

Welcome to our quarterly newsletter, which aims to inform and educate school administrators on the process of performing enrollment projections and other topics related to school demography.

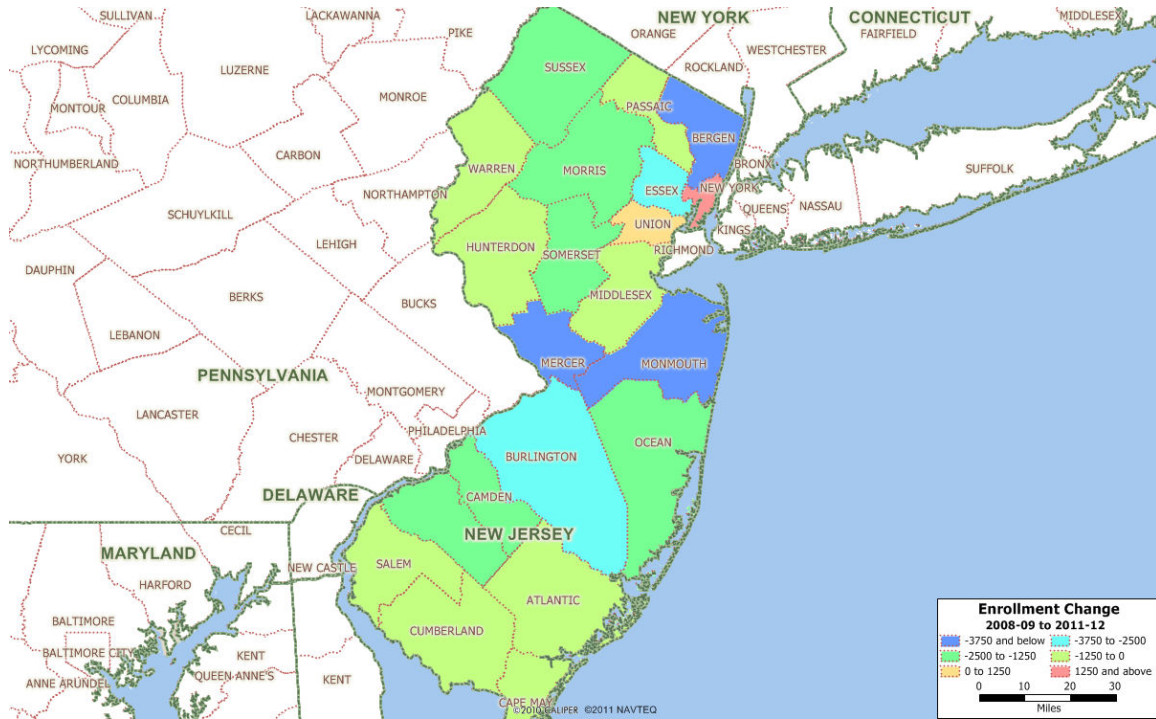
Greetings as we embark on the start of a new school year.

Over the course of 2012, our firm has been hired to complete a number of demographic studies for districts in New Jersey. With the exception of one or two districts, enrollment has been in decline. What a difference a few years makes! In the early-to-mid 2000's, housing construction boomed and so did enrollment. Instead of building new schools, districts are now considering closing existing ones.

In this newsletter, I wanted to explore the enrollment change at the county level by comparing enrollment in 2008-09 with that of 2011-12. The table below ranks the counties from the greatest decline in enrollment to those who have experienced an increase in enrollment.

County	2009-10	2011-12	Change
Monmouth NJ	105,552.5	100,807	-4,745.5
Bergen NJ	135,115.5	130,516	-4,599.5
Mercer NJ	57,780.5	53,371	-4,409.5
Essex NJ	119,443	115,761.5	-3,681.5
Burlington NJ	73,245.5	70,533.5	-2,712
Camden NJ	81,400	79,036	-2,364
Morris NJ	80,127	77,849	-2,278
Gloucester NJ	49,730.5	47,480.5	-2,250
Sussex NJ	25,048.5	23,197	-1,851.5
Ocean NJ	75,759	73,965	-1,794
Somerset NJ	55,006.5	53,730.5	-1,276
Hunterdon NJ	22,740	21,540	-1,200
Passaic NJ	80,099	79,157	-942
Atlantic NJ	45,439	44,537	-902
Warren NJ	18,272	17,561	-711
Cape May NJ	13,608	12,949	-659
Middlesex NJ	120,334.5	119,730.5	-604
Cumberland NJ	26,792	26,344	-448
Salem NJ	11,823	11,466.5	-356.5
Union NJ	87,317.5	87,603.5	+286
Hudson NJ	77,385.5	78,734	+1,348.5
Subtotal	1,362,019	1,325,869.5	-36,149.5
Charters	21,686.5	25,158.5	+3,472
State Total	1,383,705.5	1,351,028.0	-32,677.5

For the visual learner in all of us, the figure below shows the enrollment change during this time period. Counties shaded blue had the greatest enrollment decline while those shaded green had moderate declines. Of the 21 counties, only two (Hudson and Union) had enrollment gains.



During this time period, enrollment in the state has declined by nearly 33,000 students, a decline of 2.4%. Some of the decline can be attributed to the growth in charter school enrollment, which gained nearly 3,500 students. However, the charter enrollment increase does not fully explain the decline in public school enrollment. What is causing the decline? That will have to wait for another newsletter, when I explore birth rates in the state.

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