

## Enrollment Projection Methodology

The base of the model is the October 7, 2014, official reported enrollment, as submitted to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). Using those numbers DCPS goes through a process to develop a conservative estimate of a projected student enrollment for October 7, 2015. The calculation is made in the following way:

- **Step 1:** Using at least four years of enrollment history, DCPS applies grade-by-grade trends at each individual school to adjust the rising grade cohort numbers. For example, if a school has a history of losing 10 percent of its rising fifth-grade class, DCPS will apply that loss rate to the current year's fourth-grade enrollment numbers. Past work with various statistical models has demonstrated that using this cohort model is by far the strongest predictor of future enrollment
- **Step 2:** DCPS adjusts the kindergarten numbers to reflect changes in birth rates and trends. This adjustment includes changes in grade configuration, planned expansion of early childhood classrooms, and planned introduction of new special education programs.
- **Step 3:** DCPS adjusts the projection to reflect individual school and grade performance based on the latest audit for which we have data (SY14-15). Schools that tend to "lose" students in the audit, have their projection adjusted accordingly
- **Step 4:** DCPS reviews overall grade-level and school-level trends to ensure that the aggregate numbers reflect four-years trends. For example, DCPS' cohort loss rate has been steadily declining over the last four years for rising first graders, so we want to ensure that our individual school and grade numbers, in the aggregate, reflect that trend. Where trends looked incorrect, projections are reviewed at individual school- and grade-levels to address any anomalies.
- **Step 5:** DCPS shares preliminary projections with each principal in January.

Principals review their projections (including a four-year enrollment history for context) and either approves the projection or petition to change it. Any petition for change has to include the principal's specific rationale for the change. All petitions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and then approved or denied based on the strength and specificity of the argument as well as our overall enrollment projection.