



Antietam School District, PA

Demographic Study Report 2024

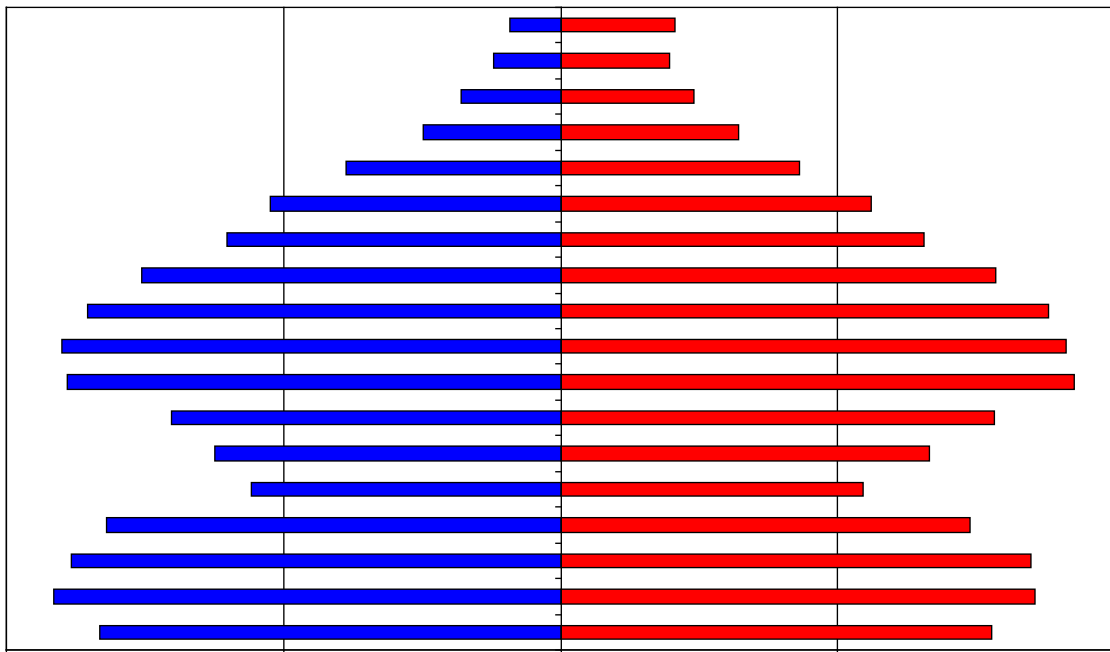


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Executive Summary

1. The resident total fertility rate for the Antietam School District over the life of the forecasts is just below replacement level. (1.68 vs. the replacement level of 2.1)
2. Most in-migration to the district continues to occur in the 0-18 and 22-49-year-old age groups.
3. The local 18-22-year-old population continues to leave the district, going to college. Another migration outflow is in the 65+ age groups, as empty-nester housing turnover continues to be a driver of migration flow.
4. The primary factor causing the district's enrollment to increase over the next 10 years is the continuing in-migration, coupled with positive natural increase.
5. Changes in year-to-year enrollment over the next ten years will primarily be due to varying size of cohorts entering, moving through, and leaving the school system.
6. The total enrollment is expected to decrease due to lag effect of COVID-19 and then increase back up to current levels by the end of the forecast horizon.
7. The median age of the district's population will decrease from 39.1 in 2020 to 38.6 in 2035.
8. Even if the district continues to have the projected amount of annual new housing unit construction over the next 10 years, the rate, magnitude, and price of existing homes, as well as availability of rental housing will continue to be a major factor affecting the amount of population and enrollment change.
9. Total district enrollment is forecasted to decrease by 109 students, or -9.0%, between 2023-24 and 2028-29. Total enrollment is forecasted to then increase by 98 students, or 8.9%, from 2028-29 to 2033-34.

INTRODUCTION

By demographic principle, distinctions are made between projections and forecasts. A projection extrapolates the past (and present) into the future with little or no attempt to take into account any factors that may impact the extrapolation (e.g., changes in fertility rates, housing patterns or migration patterns) while a forecast results when a projection is modified by reasoning to take into account the aforementioned factors.

To maximize the use of this study as a planning tool, the ultimate goal is not simply to project the past into the future, but rather to assess various factors' impact on the future. The future population and enrollment change of each school district are influenced by a variety of factors. Not all factors will influence the entire school district at the same level. Some may affect different areas at dissimilar magnitudes and rates causing changes at varying points of time within the same district. The forecaster's judgment, based on a thorough and intimate study of the district, has been used to modify the demographic trends and factors to more accurately predict likely changes. Therefore, strictly speaking, this study is a forecast, not a projection; and the amount of modification of the demographic trends varies between different areas of the district as well as within the timeframe of the forecast.

To calculate population forecasts of any type, particularly for smaller populations such as a school district, realistic suppositions must be made as to what the future will bring in terms of age specific fertility rates and residents' demographic behavior at certain points of the life course. The demographic history of the school district and its interplay with the social and economic history of the area is the starting point and basis of most of these suppositions particularly on key factors such as the age structure of the area. The unique nature of each district's and attendance area's demographic composition and rate of change over time must be assessed and understood to be factors throughout the life of the forecast series. Moreover, no two populations, particularly at the school district and attendance area level, have exactly the same characteristics.

The manifest purpose of these forecasts is to ascertain the demographic factors that will ultimately influence the enrollment levels in the district's schools. There are of course, other non-demographic factors that affect enrollment levels over time. These factors include, but are not limited to transfer policies within the district; student transfers to and from neighboring districts; placement of "special programs" within school facilities that may serve students from outside the attendance area; state or federal mandates that dictate the movement of students from one facility to another (No Child Left Behind was an excellent example of this factor); the development of charter schools in the district; the prevalence of home schooling in the area; and the dynamics of local private schools.

Unless the district specifically requests the calculation of forecasts that reflect the effects of changes in these non-demographic factors, their influences are held constant for the

life of the forecasts. Again, the main function of these forecasts is to determine what impact demographic changes will have on future enrollment. It is quite possible to calculate special "scenario" forecasts to measure the impact of school policy modifications as well as planned economic and financial changes. However, in this case the results of these population and enrollment forecast are meant to represent the most likely scenario for changes over the next 10 years in the district and its attendance areas.

The first part of the report will examine the assumptions made in calculating the population forecasts for the Antietam School District. Since the results of the population forecasts drive the subsequent enrollment forecasts, the assumptions listed in this section are paramount to understanding the area's demographic dynamics. The remainder of the report is an explanation and analysis of the district's population forecasts and how they will shape the district's grade level enrollment forecasts.

DATA

The data used for the forecasts come from a variety of sources. The Antietam School District provided enrollment by grade and attendance center for the school year 2017-24. The net migration values were calculated using Internal Revenue Service migration reports for the years 2010 through 2020. The data used for the calculation of migration models came from the United States Bureau of the Census, 2010 to 2020, and the models were designed using demographic and economic factors. The base age-sex population counts used are from the results of the 2020 Census.

Recently the Census Bureau began releasing annual estimates of demographic variables at the block group and tract level from the American Community Survey (ACS). There has been wide scale reporting of these results in the national, state and local media. However, due to the methodological problems the Census Bureau is experiencing with their estimates derived from ACS data, particularly in areas with a population of less than 60,000, the results of the ACS are not used in these forecasts. For example, given the sampling framework used by the Census Bureau, each year only 660 of the over 23,000 current households in the district would have been included. For comparison 3,000 households in the district were included in the sample for the long form questionnaire in the 2000 Census. As a result of this small sample size, the ACS survey result from the last 5 years must be aggregated to produce the tract and block group estimates.

To develop the population forecast models, past migration patterns, current age specific fertility patterns, the magnitude and dynamics of the gross migration, the age specific mortality trends, the distribution of the population by age and sex, the rate and type of existing housing unit sales, and future housing unit construction are considered to be primary variables. In addition, the change in household size relative to the age structure of the forecast area was addressed. While there was a slight drop in the average household size in the Antietam School District as well as most other areas of the

state during the previous 20 years, the rate of this decline has been forecasted to slow over the next ten years.

ASSUMPTIONS

For these forecasts, the mortality probabilities are held constant at the levels calculated for the year 2010. While the number of deaths in an area are impacted by and will change given the proportion of the local population over age 65, in the absence of an extraordinary event such as a natural disaster or a breakthrough in the treatment of heart disease, death rates rarely move rapidly in any direction, particularly at the school district or attendance area level. Thus, significant changes are not foreseen in district's mortality rates between now and the year 2035. (At this point in time, there is insufficient data of the geographic and age level impacts of COVID-19 on mortality rates. We assume that most areas will return to their traditional mortality rate levels by 2022). Any increases forecasted in the number of deaths will be due primarily to the general aging of the district's population and specifically to the increase in the number of residents aged 65 and older.

Similarly, fertility rates are assumed to stay fairly constant for the life of the forecasts. Like mortality rates, age specific fertility rates rarely change quickly or dramatically, particularly in small areas. Even with the recently reported rise in the fertility rates of the United States, overall fertility rates have stayed within a 10% range for most of the last 40 years. In fact, the vast majority of year to year change in an area's number of births is due to changes in the number of women in child bearing ages (particularly ages 20-29) rather than any fluctuation in an area's fertility rate.

The resident total fertility rate (TFR), the average number of births a woman will have while living in the school district during her lifetime, is estimated to be 1.68 for the total district for the ten years of the population forecasts. A TFR of 2.1 births per woman is considered to be the theoretical "replacement level" of fertility necessary for a population to remain constant in the absence of in-migration. Therefore, in the absence of migration, fertility alone would be insufficient to maintain the current level of population and enrollment within the Antietam School District over the course of the forecast period.

A close examination of data for the Antietam School District has shown the age specific pattern of net migration will be nearly constant throughout the life of the forecasts. While the number of in- and out-migrants has changed in past years for the Antietam School District (and will change again over the next 10 years), the basic age pattern of the migrants has stayed nearly the same over the last 30 years. Based on the analysis of data it is safe to assume this age specific migration trend will remain unchanged into the future. This pattern of migration shows most of the local out-migration occurring in the 65+ age groups, as empty nester homeowner continue to leave the district, as well as in the college-age 18-22 age groups. Most of the local in-migration occurs in the 0-14 and 22-49 age groups. It is important to note that rent-based

migration, although frequent, usually remains cyclical and stable – the in-migration and out-migration cancel each other out. The changes in migration magnitude and patterns that are not related to new construction, usually occur due changes in the household structure in turnover of existing homes.

As the Lower Alsace Township and Mount Penn Borough area are not currently contemplating any major expansions or contractions, the forecasts also assume that the current economic, political, social, and environmental factors, as well as the transportation and public works infrastructure (with a few notable exceptions) of the Antietam School District and its attendance areas will remain the same through the year 2033. Below is a list of assumptions and issues that are specific to the Antietam School District. These issues have been used to modify the population forecast models to more accurately predict the impact of these factors on each area's population change. Specifically, the forecasts for the Antietam School District assume that throughout the study period:

- a. The national, state or regional economy does not go into deep recession at any time during the 10 years of the forecasts; (Deep recession is defined as four consecutive quarters where the GDP contracts greater than 1% per quarter)
- b. Interest rates have climbed from a historic low in 2020 and will not fluctuate more than one percentage point in the short term; the interest rate for a 30-year fixed home mortgage stays below 8.0%;
- c. The rate of mortgage approval stays at 2015-2020 levels and lenders do not return to "sub-prime" mortgage practices;
- d. There are no additional restrictions placed on home mortgage lenders or additional bankruptcies of major credit providers;
- e. The rate of housing foreclosures does not exceed 125% of the 2015-2020 average of Berks County for any year in the forecasts;
- f. All currently planned, platted, approved, and permitted housing developments are built out and completed by 2035. All housing units constructed are occupied by 2033;
- g. The unemployment rates for Berks County and the Greater Reading Area will remain below 7.5% for the 10 years of the forecasts;
- h. The intra district student transfer policy remains unchanged over the next 10 years;
- i. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania does not change any of its current laws or policies regarding Charter Schools, Vouchers or inter district transfers;
- j. No additional Charter schools open in Antietam over the next 10 years;
- k. The rate of students transferring into and out of the Antietam School District will remain at the 2019-20 to 2023-24 average;
- l. The inflation rate for gasoline will stay below 5% per year for the 10 years of the forecasts;

- m. There will be no building moratorium within the district;
- n. Businesses within the Greater Reading Area, Lower Alsace Township and Mount Penn Borough will remain viable;
- o. The number of existing home sales in the district that are a result of “distress sales” (homes worth less than the current mortgage value) will not exceed 20% of total homes sales in the district for any given year;
- p. Housing turnover rates (sale of existing homes in the district) will remain at their current levels. The majority of existing home sales are made by home owners over the age of 55;
- q. Private school and home school attendance rates will remain constant;
- r. The rate of foreclosures for commercial property remains at the 2015-2020 average for Berks County;
- s. The district will have at least an average of 150 single-family home sales per year for the next 10 years.

If a major employer in the district or in the Greater Reading Area closes, reduces or expands its operations, the population forecasts would need to be adjusted to reflect the changes brought about by the change in economic and employment conditions. The same holds true for any type of natural disaster, major change in the local infrastructure (e.g., highway construction, water and sewer expansion, changes in zoning regulations etc.), a further economic downturn, any additional weakness in the housing market or any instance or situation that causes rapid and dramatic population changes that could not be foreseen at the time the forecasts were calculated.

Finally, all demographic trends (i.e., births, deaths, and migration) are assumed to be linear in nature and annualized over the forecast period. For example, if 1,000 births are forecasted for a 5-year period, an equal number, or proportion of the births are assumed to occur every year, 200 per year. Actual year-to-year variations do and will occur, but overall year to year trends are expected to be constant.

METHODOLOGY

The population forecasts presented in this report are the result of using the Cohort-Component Method of population forecasting (Siegel, and Swanson, 2004: 561-601) (Smith et. al. 2004). As stated in the **INTRODUCTION**, the difference between a projection and a forecast is in the use of explicit judgment based upon the unique features of the area under study. Strictly speaking, a cohort projection refers to the future population that would result if a mathematical extrapolation of historical trends. Conversely, a cohort-component forecast refers to the future population that is expected because of a studied and purposeful selection of the components of change (i.e., births, deaths, and migration) and forecast models are developed to measure the impact of these changes in each specific geographic area.

Five sets of data are required to generate population and enrollment forecasts. These five data sets are:

1. a base-year population (here, the 2020 Census population for the Antietam School District);
2. a set of age-specific fertility rates for the district to be used over the forecast period;
3. a set of age-specific survival (mortality) rates for the district;
4. a set of age-specific migration rates for the district; and;
5. the historical enrollment figures by grade.

The most significant and difficult aspect of producing enrollment forecasts is the generation of the population forecasts in which the school age population (and enrollment) is embedded. In turn, the most challenging aspect of generating the population forecasts is found in deriving the rates of change in fertility, mortality, and migration. From the standpoint of demographic analysis, the Antietam School District is classified as a “small area” population (as compared to the population of Pennsylvania or to that of the United States). Small area population forecasts are more complicated to calculate because local variations in fertility, mortality, and migration may be more irregular than those at the regional, state or national scale. Especially challenging is the forecast of the migration rates for local areas, because changes in the area's socioeconomic characteristics can quickly change from past and current patterns (Peters and Larkin, 2002.)

The population forecasts for Antietam School District were calculated using a cohort-component method with the populations divided into male and female groups by five-year age cohorts that range from 0-to-4 years of age to 85 years of age and older (85+). Age- and sex-specific fertility, mortality, and migration models were constructed to specifically reflect the unique demographic characteristics of each of the attendance areas in the Antietam School District.

The enrollment forecasts were calculated using a modified average survivorship method. Average survivor rates (i.e., the proportion of students who progress from one grade level to the next given the average amount of net migration for that grade level) over the previous five years of year-to-year enrollment data were calculated for grades two through twelve. This procedure is used to identify specific grades where there are large numbers of students changing facilities for non-demographic factors, such as private school transfers or enrollment in special programs.

The survivorship rates were modified or adjusted to reflect the average rate of forecasted in and out-migration of 5-to-9, 10-to-14 and 15-to-17-year-old cohorts to each of the attendance centers in Antietam School District for the period 2015 to 2020. These survivorship rates then were adjusted to reflect the forecasted changes in age-specific migration the district should experience over the next five years. These modified survivorship rates were used to project the enrollment of grades 2 through 12 for the period 2022 to 2027. The survivorship rates were adjusted again for the period 2027

to 2032 to reflect the predicted changes in the amount of age-specific migration in the district for the period.

The forecasted enrollments for kindergarten and first grade are derived from the 5-to-9-year-old population of the age-sex population forecast at the elementary attendance center district level. This procedure allows the changes in the incoming grade sizes to be factors of forecasted population change and not an extrapolation of previous class sizes. Given the potentially large amount of variation in kindergarten enrollment due to parental choice, changes in the state's minimum age requirement, and differing district policies on allowing children to start kindergarten early, first grade enrollment is deemed to be a more accurate and reliable starting point for the forecasts. (McKibben, 1996) The level of the accuracy for both the population and enrollment forecasts at the school district level is estimated to be +2.0% for the life of the forecasts.

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Population Geography. 7th Edition. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing. 2002.
- Siegel, J. and D. Swanson
The Methods and Materials of Demography: Second Edition, Academic Press: New York, New York. 2004.
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Appendix A: Supplemental Tables

Table 1: Forecasted District Population Change, 2020 to 2035

	2020	2025	2020-2025 Change	2030	2025-2030 Change	2035	2030-2035 Change	2020-2035 Change
DISTRICT TOTAL	7,960	8,160	2.5%	8,390	2.8%	8,610	2.6%	8.2%

Table 2: Household Characteristics, 2020 Census

	HH w/ Pop Under 18	% HH w/ Pop Under 18	Total Households	Household Population	Persons Per Household
DISTRICT TOTAL	3,017	28.5%	10,579	26,116	2.44

Table 3: Householder Characteristics, 2020 Census

	Percentage of Householders aged 35-54	Percentage of Householders aged 65+	Percentage of Householders Who Own Homes
DISTRICT TOTAL	33.4%	28.7%	59.8%

Table 4: Percentage of Households that are Single Person Households and Single Person Households that are over age 65, 2020 Census

	Percentage of Single Person Households	Percentage of Single Person Households and are 65+
DISTRICT TOTAL	30.1%	14.0%

Table 5: Elementary Enrollment (K-6), 2023, 2028, 2033

	2023*	2028	2023-2028 Change	2033	2028-2033 Change	2023-2033 Change
DISTRICT TOTAL	633	576	-9.0%	632	9.7%	-0.2%

* October 2023 school district provided enrollment data

Table 6: Age Under One to Age Ten Population Counts, by Year of Age: 2020 Census

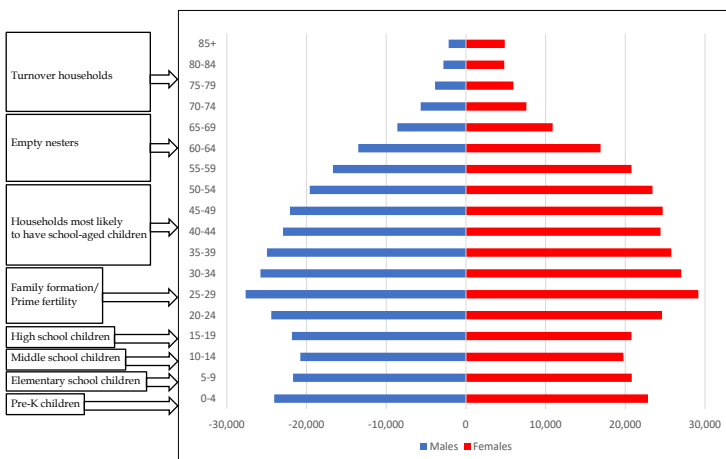
	Under 1 year	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years	8 years	9 years	10 years
DISTRICT TOTAL	76	81	95	96	88	103	95	95	108	112	116

Appendix B: Population Pyramids

Population pyramids are an effective tool to graphically represent age-sex composition of a given geographical area. They are designed to provide a detailed picture of structure of a population, with age and sex group intervals represented as horizontal bars stacked on one another. Most commonly, the pyramids are represented in 5-year age intervals, with the oldest group being open ended (on top). Male population groups are presented on the left, and female groups are given on the right side of the graph. For the purpose of this report, pyramids are represented as absolute numbers, since these types of pyramids show differences in overall population numbers between age-sex groups and between different geographical areas. Since the size of population between different attendance zones, regions and the district as a whole varies significantly, the pyramids are represented at different scale groupings, varying from: very small (up to 400 per age-sex group); small; (up to 800 per age-sex group); medium-sized (up to 1,200 per age-sex group); large (up to 1,600 per age-sex group); and very-large (up to 2,000 per age-sex group). The scales for the regions as well as for the whole district are naturally larger and are adjusted accordingly.

The shapes of the pyramids, along with the magnitude of the scales, are powerful tool with which one can quickly gain insight into population dynamics of analyzed area. Various types of shapes offer demographers visual aids in determining possible underlying trends regarding not just the age-sex composition of the area, but also provide clues to population components of change (fertility, mortality, and migration). They might also provide insight into possible type of housing, workforce, education level and presence of group quarters (such as correctional institutions, colleges, senior care facilities, etc.) All these factors should be considered when analyzing population trends of a certain area and more importantly while trying to ascertain future trends that this area might experience.

With all of this in mind, one can consider a population pyramid as a demographic fingerprint of a certain area. Consider the pyramid below:

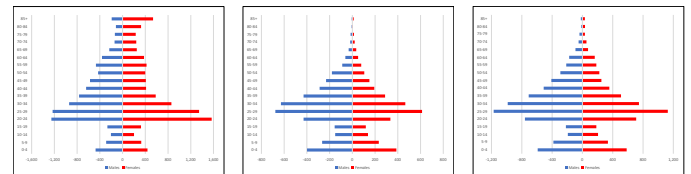


We can classify age groups into eight approximate categories (with an obvious note that 5-year age groups will not perfectly match school levels):

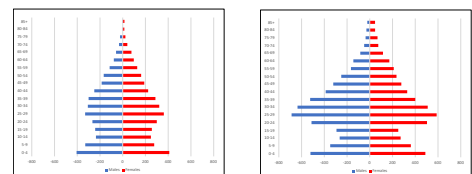
- Ages 0-4 - Pre-K children;
- Ages 5-9 - Elementary school children;
- Ages 10-14 - Middle school children;
- Ages 15-19 - High school children;
- Ages 20-34 - Family formation/prime fertility;
- Ages 35-54 - Households most likely to have school-aged children;
- Ages 55-74 - Empty nesters; and
- Ages 75 - Turnover households.

Using different kinds of typologies, we can classify elementary attendance zones into 7 different types, as follows:

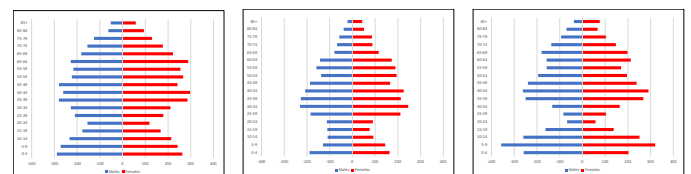
- Multi-family - high SES (socioeconomic status): characterized by high proportion of population in their 20s and early 30s, most likely to be renting apartments. In addition, characterized by higher SES.



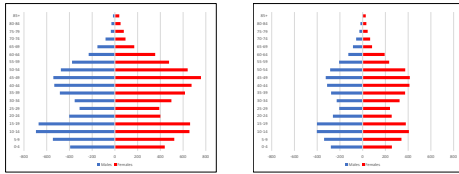
- Multi-family - low SES: characterized by high proportion of population in their 20s and early 30s, most likely to be renting apartments. In addition, characterized by lower SES.



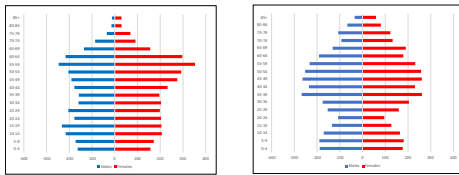
- Young suburban: characterized by high proportions of population in their 30s and 40s, as well as young children (pre-K and elementary schoolers).



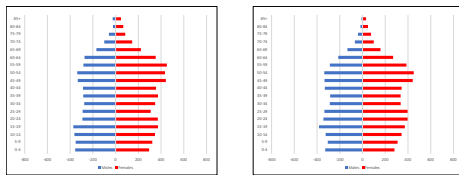
- d) Old suburban: characterized by high proportions of population in their 40s and 50s, as well as older children (middle and high schoolers).



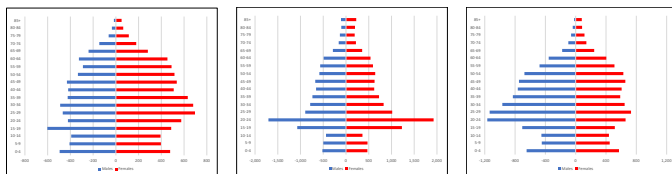
- e) Turnover: characterized by population in 50s and 60s, empty nest households more likely to sell a house and downsize.



- f) Mixed: characterized by mixed population of various ages and types of housing.

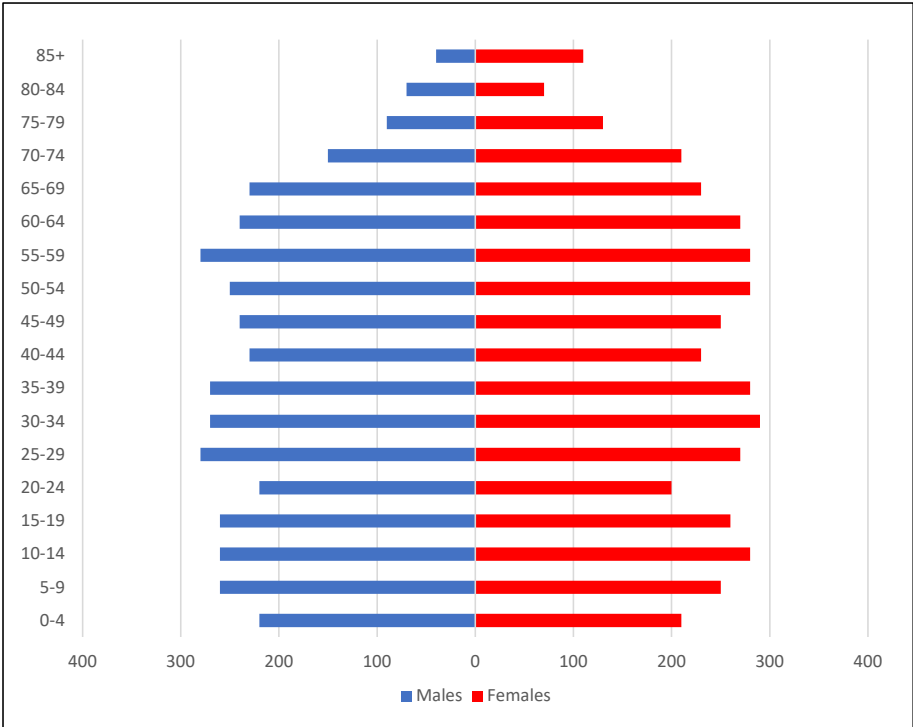


- g) Group quarters: characterized by presence of one specific group of population that is living in either retirement homes, correctional facilities, army bases, student dorms, etc.

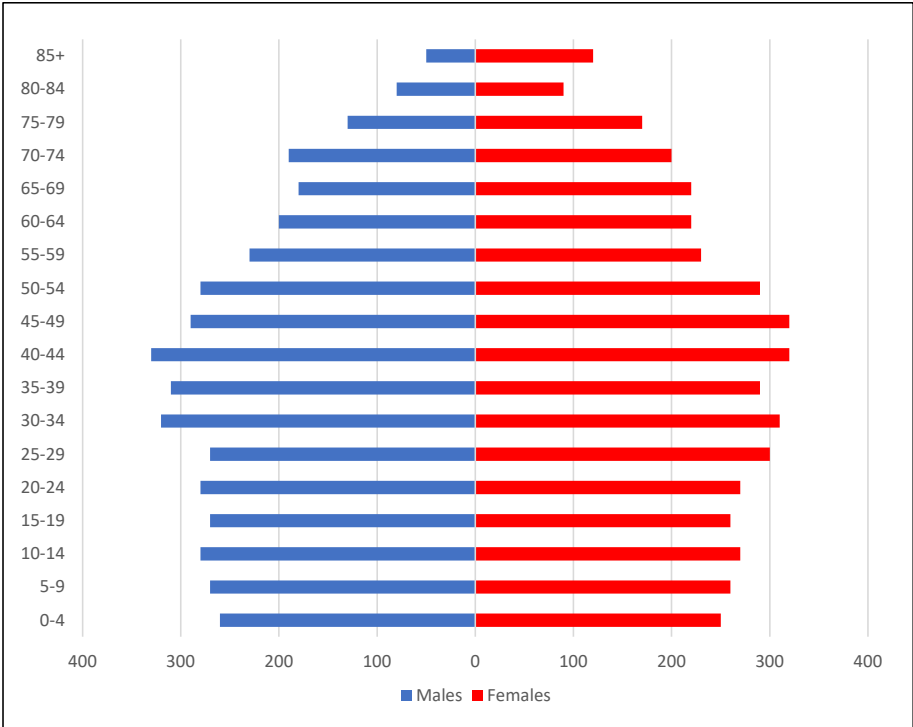




Antietam School District Total Population – 2020 Census



Antietam School District Total Population – 2035 Forecast



Appendix C: Population Forecast

Antietam School District - 2023 Population Forecast

Total	2020	2025	2030	2035
0-4	430	450	490	510
5-9	510	490	490	530
10-14	540	610	570	550
15-19	520	540	550	530
20-24	420	520	540	550
25-29	550	460	550	570
30-34	560	590	560	630
35-39	550	540	630	600
40-44	460	530	570	650
45-49	490	480	580	610
50-54	530	470	480	570
55-59	560	510	450	460
60-64	510	510	450	420
65-69	460	470	460	400
70-74	360	410	380	390
75-79	220	290	310	300
80-84	140	140	170	170
85+	150	150	160	170
Total	7,960	8,160	8,390	8,610
Median Age	39.1	38.9	38.5	38.6

	2020 to 2025	2025 to 2030	2030 to 2035
Births	430	460	490
Deaths	260	280	290
Natural Increase	170	180	200
Net Migration	30	50	40
Change	200	230	240

Differences between period Totals may not equal Change due to rounding.

Appendix D: Enrollment Forecast

Antietam School District: Total Enrollment

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
K	84	68	96	98	74	80	75	73	80	81	82	83	86	88	88
1	70	89	83	97	108	79	86	81	78	86	86	86	87	89	91
2	88	64	88	87	99	103	76	82	78	76	84	85	86	87	89
Total: K-2	242	221	267	282	281	262	237	236	236	243	252	254	259	264	268

3	82	86	66	88	89	97	98	73	80	76	75	84	85	86	88
4	95	83	91	71	92	92	100	101	76	84	80	80	90	91	92
5	93	95	81	89	80	91	92	99	100	76	86	83	82	92	93
6	95	97	85	86	91	77	87	88	95	97	76	85	82	81	91
7	84	101	114	103	91	98	82	92	94	103	106	84	93	90	88
8	94	92	96	101	102	88	94	79	88	92	101	106	84	93	89
Total: 3-8	543	554	533	538	545	543	553	532	533	528	524	522	516	533	541

9	96	99	103	110	114	111	95	101	85	95	102	112	118	93	103
10	94	86	78	85	107	100	97	82	90	76	85	94	103	107	84
11	68	86	85	83	80	101	94	91	78	86	74	82	91	101	105
12	75	64	77	76	83	75	94	87	85	73	83	71	79	88	98
Total: 9-12	333	335	343	354	384	387	380	361	338	330	344	359	391	389	390

Total: K-12	1,118	1,110	1,143	1,174	1,210	1,192	1,170	1,129	1,107	1,101	1,120	1,135	1,166	1,186	1,199
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Total: K-12	1,118	1,110	1,143	1,174	1,210	1,192	1,170	1,129	1,107	1,101	1,120	1,135	1,166	1,186	1,199
Change		-8	33	31	36	-18	-22	-41	-22	-6	19	15	31	20	13
% Change		-0.7%	3.0%	2.7%	3.1%	-1.5%	-1.8%	-3.5%	-1.9%	-0.5%	1.7%	1.3%	2.7%	1.7%	1.1%

Total: K-2	242	221	267	282	281	262	237	236	236	243	252	254	259	264	268
Change		-21	46	15	-1	-19	-25	-1	0	7	9	2	5	5	4
% Change		-8.7%	20.8%	5.6%	-0.4%	-6.8%	-9.5%	-0.4%	0.0%	3.0%	3.7%	0.8%	2.0%	1.9%	1.5%

Total: 3-8	543	554	533	538	545	543	553	532	533	528	524	522	516	533	541
Change		11	-21	5	7	-2	10	-21	1	-5	-4	-2	-6	17	8
% Change		2.0%	-3.8%	0.9%	1.3%	-0.4%	1.8%	-3.8%	0.2%	-0.9%	-0.8%	-0.4%	-1.1%	3.3%	1.5%

Total: 9-12	333	335	343	354	384	387	380	361	338	330	344	359	391	389	390
Change		2	8	11	30	3	-7	-19	-23	-8	14	15	32	-2	1
% Change		0.6%	2.4%	3.2%	8.5%	0.8%	-1.8%	-5.0%	-6.4%	-2.4%	4.2%	4.4%	8.9%	-0.5%	0.3%

Forecasts developed January 2024

Green cells (2023-2024 and earlier) are historical school district data

Blue cells (2024-2025 and later) are forecasted years

