Overview

Minnesota's student enrollment reached its zenith in 1972 at the height of the baby-boomers' progression through the school system. From 1972 to 1985, enrollment in Minnesota's public schools declined by nearly one-third to 695,000 pupils. Beginning in 1986, enrollment in Minnesota's public schools began increasing at a rate of about two percent per year. This rate of increase has been slowing, and according to the department of children, families and learning, enrollment will begin decreasing statewide during the next decade.

The statewide trends in enrollment mask the decreases in enrollment that are now occurring in most areas of the state outside of the corridor from St. Cloud to Rochester. Many school districts faced declining enrollment even during the late 1980s and 1990s as state enrollment levels were increasing. Declining enrollment poses challenges to school districts, particularly those that are geographically removed from the next nearest school district.

1 Appropriation. Appropriates $250,000 in fiscal year 2000 to the range association of municipalities and schools for a coordinated response to declining enrollment in the region's school districts, including analysis of curriculum, transportation, and district administration.