

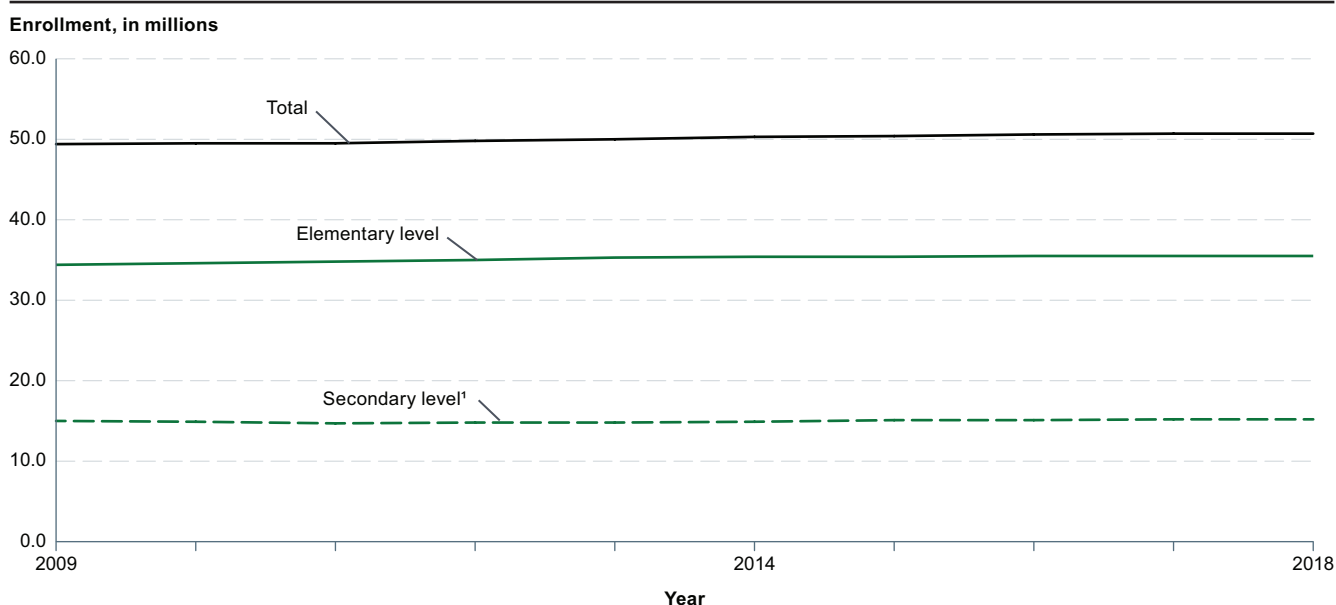
Public School Enrollment

Between fall 2009 and fall 2018, total public school enrollment in prekindergarten through grade 12 increased by 3 percent (from 49.4 million to 50.7 million students), with changes ranging from an increase of 27 percent in the District of Columbia to decreases of 9 percent in Michigan and New Hampshire.

This indicator discusses overall changes in the number of students enrolled in public schools (including both traditional public schools and public charter schools) as well as changes by grade level and by state. In fall 2018, some 50.7 million students were enrolled in public

elementary and secondary schools (prekindergarten [preK] through grade 12).^{1,2} Of these students, 35.5 million were enrolled in preK through grade 8, and the remaining 15.2 million were enrolled in grades 9 through 12.

Figure 1. Enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools, by level: Fall 2009 through fall 2018



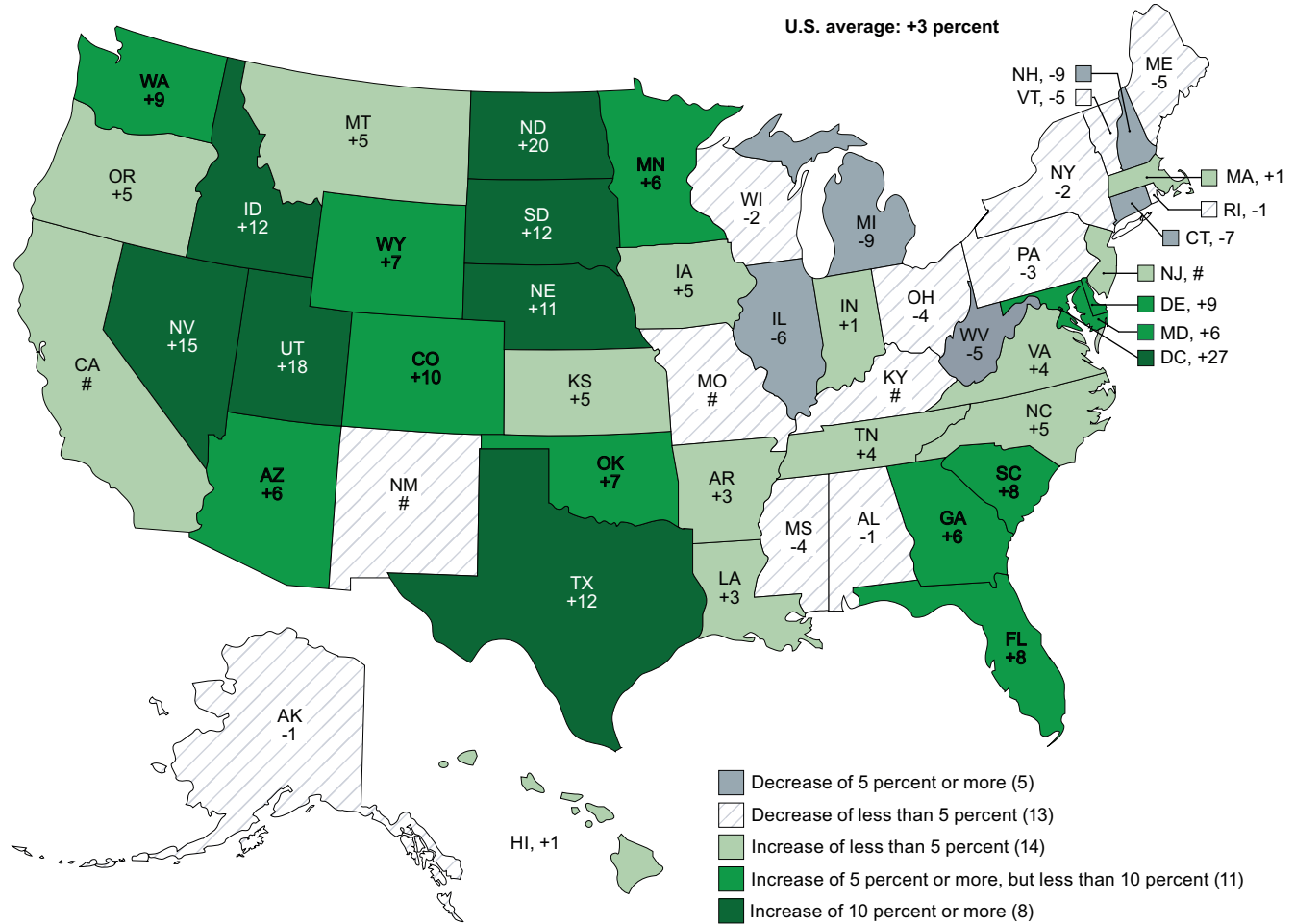
¹ Includes students reported as being enrolled in grade 13.

NOTE: Data are for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Data include both traditional public schools and public charter schools. The total ungraded counts of students were prorated to the elementary level (prekindergarten through grade 8) and the secondary level (grades 9 through 12). Some data have been revised from previously published figures.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2009–10 through 2018–19. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 203.10.

Between fall 2009 and fall 2018, total public elementary and secondary school enrollment increased by 3 percent, reaching 50.7 million students in fall 2018. During the same period, enrollment in preK through grade 8 increased by 3 percent, reaching 35.5 million students in fall 2018. Enrollment in grades 9 through 12 was higher in

fall 2018 than in fall 2009, but it did not increase steadily throughout the period. Rather, enrollment in grades 9 through 12 decreased by 1 percent between fall 2009 and fall 2011, to 14.7 million students; enrollment then increased by 3 percent between fall 2011 and fall 2018, when it reached 15.2 million students.

Figure 2. Percentage change in public elementary and secondary school enrollment, by state: Fall 2009 to fall 2018

Rounds to zero.

NOTE: U.S. average is for the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Data include both traditional public schools and public charter schools. Categorizations are based on unrounded percentages.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2009–10 and 2018–19. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, table 203.20.

Changes in public elementary and secondary school enrollment varied by state. Total enrollment in preK through grade 12 was higher in fall 2018 than in fall 2009 for 32 states and the District of Columbia. Increases of 10 percent or more occurred in 7 states (Nebraska, Texas, South Dakota, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and North Dakota) and the District of Columbia. Total enrollment in preK through grade 12 was lower in fall 2018 than in fall 2009 for the other 18 states. Decreases of 5 percent or more occurred in 5 states (West Virginia, Illinois, Connecticut, Michigan, and New Hampshire). In fall 2018, total enrollment ranged from fewer than 100,000 students in Vermont (87,100 students), the District of Columbia (88,500 students), and Wyoming (94,300 students) to 5.4 million students in Texas and 6.3 million students in California. Due to a combination of large enrollment and strong growth, the total enrollment in Texas grew by 583,300 students from fall 2009 to fall 2018.

In fall 2018, public school enrollment was higher than in fall 2009 in both preK through grade 8 and grades 9 through 12 for 24 states and the District of Columbia. In contrast, 10 states had lower enrollment in fall 2018 than in fall 2009 at both grade ranges. Compared with enrollment in fall 2009, enrollment in fall 2018 was higher in preK through grade 8 but lower in grades 9 through 12 for 12 states, and enrollment in fall 2018 was lower in preK through grade 8 but higher in grades 9 through 12 for the remaining 4 states. For preK through grade 8, changes in enrollment across states ranged from an increase of 35 percent in the District of Columbia to a decrease of 8 percent in New Hampshire. For grades 9 through 12, changes in enrollment across states ranged from an increase of 25 percent in Utah to a decrease of 16 percent in Vermont.

Endnotes:

¹ In this indicator, public elementary and secondary school enrollment includes ungraded students for all years. This also includes a small number of students reported as being enrolled in grade 13, who were counted as enrolled in grades 9 through 12.

² This indicator includes public elementary and secondary school enrollment in the United States, defined as including the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2020*, tables 203.10, 203.20, 203.25, and 203.30

Glossary: Elementary school; Enrollment; Geographic region; Prekindergarten; Public school or institution; Secondary school

Related indicators and resources: [Characteristics of Elementary and Secondary Schools](#); [Elementary and Secondary Enrollment \[Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups\]](#); [English Language Learners in Public Schools](#); [Homeless Children and Youth in Public Schools \[The Condition of Education 2017 Spotlight\]](#); [Private School Enrollment](#); [Public Charter School Enrollment](#); [Students With Disabilities](#)