



Shrewsbury Public Schools

Patrick C. Collins, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations

20 November 2018

To: School Committee

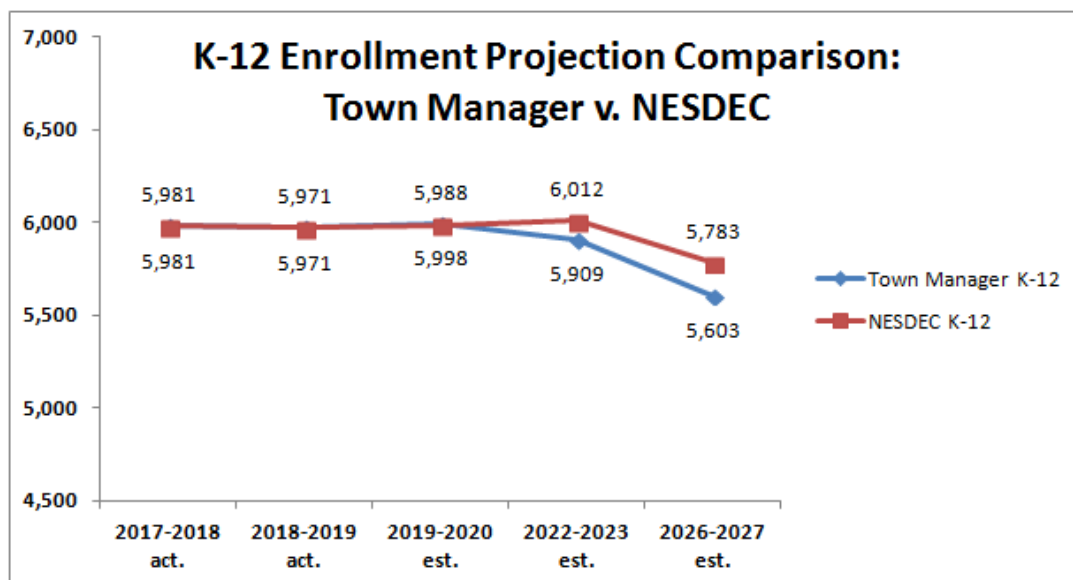
Subj: ENROLLMENT PROJECTION REPORT

Background

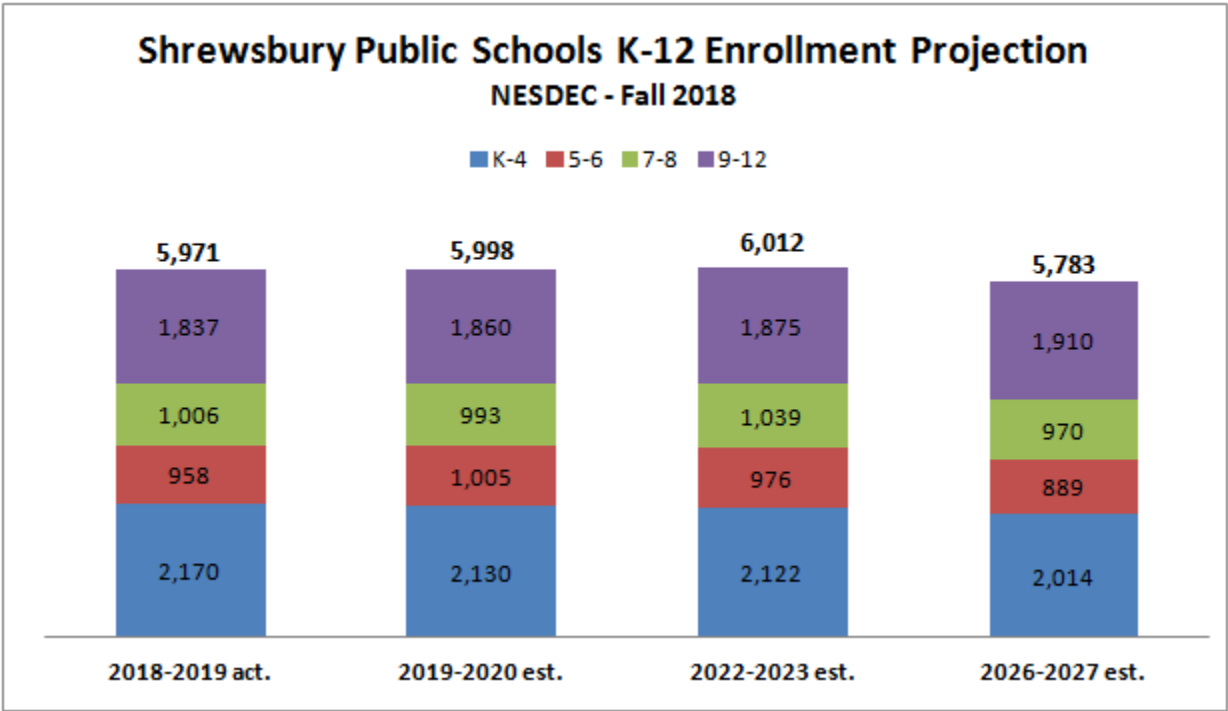
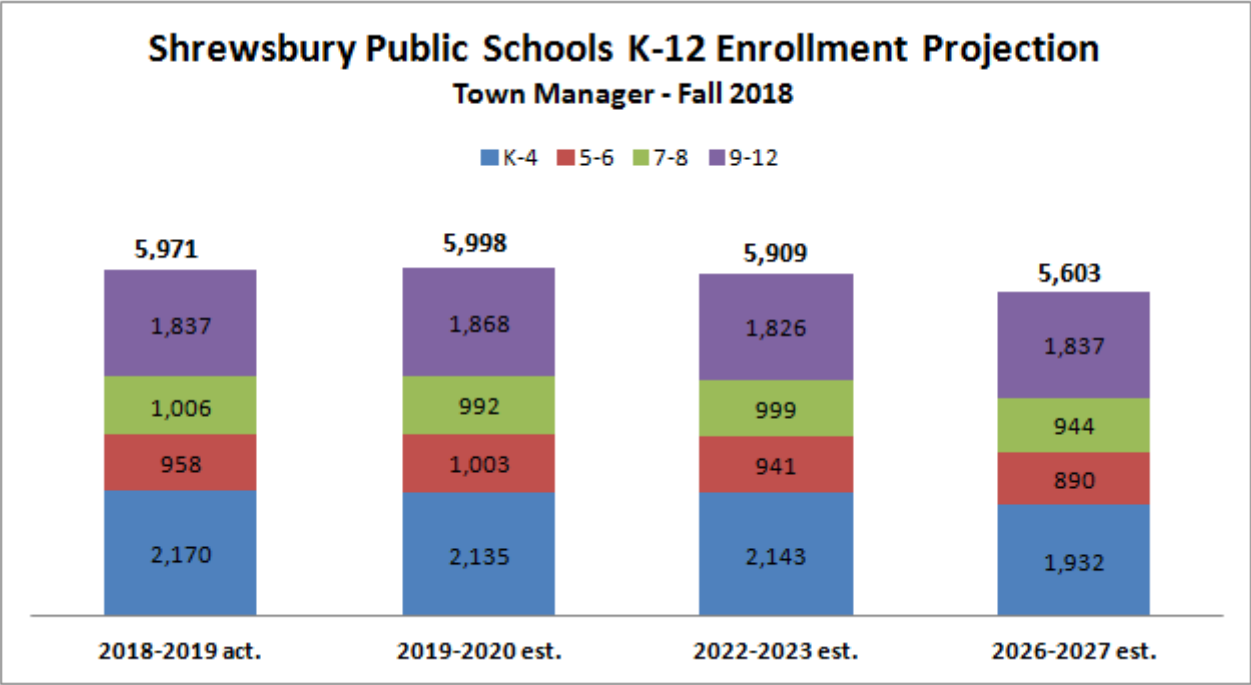
Enrollment projections are an essential element in short and long-term school planning. We use enrollment projections for capital planning purposes and near-term class size and staff planning. In Shrewsbury, we receive each year an enrollment projection from the Town Manager's Office. That projection is a standard *cohort survival method* using a five-year average for each cohort survival ratio. In addition, as a member of the New England School Development Council [NESDEC] we receive an annual enrollment projection from them. They used a three-year cohort survival ratio for grades 1-12 and a 98% survival ratio for birth to kindergarten.

Highlights

Since the Town Manager's Projection does not include Preschool enrollment we will use K-12 enrollments for comparative purposes. The chart below depicts both K-12 projections at one-year, four-year, and eight-year intervals. The NESDEC projection projects modest continued growth at the one and four-year marks while the eight-year interval shows a decline. The Town Manager projection indicates a decline at the four and eight-year intervals.



In the following charts we see the K-12 enrollment projections segmented by our current grade configuration. For planning purposes for the 2019-2020 school year, we have used the higher of the two projections for each grade level with the intent of avoiding “surprises” and also to safely plan for appropriate levels of teaching staff to ensure reasonable class sizes.

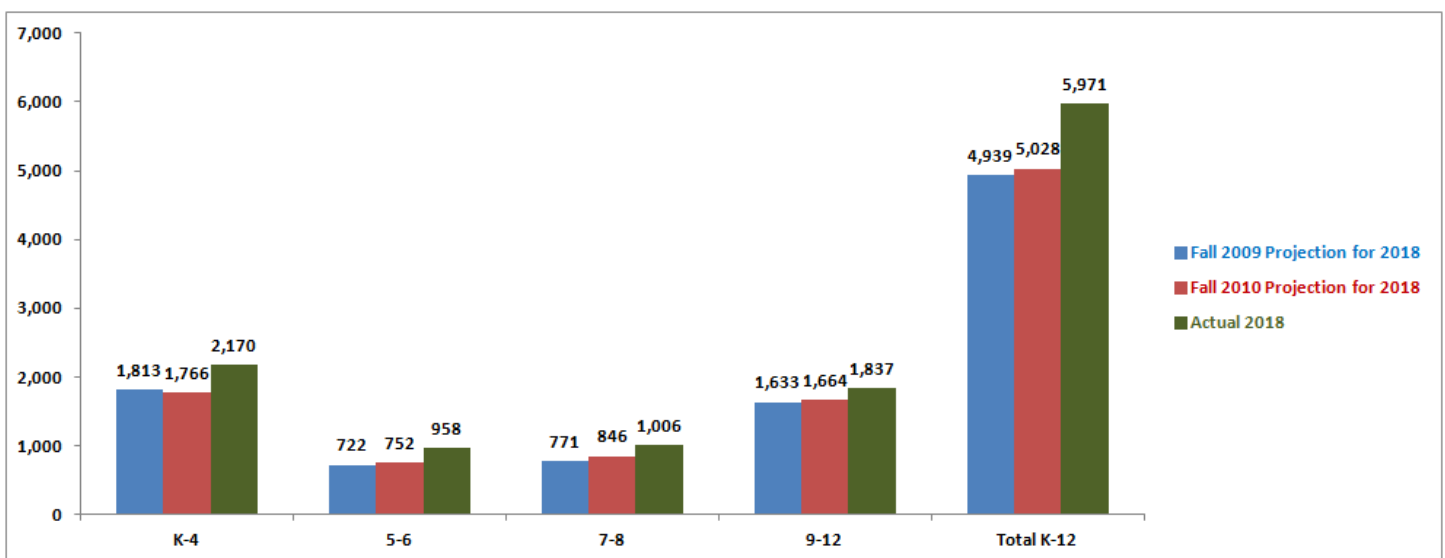


The detailed enrollment projections are included in a related Powerpoint presentation document and I will review the details at our upcoming meeting.

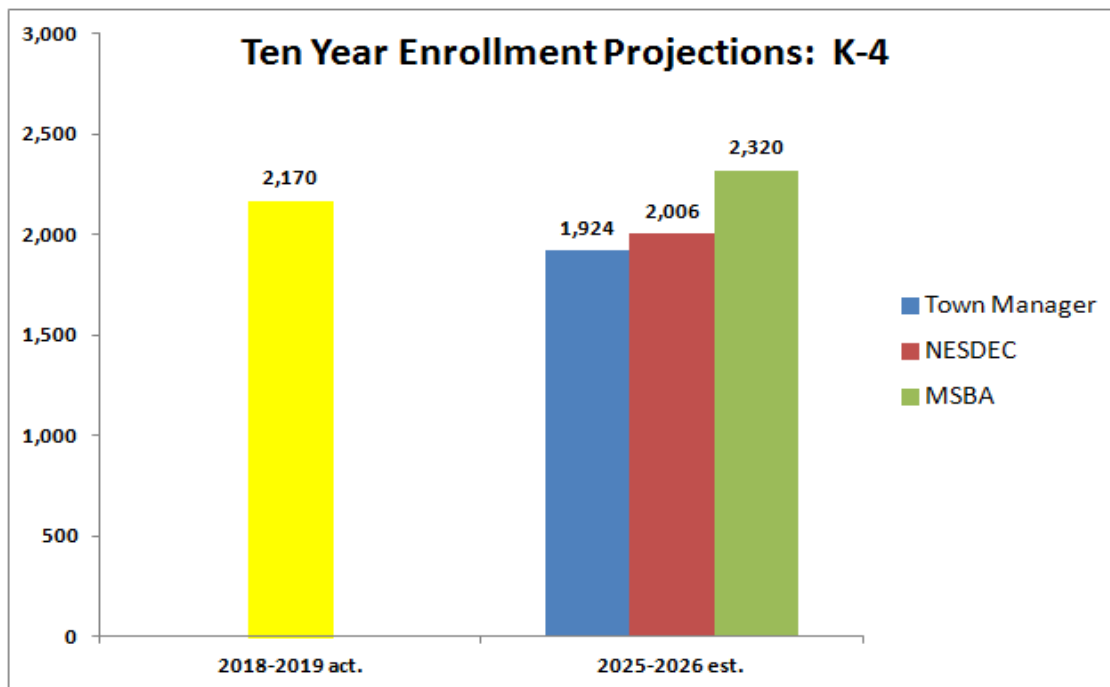
Further, we have derived an initial school-based enrollment projection in order to prepare our staff planning budget for the 2019-2020 [fiscal year 2020] school year and I will review those details as well. The school-based projection for elementary schools will be refined as we progress in the budget process and become informed with new information relative to ongoing enrollments for kindergarten and first grade students entering our system for the first time along with the level of interest expressed for full-day kindergarten.

Projection Review

It is clear we can have a very high degree of confidence in the one-year projections as both have a 99%+ degree of accuracy. But we should also review past projections to measure longer-term accuracy. The chart below compares the 2009 and 2010 enrollment projection for Fall 2018 against the actual Fall 2018 enrollment. As one can see, our actual enrollments significantly exceeded these projections by 950-1,030 students. So, during this past eight to nine year period we have obviously experienced significant in-migrations and higher than projected birth rates.



In planning for the new Beal School Project with the Massachusetts School Building Authority [MSBA], we engaged in an enrollment projection process in order to determine our K-4 space needs for the future. As you can see from the chart below, the MSBA projection is significantly higher than both the Town Manager and NESDEC projections and we believe a more accurate forecast. The MSBA projection assumes full-day kindergarten for all students and an “in-migration” factor based upon communities who build a new school.



Summary

The enclosed enrollment projections allow us to have a high degree of certainty on staff planning for the 2019-2020 school year. The areas with highest potential variability in terms of enrollment are at the K-1 grades and grade 9.

As recently reported to the School Committee, we are making steady progress with the Beal School Project and we know that completion of this project will provide much-needed space and relief at all elementary schools. On the near-term horizon is the engagement of the PreK-12 Long-term Enrollment and Space Capacity assessment to be conducted by Lamoureux Pagano Associates. We believe this project will define our space needs for the next ten-year period and provide a roadmap for future capital planning.

Finally, we need to be attentive to our growing high school population. We have significantly exceeded the design capacity and as you know the current classroom utilization rate is 98%. Thus, few options exist to manage increased enrollment so we will have to keep a watchful eye on this for 2019-2020 and beyond.