

Conducting enrollment studies is a crucial aspect of effective educational planning for public school districts. These studies provide valuable data on the number of students expected to attend school in the coming years, as well as trends in enrollment over time and the demographics of the student body.

This information is essential for forecasting staffing needs, allocating funding, and making informed decisions about programmatic and facility-related planning. Additionally, enrollment studies can assist in the evaluation of outreach and recruitment efforts and inform policy decisions at the local, state, and national levels. For example, data collected through enrollment studies may be utilized to advocate for increased resources to support English language learners or other specialized programs.

Overall, the importance of conducting enrollment studies cannot be overstated, as they serve as a valuable tool for ensuring the success and sustainability of public school systems.

The Warwick Valley Central School District works with the Western Suffolk BOCES Office of School Planning and Research to conduct a study to assess recent demographic factors and make projections through 2032. The District's efforts to plan for the future through sound management practices are fostered by comprehensive, objective data, guided by Long Range Student Enrollment Planning Study.

The district serves students in grades K-12 at four schools. Park Avenue and Sanfordville elementary schools serve students in grades K-4, while Warwick Valley Middle School serves students in grades 5-8. Students in grades 9-12 attend Warwick Valley High School.

Here's a quick look at our student enrollment as of January 1, 2023 by school:

Current enrollment	3,736 students
Park Avenue Elementary School (K-4):	482 students
Sanfordville Elementary School (K-4):	797 students
Warwick Valley Middle School (5-8):	1,086 students
Warwick Valley High School (9-12):	1,371 students

The district is expected to experience overall stability in enrollment during the projection period 2023-2032. According to the study, the school district saw an increase of 217 students, or 6.2%,

in enrollment between 2017 and 2022. The elementary and high school grades saw an increase, while the middle school grades remained stable. During the first half of the projection period, it is expected that the elementary grades will remain stable, the middle grades will see an increase, and the high school grades will experience a small loss. In the latter half of the projection period, the elementary and middle grades are anticipated to see a decrease in enrollment, while the high school grades are expected to see an increase. The projected enrollment for 2032 is 3,759 students, which represents overall stability compared to current enrollment, with a gain of 31 students.

This type of planning is a dynamic process. Periodic updates allow the incorporation of changes in district trends. Changes in school enrollment occur due to fluctuations in the number of children being born, the number of families moving into a community and/or the number of children attending non-public or charter schools.

Throughout this month, I'll share an overview of enrollment projections at each school, as well as a closer look at information pertaining to births, population, housing, and non-public school enrollment.

Here are some highlights from our schools this week:

Park Avenue Elementary School

Second grade art students have been working on a unit about the Northern Lights. They gained an understanding of how the lights appear in the sky and what happens to Earth's atmosphere during the appearances. They learned blending techniques with chalk pastels, learned to create landscapes with a horizon line and reflection, and how to make the base of their own landscapes by creating a "Milky Way" effect with an old toothbrush and white paint.

Students used their new skills to create a horizon line to divide the sky and a mountain range using white oil pastels, with a corresponding reflection that gives the effect of a lake below the mountains. They used ripped pieces of paper and more chalk pastels, and applied artistic techniques to create the Northern Lights effect in the sky. It was a blast creating different bands of color and getting their hands messy while learning about this natural phenomenon.

Sanfordville Elementary School

The Sanfordville LEGO League teams are excited about this year's theme: Powered Up!

Ms. Besimer's team is using their Chromebooks to research different power sources, power storage solutions, and sources of consumption. They work in groups to build their ideas, using LEGO WeDo Education sets to create motors that power their builds and make them mobile, portable, and transferable. They must also create blueprints of their power sources, power storage centers, and sources of consumption.

Ms. Aberasturi's team is working on their "Superpower" challenge, exploring ways that energy is generated, stored, distributed, and used in our communities. They learned how many current energy use practices are neither sustainable nor eco-friendly, and began brainstorming ways to create energy without harming the environment. Students built a windmill and solar panels to add to their design, and created a carousel that stores energy and converts it into usable energy. They are now working on coding their pieces to make them move, and exploring how energy can be used in eco-friendly ways.

Warwick Valley Middle School

Students in eighth grade began reading S.E. Hinton's popular novel *The Outsiders*, the much-loved story of teenager Ponyboy Curtis and his struggles with right and wrong in a society in which he believes he is an outsider. During book discussions, students dive deep into discussions about societal norms and character development.

Meanwhile, in sixth grade, young scientists are exploring ways to calculate the density of regular and irregular objects through a series of investigations and by applying scientific tools. Students worked collaboratively on how to find volume and mass, using graduated cylinders or rulers and a triple beam balance. Once volume and mass were collected, students calculated the density of an object. The process called on students to problem solve, communicate with their lab partners, accurately determine their data points, and synthesize the information.

Warwick Valley High School

Seventeen seniors will be announcing their Senior Project topics this week. The program includes independent study and research under the guidance of teachers Nick DiLeo and Jeanine Fogler. The course is for industrious students who want to work extensively and independently on a project of their choosing, and encourages them to "explore their passion; discover themselves."

The nationally-recognized program has four components: A student-generated idea; a 2000+ word collegiate-level research paper; a portfolio chronicling the experience; and Senior Boards, an elaborate presentation to a panel of judges. The keynote speaker during the announcement ceremony will be popular NBC 4 News New York anchor and reporter Pat Battle.

Past Senior Project topics have included:

- Exploring history by hiking the Appalachian Trail
- Learning how to be a pastry chef
- Writing a sequel to the Great Gatsby
- Organizing a fundraiser for health organizations/community groups
- Learning how to build a golf course
- Running a sports tournament/camp for young athletes
- Rebuilding a tractor