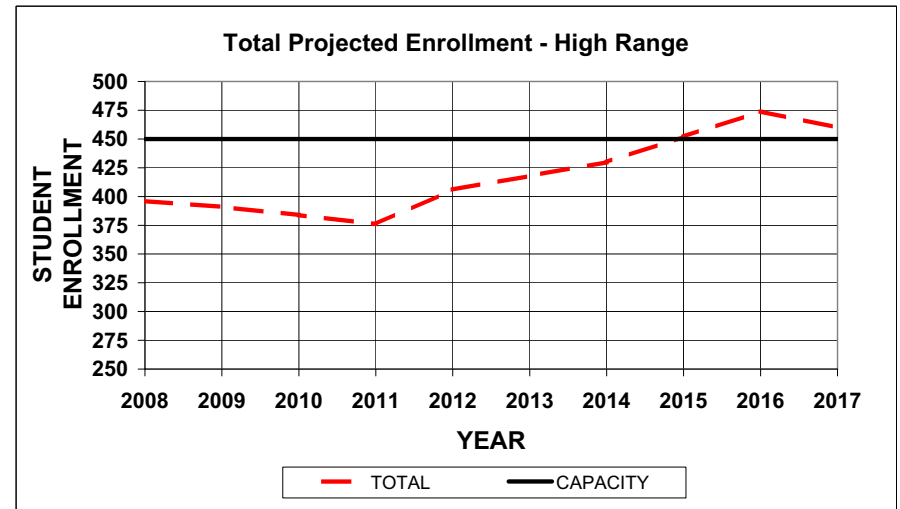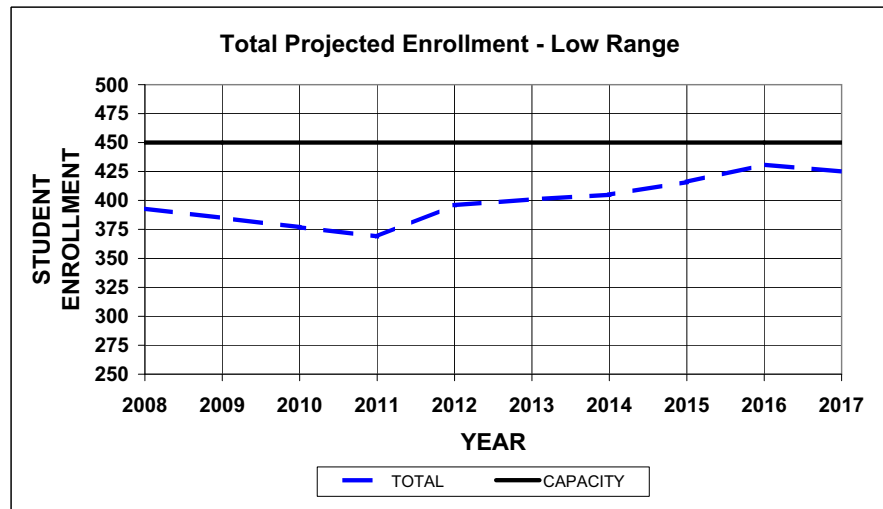
NOTE: FIRST GRADE INCLUDES READINESS.

INDICATES EXCEEDS CORE CAPACITY

FIGURE 4
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
CANTERBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE: 2008 TO 2017
December 2007

LOW-RANGE PROJECTIONS

	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 4	Grade 5	'07 UPDATE TOTAL	'06 UPDATE TOTAL	CAPACITY
2007 ACTUAL	21	31	19	32	15	**141**	128	250
2008	23	23	24	22	28	**140**	130	250
2009	20	32	18	19	19	**133**	126	250
2010	18	28	24	24	16	**129**	121	250
2011	28	24	21	18	21	**137**	122	250
2012	19	38	18	24	16	**137**	127	250
2013	23	26	29	21	21	**139**	128	250
2014	23	31	20	18	18	**140**	128	250
2015	23	31	24	29	16	**144**	130	250
2016	23	32	24	20	25	**149**	135	250
2017	23	32	24	24	17	**145**		250

HIGH-RANGE PROJECTIONS

	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	'07 UPDATE TOTAL	'06 UPDATE TOTAL	CAPACITY
2007 ACTUAL	21	31	19	23	32	15	**141**	128	250
2008	27	27	24	19	23	29	**149**	130	250
2009	22	38	20	24	19	21	**144**	126	250
2010	20	32	29	20	24	17	**142**	121	250
2011	32	28	24	29	20	22	**155**	122	250
2012	22	45	21	24	29	18	**159**	127	250
2013	25	31	34	21	24	26	**161**	128	250
2014	26	36	24	34	21	22	**163**	128	250
2015	26	37	27	24	34	19	**167**	130	250
2016	26	37	28	27	24	31	**173**	135	250
2017	30	37	28	28	27	22	**172**		250

Total Projected Enrollment - Low Range

Total Projected Enrollment - High Range
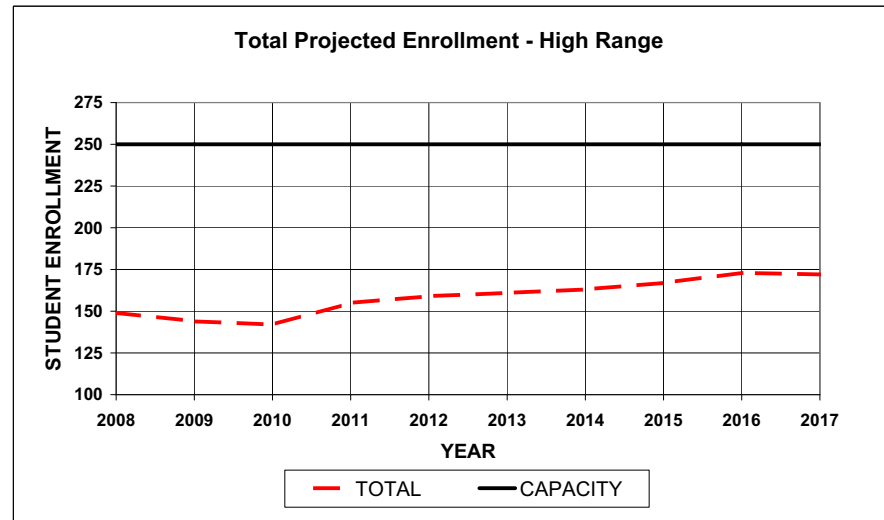
NOTE: FIRST GRADE INCLUDES READINESS.

FIGURE 5
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BELMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL
ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE: 2008 TO 2017
### December 2007

LOW-RANGE PROJECTIONS

	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	'07 UPDATE TOTAL	'06 UPDATE TOTAL	CAPACITY
2007 ACTUAL	102	101	140	133	476	463	
2008	93	117	103	143	456	473	450
2009	99	120	120	105	444	447	450
2010	92	117	123	122	454	444	450
2011	91	107	120	125	443	453	450
2012	66	110	110	122	408	451	450
2013	92	82	113	112	399	410	450
2014	91	112	84	115	402	358	450
2015	84	106	115	86	391	354	450
2016	84	96	109	117	406	350	450
2017	100	111	98	111	420		450

HIGH-RANGE PROJECTIONS

	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	'07 UPDATE TOTAL	'06 UPDATE TOTAL	CAPACITY
2007 ACTUAL	102	101	140	133	476	464	
2008	97	118	105	148	468	481	450
2009	104	125	122	111	462	449	450
2010	94	123	129	129	475	437	450
2011	92	110	127	136	465	449	450
2012	68	112	114	134	428	449	450
2013	92	86	116	120	414	414	450
2014	90	120	89	122	421	369	450
2015	84	112	124	94	414	361	450
2016	84	103	116	131	434	356	450
2017	103	116	107	122	448		450

Total Projected Enrollment - Low Range

Total Projected Enrollment - High Range
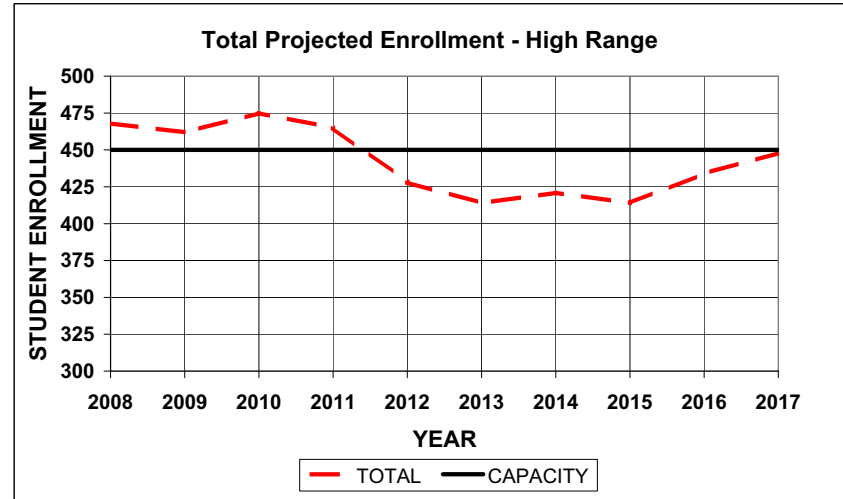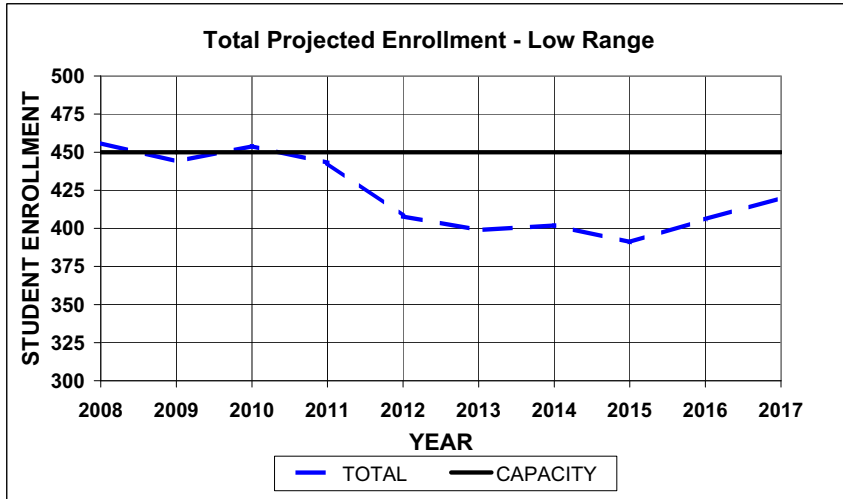
NOTE: Grade 5 consists of students from Belmont and approximately thirty percent of the 5th grade students from Canterbury.

INDICATES EXCEEDS CORE CAPACITY

FIGURE 6
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL
## ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS BY GRADE: 2008 TO 2017
December 2007

LOW-RANGE PROJECTIONS

	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	'07 UPDATE TOTAL	'06 UPDATE TOTAL	CAPACITY
2007 ACTUAL	123	143	84	111	461	461	500
2008	141	117	118	82	458	448	500
2009	152	134	97	114	497	470	500
2010	112	145	111	94	462	434	500
2011	130	107	120	108	465	432	500
2012	133	124	89	116	462	427	500
2013	130	127	103	86	446	408	500
2014	119	124	105	100	448	407	500
2015	122	113	103	102	440	402	500
2016	91	116	94	100	401	363	500
2017	124	87	96	91	398		500

HIGH-RANGE PROJECTIONS

	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	'07 UPDATE TOTAL	'06 UPDATE TOTAL	CAPACITY
2007 ACTUAL	123	143	84	111	461	457	500
2008	143	115	119	82	459	441	500
2009	159	133	96	116	504	468	500
2010	119	148	111	94	472	432	500
2011	139	111	123	109	482	429	500
2012	146	130	92	120	488	425	500
2013	144	136	108	90	478	412	500
2014	129	134	113	106	482	417	500
2015	131	120	112	111	474	411	500
2016	101	122	100	110	433	372	500
2017	141	94	102	98	435		500

Total Projected Enrollment - Low Range
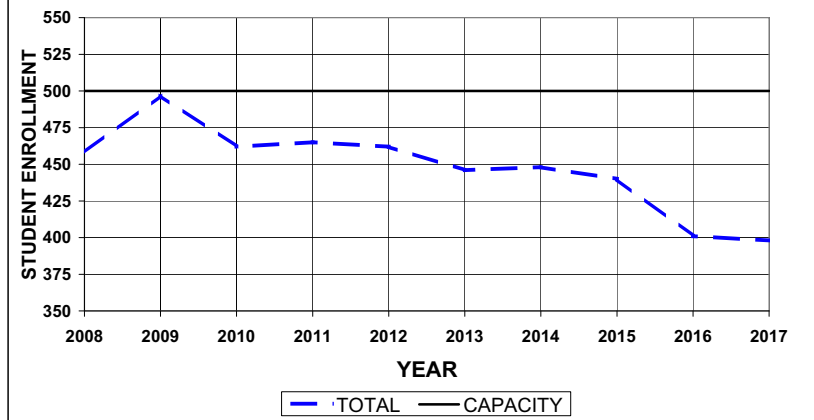
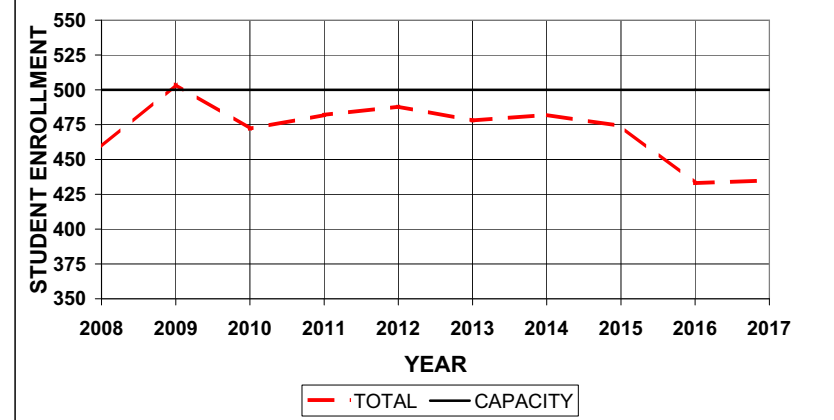Total Projected Enrollment - High Range

FIGURE 7
TOWN OF BELMONT: HISTORIC AND PROJECTED BIRTHS -- 1996-2012
December 2007

HISTORIC

YEAR	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
POPULATION	6332	6426	6521	6618	6716	6789	6863	6938	7014	7090	7167	7281
BIRTHS	86	73	81	60	72	71	50	68	67	62	62	75
BIRTHS/100 POP	1.4	1.1	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	1.0

PROJECTED

| YEAR	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
LOW PROJECTION					
POPULATION (SLIGHT INCREASE OVER HISTORIC GROWTH RATE)	7397	7515	7634	7755	7879
PROJECTED BIRTHS AT THE 2003-2007 AVERAGE BIRTH RATE (0.94/100 PEOPLE)	70	71	72	73	74
HIGH PROJECTION					
POPULATION (MATCH NH STATE FORECAST)	7476	7675	7880	7964	8050
PROJECTED BIRTHS AT THE 1996-2007 AVERAGE BIRTH RATE (1.02/100 PEOPLE)	76	78	80	81	82

BELMONT: HISTORIC BIRTHS PER 100 POPULATION
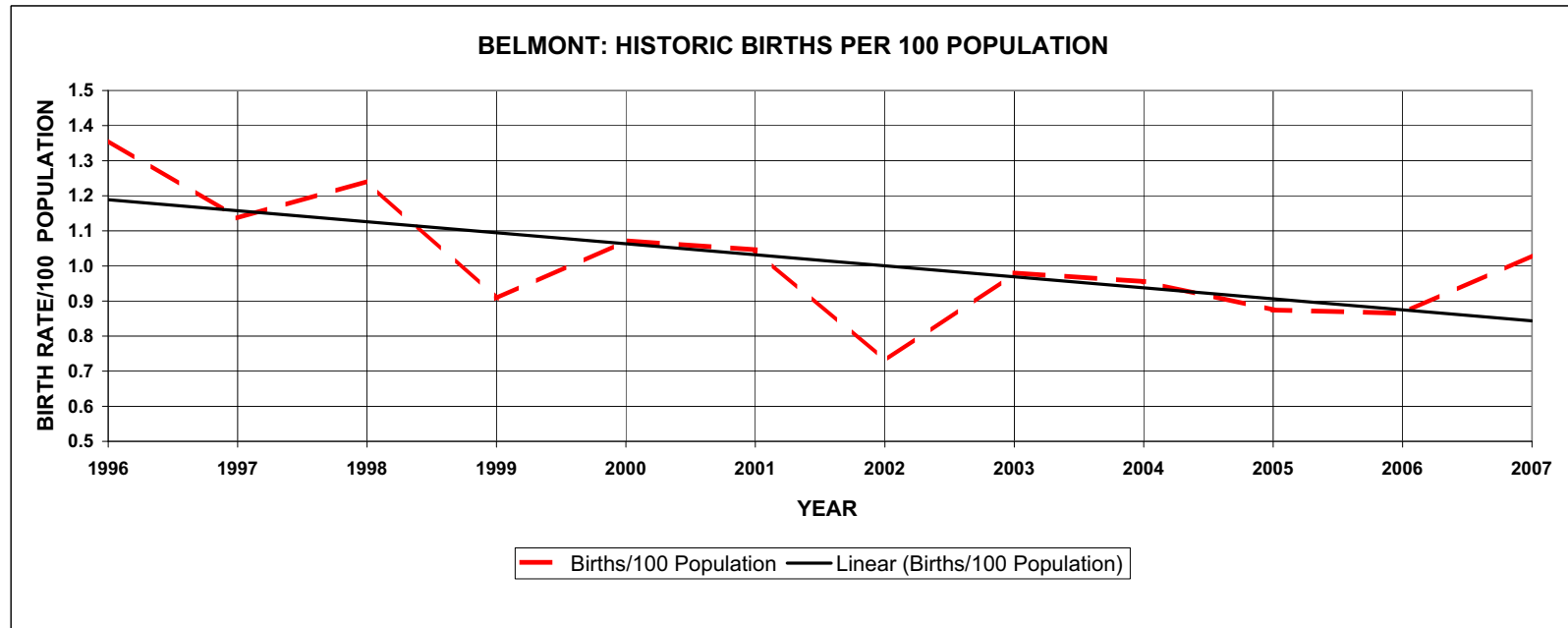
FIGURE 8
TOWN OF CANTERBURY: HISTORIC AND PROJECTED BIRTHS -- 1996-2012
December 2007

HISTORIC

YEAR	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
POPULATION	1853	1884	1915	1947	1979	2020	2062	2105	2149	2193	2239	2261
BIRTHS	21	29	33	22	23	20	19	27	23	20	32	22
BIRTHS/100 POP	1.13	1.54	1.72	1.13	1.16	0.99	0.92	1.28	1.07	0.91	1.43	0.97

PROJECTED

YEAR	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
POPULATION	2284	2307	2330	2349	2369
PROJECTED BIRTHS (AT 2003-2007 AVERAGE OF 1.13 BIRTHS/100 POPULATION)	26	26	26	27	27

HISTORIC BIRTHS PER 100 POPULATION
CANTERBURY: 1996-2007
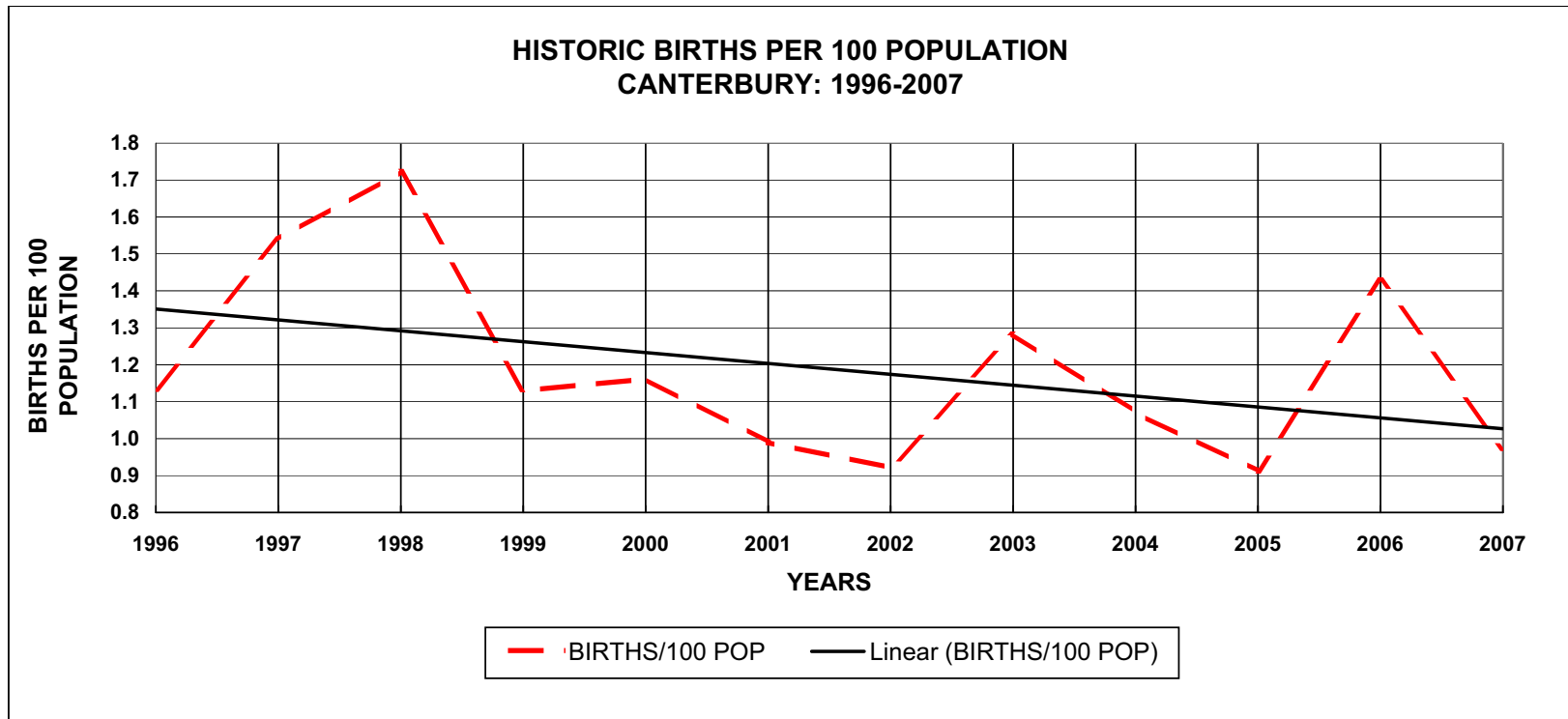
FIGURE 9
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
2007 ENROLLMENT COMPARED WITH PROJECTIONS
December 2007

TOTAL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

	CES	BES	BMS	BHS	TOTAL
PROJECTED					
LOW	128	395	467	461	1451
HIGH	126	396	471	457	1450
ACTUAL	141	422	476	461	1500
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL					
LOW	-13	-27	-9	0	-49
HIGH	-15	-26	-5	-4	-50

BELMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	TOTAL	CAPACITY
PROJECTED							
LOW	52	100	79	80	84	395	
HIGH	50	95	81	86	84	396	
ACTUAL	69	94	82	90	87	422	450
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL							
LOW	-17	6	-3	-10	-3	-27	
HIGH	-19	1	-1	-4	-3	-26	

CANTERBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

	K	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	TOTAL	CAPACITY
PROJECTED								
LOW	16	23	23	24	31	11	128	
HIGH	17	24	24	23	26	12	126	
ACTUAL	21	31	19	23	32	15	141	250
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL								
LOW	-5	-8	4	1	-1	-4	-13	
HIGH	-4	-7	5	0	-6	-3	-15	

BELMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL

	GRADE 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	TOTAL	CAPACITY
PROJECTED						
LOW	97	123	139	108	467	
HIGH	98	127	141	105	471	
ACTUAL	102	101	140	133	476	450
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL						
LOW	-5	22	-1	-25	-9	
HIGH	-4	26	1	-28	-5	

BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL

	GRADE 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	TOTAL	CAPACITY
PROJECTED						
LOW	116	136	88	121	461	
HIGH	114	141	86	116	457	
ACTUAL	123	143	84	111	461	500
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL						
LOW	-7	-7	4	10	0	
HIGH	-9	-2	2	5	-4	

Readiness students are included in the Grade 1 figures. Pre-school students are not included.

FIGURE 10
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMPARISON OF PROJECTED AND ACTUAL ENROLLMENT:
FOR FORECASTS MADE FROM 2003 TO 2006
December 2007

TOTAL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT

	TOTAL ENROLLMENT			
	'06 Forecast	'05 Forecast	'04 Forecast	'03 Forecast
PROJECTED				
LOW	1451	1483	1497	1530
HIGH	1450	1497		
ACTUAL	1500	1472	1507	1535
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL				
LOW	-49	11	-10	-5
HIGH	-50	24		
NET FOUR-YEAR DIFFERENCE	-12			

	BELMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL			
	'06 Forecast	'05 Forecast	'04 Forecast	'03 Forecast
PROJECTED				
LOW	395	427	417	437
HIGH	396	438		
ACTUAL	422	420	419	439
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL				
LOW	-27	7	-2	-2
HIGH	-26	18		
NET FOUR-YEAR DIFFERENCE	-5			

|	CANTERBURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL			
	'06 Forecast	'05 Forecast	'04 Forecast	'03 Forecast
PROJECTED				
LOW	128	131	141	157
HIGH	126	131		
ACTUAL	141	138	141	145
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL				
LOW	-13	-7	0	12
HIGH	-15	-7		
NET FOUR-YEAR DIFFERENCE	-2			

	BELMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL			
	'06 Forecast	'05 Forecast	'04 Forecast	'03 Forecast
PROJECTED				
LOW	467	463	474	480
HIGH	471	464		
ACTUAL	476	447	496	468
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL				
LOW	-9	16	-22	12
HIGH	-5	17		
NET FOUR-YEAR DIFFERENCE	0			

	BELMONT HIGH SCHOOL			
	'06 Forecast	'05 Forecast	'04 Forecast	'03 Forecast
PROJECTED				
LOW	461	462	465	456
HIGH	457	464		
ACTUAL	461	467	451	483
PROJECTED LESS ACTUAL				
LOW	0	-5	14	-27
HIGH	-4	-4		
NET FOUR-YEAR DIFFERENCE	-5			

To calculate the average difference, we averaged the high and low projections for the 2005 and 2006 forecasts.

FIGURE 11
SHAKER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ENROLLMENT BY SCHOOL AND POPULATION: 2001-2007
December 2007

YEAR	ENROLLMENT*					DISTRICT POPULATION
	BES	CES	BMS	BHS	TOTAL	
2007	422	141	476	461	1500	9542
2006	420	138	447	467	1472	9406
2005	419	141	496	451	1507	9283
2004	439	145	468	483	1535	9162
2003	472	131	466	453	1522	9043
2002	445	144	467	495	1551	8925
2001	451	138	474	472	1535	8810

Historic Enrollment* By School: 2001-2007
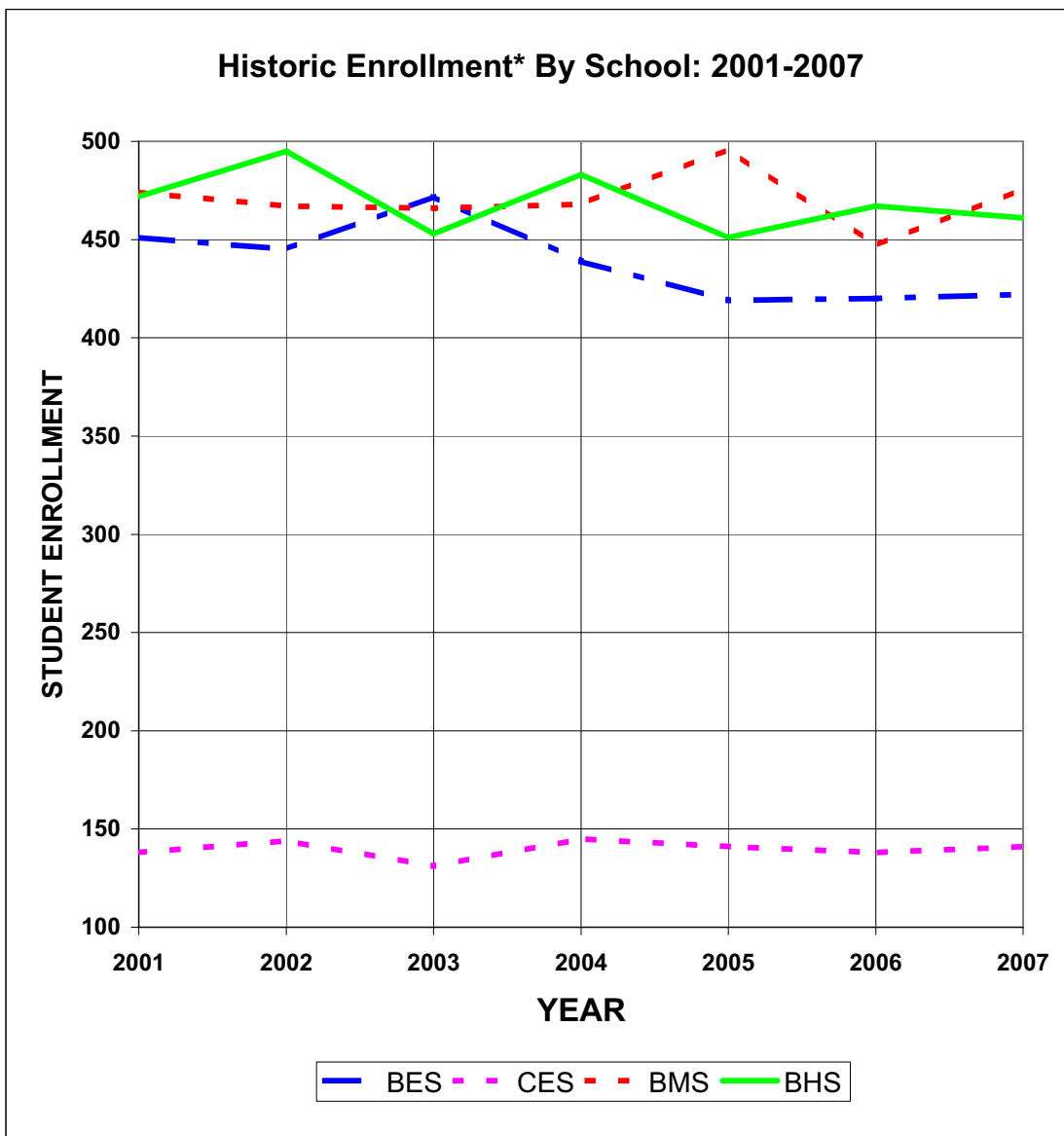
*Does not include pre-school students

FIGURE 12
ENROLLMENT AND POPULATION CHANGES
IN SELECTED NEW HAMPSHIRE DISTRICTS: 2000-2006
December 2007

DISTRICT	ENROLLMENT			2000-2006
	2006	**2000**	**2006-2000**	**POP CHANGE**
Districts with Increasing Populations and Decreasing Enrollments				
Allenstown	472	675	-203	148
Alton	613	724	-111	529
Amherst	1,647	1,743	-96	769
Berlin	1,556	1,686	-130	59
Bow	1,769	1,822	-53	652
Concord	5,303	5,564	-261	1,534
Conway	1,996	2,204	-208	598
Derry Cooperative	3,879	4,685	-806	365
Farmington	1,434	1,530	-96	1,043
Governor Wentworth	2,686	2,903	-217	1,531
Hampstead	1,057	1,215	-158	402
Hampton	1,267	1,446	-179	341
Henniker	456	625	-169	530
Keene	3,688	3,846	-158	207
Laconia	2,318	2,502	-184	693
Lebanon	1,926	2,105	-179	943
Littleton	910	1,043	-133	438
Manchester	17,154	17,407	-253	2,358
Masenic Regional	1,297	1,445	-148	934
Merrimack	4,706	4,875	-169	1,243
Monadnock Regional	2,347	2,596	-249	811
Nashua	12,712	13,668	-956	1,000
Newfound Area	1,471	1,587	-116	776
Newport	1,160	1,298	-138	94
Oyster River	2,082	2,393	-311	1,484
Pittsfield	696	839	-143	439
Raymond	1,570	1,842	-272	1,106
Somersworth	1,797	1,904	-107	421
Winchester	473	764	-291	196
Winnisquam Regional	1,712	1,861	-149	970
Districts with Increasing Populations and Enrollments				
Bedford	3,065	2,671	394	2,514
Brentwood	403	255	148	932
Chester	686	542	144	850
Dover	4,121	3,918	203	1,819
Goffstown	3,083	2,900	183	776
Hollis-Brookline	1,353	1,020	333	1,222
Litchfield	1,663	1,358	305	983
Milford	2,564	2,452	112	1,449
Pelham	2,163	1,924	239	1,534
Salem	5,255	5,102	153	1,773
Timberlane Regional	4,541	4,219	322	1,502

Sources: New Hampshire Department of Education; New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning

FIGURE 13

State Totals - Eleven Years Public and Private Fall Enrollments
1996-1997 Through 2006-2007

Public District Schools										
	96-97	**97-98**	**98-99**	**99-00**	**00-01**	**01-02**	**02-03**	**03-04**	**04-05**	**05-06**	**06-07**
Preschool	1,540	1,576	1,585	1,696	1,877	1,830	1,923	2,221	2,360	2,525	2,531
Kindergarten	8,552	8,744	8,809	9,032	9,160	9,599	9,757	9,989	10,116	10,360	10,370
Readiness	938	874	729	613	454	432	352	293	260	210	193
Grade 1	17,164	16,403	16,409	15,818	15,624	15,443	15,196	15,071	15,009	14,733	14,639
Grade 2	16,507	16,820	16,249	16,206	15,587	15,563	15,319	14,951	14,978	14,940	14,603
Grade 3	16,401	16,604	16,858	16,390	16,372	15,776	15,748	15,403	15,019	14,976	14,941
Grade 4	16,378	16,421	16,662	16,948	16,541	16,612	15,939	15,810	15,495	15,147	15,065
Grade 5	16,121	16,502	16,600	16,910	17,167	16,756	16,769	16,045	15,950	15,627	15,274
Grade 6	16,379	16,208	16,822	16,818	17,171	17,422	16,971	16,889	16,200	16,093	15,758
Grade 7	15,736	16,532	16,497	16,922	16,893	17,314	17,667	17,166	17,009	16,358	16,295
Grade 8	15,518	15,728	16,561	16,508	16,874	17,111	17,421	17,703	17,224	17,035	16,429
Grade 9	14,962	15,200	15,388	16,317	16,315	16,513	16,625	17,131	17,302	16,973	16,935
Grade 10	13,433	14,009	14,070	14,235	15,047	15,188	15,524	15,659	16,012	16,224	15,688
Grade 11	12,103	12,562	13,215	13,372	13,508	14,304	14,419	14,894	14,766	15,203	15,474
Grade 12	10,468	10,991	11,451	11,986	12,206	12,541	13,499	13,618	13,893	13,998	14,430
Spec Ed Elem	518	547	422	487	524	448	431	348	368	377	0
Ungraded Elem	82	80	96	1	4	11	1	0	7	0	0
Spec Ed Sec	94	49	111	56	185	132	65	128	183	135	0
Ungraded Sec	91	64	28	39	54	58	71	23	55	28	0
Post Graduate	4	5	8	9	5	19	18	17	17	33	20
Totals	192,989	195,919	198,570	200,363	201,568	203,072	203,715	203,359	202,223	200,975	198,645

Public Academies & Joint Maintenance Agreement										
	96-97	**97-98**	**98-99**	**99-00**	**00-01**	**01-02**	**02-03**	**03-04**	**04-05**	**05-06**	**06-07**
All Grades	3,212	3,303	3,461	3,605	3,731	3,775	3,969	4,058	4,548	4,592	4,603

Public Charter Schools										
	96-97	**97-98**	**98-99**	**99-00**	**00-01**	**01-02**	**02-03**	**03-04**	**04-05**	**05-06**	**06-07**
All Grades	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	81	200	324

Total Public Schools										
	96-97	**97-98**	**98-99**	**99-00**	**00-01**	**01-02**	**02-03**	**03-04**	**04-05**	**05-06**	**06-07**
All Grades	196,201	199,222	202,031	203,968	205,299	206,847	207,684	207,417	206,852	205,767	203,572

Total - Nonpublic Schools										
	96-97	**97-98**	**98-99**	**99-00**	**00-01**	**01-02**	**02-03**	**03-04**	**04-05**	**05-06**	**06-07**
All Grades	21,057	21,642	22,515	22,995	23,820	24,114	23,828	23,470	22,736	22,237	21,661

Total - All Schools										
	96-97	**97-98**	**98-99**	**99-00**	**00-01**	**01-02**	**02-03**	**03-04**	**04-05**	**05-06**	**06-07**
All Grades	217,258	220,864	224,546	226,963	229,119	230,961	231,512	230,887	229,588	228,004	225,233

Source: NH Department of Education, Division of Program Support, Bureau of Data Management. April 27, 2007.

FIGURE 14
ESTIMATED AND PROJECTED NH POPULATION BY AGE: 2000-2020
December 2007

New Hampshire State Totals

AGE CATEGORY	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
0-4	75,685	69,830	72,004	74,658	75,367
5-19	268,480	268,915	258,832	253,646	259,364
20-24	68,766	83,492	83,799	81,742	77,271
25-34	160,061	153,306	170,853	178,683	177,912
35+	731,560	873,127	918,191	963,025	1,007,416
TOTAL	1,235,786	1,365,178	1,419,880	1,470,012	1,520,059
SUBTOTALS					
5-19: % OF TOTAL	22%	20%	18%	17%	17%
25-34: % OF TOTAL	13%	11%	12%	12%	12%

Belknap County

AGE CATEGORY	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
0-4	3,003	3,140	3,195	3,140	3,064
5-19	11,570	10,688	10,392	10,564	10,936
20-24	2,539	2,952	2,745	2,547	2,579
25-34	6,377	6,688	7,080	6,710	6,358
35+	35,375	44,378	46,803	49,487	52,149
TOTAL	56,325	64,894	67,470	69,901	72,507
SUBTOTALS					
5-19: % OF TOTAL	21%	16%	15%	15%	15%
25-34: % OF TOTAL	11%	10%	10%	10%	9%

Merrimack County

AGE CATEGORY	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
0-4	8,112	7,990	8,492	8,764	8,682
5-19	29,665	29,376	28,534	28,806	30,249
20-24	7,220	9,379	9,129	8,858	8,426
25-34	16,902	17,865	20,499	20,964	20,448
35+	81,546	98,887	104,053	110,555	116,985
TOTAL	136,225	154,118	161,578	169,089	176,364
SUBTOTALS					
5-19: % OF TOTAL	22%	19%	18%	17%	17%
25-34: % OF TOTAL	12%	12%	13%	12%	12%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and NH Office of Energy & Planning Population Projections
   Published November 2006