



December 2023

SEMCOG's 2050 Forecast of School-Age Population

The SEMCOG Regional Forecast is critical to understanding the changing regional and local demographics of Southeast Michigan. This year, SEMCOG adopted its 2050 demographic and economic forecast and subsequently released an interactive web tool, the 2050 Regional Development Forecast Explorer, which allows users to explore changing demographic trends in the region for six age groups at multiple geographic levels.

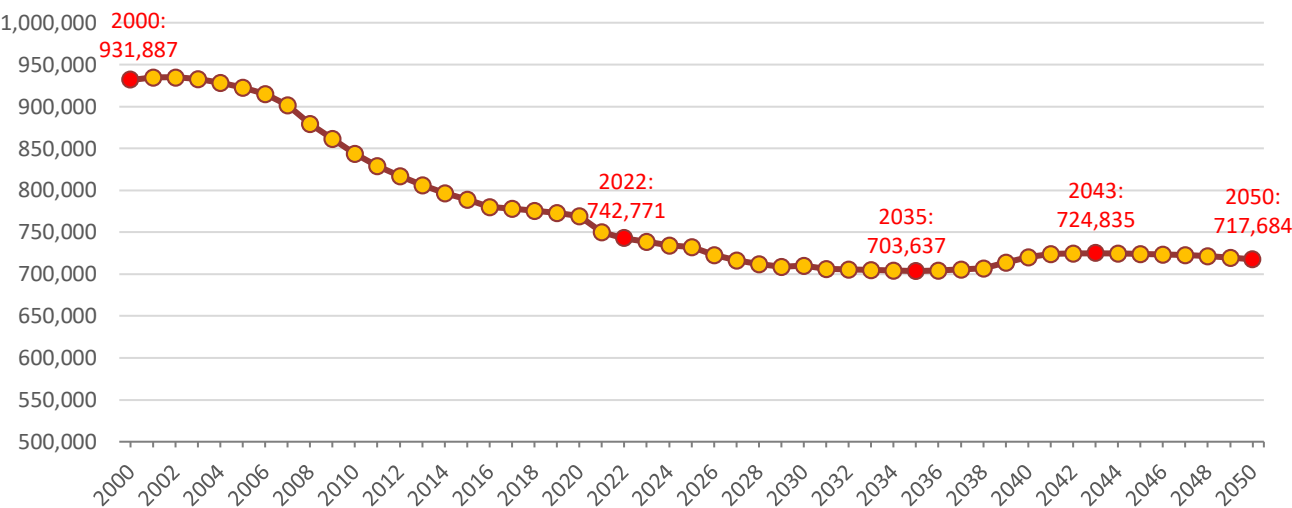
This report, along with SEMCOG's Forecast Explorer (<https://www.semco.org/regional-forecast>), present an in-depth analysis of forecasted changes in the region's school-age population (children aged 5 to 17). This analysis helps local school districts, communities, and other data users to better understand the changing dynamics of that population group over the next 30 years as well as their impacts on K-12 education in the region. This report illustrates the following trends for Southeast Michigan:

- The continued aging of the region
- Fewer births in the region
- Migration as a driving factor in population change
- Local trends impacting school districts

Southeast Michigan's school-age population: Past, present, and future

In 2000, there were nearly 932,000 school-age children in Southeast Michigan. The number decreased to 743,000 by 2022, a decline of 20%. This number is projected to decrease even further to 710,000 by 2030 and to 704,000 by 2035, another 5% decline. After 2035, school-age population is expected to stabilize and stay relatively unchanged for few years before experiencing small increases beginning in 2039 and reaching a peak of 725,000 children in 2043. By 2050, there will be nearly 718,000 school-age children in the region, a mere 2% increase from the low of 2035 and a 3.5% decrease from the 2022 levels (Figure 1).

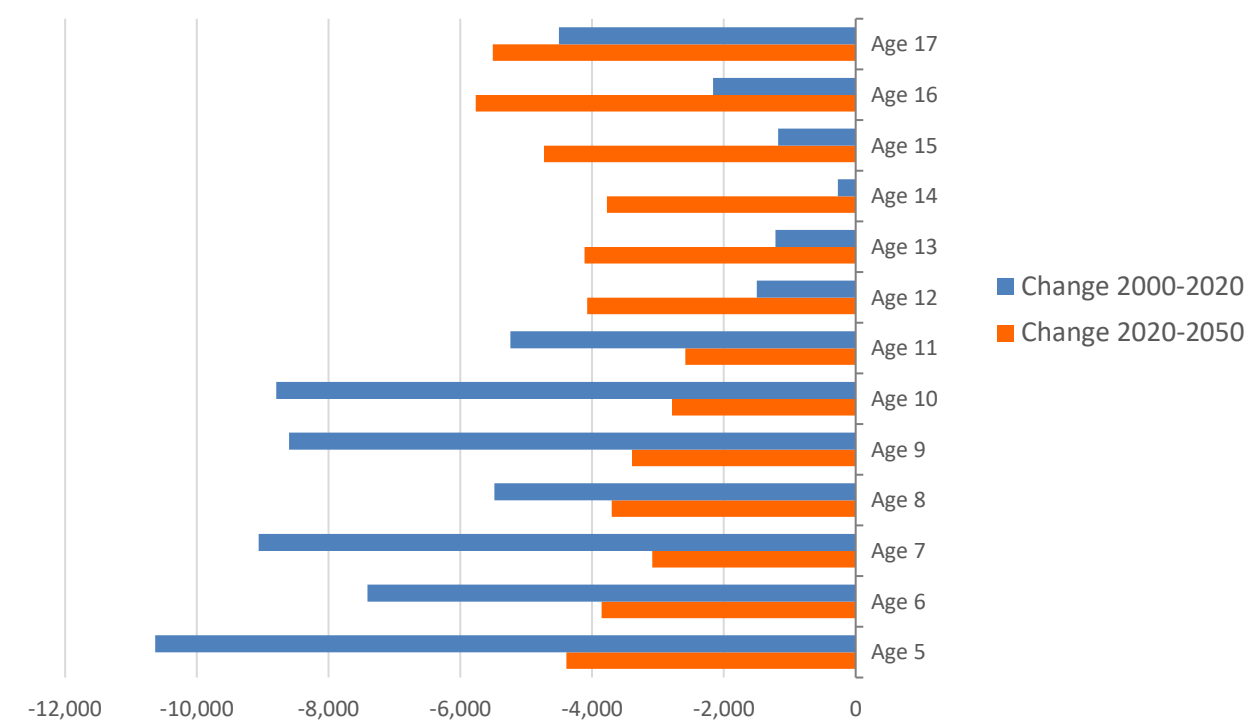
Figure 1
Southeast Michigan’s school-age population (ages 5-17), 2000-2050



While the decline in school-age population will slow and stabilize in the coming decades, changes among individual ages will continue to transform our schools. During the past two decades, the region witnessed a dramatic decline in elementary school-age children (Figure 2). However, going forward, as kids in lower grades move into higher grades, high schools in the region will witness more population losses, although less severe than the record losses in younger cohorts observed in the recent past.

Figure 2

Change in school-age population by single year of age, 2000-2020 and 2020-2050

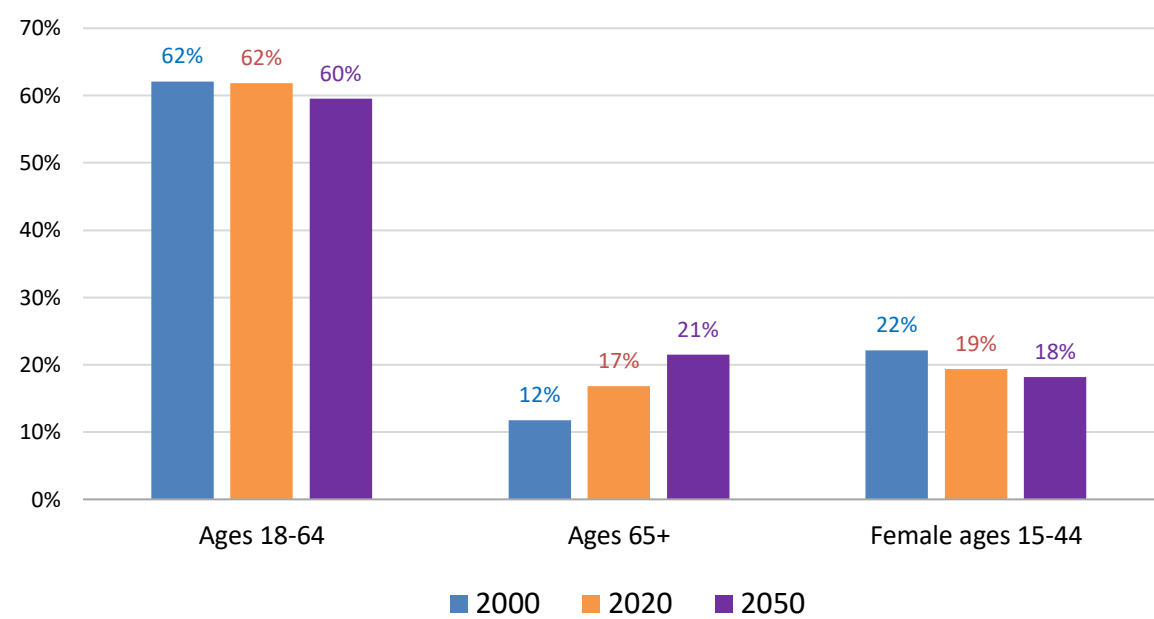


The negative trends in the region’s school-age population are driven by three factors: overall aging of our population, declining birth rates, and net domestic out-migration from the region.

The region continues to age

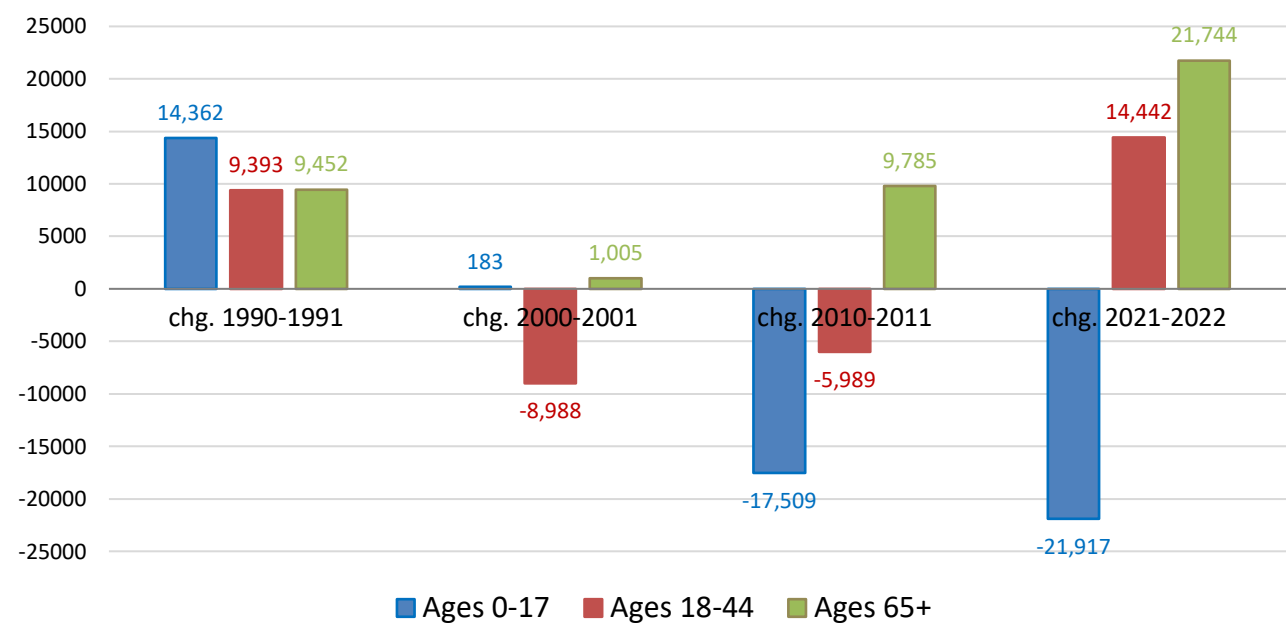
Southeast Michigan, along with the nation, faces an aging baby boomer population. Its influence on demographic trends continues to affect various age groups. While the baby boomers are driving the dramatic increases in senior age groups, the shares of working-age population (aged 18 to 64) and women of childbearing age (aged 15 to 44) are declining (Figure 3).

Figure 3
Demographic shifts by select age group, Southeast Michigan, 2000, 2020, 2050



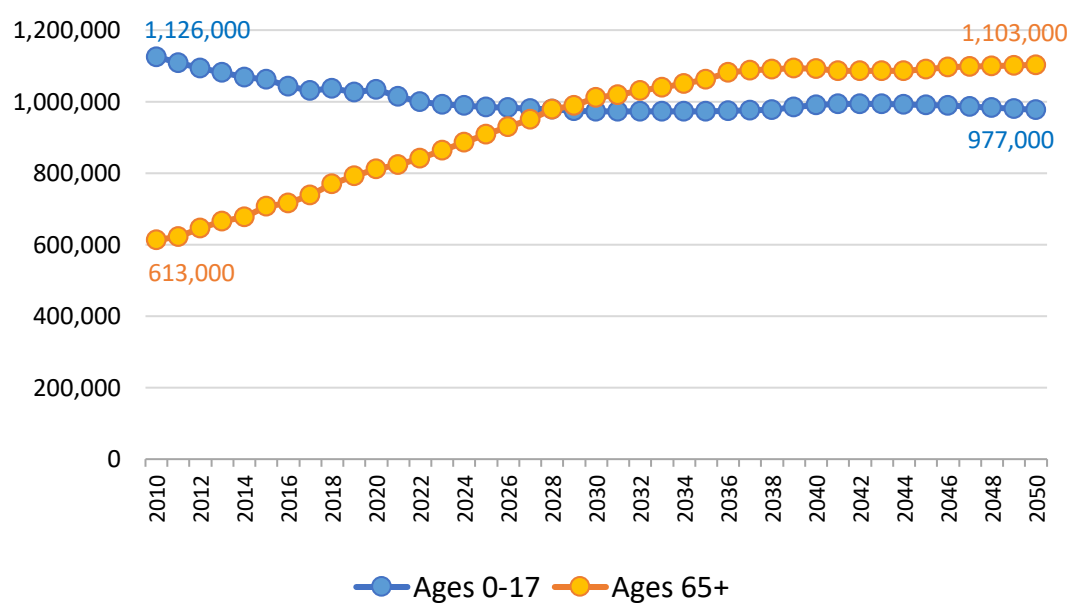
During early 1990s, children under 18 made up a significant portion of annual population growth in the region and exceeded the growth of the child-bearing and senior age groups (Figure 4). By the turn of the century, the pattern had changed, with hardly any growth in child population in 2001, and a large loss in 2011, when the region lost more than 17,000 people under age 18. The population aged 18 to 44 also decreased during 2000-2001 and 2010-2011 periods. As the baby boomers began to enter 65+ age group in 2011, growth in senior population increased by more than 9,000. By 2022, growth in the senior population accelerated to over 21,000 per year.

Figure 4
Annual change in population by age group, Southeast Michigan



As more baby boomers enter senior years and fewer people will be in the childbearing ages, there will be continued decrease in the child population. Year 2028 marks an important turning point in the region, when nearly the entire baby boom generation will be 65 years or older and the child population is projected to be outnumbered by the senior population for the first time (Figure 5).

Figure 5
Growth trends in child (0-17) and senior populations (65+), Southeast Michigan, 2010-2050



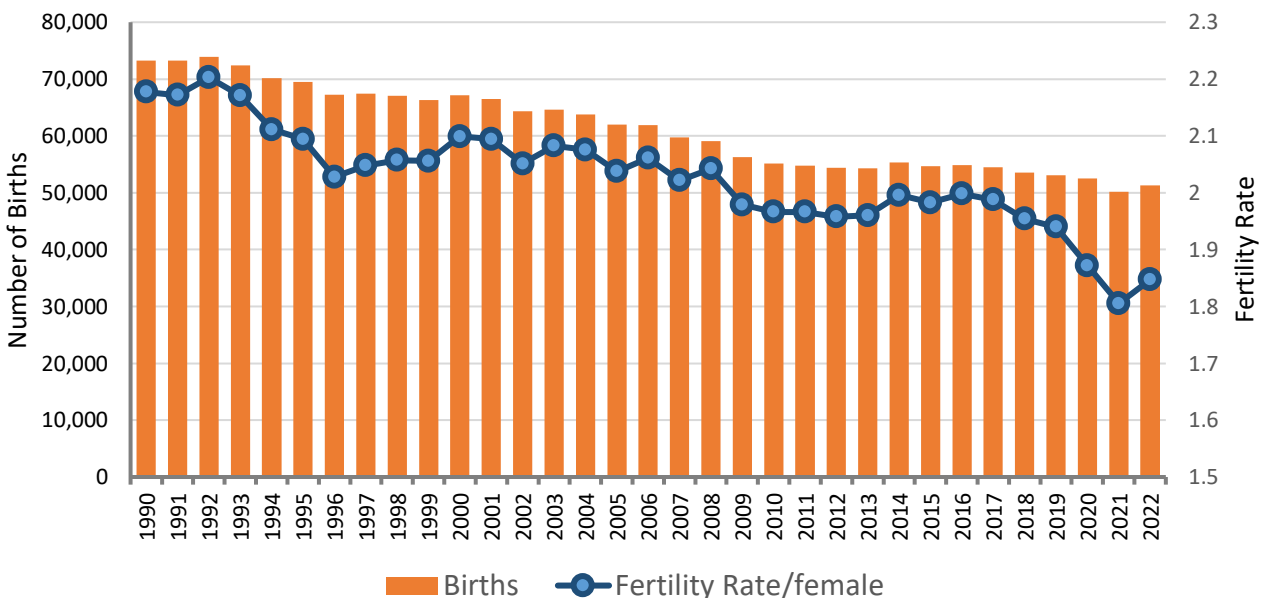
Fewer babies are born in the region

Birth rates and fertility rates among women have also been dropping in the region, reducing the level of natural increase in population. Birth rates measure the number of live births per 1,000 people in a year. The region's birth rate has decreased from 15.95 in 1990 to 10.74 in 2022. Between 2015 and 2020, there were an average of 53,800 births per year in the region, down from 72,100 annual births between 1990 and 1995 (Figure 6).

Fertility rate measures the average number of children born to a woman throughout her childbearing ages (ages 15 to 44). The region's fertility rate was 2.18 births per woman in 1990, slightly above the replacement rate of 2.1 needed to maintain a stable population without migration. Fertility rates have been on the decline and now are much below the replacement level. In 2022, the fertility rate among region's 15-to-44-year-old women was 1.85, well below the needed population replacement rate.

Figure 6

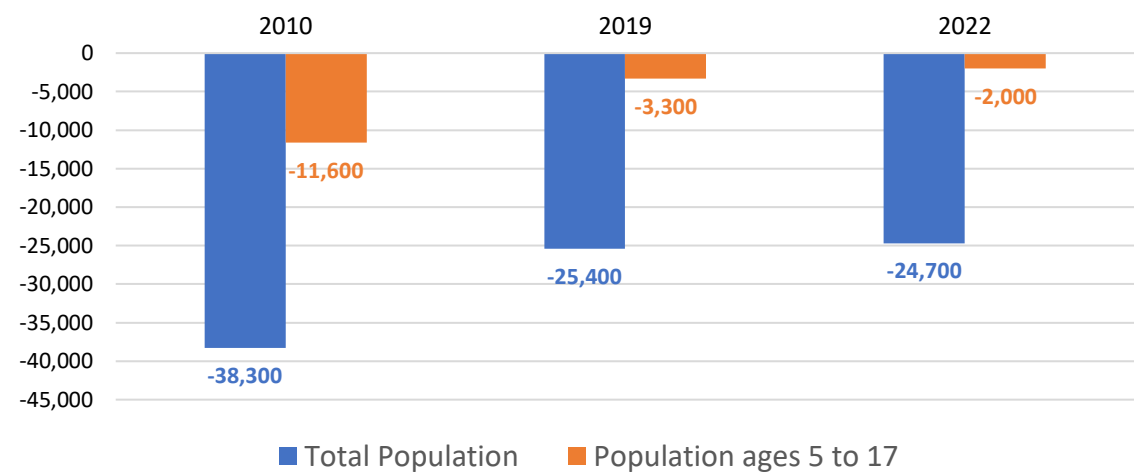
Number of births and fertility rates, Southeast Michigan



Migration will be the driving factor in population change

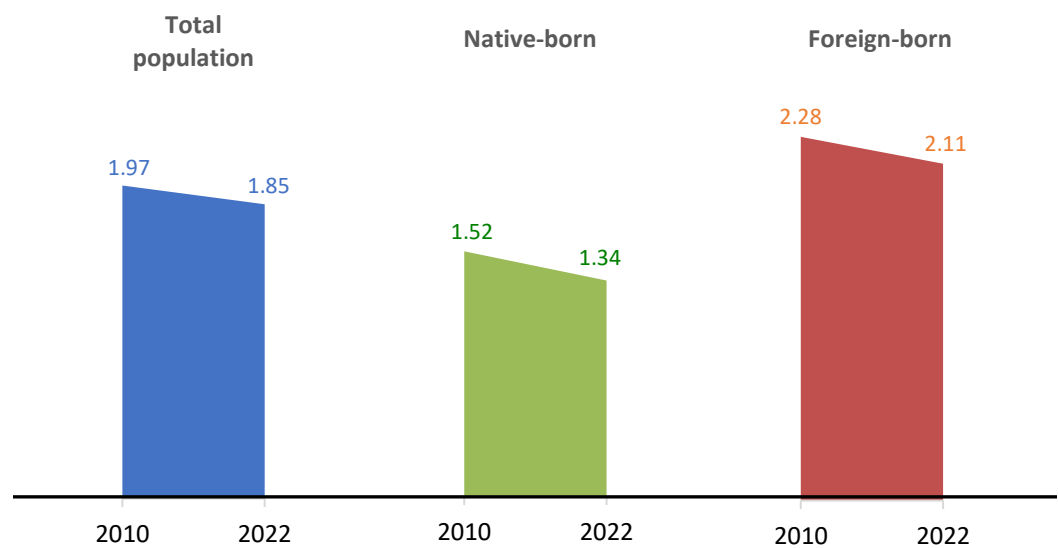
As the fertility rate remains under the population replacement rate, migration is now the driving factor for population growth, including school-age population. Much of loss in child population in the past decade can be attributed to migration of people out of the region. In 2010, the region lost about 38,300 people to net domestic out-migration, of whom 11,600 people (or 30%) were school-age children. The rate of outmigration from the region is slowing because of an improved economy since 2010. In 2019, the region saw about one-third reduction in net outmigration compared to 2010, losing 25,400 people. Of these, 3,300 (or 13%) were school-age children. In the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic, domestic outmigration continues to influence the region's population. In 2022, the region lost 24,700 people to domestic outmigration, 2,000 of whom were children aged 5-17 (Figure 7).

Figure 7
Net domestic migration, Southeast Michigan



While domestic migration has been negative for decades in Southeast Michigan, international migration has always contributed to population growth. Furthermore, birth rates are higher for immigrant populations. Since 1990, much of the downward trend in the number of births in the region is driven by native-born women. While the fertility rates are trending downward for both native-born and foreign-born women (aged 15 to 44), foreign-born women have, on average, higher fertility rates than native-born women (Figure 8).

Figure 8
Fertility rate by nativity



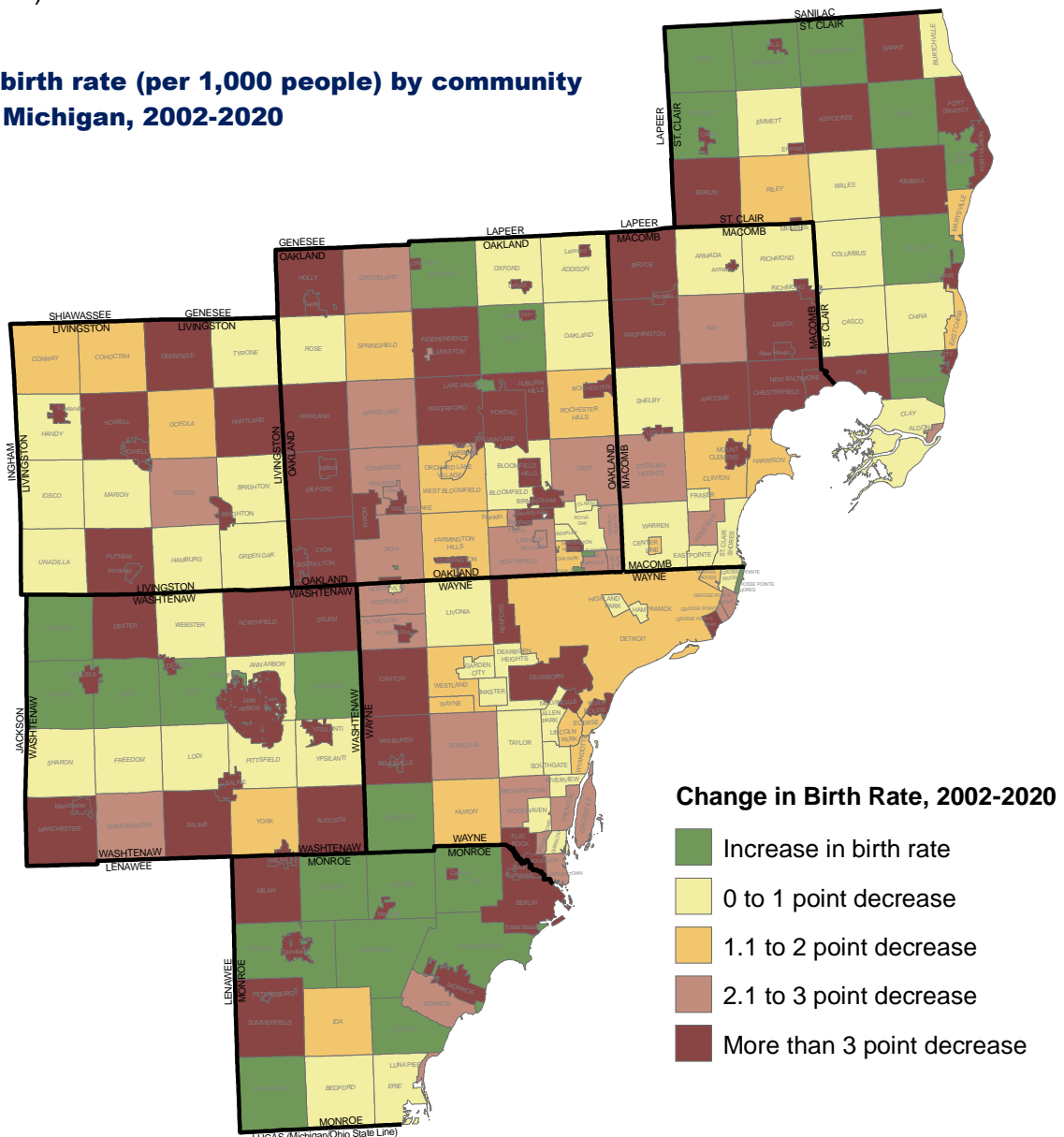
\$4,620,800	\$3,942,100	\$878,500	15%
\$324,400	\$260,700	\$63,700	20%

With our aging population and declining fertility rates, migration into the region – international and domestic – will be the main contributing factor to stabilization and growth in school-age population in the future.

Local trends impacting school districts

While the region is witnessing the trends of an aging population and reduced birth rates, the patterns differ among individual communities and school districts. Many suburban and rural communities are seeing greater reductions in birth rates compared to urban, inner-ring communities. Nearly three quarters of communities (171 out of 233) in the region saw a decrease in birth rate between 2002 and 2020 (Figure 9).

Figure 9
Change in birth rate (per 1,000 people) by community
Southeast Michigan, 2002-2020



Source: SEMCOG analysis of Michigan Department of Community Health vital statistics data



From 2020 to 2035, all intermediate school districts (ISDs) in the region will see additional declines in school-age population. After 2035, all districts - excepting Monroe ISD and Wayne Regional Education Services Agency (Wayne RESA) – are projected to experience small gains in school-age population. By 2050, all ISDs in the region, except for Livingston Educational Service Agency (Livingston ESA) and Washtenaw ISD, will have lower populations of school-age children than the levels observed in 2020.

Following are the forecast changes in school-age population in each of the seven ISDs in the region for the next 30 years:

- Livingston ESA – gain of 2,900 (+11%)
- Macomb ISD – loss of 5,800 (-4%)
- Monroe ISD – loss of 3,200 (-13%)
- Oakland Schools – loss of 2,900 (-1%)
- St. Clair ISD – loss of 2,800 (-12%)
- Washtenaw ISD – gain of 200 (+0.3%)
- Wayne RESA – loss of 39,600 (-13%)

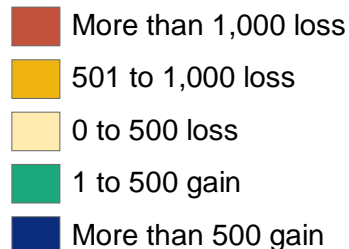
At the individual school district level, all but 11 of the 112 school districts in the region are forecast to experience declines in school-age children between 2020 and 2035 (Figure 10). After 2035, Most districts will see some modest gains in school age children (Figure 11).

Conclusion

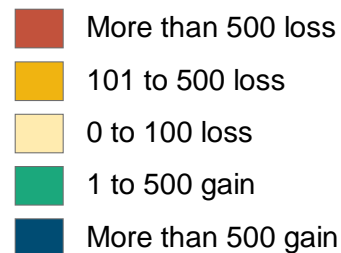
School districts across Southeast Michigan have been grappling with the declining enrollments for several years and will continue to see additional declines for several more years into the future. However, the trends going forward will be less dramatic. The subsequent growth in the future will be modest due to several demographic factors. These include an aging population, declining birth rates, and lack of in-migration. These competing trends will provide many challenges to school districts in their facility and program planning.

These shifting age dynamics will require local communities to focus their planning efforts beyond school grounds. As most of these places are also the ones that are either experiencing rapid increases in senior population or already have larger share of senior populations, communities will be required to put greater emphasis on planning for infrastructure and services that will cater to the aging population but also retain and attract younger populations.

Southeast Michigan, 2020-2035



Southeast Michigan, 2035-2050





Accessing the data

Table 1 provides SEMCOG's 2050 school-age population forecast by individual school district. Additional data by each school district can be accessed through SEMCOG's interactive Forecast Explorer tool located at <https://maps.semco.org/forecast>.

This map allows users to view SEMCOG's detailed long-range forecast of population and households for each ISD and school district in the seven-county Southeast Michigan region. In addition to viewing the forecast data in map form, one can also view a detailed report of total population, population by age cohort, and household change for each district in the region.

Additional notes:

- A school district is defined as each public school district that is a member of the larger intermediate school district agency (ISD) associated with each of the 7 counties in Southeast Michigan. In total, 112 public school districts are members of the 7 county ISDs.
- Of the 112 public school districts, 8 span across the boundary of the Southeast Michigan region:
 - Fowlerville Community Schools in Livingston County;
 - Whiteford Agricultural Schools in Monroe County;
 - Brandon School District and Oxford Community Schools in Oakland County;
 - Capac Community School District and Yale Public Schools in St. Clair County; and
 - Chelsea School District and Manchester Community Schools in Washtenaw County.
- While a large majority of these districts are within the region, the forecast results for these districts includes only the portion of the district within the SEMCOG region.
- An additional 16 public school districts that are members of county ISDs located outside the region cover parcels within the region. SEMCOG does not produce forecast results for these districts as only a small percentage of these areas are within the region.

Table 1

School-age population (age 5 through 17) by school district, 2020-2050

SCHOOL DISTRICT	2020	2030	2040	2050	CHANGE 2020-2050	% CHANGE 2020-2050
Livingston Educational Services Agency	27,345	25,489	30,005	30,298	2,953	10.8%
Brighton Area Schools	6,003	5,551	6,683	6,776	773	12.9%
Fowlerville Community Schools	3,064	2,751	3,225	3,232	168	5.5%
Hartland Consolidated Schools	5,282	5,020	5,647	5,857	575	10.9%
Howell Public Schools	9,473	9,081	10,709	10,814	1,341	14.2%
Pinckney Community Schools	,3523	3,086	3,741	3,619	96	2.7%
		124,04	128,98	130,72		
Macomb Intermediate School District	136,532	2	4	6	-5,806	-4.3%
Anchor Bay Schools	5,798	5,524	5,902	5,820	22	0.4%
Armada Area Schools	1,434	1,314	1,425	1,416	-18	-1.3%
Center Line Public Schools	2,969	2,648	2,570	2,707	-262	-8.8%
Chippewa Valley Schools	16,394	14,975	15,220	15,363	-1,031	-6.3%
Clintondale Community Schools	2,782	2,135	2,441	2,449	-333	-12.0%
East Detroit Public Schools	7,104	6,523	6,581	6,500	-604	-8.5%
Fitzgerald Public Schools	3,359	2,687	2,826	2,704	-655	-19.5%
Fraser Public Schools	4,048	3,730	3,709	3,892	-156	-3.9%
Lake Shore Public Schools	2,647	2,208	2,393	2,506	-141	-5.3%
Lakeview Public Schools	2,276	1,984	2,043	2,073	-203	-8.9%
L'Anse Creuse Public Schools	10,436	9,632	9,980	10,539	103	1.0%
Mt. Clemens Community School District	3,351	2,900	2,847	2,898	-453	-13.5%
New Haven Community Schools	3,899	4,915	5,854	6,149	2,250	57.7%
Richmond Community Schools	1,900	1,695	1,819	1,866	-34	-1.8%
Romeo Community Schools	6,014	5,707	6,168	6,451	437	7.3%
Roseville Community Schools	6,783	5,946	6,002	5,850	-933	-13.8%
South Lake Schools	2,605	2,115	2,259	2,372	-233	-8.9%
Utica Community Schools	28,701	26,223	27,747	27,930	-771	-2.7%
Van Dyke Public Schools	3,762	3,037	2,968	3,046	-716	-19.0%
Warren Consolidated Schools	17,340	15,510	15,592	15,565	-1,775	-10.2%
Warren Woods Public Schools	2,930	2,634	2,638	2,630	-300	-10.2%
Monroe Intermediate School District	23,836	21,024	21,874	20,666	-3,170	-13.3%
Airport Community School District	3,404	3,179	3,298	2,867	-537	-15.8%
Bedford Public Schools	5,149	4,332	4,188	4,122	-1,027	-19.9%
Dundee Community Schools	1,798	1,656	1,931	1,744	-54	-3.0%
Ida Public Schools	1,208	1,158	1,212	1,154	-54	-4.5%
Jefferson Schools	1,961	1,692	1,635	1,638	-323	-16.5%
Mason Consolidated Schools	1,195	1,065	1,130	1,061	-134	-11.2%
Monroe Public Schools	7,691	6,619	7,044	6,788	-903	-11.7%
Summerfield Schools	729	794	849	801	72	9.9%

Whiteford Agricultural School District 701 529 587 491 -210 -30.0%

SCHOOL DISTRICT	2020	2030	2040	2050	CHANGE 2020-2050	% CHANGE 2020-2050
Oakland Schools	194,359	180,362	188,481	191,481	-2,878	-1.5%
Avondale School District	3,781	3,462	3,634	3,779	-2	-0.1%
Berkley School District	4,234	3,682	3,833	4,019	-215	-5.1%
Birmingham City School District	10,026	8,946	9,267	9,628	-398	-4.0%
Bloomfield Hills School District	7,034	6,219	6,384	6,376	-658	-9.4%
Brandon Schools	2,516	2,351	2,391	2,301	-215	-8.5%
Clarenceville Schools	1,474	1,345	1,311	1,249	-225	-15.3%
Clarkston Community Schools	7,975	7,193	7,597	7,635	-340	-4.3%
Clawson School District	1,162	1,075	1,159	1,177	15	1.3%
Farmington Public School District	11,526	10,120	10,588	10,250	-1,276	-11.1%
Ferndale School District	2,456	1,996	1,970	2,026	-430	-17.5%
Hazel Park City School District	2,135	1,877	1,882	1,905	-230	-10.8%
Holly Area Schools	4,737	4,218	4,392	4,570	-167	-3.5%
Huron Valley Schools	9,440	8,751	9,237	9,621	181	1.9%
Lake Orion Community Schools	7,775	6,870	7,230	7,395	-380	-4.9%
Lamphere Schools	1,897	1,867	1,965	2,041	144	7.6%
Madison Public Schools	1,484	1,438	1,464	1,301	-183	-12.3%
Novi Community School District	7,003	7,119	7,691	7,925	922	13.2%
Oak Park Public Schools	3,662	3,533	3,577	3,324	-338	-9.2%
Oxford Community Schools	4,850	4,283	4,372	4,678	-172	-3.5%
Pontiac School District	13,199	12,134	12,346	12,455	-744	-5.6%
Rochester Community School District	17,196	16,809	17,391	17,747	551	3.2%
School District City of Royal Oak	5,800	5,420	5,949	6,327	527	9.1%
South Lyon Community Schools	10,455	10,667	12,145	12,818	2,363	22.6%
Southfield Public Schools	9,424	8,870	9,562	9,987	563	6.0%
Troy School District	12,265	11,131	11,675	11,810	-455	-3.7%
Walled Lake Consolidated Schools	16,187	15,360	15,844	15,978	-209	-1.3%
Waterford School District	9,974	9,741	9,966	9,818	-156	-1.6%
West Bloomfield School District	4,692	3,885	3,659	3,341	-1,351	-28.8%
St. Clair Regional Educational Service Agency	23,419	19,426	21,065	20,601	-2,818	-12.0%
Algonac Community School District	1,787	1,613	1,677	1,622	-165	-9.2%
Capac Community School District	1,373	1,066	1,176	1,171	-202	-14.7%
East China Schools	4,333	3,544	4,074	3,896	-437	-10.1%
Marysville Public Schools	2,299	1,872	1,845	1,874	-425	-18.5%
Memphis Community Schools	835	698	773	786	-49	-5.9%
Port Huron Area School District	10,952	9,131	9,851	9,652	-1,300	-11.9%
Yale Public Schools	1,840	1,502	1,669	1,600	-240	-13.0%

SCHOOL DISTRICT	2020	2030	2040	2050	CHANGE 2020-2050	% CHANGE 2020-2050
Washtenaw Intermediate School District	50,698	46,933	50,041	50,874	176	0.3%
Ann Arbor Public Schools	20,374	18,350	20,045	20,095	-279	-1.4%
Chelsea School District	2,546	2,382	2,431	2,563	17	0.7%
Dexter Community School District	3,883	3,624	3,912	3,696	-187	-4.8%
Lincoln Consolidated Schools	5,717	5,673	5,693	5,788	71	1.2%
Manchester Community Schools	990	843	878	894	-96	-9.7%
Milan Area Schools	2,159	1,935	1,960	2,027	-132	-6.1%
Saline Area Schools	5,213	4,589	4,773	4,895	-318	-6.1%
Whitmore Lake Public Schools	1,295	1,225	1,394	1,501	206	15.9%
Ypsilanti School District	8,521	8,312	8,955	9,415	894	10.5%
Wayne Regional Educational Services Agency	309,096	289,885	276,455	269,530	-39,566	-12.8%
Allen Park Public Schools	2,801	2,594	2,490	2,286	-515	-18.4%
Crestwood School District	6,110	5,951	5,703	5,265	-845	-13.8%
Dearborn Heights School District #7	2,091	1,930	1,771	1,737	-354	-16.9%
Dearborn Public Schools	24,791	25,609	25,195	24,013	-778	-3.1%
Detroit Public Schools	115,373	0	93,310	93,986	-21,387	-18.5%
Ecorse Public Schools	1,715	1,667	1,569	1,571	-144	-8.4%
Flat Rock Community Schools	2,210	1,945	1,991	1,951	-259	-11.7%
Garden City Public Schools	3,891	3,887	3,761	3,543	-348	-8.9%
Gibraltar School District	3,764	3,167	3,114	3,082	-682	-18.1%
Grosse Ile Township Schools	1,705	1,528	1,452	1,431	-274	-16.1%
Grosse Pointe Public Schools	8,758	7,709	7,007	6,582	-2,176	-24.8%
Hamtramck Public Schools	6,450	6,322	6,088	5,615	-835	-12.9%
Harper Woods School District	1,808	1,756	1,628	1,588	-220	-12.2%
Highland Park Public Schools	1,374	1,186	1,058	975	-399	-29.0%
Huron Schools	2,441	2,625	2,590	2,605	164	6.7%
Lincoln Park Public Schools	7,232	6,904	6,777	6,319	-913	-12.6%
Livonia Public Schools	15,265	15,280	15,203	14,641	-624	-4.1%
Melvindale-North Allen Park Schools	3,953	3,880	3,643	3,399	-554	-14.0%
Northville Public Schools	7,698	7,306	7,467	7,256	-442	-5.7%
Plymouth-Canton Community Schools	21,527	19,519	19,538	19,116	-2,411	-11.2%
Redford Union School District	4,054	3,960	3,956	3,597	-457	-11.3%
River Rouge School District	1,619	1,277	1,278	1,207	-412	-25.4%
Riverview Community School District	1,795	1,468	1,440	1,401	-394	-21.9%
Romulus Community Schools	4,706	4,603	4,143	4,050	-656	-13.9%
South Redford Schools	3,809	3,822	3,712	3,640	-169	-4.4%
Southgate Community School District	4,074	3,941	3,947	3,820	-254	-6.2%
Taylor Public Schools	11,226	11,127	11,345	10,716	-510	-4.5%
Trenton Public Schools	2,557	2,251	2,199	2,164	-393	-15.4%

\$4,620,800	\$3,942,100	\$678,500	15%
\$324,400	\$260,700	\$63,700	20%

SCHOOL DISTRICT	2020	2030	2040	2050	CHANGE 2020-2050	% CHANGE 2020-2050
Van Buren Public Schools	7,182	7,296	6,904	6,863	-319	-4.4%
Wayne-Westland Community School District	14,075	13,981	14,047	13,166	-909	-6.5%
Westwood Community Schools	3,724	3,690	3,623	3,690	-34	-0.9%
Woodhaven School District	5,861	5,860	5,553	5,376	-485	-8.3%
Wyandotte City School District	3,457	3,184	2,953	2,879	-578	-16.7%