

School enrollment remains steady in Macomb schools

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By Frank DeFrank, Macomb Daily Staff Writer

Economic doldrums took only a minor toll on Macomb County school enrollment as K-12 districts and charter schools reported a modest decline in the number of children attending their facilities.

Districts across the state compiled their annual "Fourth Wednesday" head counts Sept. 29. The count is an initial step in determining how much state aid individual districts collect.

The figures are unofficial and subject to auditing later in the year, but even the raw numbers provide a glimpse of enrollment trends. In Macomb County's K-12 districts, the figures held relatively steady when compared to 2009 as enrollment dipped less than 1 percent.

"We are very pleased with the overall enrollment," Michael DeVault, Macomb Intermediate School District superintendent, said in a statement. "Our numbers are stable."

The MISD is the entity responsible for auditing enrollment figures. The numbers from 2009 are audited, and considered "official," but the Fourth Wednesday head counts are preliminary and can change.

Because of the discrepancy in how the figures are tabulated, comparisons from one year to the next are only approximations.

Given those limitations, the numbers suggest DeVault's assessment is accurate. In 2009, 132,674 students attended Macomb County's K-12 schools. The Sept. 29 head counts totaled 131,745 students. The difference of 929 students represents a change of less than 1 percent.

Charter schools fared a bit worse. Figures for those schools, also tabulated by the MISD, revealed some 6,745 students were enrolled in charter schools throughout the county in 2009. The 2010 Fourth Wednesday count came in at 6,603, a decline of about 2 percent.

On Sept. 29, about 138,348 students were counted in all Macomb County schools, K-12 and charters. That number was down from 139,419 in 2009. The decline of 1,071 students is less than 1 percent.

While overall numbers remained fairly constant, enrollment within Macomb County's 21 individual districts varied wildly in some cases. With an increase of 325 students,