Executive Summary

The Summit Hill School District 161 (District) requested enrollment projections using existing enrollment data and live birth records as part of a larger study looking at the issue of establishing a consolidated K-12 school district. The scope of work involved in developing K-12 enrollment projections included the following.

- Acquire and process base mapping data suitable for geocoding (address matching)
- Geocoding 10 years of District student addresses and assemble by cohort or class
- Process high school student address data, identify students in District, and build-out grade 9-12 resident classes
- Process live birth records, assign to Kindergarten cohorts, and project Kindergarten enrollments
- Develop a K-12 enrollment projections model and enrollment projections by grade and District attendance area

The K-8 enrollment projections are forecasting enrollment declines of 15% to 19% by 2023-24 (mid and snapshot projections).

- Elementary (K-4) enrollments will decrease by 6% to 9% (high and snapshot projections)
- Sharper declines are expected in the intermediate and junior high school grades
- Based on available high school data and trends observed in the intermediate and junior high school grades, resident high school enrollments are expected to decline by 10% to 20% over the next 5 years (mid and snapshot projections)

These observations are shaped largely by recent declines in K-8 District enrollments. Between 2015 and 2018, K-8 enrollments in the District declined by 304 students or roughly 10%. In addition, Kindergarten cohort births declined sharply between 2014 and 2017 and Kindergarten enrollments have followed. As births remained at roughly the same levels for Kindergarten cohort years 2017-2019, Kindergarten enrollments have remained and are projected to remain at the same levels. Birth counts in Kindergarten cohort years 2020 and 2021 are lower than the totals in 2017-19 and it would be expected for Kindergarten enrollments to decline accordingly. Births for 2022 increased to 2017-19 levels but have declined again for Kindergarten cohort year 2023. It appears that the new floor for District births would be between 217 and 243 births for future Kindergarten class sizes.

Cohort survival ratios (CSRs, ratios of students surviving birth to Kindergarten and to succeeding grades) are generally close to 1.000 based on current and past enrollments which may be explained by smaller class sizes and declining class sizes in succeeding grades. Births to Kindergarten class sizes are in the .901 to 1.017 range which indicates that Kindergarten enrollments have been between 90% and 101% of births representing the pool of Kindergarten students over the last 5 years.

This study should mark the beginning of a planning process that will monitor enrollments and the direction of District births with other changes that may impact District enrollments in the community. In a sense, this study will never be completely finished. It represents the collection and interpretation of a snapshot in time of the latest information available from the District, the high school district, local government, and state government. Tools and data have been developed to facilitate the maintenance of this planning process and the District's enrollment projections model.