DATA SOURCES

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While these peaks and valleys might vary from district to district, a vast majority of districts were within one year of the state pattern.

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PUPIL PER TEACHER RATIO BY STATE, FALL 1986

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Regionally, the highest pupil/teacher ratios were in the west and south. The lowest ratios were in the northern Great Plains and the northeast.

Between 1972 and 1987, Minnesota's pupil per teacher ratio dropped from 20.5 to 17.4 (15 percent). During the same 15 years, the national average has dropped even faster from 22.3 to 17.8 (20 percent). As a result of these changes over the 15-year period, Minnesota's national rank has dropped from 11th to 28th lowest.

Nationally, the number of classroom teachers, as a percent of all school district employees, has dropped from 65 percent in 1959-60 to 53 percent in 1986.

CHANGE IN SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT, 1982-3 TO 1986-7

During this 5-year period, total public school enrollment declined by only 2,526, or 0.4 percent. However, this change was far from uniform across the State. In terms of percent change, the Babbitt district had the largest decline with -37.1 percent (a loss of 378 students) and the Warroad district had the largest increase with 41.9 percent (a gain of 303 students).

Areas with major enrollment declines were concentrated in the mining and agricultural areas of the state which were both hit by economic decline during this period.

Areas with major enrollment increases were concentrated in portions of the Twin Cities commuter area and selected Greater Minnesota cities.


RECENT ENROLLMENT CHANGES

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* Change in counting method resulted in exaggerated total.

PROJECTED CHANGE IN SCHOOL DISTRICT ENROLLMENT, 1986-7 TO 1991-2

During this 5-year period, total state enrollment is expected to increase by 35,036 students or 4.9 percent. As might be expected, the projected increase will not be spread uniformly over the State. In fact, almost 58 percent of the State's 436 school districts are projected to decline over this 5-year period.

Areas with projected declines of enrollment continue to be found in northeastern Minnesota and small-enrollment districts in the agricultural part of the state. The largest projected loss is 38.9 percent for the Babbitt district.

Areas with projected increases of enrollment are predominantly located in the population growth axis from southeastern to northcentral Minnesota. The largest increase is in the Eden Prairie district with 53.5 percent.

Looking at projections for the next ten years and beyond, total state enrollment is expected to be about 10 percent above present totals by the mid-1990s, then is likely to start declining again before the end of the century. Projections for the next ten years show:

1. Kindergarten enrollment peaking in the 1987-8 school year,
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Trend Reports Minnesota State Planning Agency

Minnesota STATE PLANNING AGENCY

300 Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street, St. Paul, MN 55155
NATIONAL AND STATE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS, 1970-1987

Change in the number of public school teachers at the state and national level shows a very similar pattern over the last 15 years. The number of teachers peaked in the mid-1970s, dropped with enrollment declines in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and had increased since then.

Total teacher numbers in Minnesota decreased sharply in the early 1980s as a result of lower enrollments and the state budget crisis. The number of teachers has increased since 1984, reflecting increased enrollments and funding levels. Change in the number of teachers for any individual district is closely related to enrollment changes.

School enrollment projections, based on the impact of the baby boom “echo”, should dictate higher numbers of elementary teachers in growing districts for the next few years. Demand for secondary teachers should rise in growing districts during the early 1990s.


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MINNESOTA SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY SIZE GROUP, 1986-7

If the total public school enrollment was spread evenly over all of the state’s 436 districts for the 1986-7 school year, each district would have about 1,625 students. However, the median district had only 621 students, indicating a large number of small-enrollment districts. District enrollments ranged in size from Minneapolis with 38,763 to Verdant with 73.

The three largest districts in the state - Minneapolis, Anoka-Hennepin and St. Paul - serve nearly one-seventh of the state’s students.

When school districts are grouped by enrollment, the largest 10 percent of districts have over 50 percent of the State’s students. Conversely, the smallest 10 percent of districts have only 1 percent of the State’s students.


PUPILS PER TEACHER

- LESS THAN 16.0
- 16.0 TO 17.9
- 18.0 TO 19.9
- 20.0 OR MORE

7-COUNTY METRO AREA

PUPILS
- 73 TO 619
- 620 TO 1149
- 1150 TO 3699
- 3700 OR MORE
- COUNTY SEAT

MINNESOTA SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY SIZE, 1986-7

Districts with the most students generally contain one or more major cities or are in fast-growing suburban areas. Of the 20 largest school districts, only four (Duluth, Rochester, St. Cloud and Mankato) are located outside the 7-county Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Of the 300 smallest districts, only four are in the 7-county metropolitan area. A majority of the smaller districts have large geographic areas, recent population declines, and/or have been hit by economic decline in recent years. These factors present obvious funding and transportation problems for these districts.

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In the fall of 1987, the peak age of the baby boom echo was 6 years (kindergarten or first grade). These 71,531 people represent the largest age group for the school age population.

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PUPILS PER PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER BY DISTRICT, 1986-7

For the 1986-7 school year, Minnesota’s school districts employed a total professional staff of 46,425. This number includes administrators, classroom teachers, and all other licensed professional personnel measured in full-time equivalents (FTE). If this staff was distributed evenly across all school districts, each would have about 106. However, the median for professional staff per district in Minnesota is 46, indicating a large number of school districts with fewer employees than the state average. The range is from 12 in the Verdi District to 2,802 in Minneapolis.

The state average number of pupils per professional staff member (state ADM divided by total state professional staff in FTE) was 15.2 for the 1986-7 school year. However, the state median district had a ratio of 14.0, indicating that more districts were below the state average ratio than above.

Districts with the fewest pupils per professional staff member were generally in Greater Minnesota. For the 1986-7 school year the ratio ranged from a low of 5.7 in the Verdi district to a high in Stillwater with 19.0.

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