

Demographic Study

for the

Saddle River School District

August 2026 (revised November 2026)

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Introduction

Statistical Forecasting LLC ("Statistical Forecasting") completed a demographic study for the Saddle River School District, projecting grade-by-grade enrollments from 2026-27 through 2030-31, a five-year period. In addition, the following tasks were completed:

- analyzed community birth counts,
- examined districtwide (PK-5) historical enrollment trends, and
- researched new housing starts and analyzed their impact on the school district.

District Overview

The Saddle River School District is a PK-5 school district consisting of one school, Wandell Elementary School ("Wandell"). Children in grades 6-8 attend Eric S. Smith Middle School in the Ramsey School District through a sending-receiving relationship. Children in grades 9-12 attend either Ramsey High School in the Ramsey School District or Northern Highlands Regional High School in the Northern Highlands Regional School District through separate sending-receiving relationships.

In this study, historical enrollments from the New Jersey Department of Education ("NJDOE") database, Saddle River School District, Ramsey School District, and Northern Highlands Regional School District were used to project enrollments five years into the future using the Grade Progression Differences method.

Explanation of the Grade Progression Differences Method

The Grade Progression Differences ("GPD") method was used to project enrollments in this study since the number of students in each grade level was quite small. In this method, the change in the number of students, as opposed to the ratio, is computed for each grade progression. As compared to a ratio, a numerical change is less sensitive to the movement inward or outward of a few students and is preferred when grade level sizes are small. A positive value indicates an inward migration of students while a negative value indicates an outward migration of students. The computed differences in enrollment in each grade progression were averaged and these values were used to project enrollments five years into the future.

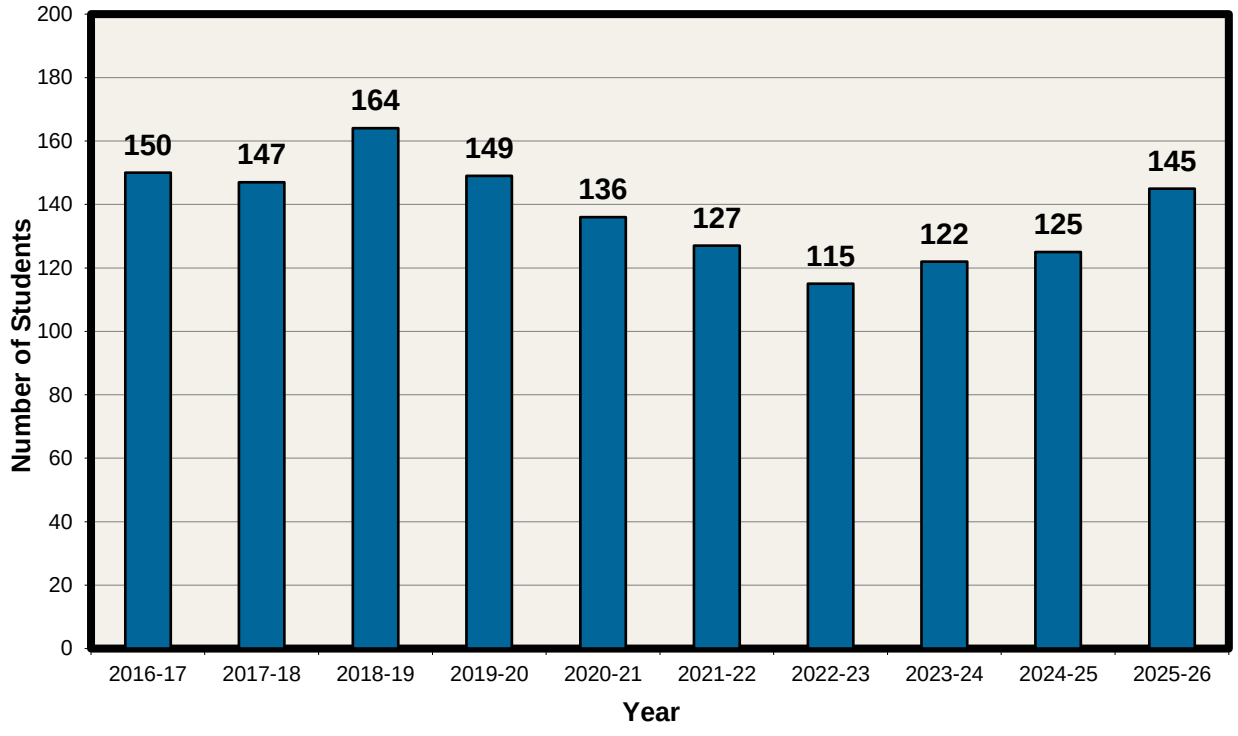
The GPD method assumes that what happened in the past will also happen in the future and is most applicable for districts that have relatively stable trends without any major unpredictable fluctuations from year to year. In school districts encountering rapid growth or decline not experienced historically (a change in the historical trend), the GPD method must be modified and supplemented with additional information. In this study, grade progression differences were calculated using historical data for birth to kindergarten, kindergarten to first grade, first grade to second grade, etc. Due to the fluctuation in grade progression differences from year to year, it is appropriate to calculate an average, which is then used to calculate grade-level enrollments five years into the future.

The accuracy of the projections is contingent on the most recent historical trends continuing into the future. If there is a departure from these trends caused by, for example, migration or withdrawal of students due to the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous new housing starts (or planned housing starts that do not occur), changes in school district policy, changes to immigration laws, an economic downturn, a change in the housing resale market, etc., the enrollment projections presented are less likely to be accurate in future years, as this analysis does not forecast future trends. Therefore, the projections need to be revised annually to detect potential reversals in enrollment trends. Changes in enrollment are dependent on several factors such as birth counts, migration of students into or out of the school district, the presence of charter schools, private schools, or parochial schools, and school district policy changes.

Historical Enrollment Trends

Historical enrollments[1] (PK-5) for the Saddle River School District from 2016-17 through 2025-26, a ten-year period, are shown in Figure 1 and Table 1. After peaking at 164 students in 2018-19, enrollments declined through 2022-23 before reversing the trend. In 2025-26, enrollment is 145, which is slightly lower (-5) than the 2016-17 enrollment of 150.

Figure 1
Saddle River School District Historical Enrollments
2016-17 to 2025-26



[1] Includes students placed out-of-district for special education

Historical enrollments[2] are also shown in Table 1 and Figure 2 by grade configuration (PK-5, 6-8, and 9-12) from 2020-21 to 2025-26, a six-year period, as well for grades PK-12. Self-contained special education/ungraded students were incorporated into the totals for each grade configuration. Enrollments (PK-12) generally declined through 2024-25 before reversing trend. In 2025-26, enrollment is 352, which is slightly lower (-20) than the 2020-21 enrollment of 372. For grades PK-5, enrollments declined through 2022-23 before reversing trend. In 2025-26, enrollment is 145, which is slightly higher (+9) than the 2020-21 enrollment of 136. For grades 6-8, enrollments ranged from 54-81 over this time period. In 2025-26, enrollment is 63, which is slightly higher (+5) than the 2020-21 enrollment of 58. For grades 9-12, enrollments have slowly declined over this time period. Enrollment is 144 in 2025-26, which is a decline of 34 students from the 2020-21 enrollment of 178.

Figure 2
Saddle River
Historical Enrollments by Grade Configuration
2020-21 to 2025-26

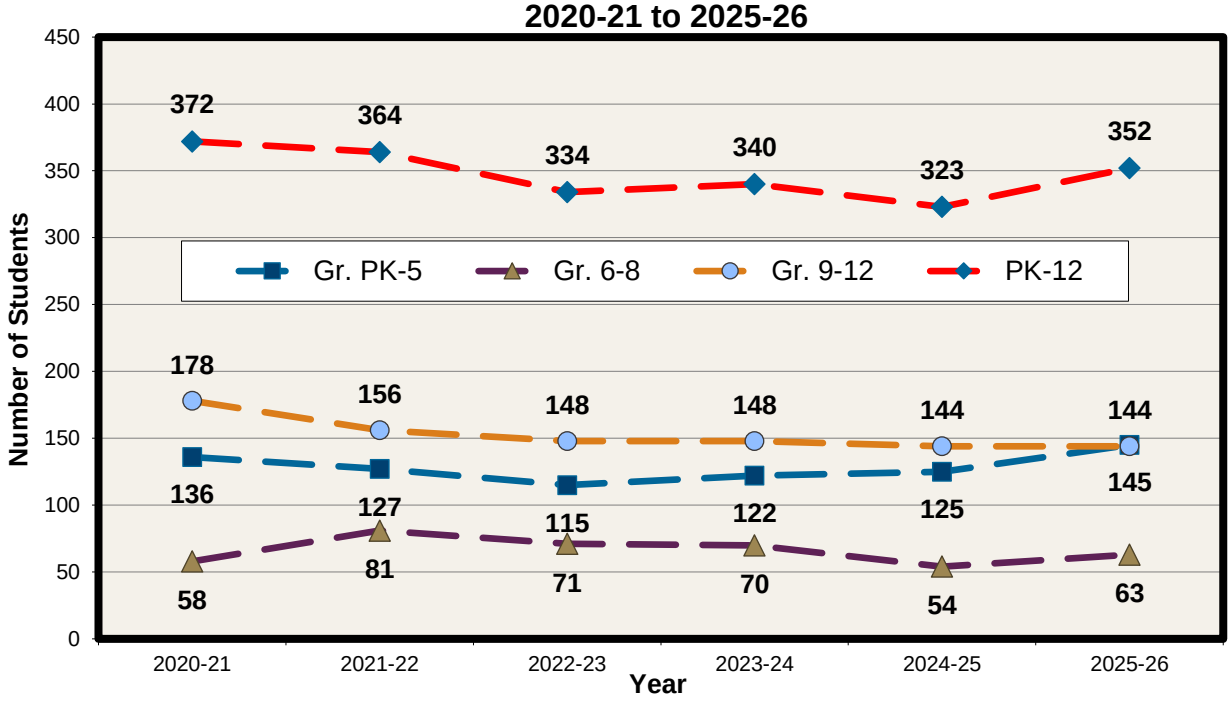


Table 2 shows computed grade-by-grade progression differences from 2020-21 to 2025-26. In addition, the average grade progression differences are shown for the past five years, which were used to project enrollments. The average grade progression differences also indicate the net migration by grade, where positive values reflect net inward migration and negative values reflect net outward migration.

[2] Includes students attending the Ramsey School District, Northern Highlands Regional School District, Vo-Tech, or out-of-district-special education programs and were retrieved from 2020-21 to 2025-26

Table 1
Saddle River School District Historical Enrollments (PK-12)
2016-17 to 2025-26

Year[1]	PK[2]	K	1	2	3	4	5	SE[3]	PK-5 Total	6	7	8	SE[4]	6-8 Total	9	10	11	12	SE[5]	9-12 Total	PK-12 Total
2016-17	6	16	31	20	25	18	33	1	**150**												
2017-18	11	19	19	36	21	24	17	0	**147**												
2018-19	16	18	25	20	35	22	26	2	**164**												
2019-20	20	13	20	26	16	32	22	0	**149**												
2020-21	10	16	15	21	24	15	35	0	**136**	20	21	17	0	**58**	40	38	43	52	5	**178**	**372**
2021-22	16	17	22	15	19	20	18	0	**127**	31	25	25	0	**81**	25	42	40	42	7	**156**	**364**
2022-23	11	13	17	21	12	18	22	1	**115**	17	30	24	0	**71**	35	25	43	39	6	**148**	**334**
2023-24	14	20	15	18	23	14	18	0	**122**	20	17	33	0	**70**	39	37	25	44	3	**148**	**340**
2024-25	13	20	17	19	17	22	17	0	**125**	17	19	18	0	**54**	44	38	37	24	1	**144**	**323**
2025-26	14	20	21	22	24	21	23	0	**145**	18	23	22	0	**63**	31	42	34	36	1	**144**	**352**

Notes: [1] Data were provided by the New Jersey Department of Education (http://www.nj.gov/education/data/enr/), Saddle River School District, Ramsey School District, and Northern Highlands Regional School District.
[2] Pre-kindergarten regular education enrollment
[3] Self-contained special education enrollment/ungraded students at the elementary school level
[4] Self-contained special education enrollment/ungraded students at the middle school level
[5] Self-contained special education enrollment/ungraded students ages 18-21

Table 2
Saddle River School District Historical Grade Progression Differences
2020-21 to 2025-26

Progression Years	B-K	K-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12
2020-21 to 2021-22	+7	+6	0	-2	-4	+3	-4	+5	+4	+8	+2	+2	-1
2021-22 to 2022-23	+3	0	-1	-3	-1	+2	-1	-1	-1	+10	0	+1	-1
2022-23 to 2023-24	+2	+2	+1	+2	+2	0	-2	0	+3	+15	+2	0	+1
2023-24 to 2024-25	+7	-3	+4	-1	-1	+3	-1	-1	+1	+11	-1	0	-1
2024-25 to 2025-26	+4	+1	+5	+5	+4	+1	1	+6	+3	+13	-2	-4	-1
Avg. 5-Year Difference	+4.6000	0.0000	+2.2500	+0.7500	+1.0000	+1.5000	-0.7500	+1.0000	+1.5000	+12.2500	-0.2500	-0.7500	-0.5000

Birth Data

Birth data were needed to compute kindergarten enrollments, which were calculated as follows. Birth data, which are lagged five years behind their respective kindergarten classes, were used to calculate the grade progression difference for each birth-to-kindergarten cohort. For instance, in 2020, there were a total of 16 births in Saddle River. Five years later (the 2025-26 school year), 20 children enrolled in kindergarten, which is equal to a grade progression difference of +4 from birth to kindergarten. Birth counts and birth-to-kindergarten grade progression differences are displayed in Table 3. Values that are positive indicate that some children are born outside of a community's boundaries and are attending kindergarten in the school district five years later, i.e., an inward migration of children. This type of inward migration is typical in school districts with excellent reputations, because the appeal of a good school district draws families into the community. Inward migration is also seen in communities where there are a large number of new housing starts (or home resales), with families moving into the community having children of age to attend kindergarten. Birth-to-kindergarten grade progression differences that are negative indicate that a number of children born within a community are not attending kindergarten in the school district five years later. This is common in communities where a high proportion of children attend private, parochial, charter, or out-of-district special education facilities, or where there is a net migration of families moving out of the community. It is also common in school districts that have a half-day kindergarten program where parents choose to send their child to a private full-day kindergarten for the first year. With the exception of 2019-20, each birth-to-kindergarten grade progression difference was positive in the last decade, reflecting inward migration.

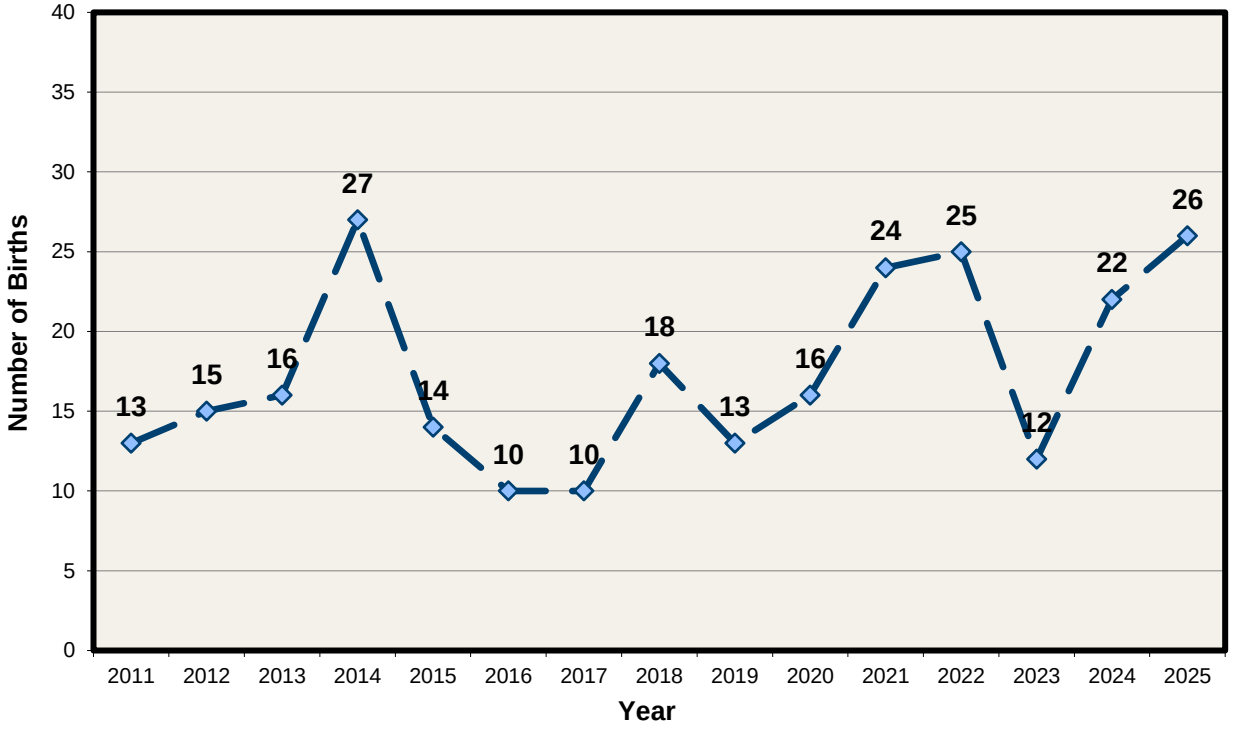
Table 3
Birth Counts and Historical Birth-to-Kindergarten Grade Progression Differences

Birth Year	Number of Births Saddle River[1]	Kindergarten Students 5 years Later	Birth-to-Kindergarten Grade Progression Difference
2011	13	16	+3
2012	15	19	+4
2013	16	18	+2
2014	27	13	-14
2015	14	16	+2
2016	10	17	+7
2017	10	13	+3
2018	18	20	+2
2019	13	20	+7
2020	16	20	+4
2021	24	N/A	N/A
2022	25	N/A	N/A
2023	12	N/A	N/A
2024	22	N/A	N/A
2025[2]	26	N/A	N/A

Notes: [1] Birth data were provided by the New Jersey Center for Health Statistics.
[2] Birth data from 2025 are provisional.

Geocoded birth data were provided by the New Jersey Center for Health Statistics ("NJCHS") from 2011-2025 by assigning geographic coordinates to a birth mother based on her street address. Birth data from 2025 are provisional. Figure 3 shows the number of annual births in Saddle River from 2011-2025. Over this time period, the annual number of births has ranged from 10-27 with no apparent increasing or declining trend. In general, the number of births has been higher post-pandemic (after 2020) than prior to the pandemic.

Figure 3
Saddle River Historical Birth Counts
2011-2025



New Housing in Saddle River

Saddle River municipal representatives provided information regarding current and future residential development in the community. A list of approved and proposed housing developments, location, number of units, bedroom distribution (if available), housing type, and development status is shown in Table 4. The table excludes new houses to be built on single in-fill lots, or the subdivision of existing lots, or homes that are built after the demolition of an existing older home. In the latter instance, there is no net gain in the number of housing units. In total, there is the potential for 377 non age-restricted housing units, all of which are multi-family units such as apartments, stacked flats, or townhouses.

Table 4
Approved and Proposed Residential Developments in Saddle River

Subdivision/Developer (Location)	Number of Units	Bedroom Distribution	Housing Type	Notes/Project Status
Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC (107-115 E. Allendale Road)	54	Market-Rate TH (46) 46 3-BR Affordable TH (8) 4 2-BR 4 3-BR	Townhouse (Market-Rate and Affordable)	Planning Board preliminary and final site plan approval granted. Construction has not commenced; applicant is obtaining required outside agency approvals/permits from county and state agencies. 8 units will be set aside for Low-Moderate Income households.
Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC (14 Algonquin Trail/ 167 W. Saddle River Road)	48	Market-Rate TH (36) Affordable Stacked Flats (12)	Townhouse/ Stacked Flats (Market-Rate and Affordable)	Planning Board preliminary and final site plan approval granted. Construction has not commenced; applicant is obtaining required outside agency approvals/permits from county and state agencies. 12 units will be set aside for Low-Moderate Income households. Bedroom distribution was unavailable from resolution.
AvalonBay Communities, Inc. (1 Route 17 South)	275	Market-rate (242) 18 0-BR 102 1-BR 96 2-BR 26 3-BR Affordable Family (18) 3 0-BR 2 1-BR 8 2-BR 5 3-BR Supportive Housing (15) 8 2-BR 7 3-BR	Apartment (Market-Rate and Affordable)	Planning Board preliminary and final site plan approval granted. Construction is currently in progress. 33 units will be set aside for Low-Moderate Income households whereby 18 units will be for families and 15 units will be supportive housing for adults ages 21 and over. Potential completion and occupancy in late 2027.
Total	**377 units**			

Source: Saddle River Planning Board Secretary

The first development, Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC, will be located at 107-115 E. Allendale Road and will consist of 54 townhouse units with primarily three bedrooms, whereby eight (8) units will be set aside for affordable housing. While the project has received preliminary and final approvals from the Planning Board, construction has not yet begun.

The second development, also by Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC, will be located at 14 Algonquin Trail and will consist of 36 market-rate townhouse units and 12 affordable stacked flats. The development's bedroom distribution was unavailable. While the project has received preliminary and final approvals from the Planning Board, construction has not yet begun.

Finally, the third development, AvalonBay Communities, Inc., is under construction with anticipated completion and occupation in late 2027. The development will consist of a mix of 275 market-rate and affordable apartment units in a four-story building. Of the 33 affordable units, 18 units will be set aside for families and 15 units will be supportive housing for adults ages 21 and over. Due to the nature of the supportive housing, it was assumed that no school-age children will reside in those units.

It should be noted that Table 4 does not include one potential affordable age-restricted development, Saddle River Phase 2, LLC. at 20 & 22 E. Allendale Road (42 apartment units), which would have no impact on the school district. While there should be no direct impact on the school district, there could be an indirect impact if current Saddle River residents move into the new housing units and sell their existing homes to families with children. While the potential for new schoolchildren exists under this scenario, it is unknown whether current residents will rent these units and what the demographic characteristics of the buyers will be of the existing homes in Saddle River.

Estimate of Public School Children from New Housing

In the process of determining how many children will come from the new housing units, *Who Lives in New Jersey Housing?*,[3] published by the Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research ("CUPR"), was utilized. The resource provides statewide housing multipliers (student yields) based on housing type, number of bedrooms, housing value, housing tenure (ownership versus rental), and whether the housing units are market-rate or affordable. Student multipliers are greatest for detached single-family homes and smallest for apartments, townhouses, and condominiums.

To project the number of public school children from the new housing units, several assumptions were made:

1. The student yield multipliers used from CUPR are from a sample of New Jersey homes and these multipliers would be representative of the families moving into Saddle River.

2. The affordable stacked flats in Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC on Algonquin Trail were assumed to have the same bedroom distribution as the affordable townhouse units in Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC on East Allendale Road: 2-bedroom = 50%, 3-bedroom = 50%.

[3] Listokin, David, and Voicu, Alexandru. (2025). Who Lives in America's Housing? Fifty State Demographic Multipliers. Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research.

3. All market-rate townhouse units with three bedrooms were assumed to have the following student yield multiplier: 0.557.

4. All affordable apartment/townhouse units/stacked flats (5-49 units) were assumed to have the following student yield multipliers: 1-bedroom = 0.088, 2-bedroom = 0.408, 3-bedroom = 1.087.

5. All market-rate apartment units (50+ units) in AvalonBay Communities, Inc. were assumed to have the following student yield multipliers: 0- to 1-bedroom = 0.031, 2-bedroom = 0.182, 3-bedroom = 0.593.

6. The affordable supportive housing units in the AvalonBay Communities, Inc. development would not have school-age children residing in the units.

7. The full build-out and occupation of AvalonBay Communities, Inc. would occur in the 2027-28 school year.

8. The full build-out and occupation of Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC – Algonquin Trail and Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC – E. Allendale Road would be completed over a two-year period (2028-29 and 2029-30).

In total, 106 public school children (K-5 = 52, 6-8 = 23, and 9-12 = 31) in grades K-12 are projected according to the following distribution:

- Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC – Algonquin Trail – 29 (K-5 = 14, 6-8 = 7, and 9-12 = 8)
- Toll Brothers NJ I, LLC – E. Allendale Road – 31 (K-5 = 15, 6-8 = 8, and 9-12 = 8)
- AvalonBay Communities, Inc. – 46 (K-5 = 23, 6-8 = 8, and 9-12 = 15)

Historical Residential Construction

With respect to historical new construction, the number of housing units constructed in Saddle River from 2020-2025 is shown in Table 5. A total of 157 housing units were built over this time period. Of the new housing units constructed, 112 were affordable apartment units in the Residences at Choctaw (2025). Through internet research, it appears that most of the remaining homes constructed have been limited to building a new home after the demolition of an existing older home ("knockdown") or constructing new houses on single in-fill lots. While not shown in the table, four (4) single-family or two-family housing units were demolished during this time period as reported by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, which results in a net gain of 153 housing units since 2020.

Table 5
Number of New Housing Units in Saddle River
2020-2025

Year	Total[1]
2020	6
2021	8
2022	6
2023	8
2024	9
2025	120
Total	**157**

Note: [1] As derived from the Borough of Saddle River property database

When determining the impact of future new housing, it should be clearly stated that enrollment projections utilize grade progression differences that do take into account prior new home construction growth. Children who move into new homes during the historical period are captured by the grade progression differences, as these differences will be used to project future enrollments. Therefore, it is not appropriate to add all of the new children generated from future housing units without considering the historical period, as double counting would occur, since the grade progression differences have already increased due to the new children. The baseline enrollment projections should only be adjusted if the projected housing growth is significantly greater than prior housing growth. From 2020-2025, there was a net gain of 153 non age-restricted new housing units in Saddle River, which generated 20 children (K-5) in the Saddle River School District. With respect to future construction, there is the potential for 377 non age-restricted housing and 56 new public school children, which would be greater than that which occurred since 2020. Therefore, the baseline enrollment projections were modified to account for additional children from the new housing developments. **The modification to the enrollment projections assumes that all potential developments listed in Table 4 will be built and occupied in the next five years.**

Enrollment Projections

Enrollments (PK-12) were projected from 2026-27 through 2030-31, a five-year period. The projections were adjusted for housing growth, assuming the timeline of construction and occupancy discussed previously.

With respect to grade-level pre-kindergarten students, enrollments were projected by computing an average based on historical data and using this value throughout the five-year projection period. In the last five years, grade-level pre-kindergarten enrollments have been fairly consistent, ranging from 11-16 students per year. It was estimated that there would be 14 students in the program annually in the future.

On September 10, 2010, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie signed into law the Interdistrict School Choice Program ("Choice"), which took effect in the 2011-12 school year. This enables students the choice in attending a school outside their district of residence if the selected school is participating in the Choice program. The Choice district sets the number of openings per grade level. The Saddle River School District does not participate in the program and therefore has no impact on the enrollment projections.

As part of the School Funding Reform Act of 2008 ("SFRA"), all school districts in New Jersey were to provide expanded Abbott-quality pre-school programs for at-risk 3- and 4-year olds as outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:13A. The State of New Jersey intended to provide aid for the full-day program based on projected enrollments. School districts categorized as District Factor Group[4] ("DFG") A, B, and CD with a concentration of at-risk pupils equal to or greater than 40 percent, were required to offer a pre-school program to all pre-school aged children regardless of income, known as "Universal" pre-school. For all other school districts, a pre-school program was required only for at-risk children, known as "Targeted" preschool. School districts were required to offer these programs to at least 90% of the eligible pre-school children by 2013-14. However, due to budgetary constraints, the NJDOE postponed the roll-out of the program, which was scheduled for the 2009-10 school year.

In a different pre-school initiative, the administration of Governor Phil Murphy announced the availability of Preschool Expansion Aid ("PEA") in 2018. In September 2018, the first round of funding ($20.6 million) was publicized, where 31 districts received aid to expand their pre-kindergarten programs. A second round of funding targeted districts whose free and reduced lunch percentage was above 20% and had not previously received state preschool aid. In January 2019, an additional 33 districts were awarded aid to expand their pre-kindergarten programs through the second round of funding ($27 million). Some districts that were eligible to apply for PEA would fall under the "Universal" category under SFRA while others would be considered "Targeted" districts. However, the main difference with this expansion aid is that districts under SFRA were restricted to serve low-income children whereas now districts can educate all pre-school age children through PEA. It appears that the Murphy administration may be moving towards a pre-school program for all children, rather than just for those who are low-income. In 2024-25, PEA

[4] Introduced by the New Jersey Department of Education in 1975, DFG provides a system of ranking school districts in the state by their socio-economic status. While the system is no longer used, the number of pre-kindergarten students was determined by the former DFG rankings.

was available for districts that were partially state-funded or whose free and reduced lunch percentage was above 10%. The Saddle River School District has not received a PEA grant and therefore has no bearing on the outcome of this study.

Projected enrollments (PK-12) follow in Table 6. Enrollments are projected to steadily increase throughout the projection period. Enrollment is projected to be 470 in 2030-31, which would be a gain of 118 students from the 2025-26 enrollment of 352.

For the elementary grades (PK-5) in the Saddle River School District, enrollments are also projected to steadily increase throughout the projection period. Enrollment is projected to be 208 in 2030-31, which would be a gain of 63 students from the 2025-26 enrollment of 145.

For grades 6-8, enrollments are also projected to steadily increase throughout the projection period. Enrollment is projected to be 96 in 2030-31, which would be a gain of 33 students from the 2025-26 enrollment of 63.

Finally, for grades 9-12, enrollments are also projected to generally increase throughout the projection period. Enrollment is projected to be 166 in 2030-31, which would be a gain of 22 students from the 2025-26 enrollment of 144.

Conclusion

In the next five years, enrollments (PK-12) are projected to increase in the Saddle River School District, which is due in part to the recent new residential construction (Residences at Choctaw), as well as 377 future new multi-family housing units. The projections assume that all impending housing developments will be constructed and occupied in the next five years. The projected enrollment gain is not expected to occur equally across the three grade configurations, as the largest enrollment gains are projected in the elementary school grades.

Table 6
Saddle River School District Projected Enrollments (PK-12)
2026-27 to 2030-31

Year	PK[1]	K	1	2	3	4	5	SE[2]	PK-5 Total	6	7	8	SE[3]	6-8 Total	9	10	11	12	SE[4]	9-12 Total	PK-12 Total
2026-27	14	29	20	23	23	25	23	0	**157**	22	19	25	0	**66**	34	31	41	34	2	**142**	**365**
2027-28	14	32	30	23	25	25	28	0	**177**	23	24	22	0	**69**	39	35	31	42	2	**149**	**395**
2028-29	14	20	34	35	27	29	29	0	**188**	29	27	29	0	**85**	36	42	36	34	2	**150**	**423**
2029-30	14	29	21	38	38	29	32	0	**201**	30	32	30	0	**92**	43	37	43	37	2	**162**	**455**
2030-31	14	33	29	23	39	39	31	0	**208**	31	31	34	0	**96**	42	43	36	43	2	**166**	**470**

Notes: [1] Pre-kindergarten regular education enrollment.
[2] Self-contained special education enrollment/ungraded students at the PK-5 level.
[3]Self-contained special education enrollment/ungraded students at the 6-8 level.
[4] Self-contained special education enrollment/ungraded students ages 18-21.

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