Philippine Basic Education Enrollment, SY 2017–18 to SY 2025–26, and a Projection to SY 2031–32

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Abstract

The Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) publishes the enrollment of every school, public and private, in yearly machine-ready files. Summed over the schools in its nine files for School Year (SY) 2017–18 to SY 2025–26, enrollment rose from 26,311,949 to 27,030,391 before the pandemic, fell by 803,369 (3.0%) in SY 2020–21, rebounded by 1,333,639 and peaked at 27,794,282 in SY 2022–23. It then fell in three successive years to 25,935,863, below the SY 2017–18 total. Kindergarten fell from 2,268,455 to 1,993,117, with the smallest class, 1,827,258, in SY 2024–25, while senior high grew from 2,733,460 to 3,829,296. Private enrollment fell by 928,928 in SY 2020–21. The 1,422 private schools absent from that year's file account for 7.2% of the fall, most of which was in schools that stayed open, and public enrollment rose by only 139,486. The private share of enrollment was 15.9% in SY 2019–20, 12.0% in SY 2021–22 and 14.5% in SY 2025–26. A grade progression projection carries each grade forward with the mean ratio of its enrollment to the grade below a year earlier over the three latest transitions, and holds kindergarten flat or lets it fall at its eight-year or three-year rate. Kindergarten to Grade 12 enrollment, 25,832,313 in SY 2025–26, falls to between 23,071,633 and 24,067,357 in SY 2031–32. Junior high falls 8.9% and senior high 13.0% in every scenario, and Grade 7 falls most, by 24.4%. The projection is a scenario computed from the files, not a DepEd forecast.

Keywords: basic education; enrollment; Philippines; Department of Education; private schools; COVID-19 pandemic; kindergarten; senior high school; grade progression; enrollment projection

1. Introduction

The Department of Education (DepEd) counts learners once a year, at the beginning of the school year, in its Learner Information System (LIS), which "is also the official source of enrollment and other data used in computing performance indicators" (Department of Education [DepEd], n.d.-b, Secs. I.a, IV). It publishes the count school by school as machine-ready files, for public schools, private schools, schools run by state and local universities and colleges (SUC/LUC) and Philippine Schools Overseas (PSO) (DepEd, n.d.-a). Nine of these files cover School Year (SY) 2017–18 to SY 2025–26, a period that spans the COVID-19 pandemic and ends with the first Grade 11 learners in the Strengthened Senior High School tracks.

This report asks three questions: how enrollment changed before, during and after the pandemic; how the change divided among levels, grades and sectors, including the private schools that left the files in 2020; and what enrollment by grade would be in SY 2031–32 if the recent flow of learners from grade to grade continued.

2. Data and methods

2.1 Data

The data are DepEd's nine enrollment files, SY 2017–18 to SY 2025–26 (DepEd, n.d.-a), in NASH Reviewer's cleaned and harmonized release (Llego, 2026b), which NASH Reviewer Research Report No. 3 describes in full (Llego, 2026c). Each file has one row per school, with enrollment by grade, sex and senior high strand. The release stacks the files into a panel of 547,425 school-years over 66,967 school IDs, with 60,129 to 61,923 schools a year, and gives every year one set of labels. Totals in this report are sums of enrollment over the schools in each year's file, in every sector the file holds (PSO from SY 2018–19). They are not DepEd's official statistics.

Two rules for blank cells shape the totals. In every year, a blank grade cell for a level that the school does not offer counts as 0. The SY 2025–26 file writes blanks where earlier files wrote zeros. In that year, an offered level left blank by a school that reported another level counts as 0 (128 levels), and the 46 schools that left every grade cell blank (35 private, 8 PSO and 3 public; the 31 of them present in SY 2024–25 had 468 learners that year) are left out of the year's totals (Llego, 2026c, Sec. 2.4). The SY 2025–26 totals therefore cover 60,158 of the year's 60,204 schools.

The LIS captures PSO enrollment from SY 2018–19 (DepEd, n.d.-b, Sec. VIII.a). PSO schools held 13,492 learners that year and 25,372 in SY 2025–26; they are in the national totals and in no region. Regions are those of SY 2025–26 in every year: schools of the former ARMM count in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), Cotabato City in BARMM, the 21 divisions of the Negros Island Region (NIR) in NIR, and Sulu in Region IX, which gives 18 regions. The 118 schools of the Special Geographic Area Division, 111 of which the files up to SY 2020–21 list under North Cotabato in Region XII, count in BARMM in every year as well. In SY 2025–26 the file adds the Grade 11 learners in the Strengthened Senior High School (SSHS) Academic and Technical-Professional tracks, 268,830 learners, who are counted in Grade 11 and in senior high.

2.2 Measures

Elementary enrollment is kindergarten, Grades 1 to 6 and the elementary non-graded learners; junior high is Grades 7 to 10 and the junior high non-graded learners; senior high is Grades 11 and 12. Kindergarten is also reported alone. The private share is private enrollment as a share of the total of all sectors, and the female share is girls as a share of all learners. Growth over several years is a compound annual rate, $(E_{\text{end}}/E_{\text{start}})^{1/n} - 1$ over n years, and the trend over the nine years is the slope of a log-linear fit, with and without SY 2020–21 and SY 2021–22.

A school exits the files when its ID is present in one year's file and absent from the next, and enters when it is present after an absence or for the first time. IDs are taken as DepEd publishes them. Over the eight transitions between years, 146 exits are likely changes of ID, a school that reappears the next year under a new ID with the same name, municipality and barangay, and each counts as an exit and an entry (Llego, 2026c, Sec. 2.3).

2.3 The private schools that left the files in 2020

The private schools present in SY 2019–20 and absent in SY 2020–21 were counted with the learners they held in SY 2019–20. The fall in private enrollment that year was divided into the learners in those schools, the change in the private schools present in both years, and the learners in private schools new in SY 2020–21. To see where the learners went, the 1,643 cities and municipalities with at least 500 public learners in SY 2019–20, counted by region (so the BARMM and Region XII parts of six North Cotabato municipalities count apart), were compared, matched across years by region, province and municipality name. In the 1,385 of them with a private school, the percentage change in public enrollment from SY 2019–20 was regressed on the private learners lost per 100

public learners, with region effects. The regression was weighted by SY 2019–20 public enrollment and used heteroskedasticity-consistent (HC1) standard errors (MacKinnon & White, 1985). A slope of b means that public enrollment rose by b learners for each private learner lost in the same municipality.

2.4 Projection

The projection is a simple form of the grade progression rate method that the U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) uses for Grades 2 to 12, in which "the progression rate for each grade was applied to the previous year's enrollment in the previous grade" (Irwin et al., 2024, p. 70). For each grade g from Grade 1 to Grade 12 and each school year t from SY 2018–19 to SY 2025–26, the flow ratio is $r(g, t) = E(g, t) / E(g - 1, t - 1)$, where E is national enrollment in all sectors and the grade below Grade 1 is kindergarten. For each grade, the projection uses the mean of the three transitions that start in SY 2022–23 or later, after the two pandemic years: the ratios of SY 2023–24, SY 2024–25 and SY 2025–26. Starting from SY 2025–26, each grade's enrollment in the next year is the grade below's enrollment in the current year times that mean, for six years, to SY 2031–32.

Kindergarten has no grade below it and follows three scenarios: flat at its SY 2025–26 size of 1,993,117; falling at its eight-year rate, the compound annual change from SY 2017–18 to SY 2025–26 (−1.60% a year); and falling at its three-year rate, from SY 2022–23 to SY 2025–26 (−2.49% a year). These scenarios alone set the range of the projection. A kindergarten class that enters after SY 2025–26 reaches at most Grade 5 by SY 2031–32, so Grades 6 to 12 are the same in all three.

The method departs from NCES's in three ways: the ratios are a three-year mean, not an exponentially smoothed series; kindergarten follows scenarios, not enrollment rates applied to a projected population; and Grade 1 follows kindergarten. The enrollment files carry no population data. The projection covers graded learners from kindergarten to Grade 12, 25,832,313 in SY 2025–26; the 103,550 non-graded learners in that year's total of 25,935,863 are not projected.

The flow ratios compare national totals in consecutive years. They therefore combine promotion, repetition, dropout, late entry and return, migration into and out of the country, and schools that enter or leave the files; moves between public and private schools cancel out in a national total of all sectors. They are not DepEd's transition rate, whose numerator leaves out repeaters (DepEd, n.d.-b, Sec. VI.4), but they are the grade-by-grade counterpart of DepEd's retention rate, which divides beginning-of-year enrollment in Grades 2 to 6 by enrollment in Grades 1 to 5 the year before (DepEd, n.d.-b, Sec. VI.5).

3. Results

3.1 National enrollment

Total enrollment rose from 26,311,949 in SY 2017–18 to 27,030,391 in SY 2019–20, by 1.36% a year (Table 1, Figure 1). In SY 2020–21, the first school year that began during the pandemic, it fell by 803,369 (3.0%) to 26,227,022. The next year it rose by 1,333,639 (5.1%) to 27,560,661, which was 530,270 above SY 2019–20, and senior high accounted for 587,886 of the rise.

Enrollment peaked at 27,794,282 in SY 2022–23 and fell in each of the next three years, by 2.6%, 2.5% and 1.8%, to 25,935,863 in SY 2025–26. That total was 1,858,419 below the peak and 376,086 (1.4%) below SY 2017–18, the lowest total in the nine files. From SY 2022–23 to SY 2025–26 enrollment fell by 2.28% a year, and over the eight years by 0.18% a year.

The pandemic years do not make the long-run trend negative. A log-linear trend over all nine years falls by 0.11% a year, and one that leaves out SY 2020–21 and SY 2021–22 falls by 0.15% a year. Nor does the turnover of schools drive the totals. In every pair of adjacent years, the growth of enrollment in the schools present in both

years was within 0.4 percentage points of the growth over all schools, and the 55,029 schools present in all nine years lost enrollment at 0.46% a year, against 0.18% for all schools.

3.2 Levels and grades

Kindergarten enrollment was 2,268,455 in SY 2017–18 and peaked at 2,409,782 the next year. It fell by 10.8% in SY 2024–25 alone, to 1,827,258, the smallest kindergarten class in the nine files and 24.2% below the peak, and rose by 9.1% to 1,993,117 in SY 2025–26, still 12.1% below SY 2017–18. Over the eight years it fell by 1.60% a year.

Elementary enrollment, kindergarten included, fell from 15,752,075 to 14,348,159, by 1,403,916 learners. Junior high peaked at 8,757,957 in SY 2021–22 and was 7,758,408 in SY 2025–26, close to its SY 2017–18 level of 7,826,414. Senior high, which DepEd began in SY 2016–17 with Grade 11 only (DepEd, n.d.-b, Sec. VIII.a), grew from 2,733,460 to a peak of 4,179,644 in SY 2022–23 and was 3,829,296 in SY 2025–26, a rise of 4.30% a year over the eight years.

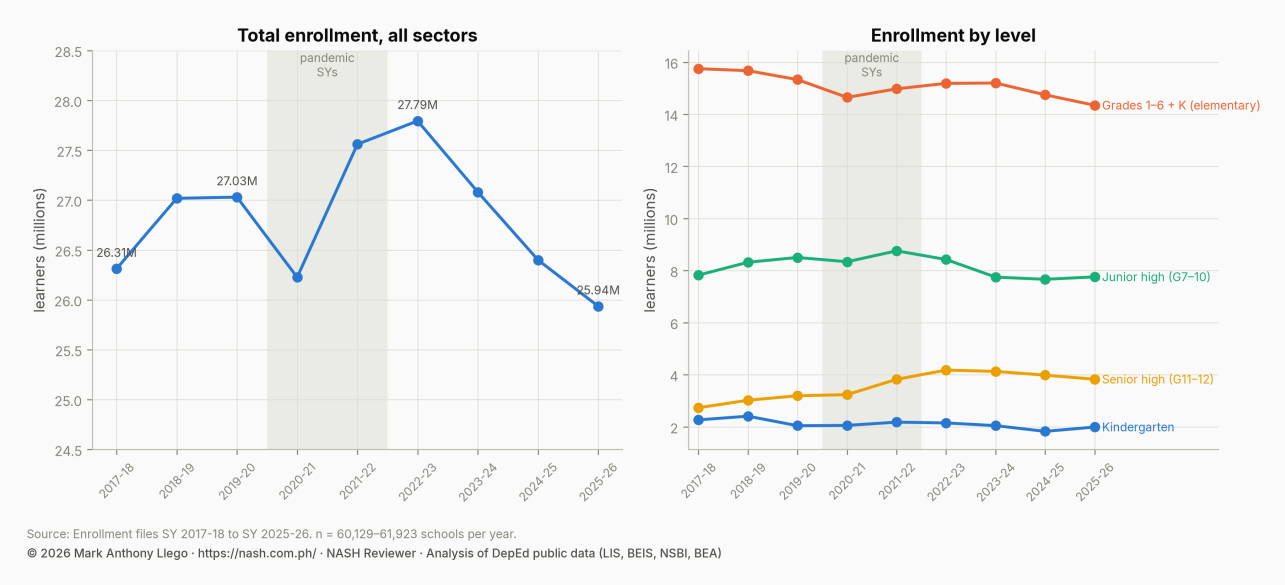

Figure 1. Total enrollment in all sectors (left) and enrollment by level (right), SY 2017–18 to SY 2025–26. The shaded band marks SY 2020–21 and SY 2021–22. Elementary includes kindergarten and elementary non-graded learners.

Table 1. Enrollment by school year and level, all sectors, SY 2017–18 to SY 2025–26

School year	Schools	Total	Change	Kindergarten	Elementary	Junior high	Senior high	Female share
2017–18	61,563	26,311,949		2,268,455	15,752,075	7,826,414	2,733,460	49.1%
2018–19	61,916	27,018,509	+2.7%	2,409,782	15,675,041	8,320,627	3,022,841	49.2%
2019–20	61,923	27,030,391	+0.0%	2,044,745	15,332,706	8,503,650	3,194,035	49.1%
2020–21	60,957	26,227,022	−3.0%	2,055,635	14,650,804	8,339,391	3,236,827	49.2%
2021–22	60,429	27,560,661	+5.1%	2,181,189	14,977,991	8,757,957	3,824,713	49.1%
2022–23	60,137	27,794,282	+0.8%	2,149,891	15,188,435	8,426,203	4,179,644	48.7%
2023–24	60,167	27,081,292	−2.6%	2,047,356	15,201,951	7,749,265	4,130,076	48.8%
2024–25	60,129	26,400,182	−2.5%	1,827,258	14,748,764	7,665,606	3,985,812	49.0%
2025–26	60,204	25,935,863	−1.8%	1,993,117	14,348,159	7,758,408	3,829,296	49.1%

Note. Sums over the schools in each year's file, in all sectors; not DepEd's official statistics. Change: from the previous year's total. Elementary includes kindergarten and elementary non-graded learners; junior high includes junior high non-graded learners. SY 2025–26 leaves out the 46 schools that reported no enrollment. Female share: girls as a share of all learners. Source: computed from DepEd (n.d.-a) as released by Llego (2026b).

By grade, enrollment in SY 2025–26 was below its SY 2017–18 level in kindergarten, in every grade from Grade 1 to Grade 7 and in Grade 9, and above it in Grade 8 and in Grades 10 to 12 (Figure 2). The largest falls were in Grade 6 (522,129 fewer learners) and kindergarten (275,338 fewer), and the largest rises in Grade 12 (660,096 more) and Grade 11 (435,740 more). The SY 2025–26 Grade 1, 1,858,183 learners, was the smallest Grade 1 in the nine files, and Grade 9, with 1,674,391, was the smallest grade of that year.

The female share of enrollment changed little: it stayed between 47.9% and 48.2% in elementary and between 49.0% and 50.3% in junior high. In senior high it fell from 52.9% in SY 2017–18 to 50.0% in SY 2023–24 and was 51.0% in SY 2025–26.

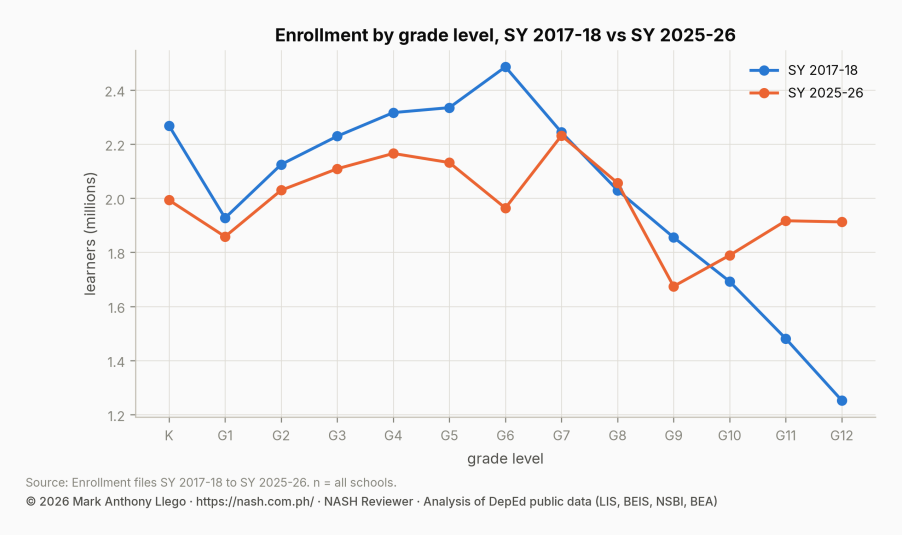

Figure 2. Enrollment by grade, all sectors, SY 2017–18 and SY 2025–26.

3.3 Senior high tracks and strands

The Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) track was the largest in every year. It peaked at 1,217,552 learners in SY 2023–24 and had 1,034,429 in SY 2025–26 (Table 2). The Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand grew from 320,577 to 1,007,555, and the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) strand from 399,360 to 702,410, after a peak of 786,711 in SY 2024–25. The General Academic Strand (GAS) and the Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) strand were smaller in SY 2025–26 than in SY 2017–18. The two SSHS tracks held 268,830 Grade 11 learners in SY 2025–26, 7.0% of senior high, so that year's strand counts are not comparable with earlier years.

The mix by sex changed within strands. Girls were 46.3% of STEM learners in SY 2017–18 and 54.4% in SY 2025–26, while their share of TVL fell from 45.6% to 39.3%; ABM stayed mostly female (70.8% and 66.2%), and HUMSS moved toward parity (61.5% and 54.6%). In SY 2025–26, 19.6% of the girls in senior high were in STEM against 17.1% of the boys, and 33.5% of the boys were in TVL against 20.8% of the girls.

Table 2. Senior high enrollment by track or strand, SY 2017–18 and SY 2025–26, with the female share

Track or strand	SY 2017–18	Female share	Peak (school year)	SY 2025–26	Female share
ABM	391,436	70.8%	459,753 (2022–23)	365,597	66.2%
GAS	571,129	54.7%	725,231 (2022–23)	423,479	52.5%
HUMSS	320,577	61.5%	1,085,575 (2024–25)	1,007,555	54.6%
STEM	399,360	46.3%	786,711 (2024–25)	702,410	54.4%
TVL	1,025,907	45.6%	1,217,552 (2023–24)	1,034,429	39.3%
Arts and Design, Sports, Maritime, unique strands	25,051	32.3%	33,001 (2019–20)	26,996	44.5%
SSHS Academic (Grade 11)				184,122	57.2%
SSHS Technical-Professional (Grade 11)				84,708	38.4%
All senior high	**2,733,460**	**52.9%**	**4,179,644 (2022–23)**	**3,829,296**	**51.0%**

Note. Grades 11 and 12, all sectors. Female share: girls as a share of the strand's learners. Peak: the largest count in the nine files. The SSHS tracks appear first in SY 2025–26, in Grade 11. Source: computed from DepEd (n.d.-a) as released by Llego (2026b).

3.4 Sectors

Public enrollment was 22,096,820 in SY 2017–18 and 22,078,460 in SY 2025–26 (Table 3, Figure 3). Between those years it rose by 139,486 (0.6%) in SY 2020–21 and by 1,415,086 in SY 2021–22, to a peak of 24,127,495 that was 1,554,572 above SY 2019–20, and then fell in each of four years. In the two latest years public enrollment fell by more than the total, by 681,716 in SY 2024–25 and 465,251 in SY 2025–26, and SUC/LUC enrollment by 19,116 and 8,305, while private enrollment rose by 18,315 and 8,720 and PSO enrollment by 1,407 and 517.

Private enrollment rose to 4,304,676 in SY 2019–20, fell by 928,928 (21.6%) in SY 2020–21 and to 3,307,342 in SY 2021–22, and recovered to 3,758,971 in SY 2025–26, 12.7% below SY 2019–20. It regained 451,629 of the 997,334 learners it lost between SY 2019–20 and SY 2021–22. The private share of enrollment was 15.9% in SY 2019–20, 12.9% in SY 2020–21, 12.0% in SY 2021–22 and 14.5% in SY 2025–26. Enrollment in SUC/LUC schools halved, from 149,614 to 73,060, and PSO enrollment rose from 13,492 in SY 2018–19 to 25,372.

Table 3. Enrollment by sector, SY 2017–18 to SY 2025–26

School year	Public	Private	SUC/LUC	PSO	Private share
2017–18	22,096,820	4,065,515	149,614		15.5%
2018–19	22,558,138	4,298,566	148,313	13,492	15.9%
2019–20	22,572,923	4,304,676	131,006	21,786	15.9%
2020–21	22,712,409	3,375,748	118,755	20,110	12.9%
2021–22	24,127,495	3,307,342	107,912	17,912	12.0%
2022–23	24,036,251	3,627,506	109,314	21,211	13.1%
2023–24	23,225,427	3,731,936	100,481	23,448	13.8%
2024–25	22,543,711	3,750,251	81,365	24,855	14.2%
2025–26	22,078,460	3,758,971	73,060	25,372	14.5%

Note. SUC/LUC: schools run by state and local universities and colleges. PSO: Philippine Schools Overseas, captured in the LIS from SY 2018–19. Private share: private enrollment over the total of all sectors (Table 1). Source: computed from DepEd (n.d.-a) as released by Llego (2026b).

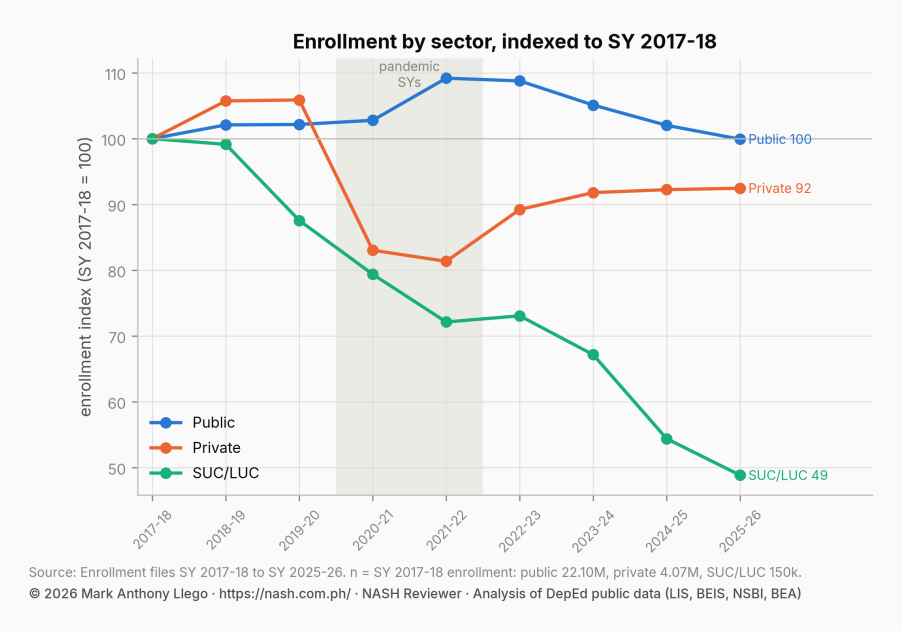

Figure 3. Enrollment by sector indexed to SY 2017–18 = 100: public, private and SUC/LUC schools. The shaded band marks SY 2020–21 and SY 2021–22.

3.5 The private schools that left the files in 2020

Of the 14,435 private schools in the SY 2019–20 file, 1,422 (9.9%) were absent from the SY 2020–21 file. They had held 67,236 learners in SY 2019–20, a median of 22 a school; 1,045 had 50 learners or fewer, and 1,142 offered elementary grades only. Of the 1,422, 188 appear again in a later file. A further 833 private schools present in SY 2020–21 were absent from the SY 2021–22 file, with 30,082 learners.

These exits explain little of the private fall. Of the 928,928 learners that private enrollment lost in SY 2020–21, the schools that left had held 67,236 (7.2%). The 13,013 private schools present in both years lost 873,880 learners (94.1% of the fall), 20.6% of their enrollment, and 243 new private schools added 12,188.

Public enrollment rose by 139,486 that year, an amount equal to 15% of the private loss. Across municipalities, it rose more where private schools lost more learners. In the quarter of the 1,385 municipalities with private schools where the private loss was largest, a median of 5.2 learners per 100 public learners, public enrollment rose by 1.1% in SY 2020–21 and stood 8.7% above SY 2019–20 in SY 2021–22. In the quarter where the loss was smallest, it fell by 0.6% in SY 2020–21 and stood 4.0% above SY 2019–20 in SY 2021–22. With region effects, public enrollment rose by 0.13 learners (95% confidence interval 0.02 to 0.24) for each private learner lost in SY 2020–21, and by 0.28 (0.17 to 0.40) by SY 2021–22. As associations between totals, these are consistent with about one lost private learner in eight enrolling in a public school of the same municipality in the first year, and about three in ten by the second.

3.6 Regions

Under SY 2025–26 boundaries, BARMM was the only region whose enrollment grew from SY 2022–23 to SY 2025–26, by 0.53% a year. Over the eight years it grew from 796,988 to 934,373 learners, by 2.01% a year, the most of any region. Both figures count the schools of the Special Geographic Area Division in BARMM throughout; Region XII, under whose North Cotabato division the earlier files list those schools, grew by 0.20% a year over the eight years. From SY 2022–23 the other 17 regions fell at rates between 1.45% a year in Region IV-A and 3.48% a year in Region I, and Region I also fell most over the eight years, by 1.23% a year.

4. Projection to SY 2031–32

4.1 Grade-to-grade flow ratios

In SY 2020–21 the flow ratio of every transition except Grade 9 to Grade 10 was the lowest of the eight years, and in SY 2021–22 every ratio was above 1 (Table 4). The three-year means used in the projection are below 1 for every transition except kindergarten to Grade 1 (1.011) and Grade 10 to Grade 11 (1.003). The lowest is Grade 11 to Grade 12 (0.925). The three junior high steps, 0.959, 0.955 and 0.949, carry a Grade 7 class to Grade 10 at about 87% of its size. Against the mean of SY 2018–19 and SY 2019–20, the kindergarten to Grade 1 ratio is lower (1.011 against 1.025) and the Grade 10 to Grade 11 ratio higher (1.003 against 0.967).

Table 4. Flow ratios: enrollment in a grade divided by enrollment in the grade below in the previous school year, all sectors

Transition	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24	2024–25	2025–26	Mean used
Kindergarten to Grade 1	1.034	1.016	0.992	1.065	1.025	1.005	1.011	1.017	1.011
Grade 1 to Grade 2	1.005	0.983	0.945	1.014	1.009	0.987	0.986	0.980	0.984
Grade 2 to Grade 3	0.996	0.994	0.958	1.012	1.008	0.988	0.994	0.990	0.991
Grade 3 to Grade 4	0.992	0.991	0.960	1.011	1.005	0.979	0.990	0.988	0.985
Grade 4 to Grade 5	0.991	0.990	0.966	1.012	0.999	0.982	0.986	0.986	0.985
Grade 5 to Grade 6	0.984	0.985	0.965	1.011	0.996	0.978	0.985	0.981	0.982
Grade 6 to Grade 7	0.985	0.996	0.928	1.011	0.995	0.971	0.981	0.981	0.977
Grade 7 to Grade 8	0.974	0.947	0.935	1.051	0.988	0.952	0.966	0.960	0.959
Grade 8 to Grade 9	0.953	0.948	0.933	1.028	0.975	0.944	0.963	0.959	0.955
Grade 9 to Grade 10	0.945	0.944	0.937	1.025	0.967	0.933	0.956	0.958	0.949
Grade 10 to Grade 11	0.964	0.969	0.934	1.084	1.015	0.983	1.018	1.006	1.003
Grade 11 to Grade 12	0.939	0.916	0.901	1.010	0.918	0.907	0.930	0.937	0.925

Note. Each column is the school year of the upper grade. Mean used: the mean of the SY 2023–24, SY 2024–25 and SY 2025–26 ratios, computed before rounding. The ratios combine promotion, repetition, dropout, late entry and migration; they are not DepEd's transition rates. Source: computed from DepEd (n.d.-a) as released by Llego (2026b).

4.2 Projected totals

With kindergarten flat, kindergarten to Grade 12 enrollment falls from 25,832,313 in SY 2025–26 to 24,067,357 in SY 2031–32 (−6.8%). With kindergarten falling at its eight-year rate it falls to 23,416,802 (−9.4%), and at its three-year rate to 23,071,633 (−10.7%) (Table 5, Figure 4). Junior high falls to 7,062,429 (−8.9%) and senior high to 3,330,786 (−13.0%) in every scenario. Elementary, kindergarten to Grade 6, falls by 4.0%, 8.6% or 11.0%.

The fall is uneven from year to year. With kindergarten flat, the total falls by 500,431 in SY 2026–27 and by 357,987 in SY 2027–28, by 219,751 and 41,465 in the next two years, and by 301,973 and 343,349 in the last two. The slowdown comes from senior high, which rises by 331,586 in SY 2029–30. That year the Grade 1 classes of SY 2018–19 and SY 2019–20, the two largest Grade 1 classes in the files (2,345,534 and 2,448,099), are projected to be in Grades 12 and 11.

Table 5. Recorded and projected enrollment, kindergarten to Grade 12, under three kindergarten scenarios, SY 2025–26 to SY 2031–32

	Elementary (kindergarten to Grade 6)					Total		
School year	Flat	Eight-year	Three-year	Junior high	Senior high	Flat	Eight-year	Three-year
2025–26 (recorded)	14,251,223	14,251,223	14,251,223	7,751,794	3,829,296	25,832,313	25,832,313	25,832,313
2026–27	14,152,160	14,120,181	14,102,485	7,613,646	3,566,075	25,331,882	25,299,903	25,282,207
2027–28	13,926,108	13,830,327	13,777,767	7,795,929	3,251,858	24,973,895	24,878,114	24,825,554
2028–29	13,703,865	13,513,474	13,409,871	7,708,231	3,342,048	24,754,144	24,563,753	24,460,150
2029–30	13,568,621	13,253,605	13,083,622	7,470,423	3,673,634	24,712,679	24,397,662	24,227,679
2030–31	13,528,111	13,059,393	12,808,595	7,410,193	3,472,403	24,410,706	23,941,989	23,691,190
2031–32	13,674,142	13,023,587	12,678,419	7,062,429	3,330,786	24,067,357	23,416,802	23,071,633
Change, SY 2025–26 to SY 2031–32	−4.0%	−8.6%	−11.0%	−8.9%	−13.0%	−6.8%	−9.4%	−10.7%

Note. Graded learners only: non-graded learners (103,550 in SY 2025–26) are not projected, so the SY 2025–26 figures fall below those of Table 1. Junior high and senior high are the same in all three scenarios. Flat: kindergarten held at 1,993,117. Eight-year and three-year: kindergarten falling at its eight-year rate (1.60% a year) or its three-year rate (2.49% a year). Source: computed from DepEd (n.d.-a) as released by Llego (2026b).

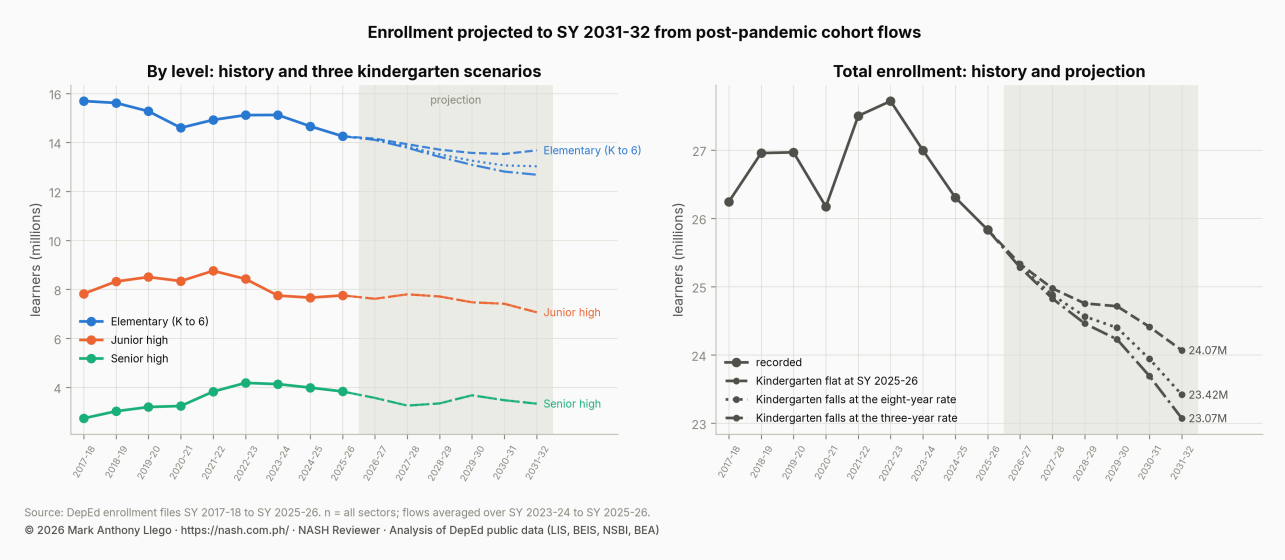

Figure 4. Recorded and projected enrollment by level (left) and in total (right), SY 2017–18 to SY 2031–32, under the three kindergarten scenarios; the shaded band is the projection. Both panels count graded learners only, so the recorded totals run below those of Figure 1. In both panels the line style marks the scenario, as the right panel's key shows: dashed lines hold kindergarten flat, dotted lines let it fall at the eight-year rate and dash-dotted lines at the three-year rate. In the left panel the three coincide for junior high and senior high.

4.3 Projected grades

In SY 2031–32, with kindergarten flat, Grade 7 is projected at 1,687,365, 544,302 (24.4%) below SY 2025–26 (Figure 5). It comes from the SY 2025–26 Grade 1, the smallest Grade 1 in the files, while the SY 2025–26 Grade 7, 2,231,667 learners, was that year's largest grade, the grade that the largest Grade 1 in the files (2,448,099 in SY 2019–20) had reached. Grade 12 falls by 19.1%, to 1,547,215, Grade 8 by 12.7%, and Grades 4 and 5 by 10.6% and 10.5%. Grade 1 rises by 8.5%, as a flat kindergarten of 1,993,117 feeds it at the ratio of 1.011, and Grade 9 rises by 7.5%, because the SY 2025–26 Grade 9 was the smallest grade of that year.

Followed through the years, the SY 2025–26 Grade 9 reaches Grade 12 in SY 2028–29 at 1,473,099, the smallest Grade 12 since SY 2018–19 (1,390,836). Grade 12 then rises by 254,803 in SY 2029–30 and to 1,798,890 in SY 2030–31, before it falls to 1,547,215 in SY 2031–32.

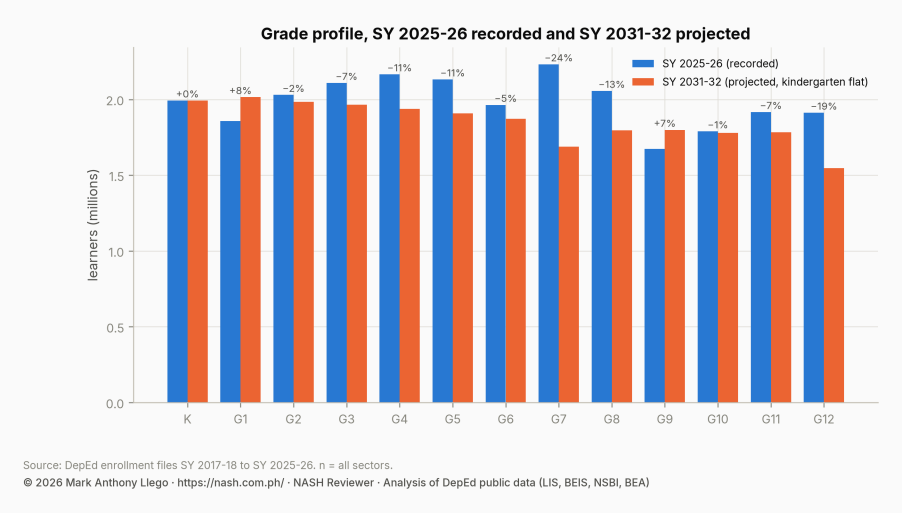

Figure 5. Enrollment by grade in SY 2025–26 and projected for SY 2031–32 with kindergarten held flat. The label over each pair of bars is the change from SY 2025–26, rounded to whole percentages.

5. Discussion

Enrollment in DepEd's files peaked in SY 2022–23 and has fallen since, and the long-run trend is negative with or without the pandemic years. The falling kindergarten intake, 1.60% a year over eight years, is moving up the grades: the SY 2025–26 Grade 1 is the smallest in the files. In SY 2031–32, Grades 6 to 12 are projected from learners already enrolled in SY 2025–26, so the projected fall in junior high and senior high does not depend on any assumption about future kindergarten classes. It depends on the flow ratios holding.

For planning, the fall arrives one grade at a time. With kindergarten flat, Grade 1 is projected to grow by 8.5% while Grade 7 shrinks by a quarter, so the rooms and teachers that each level needs change at different times. Senior high shows how short a peak can be: Grade 12 is projected at 1,473,099 in SY 2028–29, 1,798,890 two years later and 1,547,215 the year after. Capacity added for SY 2030–31 would exceed the projected Grade 12 a year later.

A national fall does not remove local shortages. DepEd's 2023 classroom shortage of 165,443 classrooms was at 25,823 of 47,659 public schools, and half of it at 2,254 schools (Llego, 2026a). Enrollment is not falling everywhere: BARMM grew over both periods compared in Section 3.6. The projection is national and does not say where the fall will be felt. Plans for classrooms and teachers still rest on each school's and each division's own enrollment and shortage.

The files do not show most of the private sector's lost learners moving into public schools in SY 2020–21. Most of that year's private loss was in private schools that stayed open, public enrollment rose by an amount equal to 15% of the loss, and across municipalities public enrollment rose by about one learner for every eight private learners lost in the same municipality that year. By SY 2025–26 the private share had recovered to 14.5%, still below the 15.9% of SY 2019–20.

6. Limitations

Enrollment is counted at the beginning of the school year (DepEd, n.d.-b, Secs. IV, V.a), so the totals do not show learners who leave during the year or enroll late, and they are not counts of completers. The totals are sums over the schools in each released file, not DepEd's official statistics, and the SY 2025–26 totals leave out the 46 schools that reported no enrollment. PSO enrollment enters the files in SY 2018–19, which adds 13,492 learners to that year's growth. The files have no population denominators, so gross and net enrollment rates, which DepEd computes with population projections (DepEd, n.d.-b, Sec. I.d), cannot be computed from them.

Sector is each school's sector in each year, and three schools moved from public to SUC/LUC over the period (Llego, 2026c). The files hold no learner records, so moves of learners between sectors are inferred from totals, not observed. School IDs are taken as published: the 146 likely ID changes count as exits and entries, and some exits, such as the 188 private schools of 2020 that appear again later, are absences from the files, not necessarily closures. Regions are fixed at SY 2025–26 boundaries, so regional figures for earlier years differ from DepEd's tables for those years.

The projection is arithmetic on national totals. It assumes that the three-year mean flow ratios hold for six years and that kindergarten follows one of three paths, none of which rises. It uses no birth registrations or population projections, so it cannot say how many children will reach school age. It does not model migration, which the ratios absorb only as it was in the three latest years, or policy changes such as the further rollout of the SSHS tracks, which first appear in Grade 11 in the SY 2025–26 file. The range across scenarios reflects the kindergarten assumption alone. It is not a confidence interval, and no probability attaches to it. National ratios say nothing about regions or divisions.

Data availability

The enrollment panel and the other files of the release are free to download from NASH Reviewer at https://data.nash.com.ph/deped-data/v1.1/ followed by the file name, with a landing page at https://nash.com.ph/blog/download-cleaned-deped-school-data, and are recorded at https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24624443. The data files are distributed under DepEd's terms of use; a work that uses them credits the Department of Education as the source of the data. DepEd's original files and technical notes are on its Machine Ready Files page (DepEd, n.d.-a). The code that computed the figures in this report is not publicly released; Section 2 describes each computation.

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Version history

Version 1.0 (November 28, 2026): https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24623296. Version 1.1 (November 28, 2026) counts the Special Geographic Area Division's schools in BARMM in every year, as release 1.1 of the data does, which changes BARMM's and Region XII's regional figures and, slightly, the private-school analysis by municipality.

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