

S.D. population on track to top one million by 2030

*Stu Whitney
South Dakota News Watch*

A trend of surging domestic migration to South Dakota that began during the COVID-19 pandemic could put the state's total population above one million residents as early as 2030.

That growth pattern runs counter to other Midwestern states and highlights the fact that more people are moving to South Dakota than leaving, and that women in the Mount Rushmore State are giving birth at a greater rate than the national average.

"It's a significant trend," said Augustana University economics professor David Sorenson, who published a study showing the state's population spikes came despite a sharp increase in deaths during the pandemic in 2020-21.

Net migration between July 1, 2021 and July 1, 2022 and a nation-leading fertility rate were the main reasons South Dakota ranked fifth in percentage of population growth among U.S. states during that span, Sorenson said. The only states with larger percentage increases were Florida, Idaho, South Carolina and Texas, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

As a region, Midwest states averaged negative 0.1 percent population growth from 2021 to 2022, and South Dakota's growth rate during that span is nearly four times higher than the national rate of 0.4 percent.

If that trend continues, Sorenson estimates that in seven to eight years, South Dakota will leave the group of five states (and the District of Columbia) that have not exceeded the one million population mark: South Dakota, North Dakota, Alaska, Vermont and Wyoming.

Some of the biggest migration gains for South Dakota, according to Internal Revenue Service data from

2020 to 2021, came from states such as California (net increase of 1,669), Colorado (955) and Minnesota (906). For comparison, the net gain from those states pre-COVID (2018-19) was 691 for California, 250 for Colorado and 12 for Minnesota.

"I would not be surprised if net migration stayed higher for a number of years, especially if South Dakota is able to start attracting a greater number of Minnesotans," said McEntaffer, a former economics professor at Penn State University.

South Dakota's total fertility rate, which calculates birth rates from different age groups to estimate how many children a typical woman would have, was 2.07 in 2021, which ranked first in the nation, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The national average was 1.7.

Sorenson noted that South Dakota was the only state to have a total fertility rate close to the replacement rate of 2.1 children per woman. Replacement rate is the level at which a population replaces itself from one generation to the next, not counting migration.

South Dakota's fertility rate is partly explained by the state's relatively high Native American population of 8.6%. From 2018 to 2020, the number of live births per 1,000 women among Native Americans in South Dakota was 104.7, compared to 65.3 for whites.

Sorenson points out that population growth is measured by natural increase (births minus deaths) and migration data. His study showed that South Dakota deaths varied between 6,782 and 8,015 between 2000 and 2019 before "shooting up nearly 25% to 9,867 in 2020-21 and remaining at a relatively high 9,231 in 2021-22."

The South Dakota Department of Health estimates that 3,231 individuals have died with COVID-19 infection in South Dakota as of June 19, 2023.

The pandemic initially slowed movement from state to state, with South Dakota's net migration slightly negative in 2019-20. In 2021 and 2022, however, the state gained more than 6,000 new residents each year, a rate greater than Iowa, Nebraska and Minnesota.

"South Dakota has outperformed these neighboring states in virtually every year since 2003," Sorenson wrote in his study. "For most of that time, Iowa, Nebraska and Minnesota had negative net migration, with Iowa and Nebraska's worst years coming around 2000 and Minnesota's occurring in the most recent two years."

From 1930 to 1990, South Dakota's average decade population growth statewide was 0.2%, including decreases in the 1930s and 1960s. The state grew by just 0.8% from 1980 to 1990, bringing the population to 696,004.

Sioux Falls' changing identity and economy in the 1990s helped move the needle, spurred by Citibank's decision in 1981 to move its credit card operation to South Dakota's largest city to capitalize on bank-friendly usury laws.

Sioux Falls, touted by Money Magazine in 1992 as the best place to live in America, transitioned from an agriculture-based economy to a burgeoning financial center and health care hub, heralding its affordability and open spaces on the way to staggering growth.

For the next three decades, the state averaged 8.5% population increases, moving from 754,844 in 2000 to 816,193 in 2010 and 887,799 in 2020.



The 2023 Clark High School Homecoming royalty candidates have been announced. Coronation is scheduled for Tuesday, September 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the Clark High School gym.

Homecoming Royalty candidates are pictured in the photo above. In the back row, left to right, are Ella Wellnitz, Nevaeh Rusher, Sara Thonvold and Madison Pickrel. In the front row, left to right: Christian Ramirez Gonzalez, Jack Helkenn, Tyson Huber and Collin Gaikowski.

Clark High School Homecoming theme is 'Toys'

▲ Coronation is Tuesday, September 19

The 93rd Annual Homecoming at Clark High School is almost upon us. The celebration of Homecoming 2023 is the week of September 18-22, and the theme selected for this year is 'Toys'.

Coronation of the Homecoming Queen and Marshal will be on Tuesday, September 19, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Clark High School gym.

During the festivities of Homecoming week, or "Spirit Week", each day has a different dress up day. Both at the high school and elementary school in Clark, Monday is Pajama Day, and Tuesday is Dress Like (a/your favorite) Teacher Day. Wednesday is Jersey Day, Thursday is Dress in a Decade Day, and Friday is Cyclone (Spirit) Day.

The Homecoming Parade begins at 1:00 p.m. on September 22, with the Cyclone football game slated to start at 7:00 against the Mobridge/Pollock Tigers at the Clark High School Sports Complex.

Queen Candidates

Madison Pickrel is the daughter of James Pickrel and Emily Repp. She has six siblings including Taylor, age 20; Rylee, 14; Jordyn, 14; Caydence, 13; Paisley, 11; and Emmett, two-years-old. She is active in basketball cheer, football

cheer, one-act play, all school play, FCCLA, NHS, student council and SADD. Her future plans include going to college. She is undecided on what her major will be or where she will be attending.

Nevaeh Rusher is the daughter of Tammy Rusher. She has one brother, Bradyn who is 24. She is active in basketball cheer, football cheer, FCCLA, NHS, SADD, Clark Area Community Foundation, church youth group, one-act play, all school play and oral interp. She plans to attend North Dakota State University for business marketing.

Sara Thonvold is the daughter of Brian and Kari Thonvold and has one sister, fifteen-year-old Shawna. She is active in volleyball, track, softball, SADD, NHS, FCCLA, FFA, FCA, shooting sports, band, choir, church youth group and student council. Future plans for Sara are to attend Black Hills State University.

Ella Wellnitz is the daughter of Jeremy Wellnitz and Stacy Wellnitz. She has four siblings: Griffin, 12; Noah, 11; Ewan, 10; and Grady, three-years-old. She is active in SADD, softball and stays busy working her part-time job. Ella plans to go to Lake Area Technical College for nursing.

Marshal Candidates

Collin Gaikowski is the son of Kyle and Trudi Gaikowski. He has one brother, Cade, who is in eighth grade and one sister, Eve, a fourth grader. Collin is active in football, baseball, track, trap, FFA, FCA, is the senior class treasurer and likes to hunt and fish. His future plans are to attend a four-year college in South Dakota and get degree in business and finance.

Christian Ramirez Gonzalez is the son of Rosa Gonzalez. He has three siblings including Yeleiny, 15; Gio, 13; and Jocelynn, nine-years-old. Christian is active in football, basketball, track and FFA. He is undecided in his future plans.

Jack Helkenn is the son of Chad and Beth Helkenn and has two brothers, Lucas, fifth grade and Nate, fourth grade. Jack is active in football, basketball, baseball, track, FFA and enjoys hunting and fishing. His future plans include getting his business degree at either South Dakota State University or Northern State University.

Tyson Huber is the son of Nick and Jessica Huber. He has two brothers, Trey, 19 and Talen, 15. Tyson is active in football, basketball, track, baseball and enjoys hunting. He is undecided in his future plans.



Clark FFA member Tye McGraw of Raymond is pictured in the photo above, fourth from left. McGraw placed in the top five showmen of the Market Meat Goat show at the South Dakota State Fair in Huron.

Other FFA entrants pictured above with the show judge include, left to right: Matea Gordon of Sturgis, first place; Carley Brist of Beresford, second place; Danika Gordon of Sturgis, third place; and Delaney Zoss of Mitchell, fourth place.

Submitted photo

Local 4-H, FFA well represented at South Dakota State Fair

Clark County 4-H and FFA programs were well represented at the 2023 South Dakota State Fair that was held in Huron.

Fourteen 4-H members participated in Youth in Action Events, 32 4-H members showed 80 head of livestock and 24 4-H members exhibited 110 static display exhibits. This is the most youth in action participants Clark County has had in the last few years, as the participation at the county level continues to grow. Altogether, Clark County 4-H members brought home eight Top 5 Overall Placings with 17 Champion or Reserve Champions in their breed or division.

One highlight of the 2023 State Fair was Clark County 4-H member

Tyler Warkenthien placing first in both the Consumer Decision Making Skill-a-thon and the Horticulture Skill-a-thon, winning the junior division.

Also, from August 31 until September 4, 2023, 366 FFA members from 71 FFA chapters competed in livestock exhibitions, farm safety quiz bowl, agriscience fair and a variety of agricultural displays. In addition, 47 district FFA officers and eight state FFA leaders coordinated with industry volunteers to provide educational experiences to fair attendees at the Ag Adventure Center.

Tye McGraw of Raymond was named one of the top five Market Meat Goat showmen.

Awards and ribbon placings for all Clark County entries at the state fair can be found in next week's edition of the *Clark County Courier*.

WEATHER			
Robert Cole - Official Weather Observer			
	HI	LO	PR
Sept. 5	99	66	0
Sept. 6	78	51	.12
Sept. 7	69	48	0
Sept. 8	73	48	.01
Sept. 9	84	54	.04
Sept. 10	71	53	.03
Sept. 11	71	50	0
2023 precipitation to date	15.73"		
2022 precipitation to date	16.68"		

Events being held in S.D. to honor the history of buffalo

Across America, fans are awaiting the October release of acclaimed documentarian Ken Burns' latest film called "The American Buffalo." In South Dakota, an early screening of that film will include a series of unique and exciting events.

"It is a quintessentially American story," Burns said, "filled with unforgettable stories and people. But, it is also a morality tale encompassing two historically significant lessons that resonate today: how humans can damage the natural world and also how we can work together to make choices to preserve the environment around us. The story of the American buffalo is also the story of Native nations who lived with and relied on the buffalo to survive, developing a sacred relationship that evolved over more than 10,000 years but which was almost completely severed in fewer than 100."

South Dakota Public Broadcasting has partnered with Mahpiya Luta (Red Cloud Indian School) to produce "Tatanka: A Way of Life".

The first preview screenings of both films will be the featured events

at the Honoring Thathanka Oyate community festival from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 30 at the Mahpiya Luta (Red Cloud Indian School).

In addition to the screenings of the two new films, there will be a variety of opportunities for attendees to celebrate the buffalo, including art booths, dancer/singer demonstrations, traditional Lakota storytelling about the buffalo, a presentation about the traditional uses of the buffalo, traditional Lakota hand games, a round dance and more.

The evening will end with a community meal that will feature buffalo as part of the meal.

"As we began to discuss some ideas for local programs to produce in conjunction with Ken Burns' 'American Buffalo,' we wanted to tell a story that was not being told — the story of the relationship between indigenous people of South Dakota and the buffalo," said Brad Van Osdel, Director of Entertainment Content at SDPB. "To do this successfully, we needed to hear the voices of the people who lived and continue to live the story of

tatanka. Because of our relationship with Mahpiya Luta (Red Cloud Indian School) and their willingness to allow us to attend the buffalo harvest and record their students reciting the White Buffalo Calf Woman Story in Lakota and English, SDPB was able to better tell the story from the perspective of indigenous people."

South Dakota has a long history surrounding the American Buffalo, both positive and negative.

The goal of South Dakota Public Broadcasting telling the story is to honor the history of the buffalo while celebrating the return of the buffalo to South Dakota.

"SDPB's mission is to make the historical and contemporary stories of South Dakota an experience," said Julie Overgaard, Executive Director at SDPB. "Providing an opportunity to give people of the Oceti Sakowin the opportunity to celebrate their bond to the American Buffalo benefits us all, for they are the keepers of the stories and we share those stories with the world."