

Archuleta County School District - Demographic Study and Enrollment Forecast





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Introduction – Archuleta County School District (ACSD) has experienced a slight enrollment decline but is expected to stabilize during the next eight years as new housing developments which include affordable components are constructed. Resort communities in Western Colorado have been impacted by high housing costs, higher interest rates and smaller families produced by Millennial and Generation Z adults who are moving into the workforce. Overall population in the district has grown and has resulted in a growing work force in an income category that tends to produce new students.

The rising values of both existing homes and new construction has priced many Archuleta families out of the market and this trend has been evident in enrollment history. As Archuleta County has achieved the status of having the most expensive single-family homes in the Four Corners region, the City of Pagosa Springs has made higher density, more affordable units a condition of most new project approvals. This new housing should partially compensate for the enrollment decline expected as the community ages and housing costs continue increase. This has stratified the housing market more toward families residing in less expensive, higher density units and fewer families residing in traditional, dispersed single-family housing. The impact on district facilities will be nominal as the decline that has been experienced due to changing demographics and increasing housing costs will be offset by the construction of housing in more affordable categories. Enrollment at most schools will be stable.

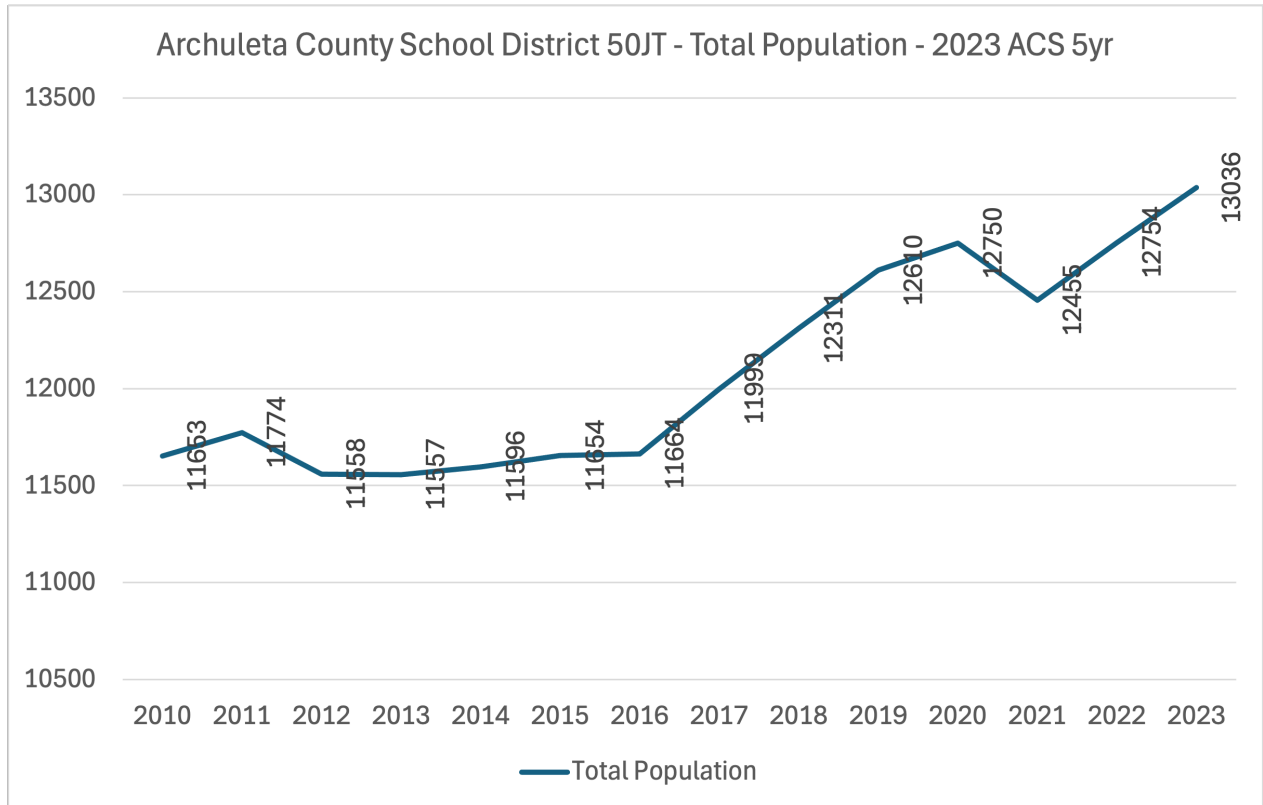
Basic Demographics – The aggregate demographic indicators for the County and the school district are generally consistent with other resort areas. Residents are generally older than the State average and earn less reflective of higher retiree populations. Education levels are slightly lower than State levels as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Demographic Summary Data – Archuleta County School District

Statistic	Archuleta County	Colorado
Median Age	52.2	37.9
65 Years and Older	27.7%	16.1%
Veterans	10.2	7.2
Median Household Income	\$ 72,524.00	\$ 92,911.00
Poverty	8.3%	9.3%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	40.70%	46.4%
Commuting (Average Time to Work in Minutes)	22.6	25.5%

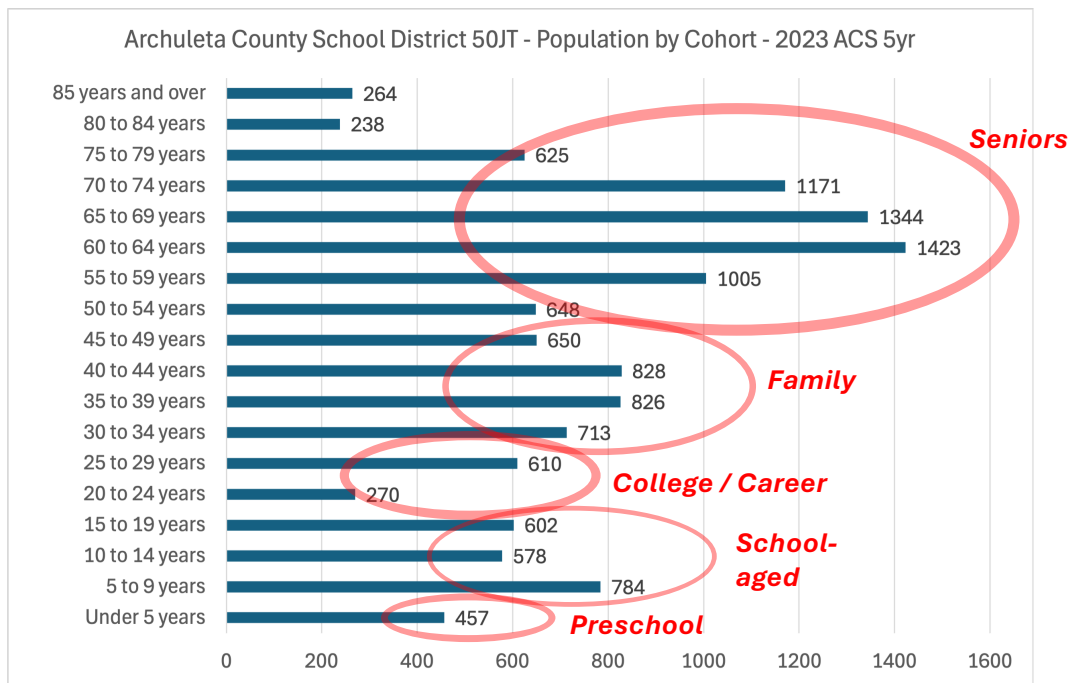
Total District Population All Ages - Total Population within the geographic boundary of the school district has increased during the past eight years according to data from the American Community Survey. Figure 2 illustrates the approximate 1,400 additional people in all age categories that have been added. Simultaneously, school enrollments have declined partially because of smaller families, declining annual birth counts and competition from other segments of the education market such as online programs.

Figure 2



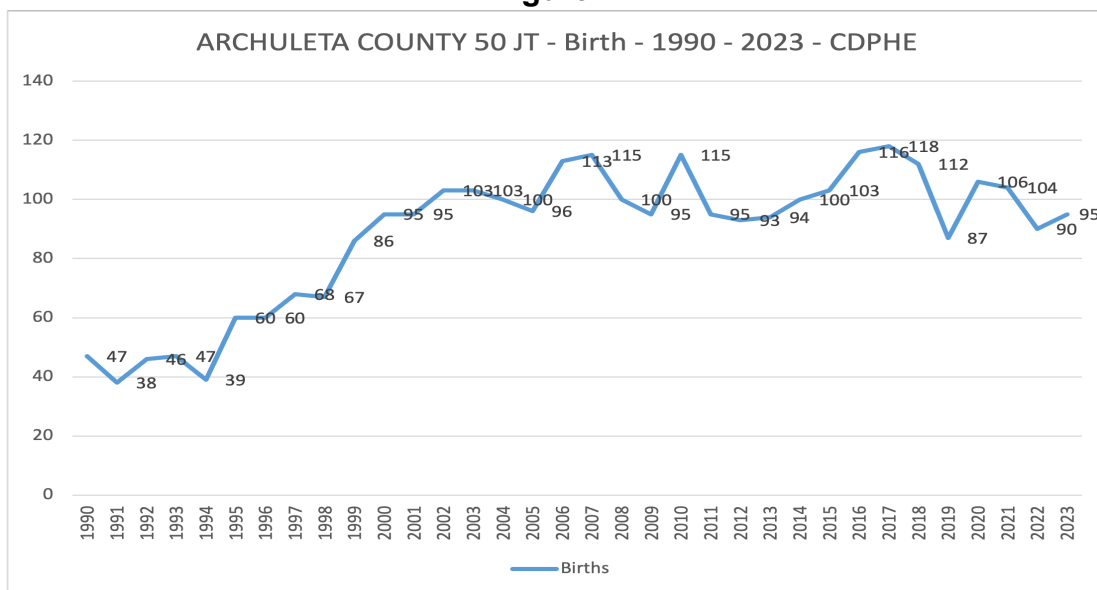
2023 Population by Cohort - School-aged population is a small portion of total population as represented by cohort populations shown in Figure 3. The preschool cohort (457 persons) is even smaller as shown on the bottom of the Figure 3 graph. These five-year population groups are somewhat consistent with other resort communities which tend to host large retirement communities. The college age cohort is also very small with only 270 persons in the age 20 to 24 age range as most students most leave the community to pursue post-secondary opportunities. The small preschool and school-aged population cohorts indicate that the community should not expect significant growth and the size of existing schools may be adequate to accommodate future school populations.

Figure 3



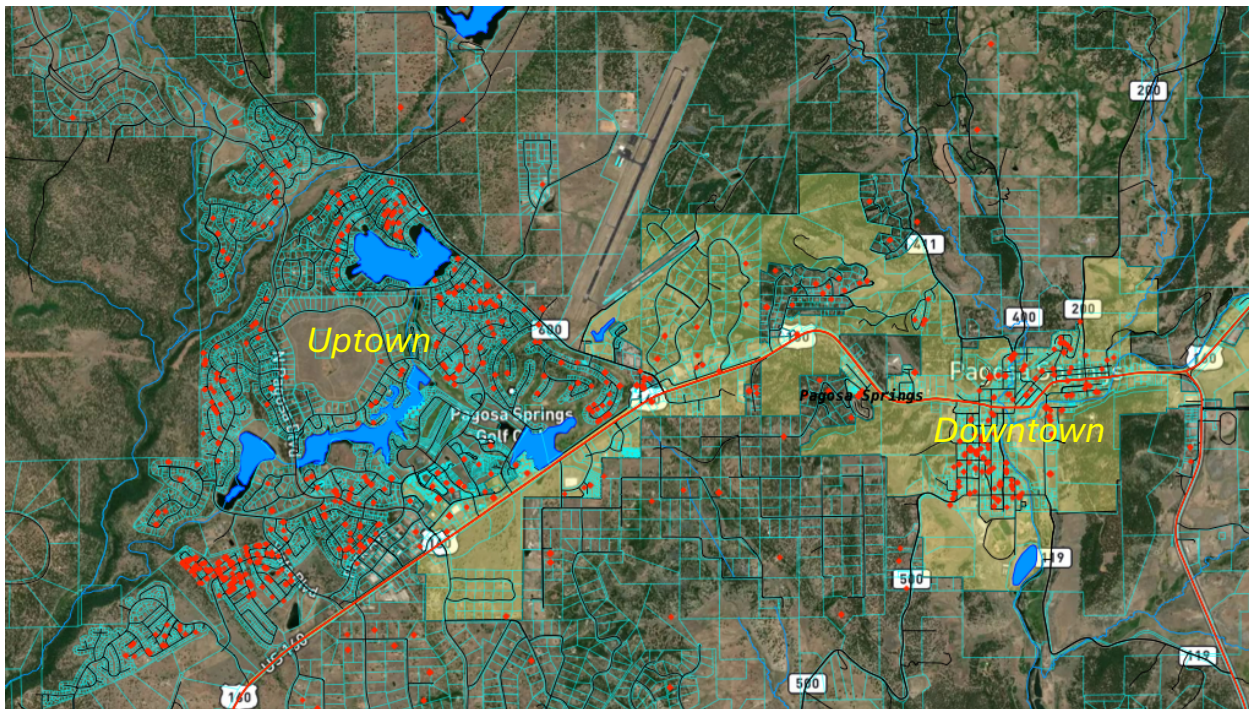
Births - Births have declined during the past five years according to data from the Colorado Department of Public Health. The data shown in Figure 4 shows babies born to mothers with home addresses located within the Archuleta County School District boundary regardless of the place of birth (specific hospital). Although the most recent five years show decline, there is a “floor” to the twenty-year span of birth data in the mid-nineties which is consistent with the birth count for the most recent, available year of 95 babies (2023). This suggests that the school populations may decline slightly if the housing stock does not grow to add more families to the community.

Figure 4



Pagosa Springs (Incorporated Area) – New housing construction is underway throughout the school district with a nominal amount of dispersed, infill single family detached homes under construction each year. Most of these are in price ranges that will produce few children and will attract a significant number of older residents who may be retirees or part-time residents. Historically, dispersed infill housing has produced few children, and the pattern of student population is consistent with this trend. There are, however, several larger, more affordable housing developments in the Town of Pagosa Springs and many of these have been targeted to the work force. Many are also designated as affordable. In general, the areas with more dispersed, single-family housing have more sparse student populations and more affordable housing have denser student populations as shown in Figure 5. The concentrations of red dots in the map are consistent with townhome, apartment and mobile home neighborhoods which produce more student per unit than single family homes.

Figure 5



Extent and Impact of New Housing – Pagosa Springs - Frequently, family populations are drawn from the existing housing stocks and little additional impact beyond cohort trends is generated. However, the scale of new housing currently underway or in the planning process in Pagosa Springs will provide affordable units that will mostly off-set the decline in the birth rate as the workforce grows. The partially affordable developments proposed in Pagosa Springs could potentially produce approximately 95 elementary students, 75 middle school students and 75 high school students. This would generally result in a recovery of current enrollment levels without growth given the expected decline of the existing housing stock. Figure 6 displays the current developments and their expected phasing, affordability status and unit counts.

Development Proposed in the City of Pagosa Springs – There are a half dozen housing projects active and proposed for the city that will include affordable components which will bolster school enrollments. These are predominantly located in the Highway 160 corridor, and most are proximate to the elementary school and Walmart. These projects are displayed in Figure 6 and most will be constructed during the coming seven years, which will offset some of the decline expected from smaller incoming families and the ageing housing stock.

Figure 6

Archuleta County School District - Subdivisions in Planning Process

Name	Location	Density	Units	Affordability / Notes	Start	Buildout
Pagosa Views	Just West of Elementary School	SFD / PUD	650	10% of units income restricted 60 - 140% AMI	2026	7 - 15 Years
Timberline Apartments	Next to Walmart	MF	50	LITEC - Low income tax exempt - 30 - 80% Affordable	2026	2 years
Timberline Apt 2	Next to Walmart	MF	50	LITEC - Low income tax exempt - 30 - 80% Affordable	2028	2 years
Pagosa West - Pagosa Peaks Apartments	West of Walmart, North of Hwy.	MF	96	10% of units income restricted 60 - 140% AMI	2027	2 years
Pagosa West - Phase 2	West of Walmart, North of Hwy.	SFD / SFA	100	10% of units income restricted 60 - 140% AMI	2027	5 years
Enclave	Behind Walmart	58 Rental Apt / 12 Owned TH	70	Income restricted 60 - 90% AMI	2027	2 years
Chris Mtn 2 Subdivision	1.5 miles west of Walmart	SFD	50	Pagosa Springs CDC Workforce Housing Project	2024	7 years

Development Proposed in the County – The majority of housing development occurs in the City of Pagosa Springs, however, there is a small amount of development that occurs in the County. Most of the development in the County is large-lot housing that is dispersed and relatively higher cost development. There is a 35-unit tiny home development proposed in the County for the lower Hwy 84 area near the fire station. These smaller units have not produced significant student populations elsewhere.

Other Factors That Affect Enrollment – In addition to births and housing growth, students that attend non-public schools and students that are “imported” or “exported” to other segments of the education market or other geographic areas affect district enrollment. Archuleta County has two private schools that enroll approximately 100-students each and these have been consistently enrolled at this level in recent years. The preschool age students in the district are also served by private schools and the enrollments at these have been consistent, but they have not consistently reported their enrollments to the Department of Education as shown in Figure 7.

Non-Public Schools - Non-public enrollment has been stable. Figure 7 displays the enrollment data that was available at the time of this report.

Figure 7 – Archuleta County SD – Non-Public Schools

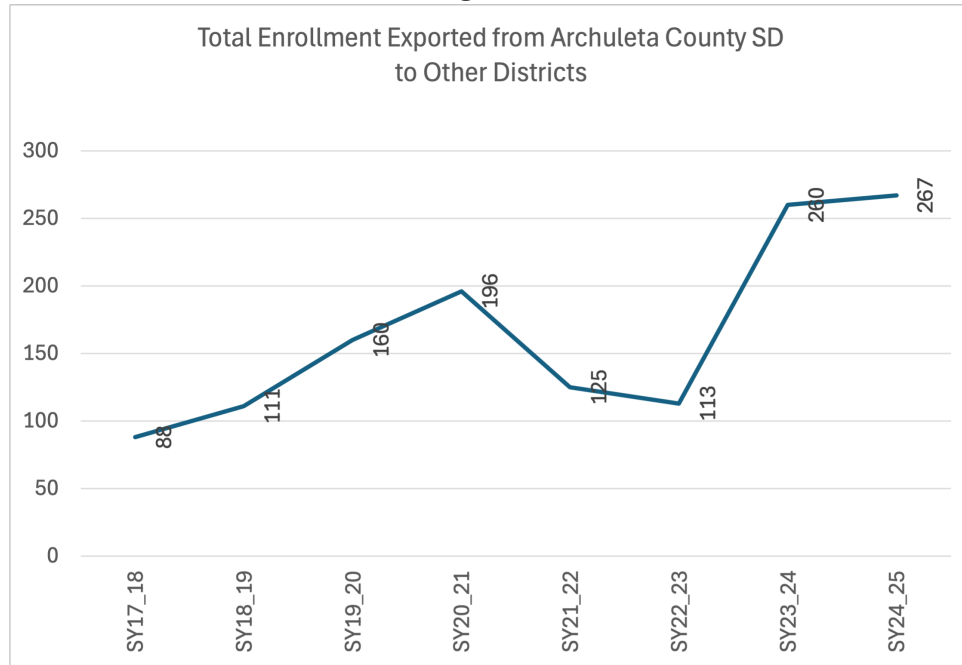
School Year	School Name	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
SY18 19	Our Savior Lutheran	38	13	3	12	6	6	5	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	90
SY19 20	Our Savior Lutheran	38	4	6	4	9	7	7	6	2	1	2	0	0	0	86
SY20 21	Our Savior Lutheran	Not Collected														
SY21 22	Our Savior Lutheran	Not Collected														
SY22 23	Our Savior Lutheran	Not Collected														
SY24 25	Our Savior Lutheran	33	8	9	4	11	5	5	2	3	8	0	0	0	0	88
SY18 19	Pagosa Valor Academy	0	6	4	4	5	4	8	4	4	6	6	0	0	0	51
SY19 20	Pagosa Valor Academy	0	2	4	5	5	4	5	6	7	7	5	5	5	0	60
SY20 21	Pagosa Valor Academy	Not Collected														
SY21 22	Pagosa Valor Academy	0	6	7	3	7	5	3	3	10	7	6	5	5	4	71
SY22 23	Pagosa Valor Academy	0	6	7	3	7	5	5	5	10	7	6	5	5	4	71
SY23 24	Pagosa Valor Academy		9	6	10	6	7	10	7	9	6	11	6	6	6	99
SY24 25	Pagosa Valor Academy	0	8	9	8	7	6	8	9	8	7	9	9	5	5	98
SY18 19	Seeds of Learning	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	58
SY19 20	Seeds of Learning	58	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	58
SY20 21	Seeds of Learning	Not Collected														
SY21 22	Seeds of Learning	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55
SY22 23	Seeds of Learning	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
SY23 24	Seeds of Learning	Not Collected														
SY24 25	Seeds of Learning	Not Collected														
SY21 22	Wings Early Childhood	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
SY22 23	Wings Early Childhood	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
SY23 24	Wings Early Childhood	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
SY24 25	Wings Early Childhood	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	67

Figure 8 - New Multi-family Housing Under Construction



Students “Exported” – All Students - Exported students have risen predominantly because of growth in online programs. Figure 9 displays the total number of students “exported” (students who reside in the district, but do not attend neighborhood schools) during the past seven years. The district “imports” students from New Mexico that will be shown subsequently.

Figure 9



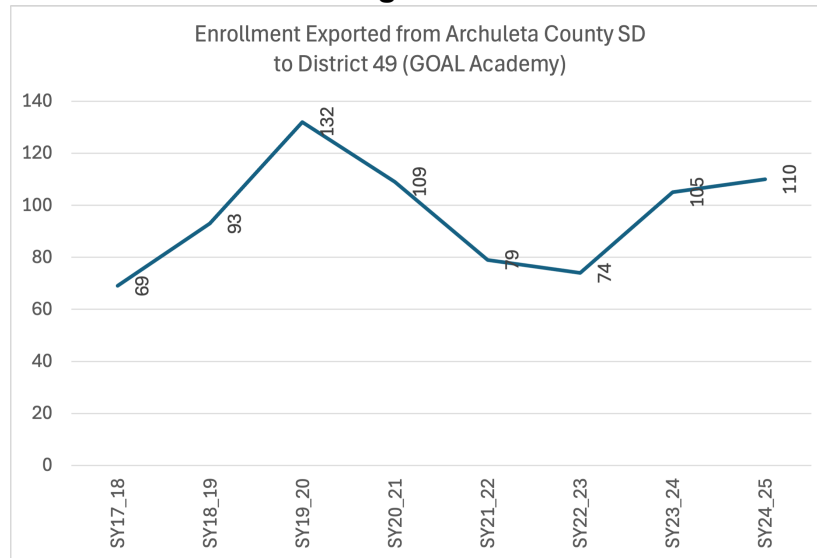
Student Exported – Location Status – The majority of student exported attend online programs and the specific sponsoring school districts of online charter schools are shown in Figure 10. The largest in-person school location is the San Juan BOCES which is the administrative unit for special education services for an 8-district service area. It provides specialized services and support to schools to ensure that all students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The other locations listed in Figure 10 are predominantly online with District 49 (GOAL Academy) and Education reEnvisioned BOCES absorbing the most enrollment. These programs are addressed subsequently.

Figure 10

Year	District	Enrollment	Location Station
SY24_25	Byers 32J	17	Online
SY24_25	Charter School Institute	1	Online
SY24_25	District 49	110	Online
SY24_25	Durango 9-R	1	Online
SY24_25	Education reEnvisioned BOCES	113	Online
SY24_25	Ignacio 11 JT	1	In Person
SY24_25	Julesburg Re-1	3	Online
SY24_25	San Juan BOCES	15	In Person
SY24_25	School District 27J	6	Online

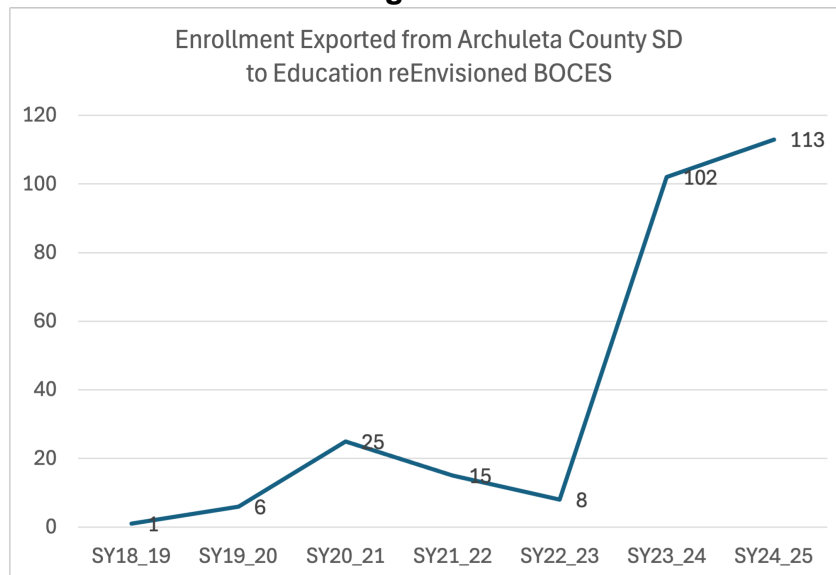
Students Exported – District 49 (GOAL Academy) - GOAL Academy is a tuition-free, state-wide public charter school that serves grades 9–12. It is an Alternative Educational Campus (AEC) that focuses on students who are at risk of not graduating high school. The charter is sponsored by District 49 in Colorado Springs. Enrollment has stabilized recently at around 111 students which has been the average of the past five years. Figure 11 shows enrollment change over time.

Figure 11



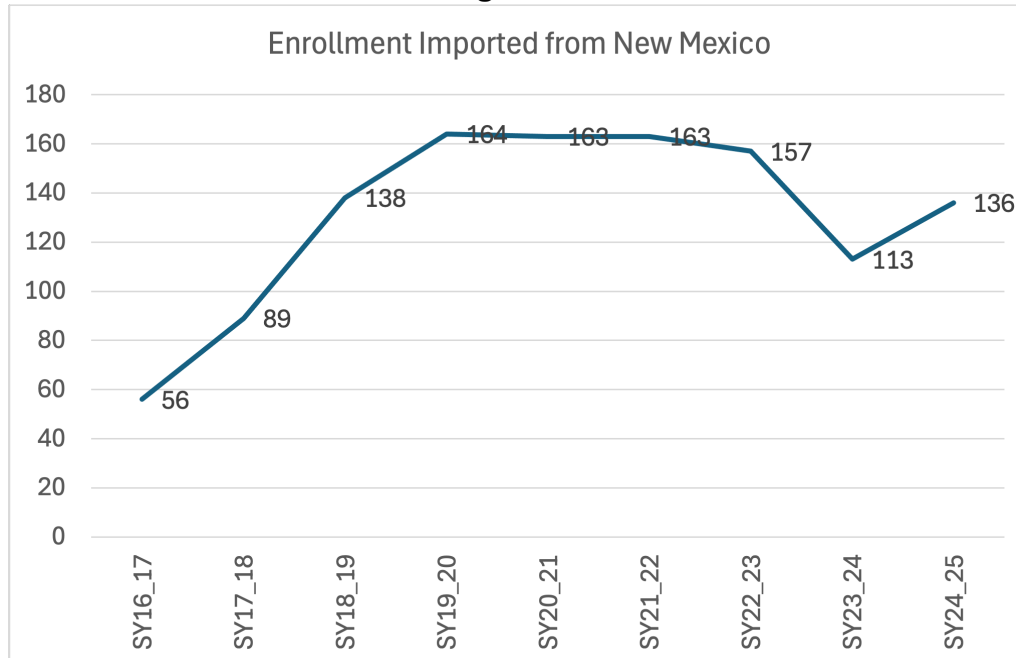
Students Exported – Education reEnvisioned BOCES - Education reEnvisioned BOCES is the second large online program affecting ACSD enrollment and was created in 2013 by Yuma School District and District 49 and was originally known as the Colorado Digital BOCES. It focuses exclusively on online education. The ACSD enrollment in this program has risen in recent years and is currently holding at 113 students as shown in Figure 12.

Figure 12



Students imported from New Mexico – The district imports many rural students who live in the isolated communities of Dulce, Chama and Lumberton, New Mexico. These students predominantly reside on the Jicarilla Apache reservation and have historically attended ACSD. Highway 84 provides the closest access to schools for many of these families. Their numbers have fluctuated over time and enrollment from the area is currently holding at 136 students.

Figure 13



Enrollment History - Given the trajectories imposed by the existing birth rates, cohort enrollment effects, import / export of students and dynamics at play in the existing housing stock, the district is declining by 35 students per year. New housing currently proposed would add back approximately that volume of enrollment per year if the developments proposed by Pagosa Springs mature as expected and affordability initiatives remain intact. Enrollment at all three levels (elementary, middle and high school) have all declined during the past four years after the district recovered from its losses during the Pandemic. Figure 14 shows the decline experienced during the past seven years.

Figure 14 – Archuleta County SD Enrollment History

Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	(K-4)	(5-8)	(9-12)	(K-12)	Net Loss/Gain
2018	122	127	127	138	140	139	148	139	128	162	141	102	93	654	554	498	1706	
2019	127	136	123	143	146	142	143	155	137	136	137	129	88	675	577	490	1742	36
2020	97	123	117	115	129	138	125	138	137	128	116	122	114	581	538	480	1599	-143
2021	115	112	136	128	129	137	142	144	145	150	131	125	118	620	568	524	1712	113
2022	117	124	106	139	132	115	133	153	141	135	146	125	115	618	542	521	1681	-31
2023	127	117	119	102	129	131	113	125	146	145	125	115	110	594	515	495	1604	-77
2024	90	135	124	131	103	135	129	129	130	139	134	108	101	583	523	482	1588	-16

Enrollment Forecast by Grade with Growth Due to New Housing – Figure 15 shows expected enrollment change during the next eight years. Housing growth predominantly replaces enrollment lost due to declining birth rates and generational change (smaller families). The enrollment expected at each level would be relatively level with a slight decline at all three. The impacts on facilities would be nominal.

Figure 15 – Enrollment Forecast by Grade and Level – Eight-year Forecast

Archuleta County School District Projections - 2025- 2029 - 2/14/25																	
Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	(K-4)	(5-8)	(9-12)	K-12
SY2025-26	114	97	135	129	130	101	133	136	128	127	132	117	96	605	498	472	1575
SY2026-27	98	121	96	139	128	128	99	141	136	125	119	115	105	582	504	464	1550
SY2027-28	103	109	123	103	141	128	129	109	142	134	120	104	105	579	508	463	1550
SY2028-29	99	117	110	129	104	141	128	138	110	141	129	105	94	559	517	469	1545
SY2029-30	95	115	118	116	130	103	140	137	138	108	134	113	94	574	518	449	1541
SY2030 31	103	113	116	123	116	129	103	148	137	136	101	118	102	571	517	457	1545
SY2031 32	101	111	114	121	124	115	128	111	149	135	130	85	107	571	503	457	1531
SY2032 33	98	108	111	118	121	122	114	135	110	145	127	113	73	556	481	458	1495

Enrollment Forecast by School – Figure 16 shows the forecasts at the individual schools for the next five years. In general, school enrollments will remain level.

Figure 16 –Enrollment Forecast by School – Five-year Forecast

Level	Year	School	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Totals
ES	SY2025-26	Pagosa Peak Open Sch	16	15	14	21	13									79
ES	SY2026-27	Pagosa Peak Open Sch	14	17	13	14	21									79
ES	SY2027-28	Pagosa Peak Open Sch	15	15	14	13	14									71
ES	SY2028-29	Pagosa Peak Open Sch	14	16	13	14	13									70
ES	SY2029-30	Pagosa Peak Open Sch	14	16	13	12	14									69
ES	SY2025-26	Pagosa Springs ES	98	81	120	108	118									525
ES	SY2026-27	Pagosa Springs ES	84	104	84	125	107									504
ES	SY2027-28	Pagosa Springs ES	89	94	109	90	126									508
ES	SY2028-29	Pagosa Springs ES	85	101	98	115	91									490
ES	SY2029-30	Pagosa Springs ES	82	99	104	103	116									504
MS	SY2025-26	Pagosa Peak Open Sch MS						4	16	5	9					34
MS	SY2026-27	Pagosa Peak Open Sch MS						10	2	14	5					31
MS	SY2027-28	Pagosa Peak Open Sch MS						17	8	0	15					40
MS	SY2028-29	Pagosa Peak Open Sch MS						11	15	6	0					32
MS	SY2029-30	Pagosa Peak Open Sch MS						9	9	14	6					38
MS	SY2025-26	PAGOSA SPRINGS MS						97	117	131	119					464
MS	SY2026-27	PAGOSA SPRINGS MS						118	97	126	131					472
MS	SY2027-28	PAGOSA SPRINGS MS						111	121	109	127					468
MS	SY2028-29	PAGOSA SPRINGS MS						130	113	132	110					485
MS	SY2029-30	PAGOSA SPRINGS MS						94	131	123	132					480
SHS	SY2025-26	San Juan HS										6	14	10	18	48
SHS	SY2026-27	San Juan HS										6	14	10	19	49
SHS	SY2027-28	San Juan HS										6	14	10	20	50
SHS	SY2028-29	San Juan HS										6	14	10	20	50
SHS	SY2029-30	San Juan HS										6	15	10	21	52
SHS	SY2025-26	Pagosa Springs HS										121	118	107	78	424
SHS	SY2026-27	Pagosa Springs HS										119	106	105	86	416
SHS	SY2027-28	Pagosa Springs HS										128	105	95	85	413
SHS	SY2028-29	Pagosa Springs HS										134	115	95	74	418
SHS	SY2029-30	Pagosa Springs HS										101	120	103	73	397