

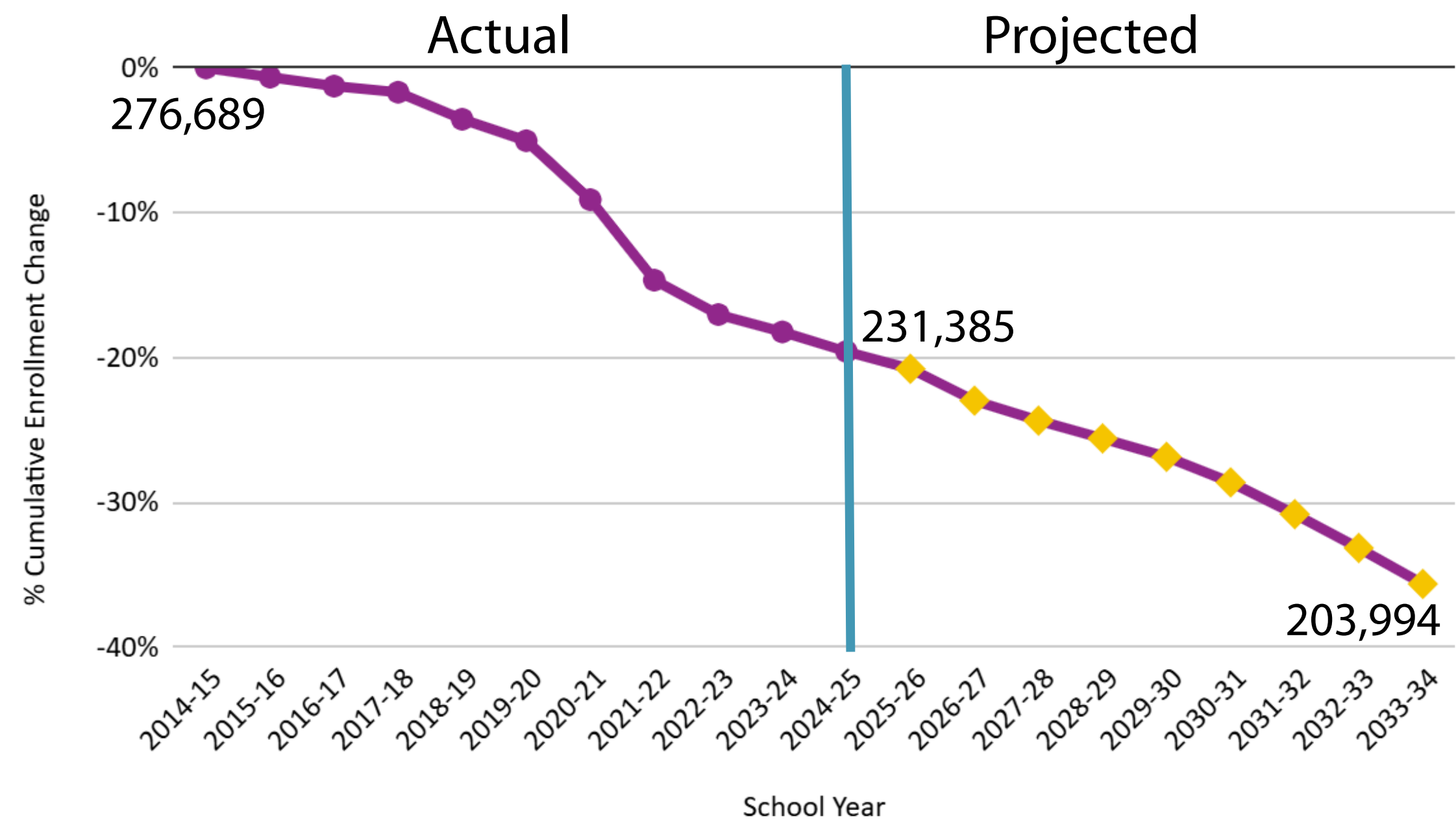


Where Did the Students Go?

Housing & the School Enrollment Crisis

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Santa Clara County Actual & Projected Public School Enrollment

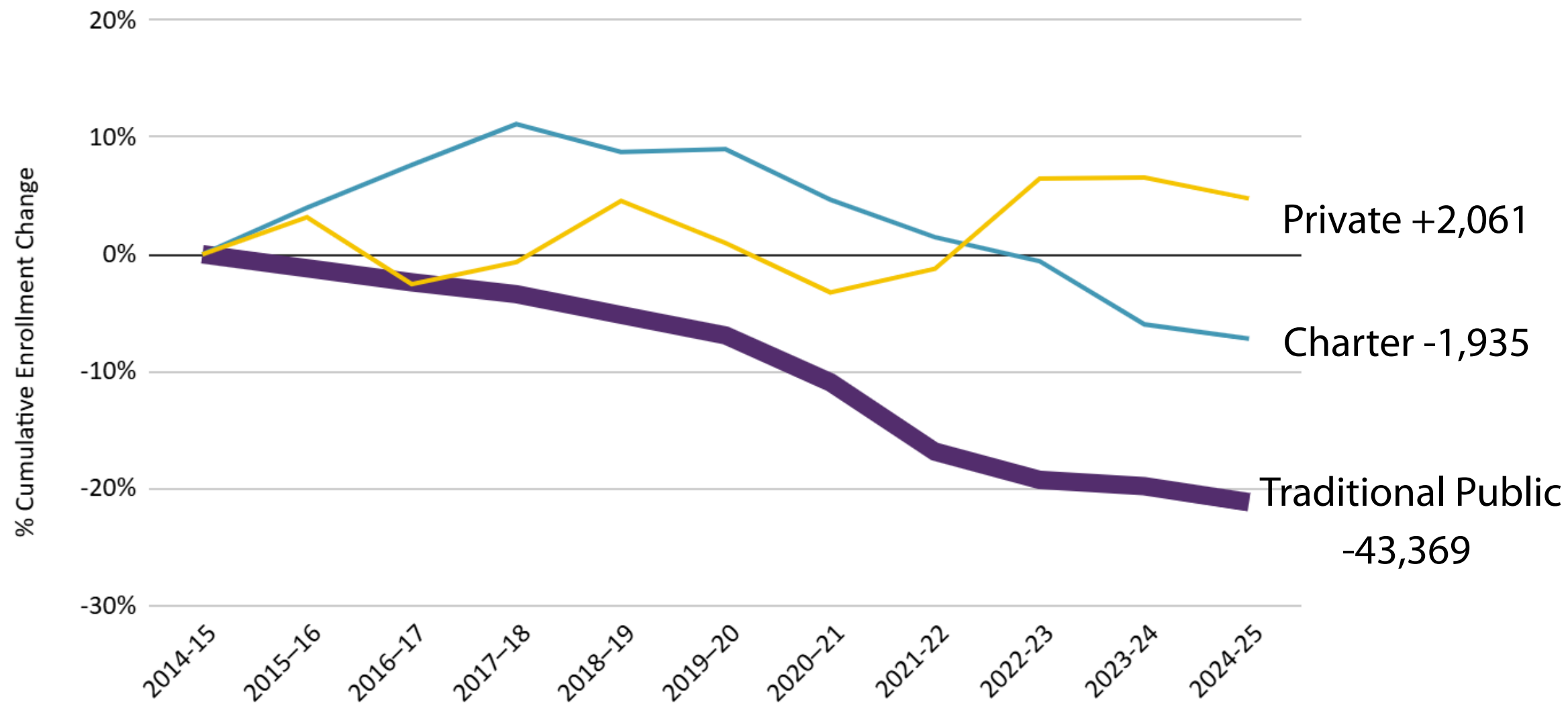


- We have over 45,000 students **fewer** countywide than we did in the 2014-2015 school year
- Enrollment projections from the California Department of Finance show the trend will continue, **if we're not able to make significant changes**, for a 20-year total enrollment decline of 36%, or nearly 73,000 fewer students.

Source: California Department of Education, California Department of Finance Projected Total Enrollment by County by School Year



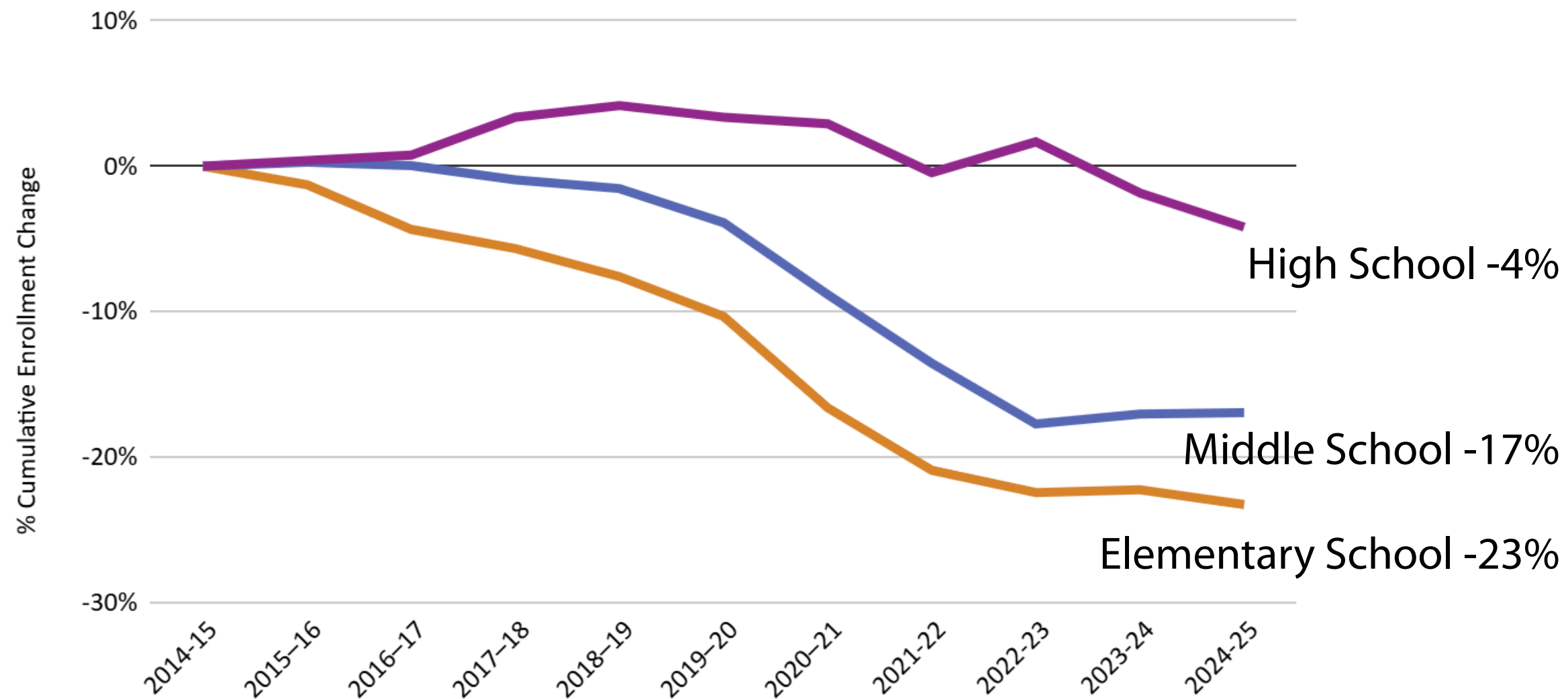
Enrollment is Changing Across All School Types in Santa Clara County



- Students are not moving from traditional public to charter & private schools in significant numbers
- Modest 5% gain in private schools from 2014 to 2025- but only about 2,000 students.
- 2,000 students gone from charter schools, more than 43,000 students from traditional public schools, where most students are enrolled.

Source: California Department of Education Enrollment Multi-Year Summary by Grade & Private School Enrollment by Grade

Enrollment Changes Are Worst for Younger Students



- TK-5th grade has the largest drop in enrollment
- Income pressures are often higher for families with younger children/ earlier careers, leading to more displacement
- A sign of what's to come: as smaller groups of elementary and middle-school aged children move into high school, larger enrollment drops will moving up with them

Source: California Department of Education Enrollment Multi-Year Summary by Grade

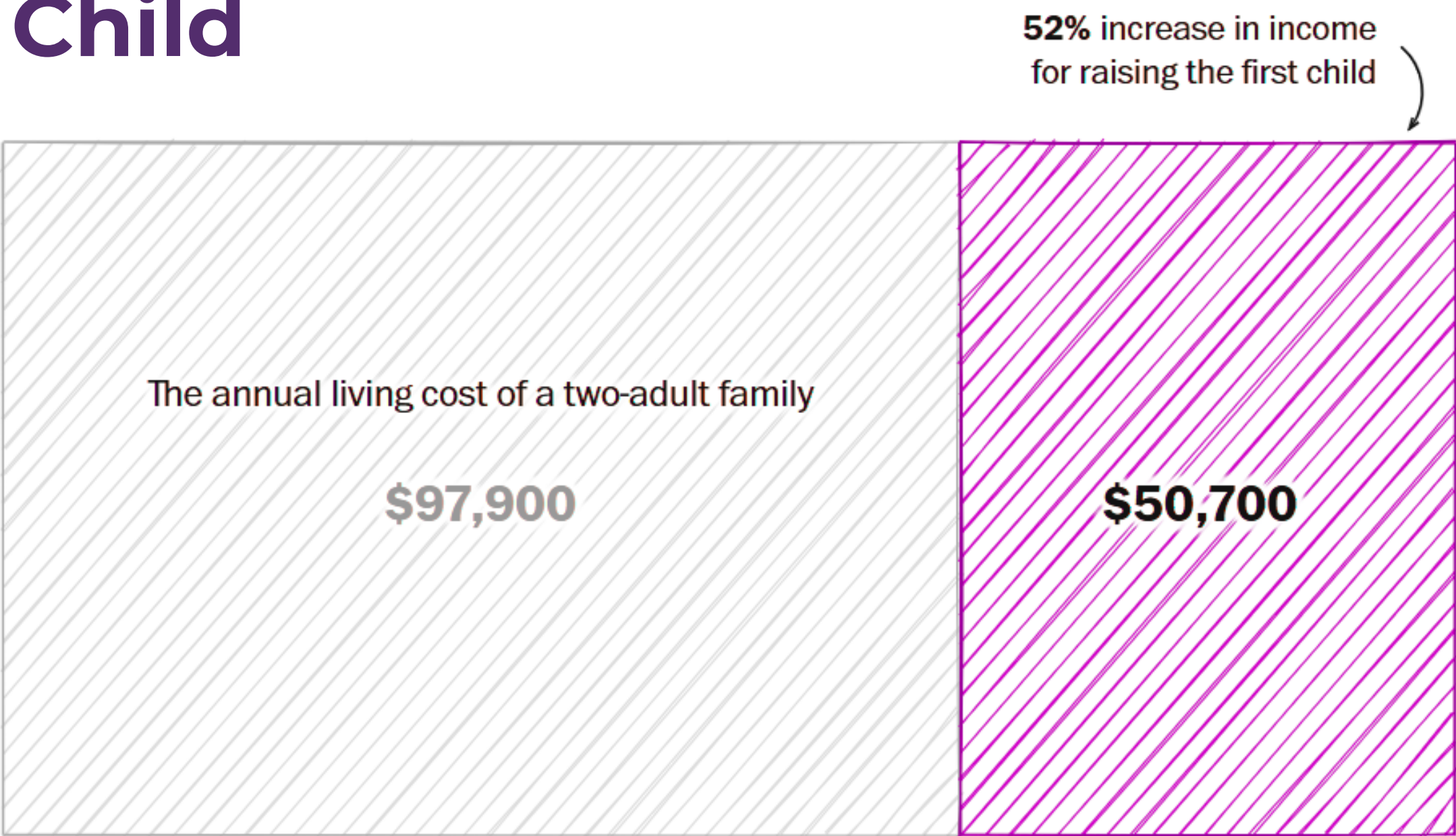
Why Are People **Having Fewer Children?**

- While there are many reasons people might choose not to have kids, 41% of adults ages 18-39 who don't have children say **they can't afford to have a child.**
- **Rising home values are linked to lower birth rates;** they represent the largest component of the cost of raising a child. This leads couples to delay childbearing or have fewer children.
- Changes in **house prices have a larger effect on current period birth rates** than changes in unemployment rates.

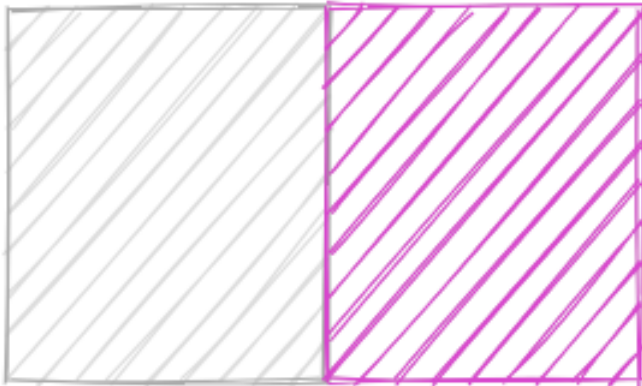


The Cost of Raising a Child

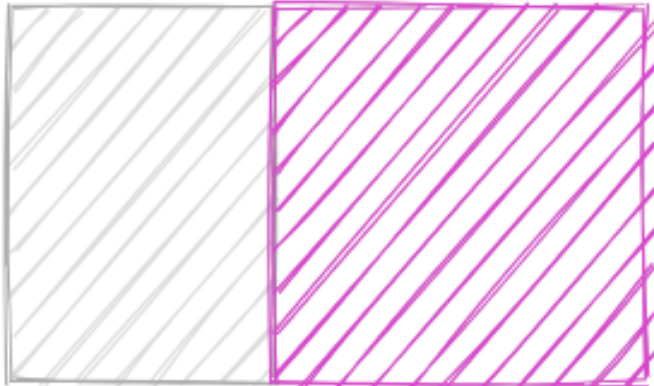
In Santa Clara County, a family of two would need to **increase their income by 52%**, for a total of \$148,600 per year, to maintain their standard of living **after having their first child.**



Raising **two children** requires a **98%** increase in income



Raising **three children** requires a **140%** increase in income



Raising **four children** requires a **157%** increase in income

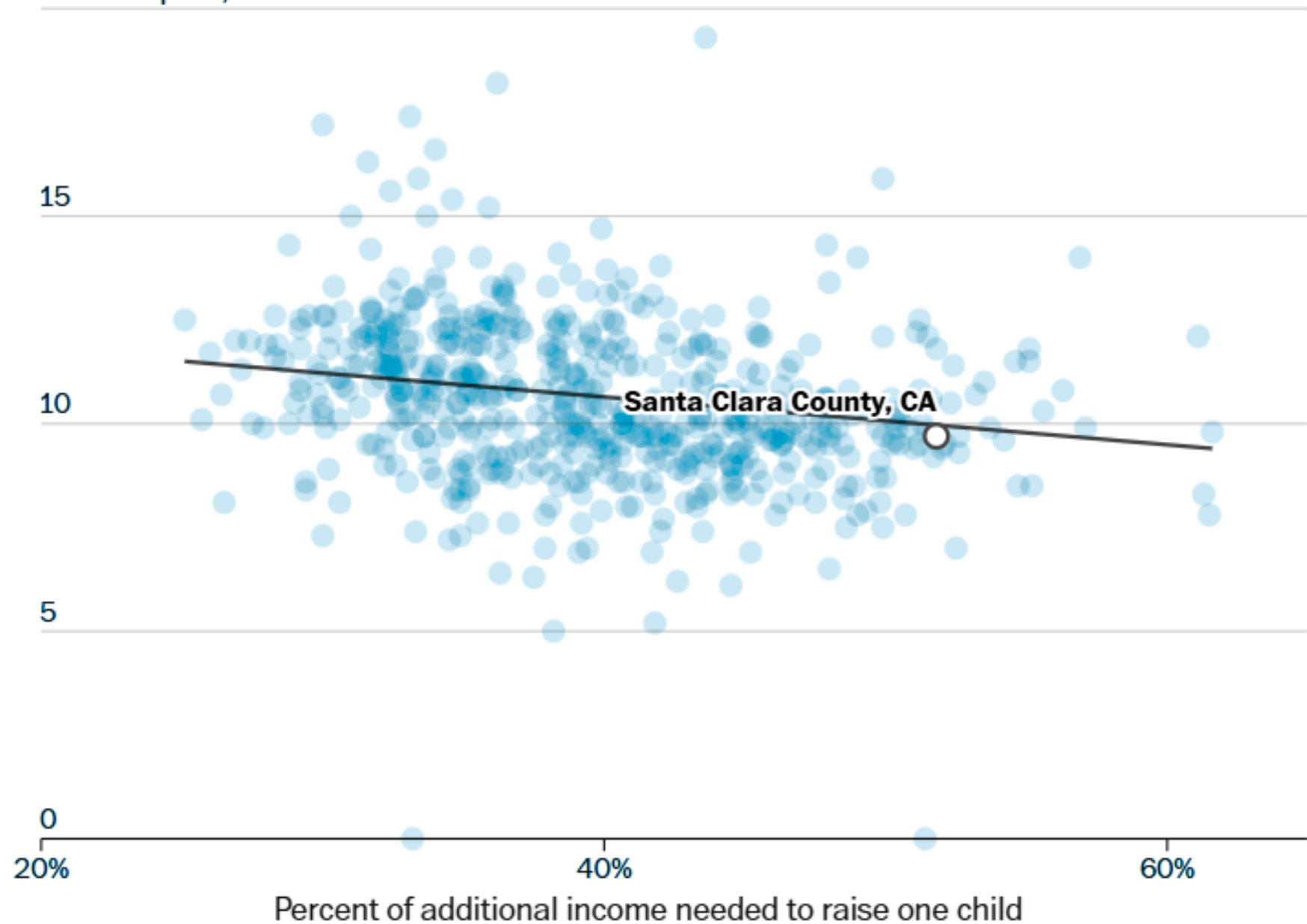


Source: Family Budget Calculator by the Economic Policy Institute

Higher Housing Cost Means Fewer Children Born

Each dot represents one county

20 births per 1,000

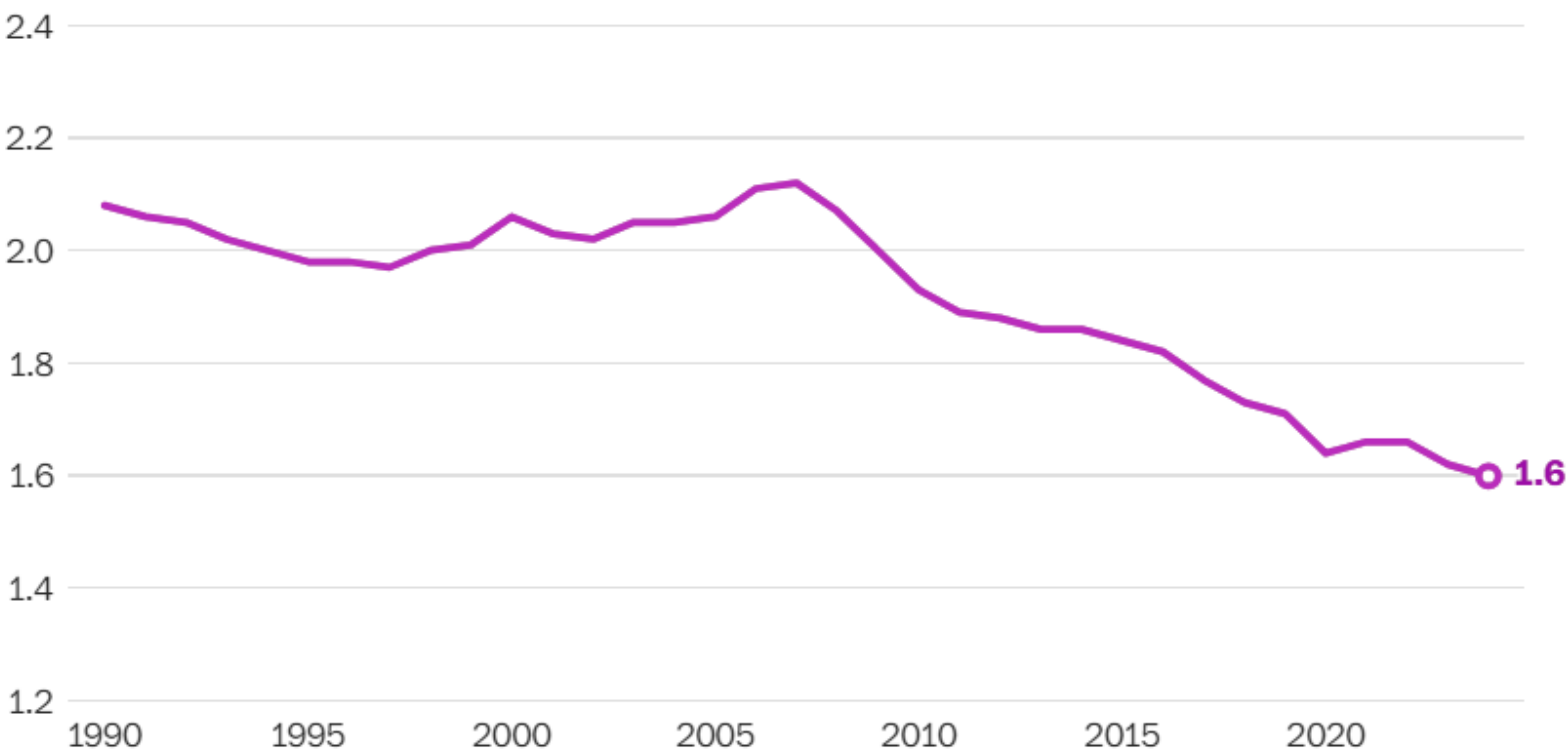


Birth rates are available for counties with populations of more than 100,000. Only 580 counties are shown.
Source: Author's analysis of data from CDC and Economic Policy Institute

Birth rates are lower in areas where **raising children takes a bigger share** of a family's income.

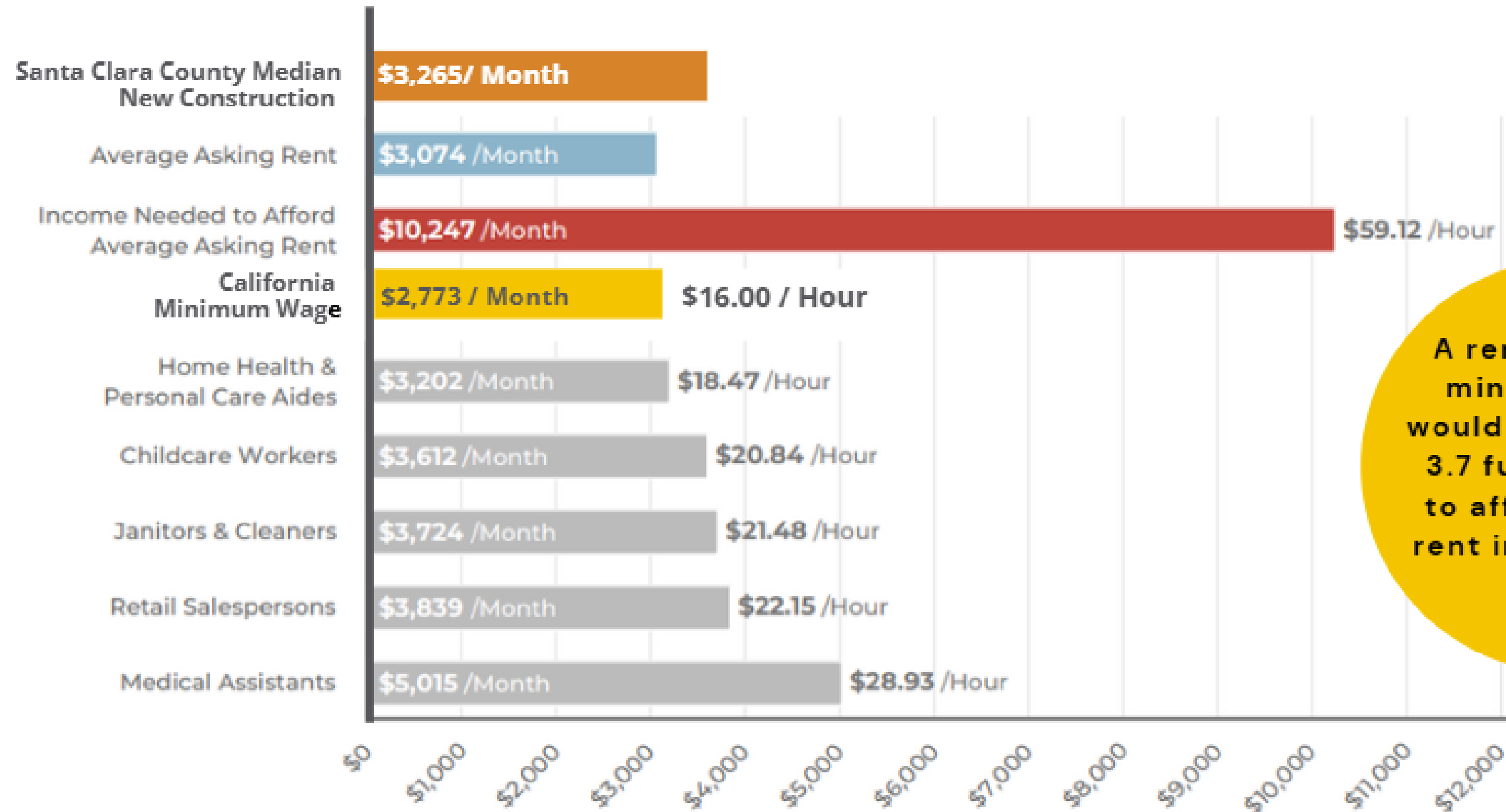
The U.S. fertility rate reached a record low in 2024

The fertility rate measures the number of children women are expected to have during their lifetime.



Source: National Vital Statistics System, CDC

Who Can Afford to Rent?



A renter earning minimum wage would need to work 3.7 full-time jobs to afford average rent in Santa Clara County

SCC Districts Ranked by Elementary School Enrollment Decline	
	Cumulative 10-Year Change by District
Mount Pleasant Elementary	-47%
Cupertino Union	-44%
Evergreen Elementary	-36%
Franklin-McKinley Elementary	-33%
Alum Rock Union Elementary	-31%
Lakeside Joint	-31%
Los Altos Elementary	-30%
San Jose Unified	-28%
Oak Grove Elementary	-27%
Palo Alto Unified School District	-24%
Luther Burbank	-23%
Berryessa Union Elementary	-23%
Sunnyvale	-21%
Saratoga Union Elementary	-20%
Campbell Union	-19%
Moreland	-19%
Orchard Elementary	-17%
Los Gatos Union Elementary	-15%
Mountain View Whisman	-14%
Santa Clara Unified School District	-14%
Loma Prieta Joint Union Elementary	-14%
Morgan Hill Unified	-10%
Union Elementary	-6%
Gilroy Unified School District	-5%
Milpitas Unified	1%
Cambrian	53%
Countywide Cumulative 10-Year Change	-21%

In Almost Every School District Enrollment is Falling



Source: California Department of Education Enrollment Multi-Year Summary by Grade

Impacts on Students of School Closures

- Lower test scores
- Worse attendance
- Behavioral problems
- Less likely to graduate from college
- Lower earnings as a young adult
- Disruption of support processes

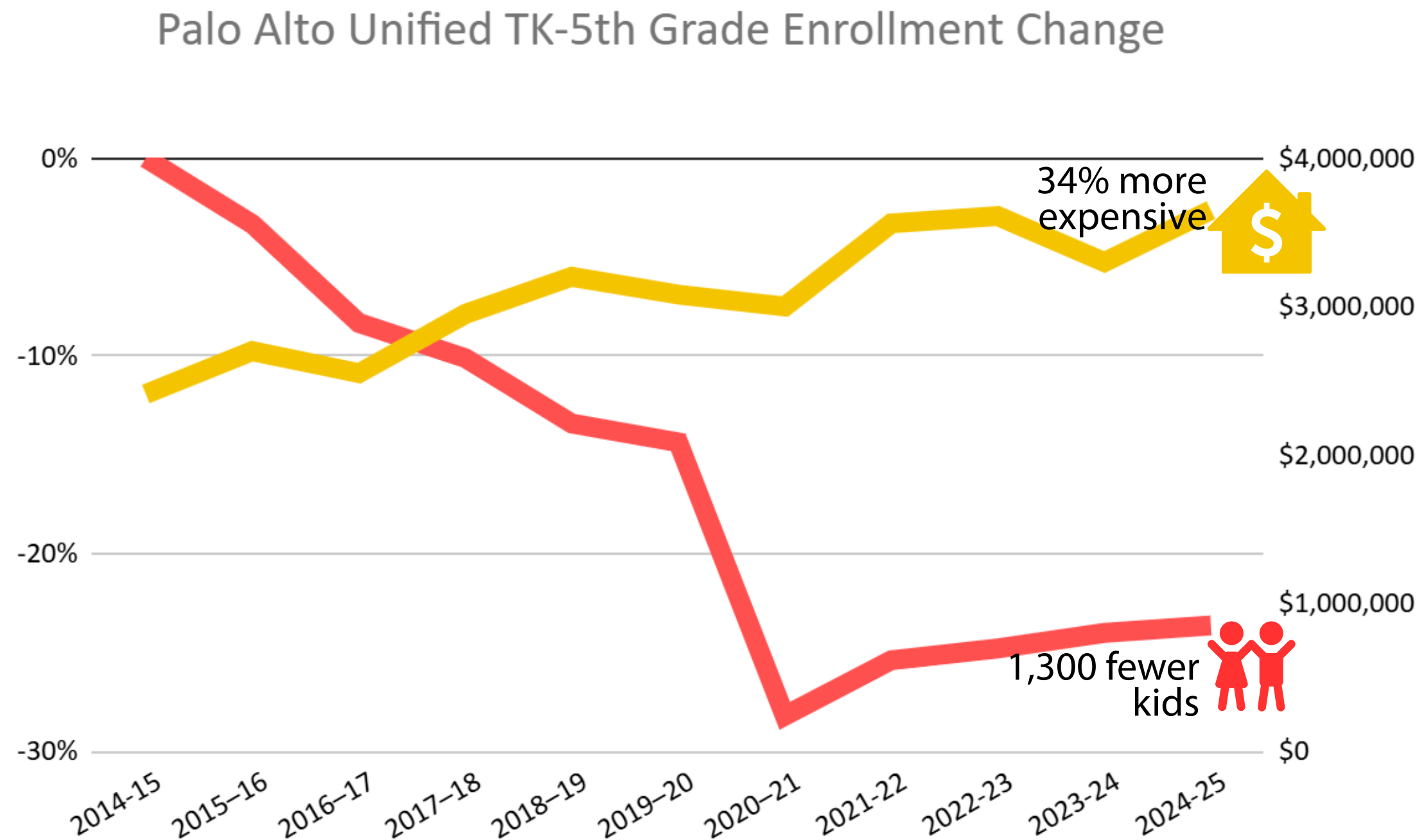
Housing is Critical for the **Wellbeing of Children & Schools**

Safe, stable, healthy, and affordable housing **sets kids up for learning**, and allows schools to **focus on what they do best**.

Strong, supported schools with the resources they need can be **anchors for communities** during the school day and outside of it.



Palo Alto Unified School District's Elementary Enrollment Falls as Home Prices Rise



Enrollment has fallen 24% over the last 11 years.

Median home prices in Palo Alto have soared by 34% over that same time to \$3,650,000.

Source: California Department of Education Enrollment Multi-Year Summary by Grade, Santa Clara County Association of Realtors Year-End Data

Palo Alto Unified School District's **Elementary School Enrollment is Falling**

Changes in Elementary School Enrollment in Palo Alto Unified School District												
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Cumulative 10-Year Change by School
Addison Elementary School	463	475	437	435	402	391	319	332	331	338	366	-21%
Barron Park Elementary School	338	289	285	259	244	240	203	198	211	229	278	-18%
Duveneck Elementary School	482	479	442	430	374	417	340	356	346	349	376	-22%
El Carmelo Elementary School	407	395	359	377	360	347	295	303	317	314	282	-31%
Escondido Elementary School	581	550	535	538	535	547	467	471	447	460	432	-26%
Fairmeadow Elementary School	548	514	496	469	445	438	360	408	403	441	425	-22%
Herbert Hoover Elementary School	406	406	392	397	395	392	352	372	386	386	389	-4%
Juana Briones Elementary School	348	335	319	314	307	317	277	263	258	260	260	-25%
Lucille M. Nixon Elementary School	477	473	457	442	445	433	359	378	358	354	350	-27%
Ohlone Elementary School	605	600	576	567	560	525	438	444	463	448	464	-23%
Palo Verde Elementary School	404	415	389	399	393	383	337	369	382	366	334	-17%
Walter Hays Elementary School	521	463	428	389	371	348	259	269	294	295	305	-41%
Total Enrollment	5580	5394	5115	5016	4831	4778	4006	4163	4196	4240	4261	
Annual Change		-3%	-5%	-2%	-4%	-1%	-16%	4%	-28%	2%	0%	
Districtwide Cumulative 10-Year Change		-3%	-8%	-10%	-13%	-14%	-28%	-25%	-25%	-24%	-24%	-24%

Source: California Department of Education Enrollment Multi-Year Summary by Grade

Every one of Palo Alto Unified's elementary schools has **suffered enrollment declines** over the last 11 years, with a district-wide **loss of more than 1,300 elementary students** over that period.

References

Why Are People Having Fewer Children? (p. 5)

- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0047272713001904#:~:text=Recognizing%20that%20housing%20is%20a,do%20changes%20in%20unemployment%20rates.>
- <https://www.nber.org/digest/feb12/impact-real-estate-market-fertility?page=1&perPage=50>
- <https://ifstudies.org/report-brief/homes-for-young-families-a-pro-family-housing-agenda>
- <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2024/07/25/reasons-adults-give-for-not-having-children/>

The Cost of Raising a Child (p. 6)

- <https://www.epi.org/resources/budget/>

Higher Housing Cost Means Fewer Children Born (p. 7)

- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/interactive/2025/trump-baby-boom-birth-rate-declining/>

Impacts on Students of School Closures (p. 10)

- <https://edworkingpapers.com/sites/default/files/ai24-963.pdf>
- <https://www.americanbar.org/groups/litigation/resources/newsletters/childrens-rights/school-closings-challenges-students-communities-litigators/>

Housing is Critical for the Wellbeing of Children & Schools (p. 11)

- <https://shelterforce.org/2024/11/11/the-housing-education-intersection/>

A photograph of a woman with dark curly hair and glasses, wearing a colorful patterned sleeveless top, hugging a young girl with dark curly hair wearing a red top. They are outdoors in a grassy area with trees and a white fence in the background.

QUESTIONS?

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