

**D R A F T**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Delaware Population Consortium**  
**January 18, 2006**  
**2:30 p.m.**  
**Kent County Administration Building**  
**Dover, DE**

**In Attendance:**

Kelly Crumpley – Kent Co.	Don Berry – Dept. of Education
Derrick Lightfoot, AICP – City of Wilmington	Dan Blevins – WILMAPCO
Jennifer Leister – New Castle Co.	Janelle Cornwell – City of Dover
Mike Mahaffie – State Planning Coordination	Ed Simon – Dept. of Labor
Ric Kautz – Sussex Co.	Javier Arce – DSHA
Ed Ratledge – University of Delaware	

The meeting was called to order at approximately 2:36 p.m. There was a round of introductions.

**Review of Approved 2005 DPC Projections**

The meeting was called to allow the DPC members to review and discuss several new data inputs that suggest that a revision to the 2005 edition of the projections may be needed.

Don Berry handed out data tables showing school enrollment for the last five years and projected out to 2015. Don explained that, while the 2005 DPC projections had suggested a leveling of enrollment growth, the data from the Department of Education show a continued growth in school enrollment, most notably in Kent County.

Ed Ratledge handed out a data table incorporating the latest population estimate for the state which shows a higher net migration, statewide, in the last year than had been expected. Ed noted that, if he distributes this migration across the counties based on each county's share of migration in previous years, it also suggests that the Kent County projections may be slightly low.

Migration into Kent County had been growing for several years. Based on the DPC's years of experience in tracking such trends, the 2005 version of the projections had anticipated a leveling-off of that migration trend. The Census Bureau data suggests that that may have been an error, though it will be hard to be certain until the Census Bureau releases county-level 2005 population estimates, sometime in the summer.

Ed noted that the birth and death data reflected in the latest Census Bureau data seem to support the slightly higher estimate. There are also several different series of employment data that show a continued growth, though there are discrepancies with each of those series.

Dan Blevins reported that a potential problem with the 2005 projections also began to become noticeable when WILMAPCO started looking at population and employment by Traffic Analysis Zone. This led to a discussion of possible impacts on resident population in Delaware as a result of the expected significant rise in employment at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, in Maryland, caused by the recommendations of the Federal Government's Base Realignment and Closing (BRAC) Commission. It was generally agreed that it is too soon to tell how that change might affect Delaware.

Ed noted that a review of projections from other entities (Census, CDC, etc.) also do not project the kind of growth we're seeing in Kent County. He explained that DPC and other entities have used 1990 to 2000 migration rates to set migration rates for recent projections. Those old migration rates had been more negative. He said that we're seeing a real change in migration rates for Kent County from the last decade to this one.

The question that arises is just how long this upswing will last? Past experience has shown that there are periodic up- and down-swings. Ed added that when we compare DPC projections with federal projections over the long term (as in out to 2030) the DPC projections are still very close to the federal projections. That suggests that we shouldn't expect the current acceleration in in-migration to last.

There was a brief discussion of the several challenges posed by the change to multiple-race categories in the 2000 Census. Ed added that we may want to look at the racial distribution in the current projections series as well.

There was a general discussion of whether the DPC should issue a mid-year update of the projections or wait until fall and incorporate the changes into the 2006 version of the projections. Don Berry pointed out that there are other data series now becoming available that might highlight the problems with the existing DPC projections and that that could hurt the Consortium's credibility with policy makers and elected officials.

Don Berry moved, and Kelly Crumpley seconded, that the Consortium prepare and consider for approval a version 2005.1, incorporating as much of the updated data as practicable. The motion was approved by the majority of the committee. Dan Blevins of WILMAPCO voted against the motion.

Ed Ratledge reported that the update could take a month to prepare. The next meeting of the Committee was tentatively set, therefore, for February 22, 2006, at 2:30 p.m. A location will be selected and announced to the group via the listserv.

Derrick Lightfoot moved, and Jennifer Leister seconded, adjournment. That motion was approved unanimously.