

West Clark projected to grow by 2,100 students by 2025

Written by George Browning
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If nothing changes with the current market and no new industries come to the area between now and 2025, the West Clark school system is forecasted to grow by 2,100 students.

That was the projection given to the school board by Charles Smith, who is the executive director of Building and Development of Southern Indiana, which serves Clark, Floyd and Washington Counties.

Smith said his organization is the local affiliate of the National Association of Home Builders and he gave the presentation at the board's regular meeting August 10.

". . . We are starting to see a lot more approvals of residential housing coming into affect," he said. "This forecast is very specific to your school district. It's for the area in Clark County that you cover and it goes through 2025." Smith said the report is based on current market conditions.

"These numbers that I am giving you are lots that are approved for development right now," he said. "These also include lots that builders have told us, they plan to have approved within the next six months."

Smith said, according to the numbers he has seen, the average age of first time parent is 25 and the age of a home buyer who can afford a house in the district is 35-49.

He said there are 1,800 total residential lots slated to be built between now and 2025, which averages to about 256 houses per year.

The average project price is about \$275,000 per house, according to Smith.

"What you are looking at is basically an additional 2,100 students K through 12," he said.

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Smith provided school board members with a chart from the National Association of Realtors, which stated a likelihood of 396 households with one child; 522 households with two children and 234 households with three children and 648 households with zero children.

None of the board members had any questions, but Crystal Gunther said there had been some questions about projected growth in the information the board had received from two previous feasibility studies the school system had done.

She said she wanted to see more firm numbers and felt building and development would be able to provide those.

“I appreciate Crystal reaching out to us, because as you know there are some capacity issues that concerns our industry, because without schools it’s very difficult to attract residents,” Smith said.

The West Clark Community School Board’s next meeting will be September 11 at 7 p.m. at the administration building (some meetings have been moved to the auditorium).