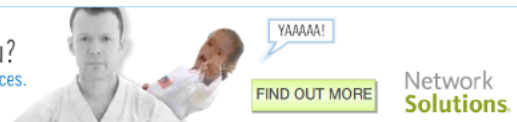


What will Network Solutions do for you?
Create a site. Drive traffic. Sell products & services.



NEWS SPORTS OPINION ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT SKYLINE CLASSIFIED SERVICES SUBSCRIBE

Wednesday
May 13, 2009

Welcome! Make This my Homepage
Web dnronline.com Archives

Google Search

CARS | HOMES | JOBS | MARKETPLACE | SHOPPING ZONE

Site Last Modified
May 13, 2009 9:20 AM

News - Top

To Top News Main To Homepage



SOLVE PET OBESITY WITH OUR GUIDANCE
FREE WEIGHT CHECK AND NUTRITIONAL CONSULTATIONS
(540) 433-9174



City, County Enrollment On The Rise

Weldon Cooper Report Shows Statewide Increase

Posted 2009-05-13

Temp: 48° 7 DAY FORECAST
Conditions: Fair
Wind: Calm
Dawn: 06:07AM - Dusk: 08:17PM

By [Jenny Jones](#)

HARRISONBURG - Enrollment in Virginia's public schools is expected to increase in the next few years and local schools are slated to follow the trend, according to a University of Virginia report.

The university's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service projects that between 2008 and 2013 public school enrollment will increase statewide by about 42,000 students, or 3.5 percent, mostly due to an increase in elementary-school-age students.

Enrollment in Harrisonburg City Schools is expected to increase by 408 students, or about 9.2 percent, while the number of students in Rockingham County Schools is projected to go up by 434 students, or about 3.8 percent, in those five years.

Elementary school enrollment is expected to increase by more than 10 percent statewide, with kindergarten enrollment alone increasing by 10.3 percent.

The number of Virginia high school students, on the other hand, is expected to decline, with 12th-grade enrollment decreasing by 5.5 percent, the report shows.

Locally, kindergarten enrollment in Harrisonburg Schools is actually expected to decrease slightly, dropping from 442 students to 436 during the five-year period.

However, enrollment in first through 11th grades in the city is expected to rise steadily, with first grade alone growing from 385 to 423 students, an increase of nearly 10 percent, the report shows.

In Rockingham County, kindergarten enrollment is expected to grow from 820 to 923 students, an increase of about 12.6 percent, during the five years. The division is expected to see the sharpest decline in fourth-grade enrollment, with totals going from 939 to 867 students, a decrease of about 8.3 percent, the report shows.

Local Schools Prepared

Increasing enrollment may mean some districts will have to add resources, from more teachers to new school buildings. But local school officials say their divisions are in good shape.

Mike Loso, assistant superintendent of Harrisonburg City Schools, said division personnel keep a close eye on enrollment projections, but additional teachers and staff usually aren't hired until the students are enrolled.

"We have been anticipating growth for a while with what we've had in the past and what is projected," he said. "It's good for us to try to anticipate the growth, but really we wait till the children are here. ... We don't hire on anticipation, we hire on enrollment."

When it comes to building space, Loso said, the division is well equipped to handle at least some increase in enrollment. The problem is that no one knows for sure how large the increase will be, he said.

"Our board has been really insightful when building our new schools," said Loso, adding that the new kindergarten-through-fourth-grade elementary configuration also helped free up building space. "[But enrollment] is very much a moving target. ... We'll continue to monitor what we think will be coming."

Joe Hill, director of math and technology for Rockingham County Schools, said the division has been anticipating growth and can handle more students.

"Absolutely, we're prepared, especially with the opening of three schools in three years," said Hill, referring to Cub Run and River Bend elementary schools and East Rockingham High School. "We're ready for that anticipated growth."

When it comes to hiring teachers and staff, the county, like the city, doesn't typically hire additional teachers until students are actually enrolled, Hill said.

"We have to go on what we have," he said. "We can't hire ... based on projections."

Some Divisions To Shrink

While many school divisions can expect increased enrollment, the report shows that several others will likely have decreased enrollment. Those are: Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Richmond, Newport News, Hampton, Portsmouth, Roanoke, Henry County, Petersburg and Danville.

The report states that enrollment projections are based on assumptions about how many students will remain in school, move from grade to grade, transfer in or out of their school divisions, graduate from high school or come to the schools as new students.

It cautions that the recession, housing crisis and changes in the state's military bases could throw off the projections.



DNR File Photo

Advertisement for ROCKTOWN WEEKLY.COM: THE FLIP SIDE OF HARRISONBURG

Advertisement for BUSINESS CENTRAL featuring the Chevrolet logo.

Advertisement for 3D MAP SEARCH with a map image.

Advertisement for WORLD OF WARCRAFT: 10-DAY FREE TRIAL

Advertisement for OLD DOMINION REALTY: your key to a new home

Advertisement for WORLD OF WARCRAFT: FREE TRIAL

Advertisement for Hanover Academy, Richmond: Accredited Private Pre-K Education Degreed Teachers, Summer Programs
FL Virtual Academy School: Provide your child an academic advantage with FLVA
Teach Elementary School: University of Phoenix Night, Distance, And Part Time!