

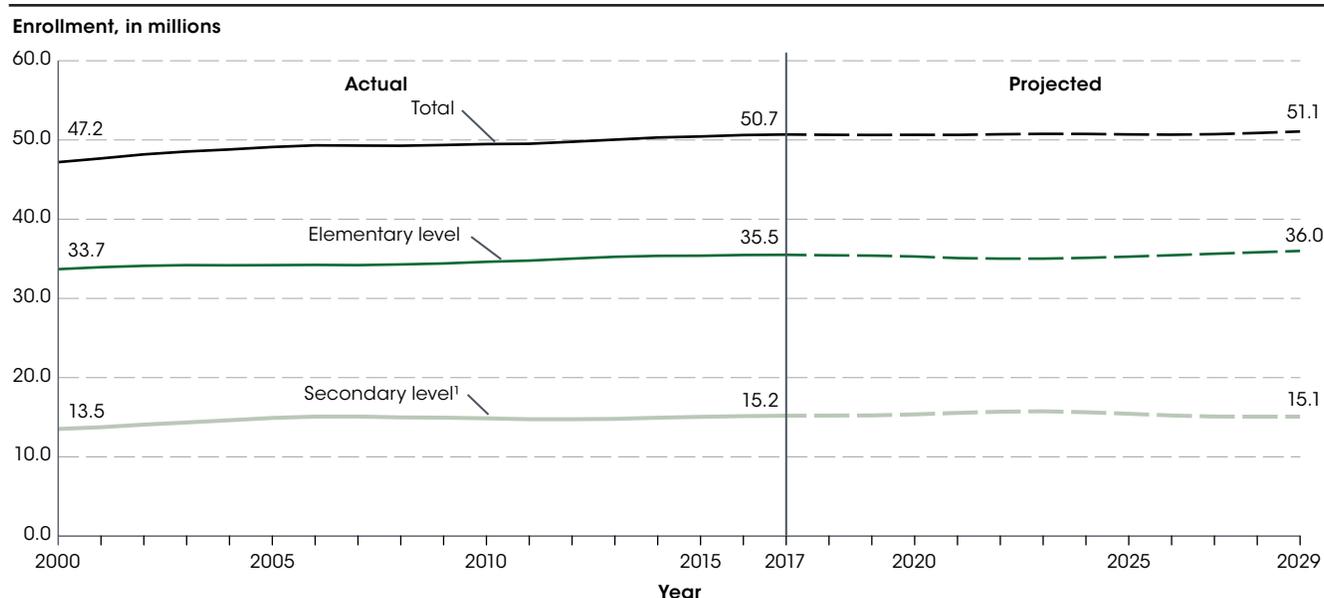
Public School Enrollment

Between fall 2017 and fall 2029, total public school enrollment in prekindergarten through grade 12 is projected to increase by 1 percent (from 50.7 million to 51.1 million students), with changes across states ranging from an increase of 16 percent in North Dakota to a decrease of 12 percent in New Mexico.

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 2017, some 50.7 million students were enrolled in public

elementary and secondary schools (prekindergarten [preK] through grade 12).^{1,2} Of these students, 70 percent were enrolled in preK through grade 8, and the remaining 30 percent were enrolled in grades 9 through 12.

Figure 1. Actual and projected public school enrollment, by level: Fall 2000 through fall 2029



¹ Includes students reported as being enrolled in grade 13.

NOTE: The total ungraded counts of students were prorated to the elementary level (prekindergarten through grade 8) and the secondary level (grades 9 through 12). Prekindergarten enrollments for California and Oregon were imputed for fall 2015 and fall 2017; prekindergarten enrollment for California was imputed for fall 2016. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Some data have been revised from previously published figures.

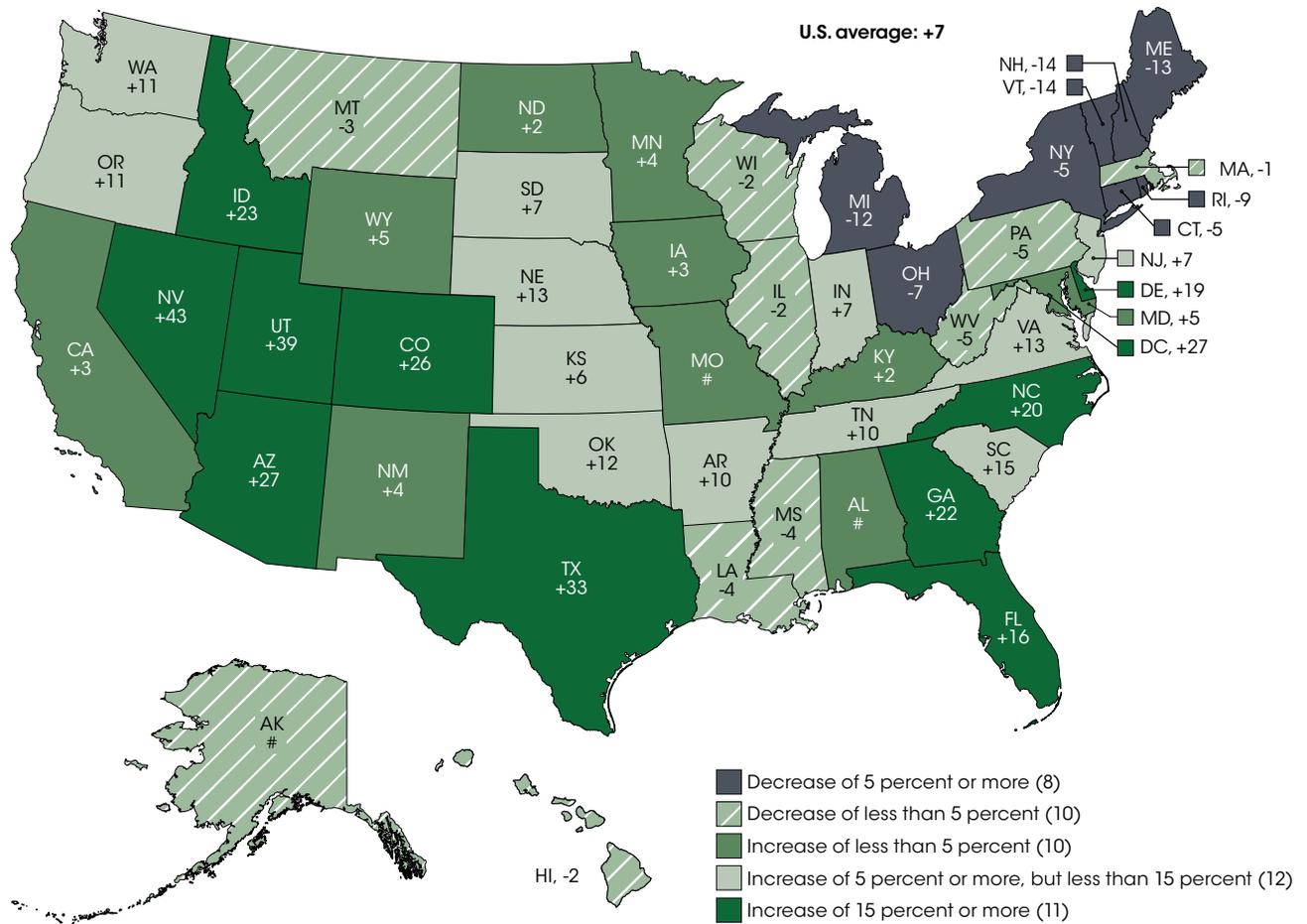
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2000–01 through 2017–18; and National Elementary and Secondary Enrollment Projection Model, 1972 through 2029. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, table 203.10.

Between fall 2000 and fall 2017, total public elementary and secondary school enrollment increased by 7 percent, reaching 50.7 million students in fall 2017. During the same period, enrollment in preK through grade 8 increased by 5 percent, reaching 35.5 million students in fall 2017. Enrollment in grades 9 through 12 increased by 12 percent between fall 2000 and fall 2007, to 15.1 million students; enrollment then decreased by 2 percent between fall 2007 and fall 2011 before increasing by 3 percent between fall 2011 and fall 2017, when it reached 15.2 million students.

Total public school enrollment is projected to continue increasing through fall 2029 (the last year for which

projected data are available). From fall 2017 to fall 2029, total enrollment is projected to increase by 1 percent to 51.1 million students. Enrollment in preK through grade 8 is projected to decrease by 1 percent, to 35.0 million students, between fall 2017 and fall 2022 and then increase by 3 percent, to 36.0 million students, between fall 2022 and fall 2029. Enrollment in grades 9 through 12 is projected to increase by 4 percent, to 15.7 million students, between fall 2017 and fall 2023 and then decrease by 4 percent, to 15.1 million students, between fall 2023 and fall 2029.

Figure 2. Percentage change in public elementary and secondary school enrollment, by state: Fall 2000 to fall 2017



Rounds to zero.

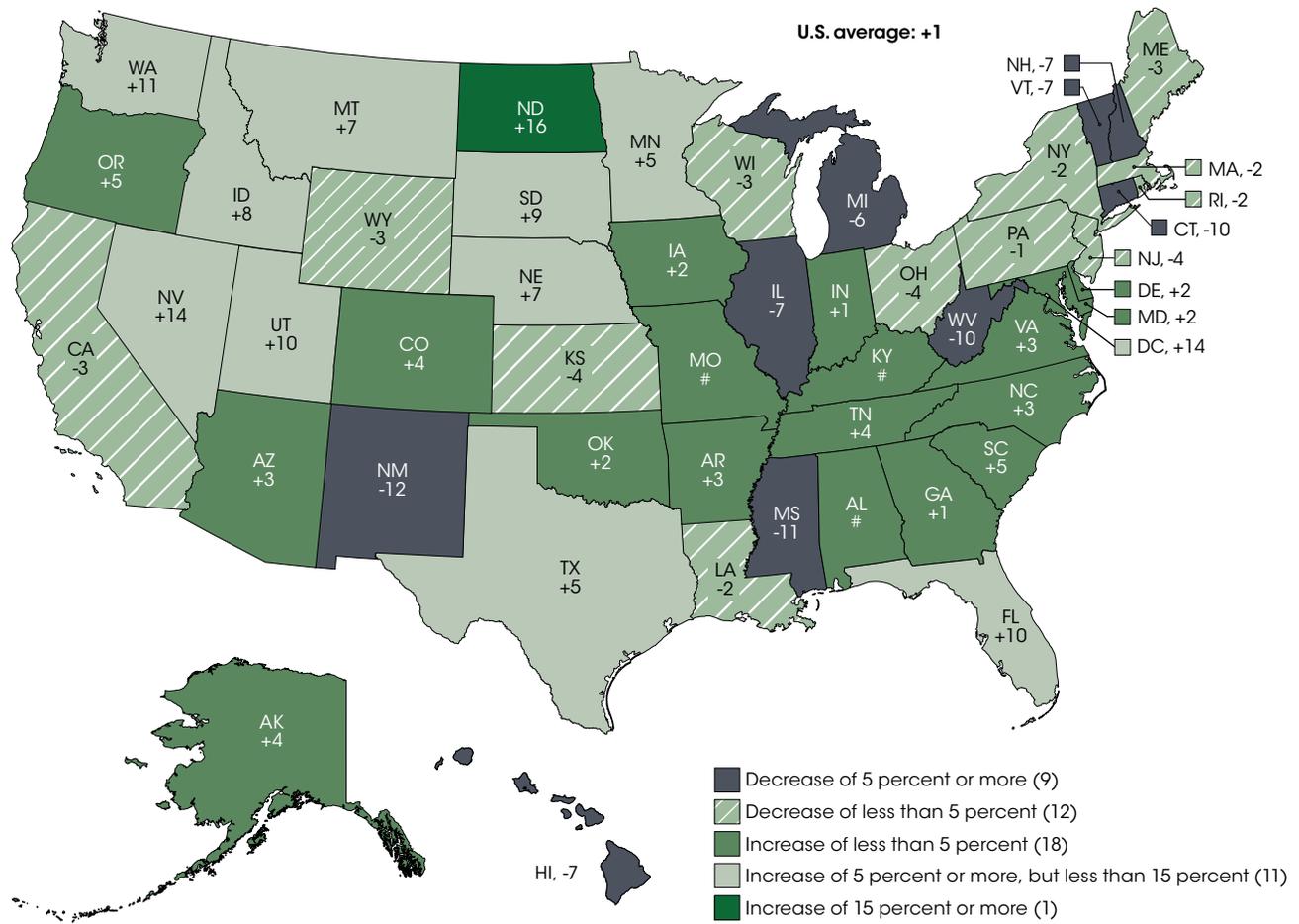
NOTE: Categorizations are based on unrounded percentages. Prekindergarten enrollments for California and Oregon were imputed for fall 2017.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2000-01 and 2017-18. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, 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 2017 than in fall 2000 for 32 states and the District of Columbia, with increases of 15 percent or more occurring in the District of Columbia and 10 states (Florida, Delaware, North

Carolina, Georgia, Idaho, Colorado, Arizona, Texas, Utah, and Nevada). Total enrollment in preK through grade 12 was lower in fall 2017 than in fall 2000 for the other 18 states, with decreases of 10 percent or more occurring in 4 states (Michigan, Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire).

Figure 3. Projected percentage change in public elementary and secondary school enrollment, by state: Fall 2017 to fall 2029



Rounds to zero.

NOTE: Categorizations are based on unrounded percentages. Prekindergarten enrollments for California and Oregon were imputed for fall 2017.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2017-18; and State Public Elementary and Secondary Enrollment Projection Model, 1980 through 2029. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2019*, table 203.20.

Total public elementary and secondary school enrollment is projected to be higher in fall 2029 than in fall 2017 in the District of Columbia and 29 states, all of which are located in the South, the West, or the Midwest. Total enrollment is projected to be lower in fall 2029 than in fall 2017 in the other 21 states: 9 of these states are located in the Northeast, 5 states are located in the Midwest, 4 states are located in the West, and 3 states are located in the South. During this period, North Dakota is projected to have the largest percentage increase in total enrollment (16 percent), followed by the District of Columbia and Nevada (14 percent each). In contrast, New Mexico and Mississippi are projected to have the largest percentage decreases in total enrollment (12 and 11 percent, respectively). In fall 2017, total enrollment ranged from fewer than 100,000 students in the District of Columbia (87,300 students), Vermont (88,000 students), and Wyoming (94,300 students) to 5.4 million students in Texas and 6.3 million students in California. In fall 2029, Vermont (82,000 students), Wyoming (91,500 students), and the District of Columbia (99,800 students) are projected to still have fewer than 100,000 students. California is projected to have the largest total enrollment

Chapter: 1/Preprimary, Elementary, and Secondary Education
Section: Elementary and Secondary Enrollment

in fall 2029 (6.1 million students), followed by Texas (5.7 million students).

Between fall 2017 and fall 2029, some 22 states and the District of Columbia are projected to have public school enrollment increases in both preK through grade 8 and grades 9 through 12. In contrast, 21 other states are projected to have enrollment decreases in both grade ranges. Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, and Tennessee are projected to have enrollment increases in preK through grade 8 but enrollment decreases in grades 9 through 12. For preK through grade 8, enrollment is projected to be at least 15 percent higher in fall 2029 than in fall 2017 in North Dakota (15 percent), while enrollment is projected to be at least 10 percent lower in fall 2029 than in fall 2017 in New Mexico (12 percent). For grades 9 through 12, enrollment is projected to be at least 15 percent higher in fall 2029 than in fall 2017 in Nevada, North Dakota, and the District of Columbia, while enrollment is projected to be at least 10 percent lower in fall 2029 than in fall 2017 in New Hampshire, Michigan, New Mexico, Mississippi, West Virginia, and Connecticut.

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. Prekindergarten enrollments for California and Oregon were imputed for fall 2015 and fall 2017; prekindergarten enrollment

for California was imputed for fall 2016.

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 2019*, tables 203.10, 203.20, 203.25, and 203.30

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](#)

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