



To: Cordelia Twomey
From: Antoinette Pinder-Darling
Date: July 25, 2014
Re: United States K-12 education data sets for 1985, 1995 and 2005

Within the last three decades the US population enrolled in K-12 education has increased dramatically, as illustrated in the following chart:

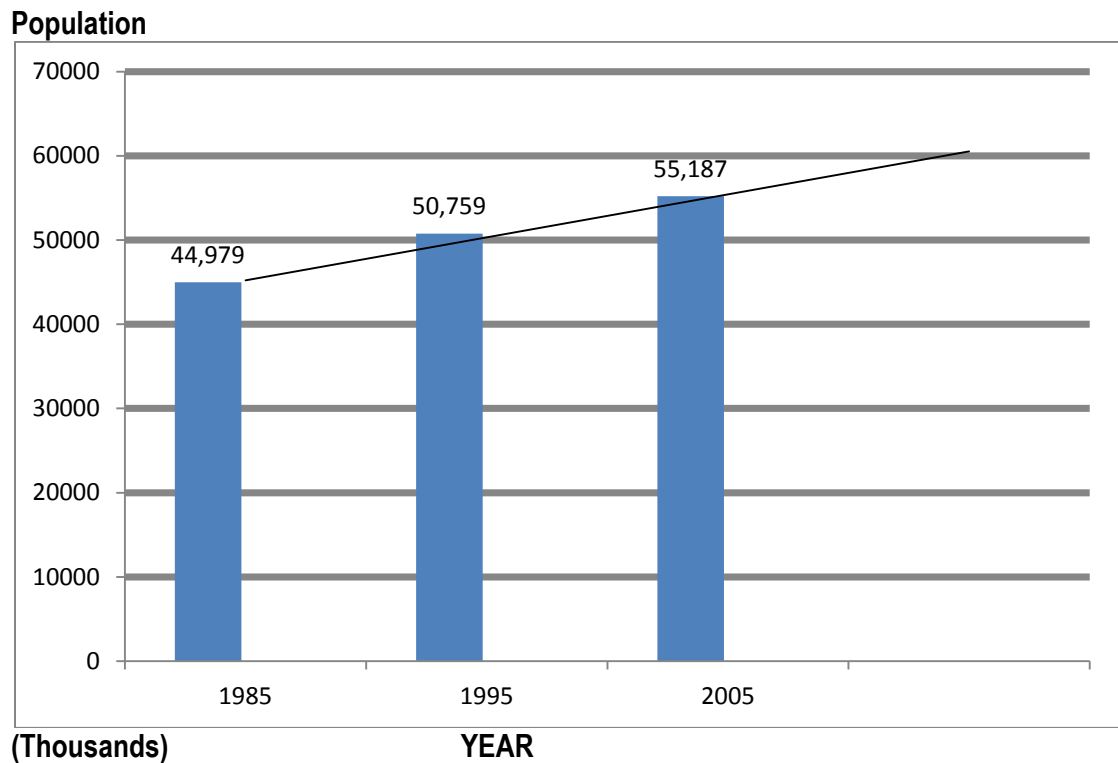


Figure 1 US Population enrolled in K-12 Education in 1985, 1995 and 2005

Enrollment in both the public and private schools in the United States has grown at a rapid rate between the 1950's and 1970's and then reached an overall peak in 1971. However, there has been a shift in this growth trend starting in 1985. The rapid increase in enrollment reflected what is known as the "baby boom". Then enrollment began hitting new levels in the mid 90s and has continued to increase up to 2006 (US Department of Education, 2013).

From 1985 to 2005, total public and private school enrollment rates changed by about 2 percentage points or less for 5- and 6-year-olds (no measurable difference between 1985 and 2005), 7- to 13-year-olds (99 percent in 1985 vs. 98 percent in 2005), and 14- to 17-year-olds (95 percent in 1985 vs. 97 percent in 2005). Because these enrollment rates remained relatively steady between 1985 and 2005, increases in public and private elementary and secondary school enrollment primarily reflect increases in the number of children in these age groups (US Department of Education, 2013). However, the increases seem to be more significant in terms of growth rate between 1985 and 1995 compared to the period of 1995 and 2005. Then it began to shift.

Between 1985 and 2005, the number of 5- and 6-year-olds increased by 15 percent, the number of 7- to 13-year-olds increased by 20 percent and the number of 14- to 17-year-olds increased by 12 percent (US Department of Education, 2013). Increases in the enrollment rate of prekindergarten age children (ages 3 and 4) from 39 percent in 1985 to 49 percent in 2005 and in the number of 3- and 4-year-olds from 7.1 million to 8.0 million and also contributed to overall prekindergarten through grade 12 enrollment increases.

Public school enrollment at the elementary level (prekindergarten through grade 8) rose from 29.9 million in fall 1990 to 34.2 million in fall 2003. After a decrease of less than 1 percent between fall 2003 and fall 2004, elementary enrollment generally increased to a projected total of 30.0 million for fall 2005 (National Center for Enrollment Statistics, 2013). Public elementary enrollment is projected to continue increasing annually, for an increase around 7 percent. Public school enrollment at the secondary level (grades 9 through 12) rose from 11.3 million in 1990 to 15.1 million in 2005 (US Department of Education, 2013). Total public school enrollment is increasing in the trend line, so will the number of students enrolled in K-12 education in both public and privates schools.

It is hoped that this research will be useful. Further questions or concerns should be directed to apinderdarling@njcu.edu or by telephone at 201-200-2222.

Reference

U.S. Department of Education. (2013). *National Center for Education Statistics*. Digest of Education Statistics, 2012 (NCES 2014-015). Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=65>