

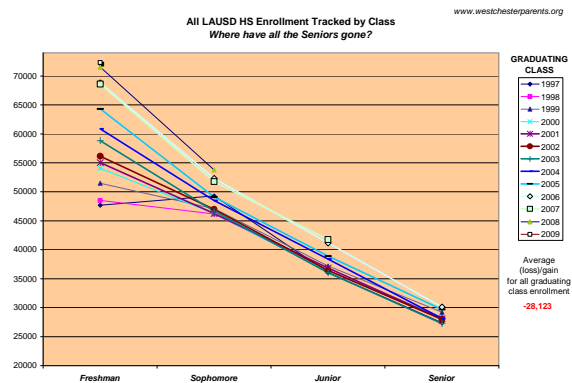
Where Have All the Seniors Gone?

Over a quarter of a million students that began their high school experience in LAUSD schools as freshman did not return by their senior year between 1993 and 2006.

By David Coffin – www.westchesterkids.org

(May 2007) In the spring of 2005 a Harvard University report of the Civil Rights Project came out detailing the “graduation” crisis in California. The Harvard study acknowledged what I suspected for years while having seen snapshots of enrollments figures of various Los Angeles Unified School District high schools and being drawn to the numbers that showed huge differences between the freshman and senior enrollment.

Current year enrollment snapshots that parents would view at LAUSD’s Accountability Report Card (SARC) web site to evaluate a school say little about what is going on from year to year. For example, In 2004 at Westchester High School the 9th grade enrollment was 1143, 10th grade enrollment was 620 students, 11th grade with 546 students and the 12th grade with 331. What does that tell us? Not a lot except that the 9th grade class is significantly larger than the senior class. But it does provide a clue to what we should be looking for. Why the huge difference between freshman and senior enrollments? Is it something simple like the districts moving kids from one over crowded school such as South Gate or Hamilton to Westchester or are the freshman numbers higher because some students are being held back?



To obtain a better picture of the enrollment dynamics it made better sense to look at enrollment data over a period of time in a “class perspective”. In real life, parents and students would view and weigh the students progress and the schools performance as students move up the grades by graduating class, so in my compilation I collected enrollment data for 333 graduating classes from 37 schools over each of LAUSD’s 8 mini-districts over 9 years. The data was then sorted by graduating class to give an entirely new picture of enrollments.

Additionally, I compiled another 135 non-LAUSD high school graduating classes from 15 schools to make comparisons and to see if there were any paths of migration from LAUSD schools to non-LAUSD schools.

The data comes from the California Department of Education web site. Enrollment data from Dataquest is a reliable snapshot of enrollment figures that are taken from every school in the state on the first Wednesday of October every year. A day that is called ‘Information Day’ at most schools. Enrollment on the site goes back to 1993.

While looking at enrollments sorted by graduating class, I found that graduation rates were the least of LAUSD’s problems because huge numbers of students are not even getting into their Sophomore or Junior years much less as Seniors. Also, not all seniors graduate or even pass the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSE).

Some examples of the data include:

- Venice High School where the average loss of enrollment from 1997 through 2006 is running at 51% or 460 students per graduating class.
- Van Nuys High School is losing 46% or 289 students for each of graduating class.
- San Fernando High School has lost 63% or 389 students for each of graduating class.

Freemont High School topped the list where losses averaged of 1219 students per graduating class or 69.2%. Freemont's worse graduating class was the year 2001 which saw a 1806 students decline or 79.74% of that graduating class.

Only one school in this study had a losses below 25% (the average was 50%) and that was LACES High School. A school with a highly managed, selective enrollment.

There were no schools immune to this disturbing phenomenon. Even award winning schools like El Camino Real noted for its achievements with the Academic Decathlon teams and Granada Hills Charter with its Science Bowl achievements lost an average 338 students and 343 students per graduating class respectively. Roughly 33% of the students at these schools did not return by their senior year. Most recently, El Camino's graduating Class of 2006 lost 427 students. Almost 40%.

District wide, all the LAUSD graduating classes combined between 1997 and 2006 (not just those in the study) had an average loss of 49.2% or 28,123 students each year. *Over a quarter of a million students that began their high school experience in LAUSD schools as freshman did not return by their senior year.*

Since 2003, enrollment losses at all LAUSD high schools increased from 53.6% to 56.2% so it is difficult to attribute any particular schools drop in enrollment to the ongoing building program and transfer of students therein.

Migration

Surprisingly, the LAUSD does not have a comprehensive system to track the student migration or dropouts and only in rare instances does the administrative staff attempt to contact students who do not return the following year.

During the course of the data collection, some school site administrators and teachers offered theories of where they thought the students are going, suggesting that many may not be dropping out at all but instead going to private schools or out of district schools. Neither of these turned out to be true.

Public school migration - In an effort to examine student migration to other school districts, this sample also includes 15 non-LAUSD schools encompassing 135 graduating classes. The data studied 9th to 10th and 10th to 11th grade class data. This is generally where the severest drops were occurring in LAUSD schools. I compared this to the same grades in non-LAUSD schools. If the theories proved to be correct, I expected to see large increases in sophomore or junior class enrollment in the non-LAUSD schools. However the data did not support this. Non-LAUSD schools had a mix of gains and losses but at most, the gains we saw in those schools was about 1/10th of the losses we saw in LAUSD schools.

The school with the largest 9th to 10th grade enrollment gains in this study was South High School of the Torrance School District. This school saw enrollment gains over 13 years of around 227 students or an average gain of 17 students per year. Most of those were between 1993 and 2000.

In the 10th to 11th grades at North High School, (also of the Torrance School District) there were minor gains between the 10th and 11th grades. Those gains in the 1993 – 2006 timeframe saw a 263 increase. About 27 student gain per year.

Overall, these 15 schools saw a net average loss of 79 students over 13 years. Compare that to the districts average loss of 1914 students per school over the same period, it's clear that neither private or out of district schools were the answer to the districts losses.

There are also practical impediments to student migration to other schools. Given the large territorial footprint of the district and the few pockets of non-LAUSD schools within, most of the non-LAUSD schools are outside of footprint making it impractical for most students to travel to. Also most non-LAUSD schools choose non-district students carefully given the limited number of seats available to them. School districts must provide seats for all students living inside their

service area, but they do not have to provide additional seats for students outside of their service area.

Private school migration - It is also doubtful that such huge numbers of these students could be moving over to private schools as others have theorized since there are only 25,334 private school seats¹ available within the LAUSD boundaries and most of those students are committed (K-12) private schoolers.

Because private schools cannot increase the size of their facilities or increase enrollments without meeting strict residential and commercial zoning requirements which often necessitate getting conditional use permits (CUP's) approvals, most of these schools are limited in their ability receive additional students that might leave the LAUSD. (Note: These restrictions are not imposed on public schools which may increase student capacity without city or community approvals.)

Held back

Some school teachers and administrators suggested that the large enrollment drops between 9th and 10th grade could be a result of students being held back to retake 9th grade. There is not much credibility to it however when you look at the data over a ten year period as this study has done.

Between 1997 and 2007 there have been a total of 634,348 9th grade students reported to the California Department of Education. Of those same classes only 317,347 12th grade students were reported. At some point those so-called ninth-graders repeating ninth grade would have to culminate and we would see their numbers (higher enrollments) in subsequent grades or they would be dropping out.

District Losses

LAUSD is not merely a district with problems, it is a broken district. The following charts showing the high school enrollments of 306 graduating classes from 34 high schools over 9 years visually reinforce the real story of an enrollment freefall of a district bleeding with students of unfulfilled potential.

Last year the entire Class of 2006 of all LAUSD high schools lost 38,687 students (up from 34,604 with the previous graduation class) over what should have been their four year stay in high school. If these young people are not your son's and daughter's then it is their peers who will find themselves working low paying service jobs or on public assistance. While we cannot attribute all of these students to dropping out (some may have moved out of the city, or sought out-of-district schools or private schools), certainly a significant if not an outright majority of them had in all likelihood given up and cut short their educations.

This report also includes 15 additional non-LAUSD schools that include Santa Monica, Inglewood, El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, Torrance, Hawthorne and Centinela Valley. The total number of graduating classes for both dist and non-district schools in this report was 405 graduating classes from 49 schools.

Charts of the schools are available at http://westchesterparents.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/05/where_have_all_the_seniors_gone.pdf

The data collected in this report comes from the State of California Department of Education web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/> which collects the information from school districts throughout the state.

¹<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/si/ps/documents/privat05.xls>

High School Enrollments 1993 to 2006 - Where Have All the Seniors Gone?

Charts show enrollments for classes 1997 through 2006

This table and the following charts of selected LAUSD high schools show the enrollments tracked by graduating class. These are enrollment figures only. This data does not attempt to attribute enrollment declines to student drop outs. This data charts a given freshman class by noting its enrollment each year through the year that it graduates. **Per Class Enrollment** gains and declines are calculated by taking the freshman graduating class enrollment and subtracting its senior class enrollment. Charts include enrollments for classes 1997 through 2006 because enrollment figures for freshman through senior years are complete. The actual tracking of enrollments begins in 1993 which is the freshman year of the Class of 1997. This is the earliest year that data is available on the California Department of Education web site. If you have questions about the data contact david@westchesterparents.org ([source: cde.ca.gov](http://source.cde.ca.gov))

District	School	Avg Net Enrollment Gain/Loss per Class	Average % Gain/Loss per Class	Greatest loss in any one Class	Highest 9th Grade Class Enrollment	Highest School Enrollment	total 9th to 10th grade losses (1993 to 2008)
1	Grover Cleveland High School	(320)	(38.83)	(47.9)	1401	4019	(1338)
1	El Camino High School	(338)	(33.60)	(37.5)	1318	4033	(1750)
1	Granada Hills High School	(343)	(32.16)	(43.5)	1347	3922	(1468)
1	William Howard Taft High School	(431)	(43.35)	(50.4)	1250	3597	(2045)
1	Birmingham High School	(489)	(47.25)	(61.3)	1006	3813	(706)
2	Bravo Medical Magent High School	(149)	(29.76)	(34.4)	524	1726	(396)
2	San Fernando High School	(389)	(63.37)	(68.1)	1859	4616	(4225)
2	Van Nuys High School	(290)	(46.13)	(53.2)	1392	3948	(1648)
2	Verdugo High School	(500)	(61.12)	(63.2)	903	2405	(2953)
3	Crenshaw High School	(401)	(43.66)	(63.2)	1148	2901	(2092)
3	Hamilton High School	(247)	(29.26)	(44.5)	1036	3401	(627)
3	Los Angeles High School	(849)	(58.01)	(64.1)	1775	4953	(1969)
3	Palisades (Charter) High School	(249)	(35.81)	(42.9)	910	2742	(1317)
3	University High School	(242)	(34.28)	(45.8)	857	2472	(1054)
3	Venice High School	(459)	(50.92)	(58.7)	829	3210	(1054)
3	Westchester High School	(393)	(50.61)	(71.7)	1143	2726	(2465)
4	Belmont High School	(1192)	(61.74)	(73.8)	2351	5447	(8227)
1	Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies (LACES)	(55)	(22.84)	(30.6)	257	898	
4	Fairfax High School	(234)	(33.57)	(43.0)	987	3174	(236)
4	Hollywood High School	(543)	(59.43)	(65.9)	1342	3284	(3022)
4	Marshall High School	(326)	(33.19)	(45.5)	1645	4834	(1032)
5	James Garfield High School	(873)	(57.09)	(67.6)	1851	5005	(1338)
5	Jefferson High School	(856)	(61.40)	(75.3)	1615	3869	(4517)
5	Theodore Roosevelt High School	(880)	(53.59)	(65.4)	1933	5187	(1298)
5	Wilson High School	(414)	(54.48)	(68.3)	1182	3106	(2276)
6	Bell High School	(1038)	(61.49)	(68.4)	1884	4914	(2887)
6	Huntington Park High School	(942)	(60.23)	(68.5)	1794	4598	(4994)
6	South Gate High School	(743)	(49.93)	(58.2)	1886	5116	(4414)
7	Freemont High School	(1219)	(69.27)	(79.7)	2265	5083	(5142)
7	Locke High School	(567)	(67.62)	(75.9)	1451	3410	(3455)
7	Manual Arts High School	(539)	(46.34)	(59.6)	1539	4148	(721)
8	Phineas Banning High School	(438)	(58.55)	(70.2)	1448	3508	(3756)
8	Cardena High School	(481)	(48.96)	(53.7)	1117	3524	(813)
8	Carson High School	(448)	(43.48)	(53.5)	1249	3662	(1817)
8	San Pedro High School	(469)	(46.87)	(57.6)	1281	3576	(1884)
8	Washington Prep High School	(589)	(56.42)	(65.9)	1184	3644	(1979)
	Averages from data set	(526)	(48.43)	(58.25)	1360	3735	(2279)
36	All LAUSD	(33160)	(49.17)				

In addition to LAUSD schools, We have added a number of west side and South Bay schools for comparison.

Other District Schools for Comparison

	Morningside High School (Inglewood Unified School District)	(157)	(37.70)	(44.4)	531	1681	(215)
	Inglewood High School (Inglewood Unified School District)	(180)	(30.02)	(38.9)	648	2192	(354)
	Culver City High School (Culver City)	(132)	(24.92)	(33.9)	660	2244	(469)
	Hawthorne High School (Centinela Valley Union High)	(199)	(23.33)	(25.7)	947	3213	(188)
	Leuzinger High School (Centinela Valley Union High)	(141)	(18.58)	(39.9)	949	3384	86
	Torrance High School	(96)	(18.49)	(31.5)	612	2246	(90)
	Redondo High School (Redondo)	(82)	(16.40)	(20.8)	680	2385	(33)
	Malibu High School (Santa Monica)	(20)	(12.06)	(21.2)	212	727	(119)
	Mira Costa High School (Manhattan Beach)	(54)	(9.36)	(14.2)	690	2452	(43)
	North High School (Torrance)	(47)	(9.02)	(14.9)	604	2260	(11)
	South High School (Torrance)	(43)	(8.78)	(18.4)	594	2203	227
	West High School (Torrance)	(40)	(8.06)	(14.4)	645	2231	73
	Santa Monica High School (Santa Monica)	(57)	(7.38)	(12.2)	947	3449	48
	El Segundo High School	(17)	(7.05)	(11.7)	332	1206	(12)
	Jordan High School (Long Beach)	(221)	(21.37)	(32.0)	1234	4383	(90)
	Lakewood High School (Long Beach)	(237)	(20.76)	(27.6)	1271	4472	(92)
	Polytechnic High School (Long Beach)	(56)	(4.79)	(21.0)	1307	4835	(70)
	Wilson High School (Long Beach)	(219)	(21.05)	(30.8)	1262	4630	(199) *** 15.80% loss between 2004/2007
	Averages from data set	(111)	(17)		785	2789	(80)

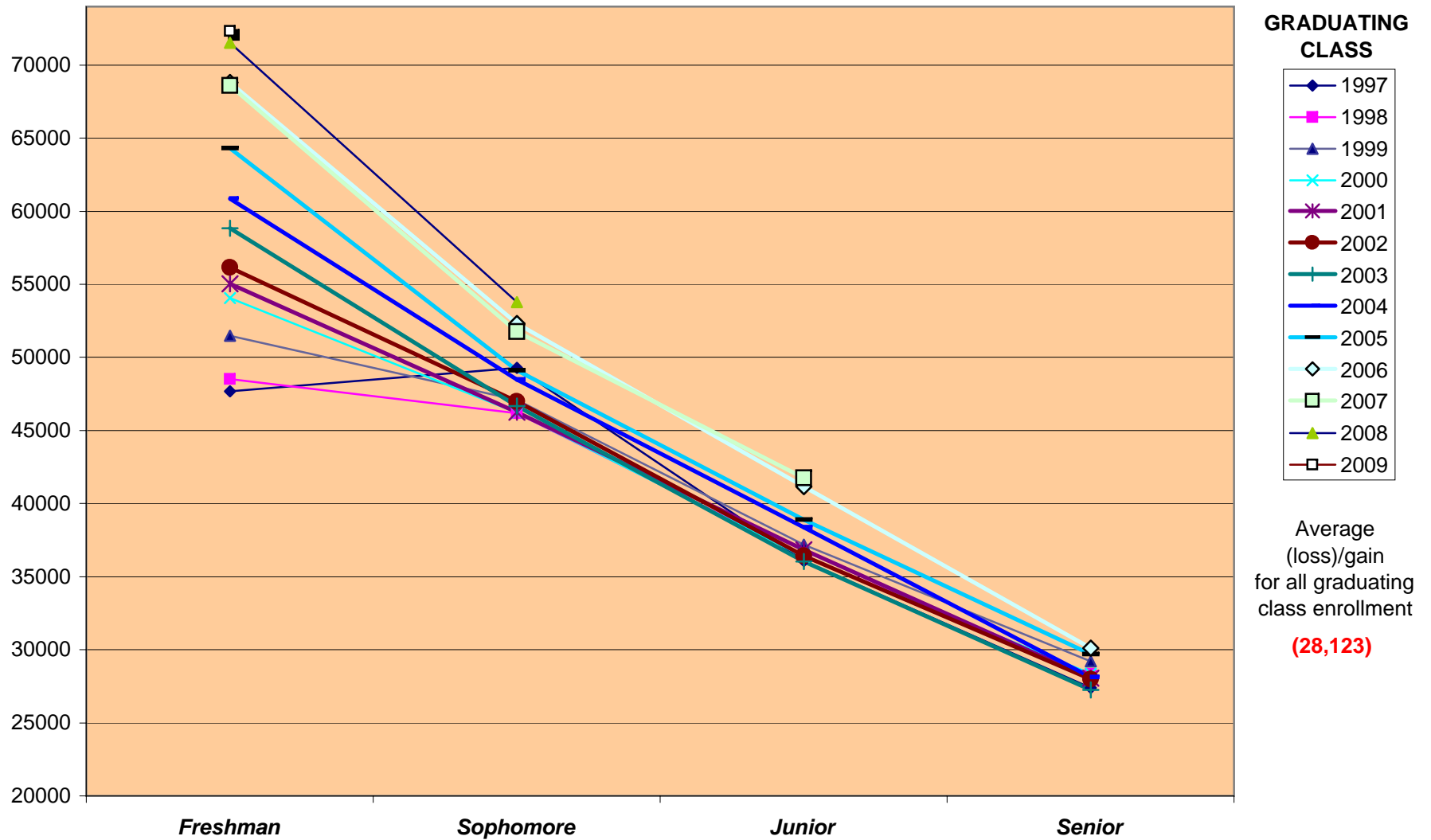
* 1993/94,1994/95 omitted because of missing or unusual enrollment

Total LAUSD high schools reviewed:	36
Total LAUSD graduating classes reviewed:	324
Total non-LAUSD high schools reviewed:	18
Total non-LAUSD graduating classes reviewed:	162
Total high schools reviewed:	54
Total graduating classes reviewed:	486

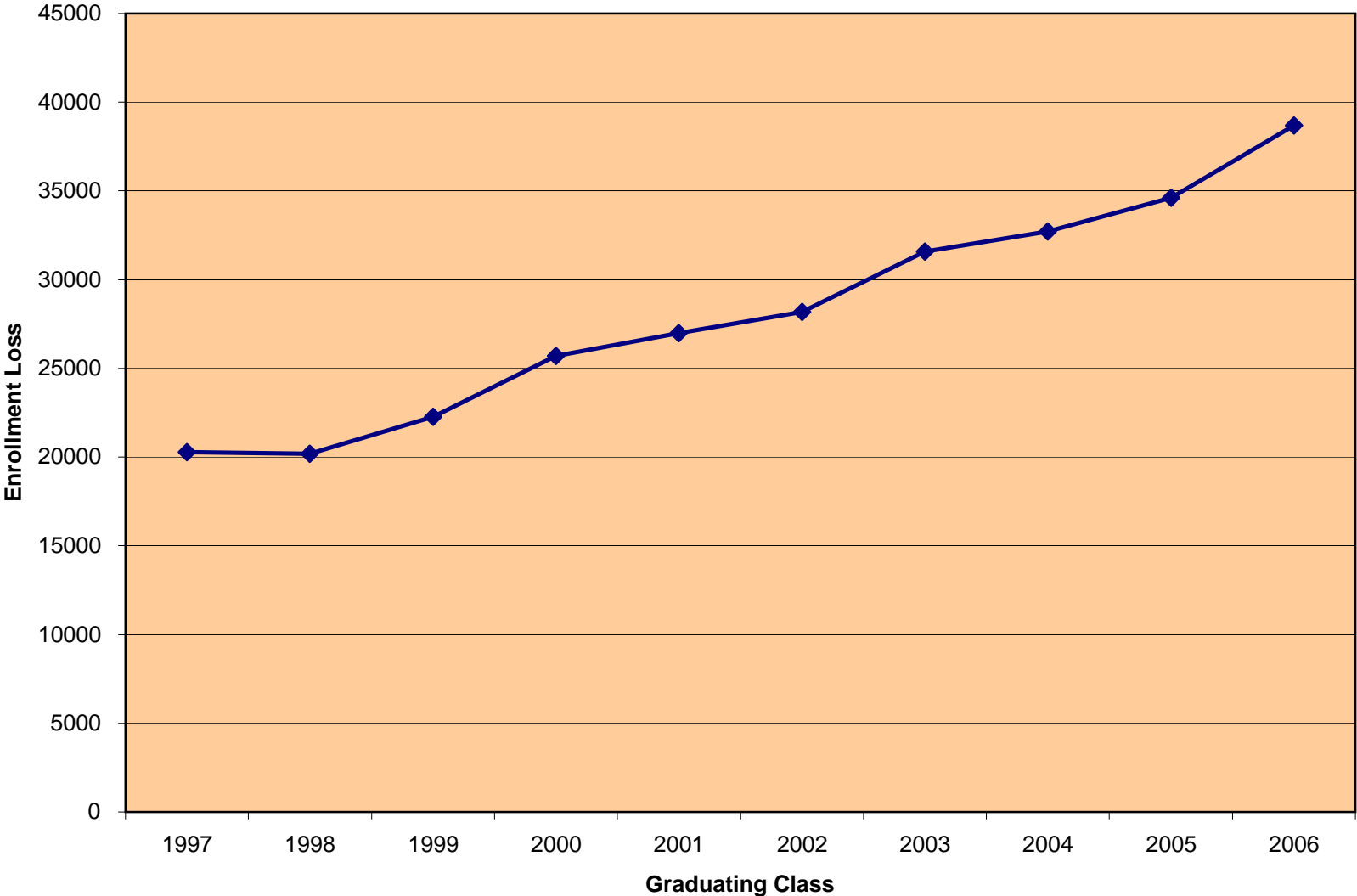
Revised: 4/21/2007

Corrected: Banning HS
 Added: Birmingham HS
 Added: Torrance School District
 Added: Inglewood School District
 Added: Manhattan Beach School District
 Added: Santa Monica/Malibu District
 Added: Long Beach District
 Added: Centinela Valley District
 Added: Culver City District

All LAUSD HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?

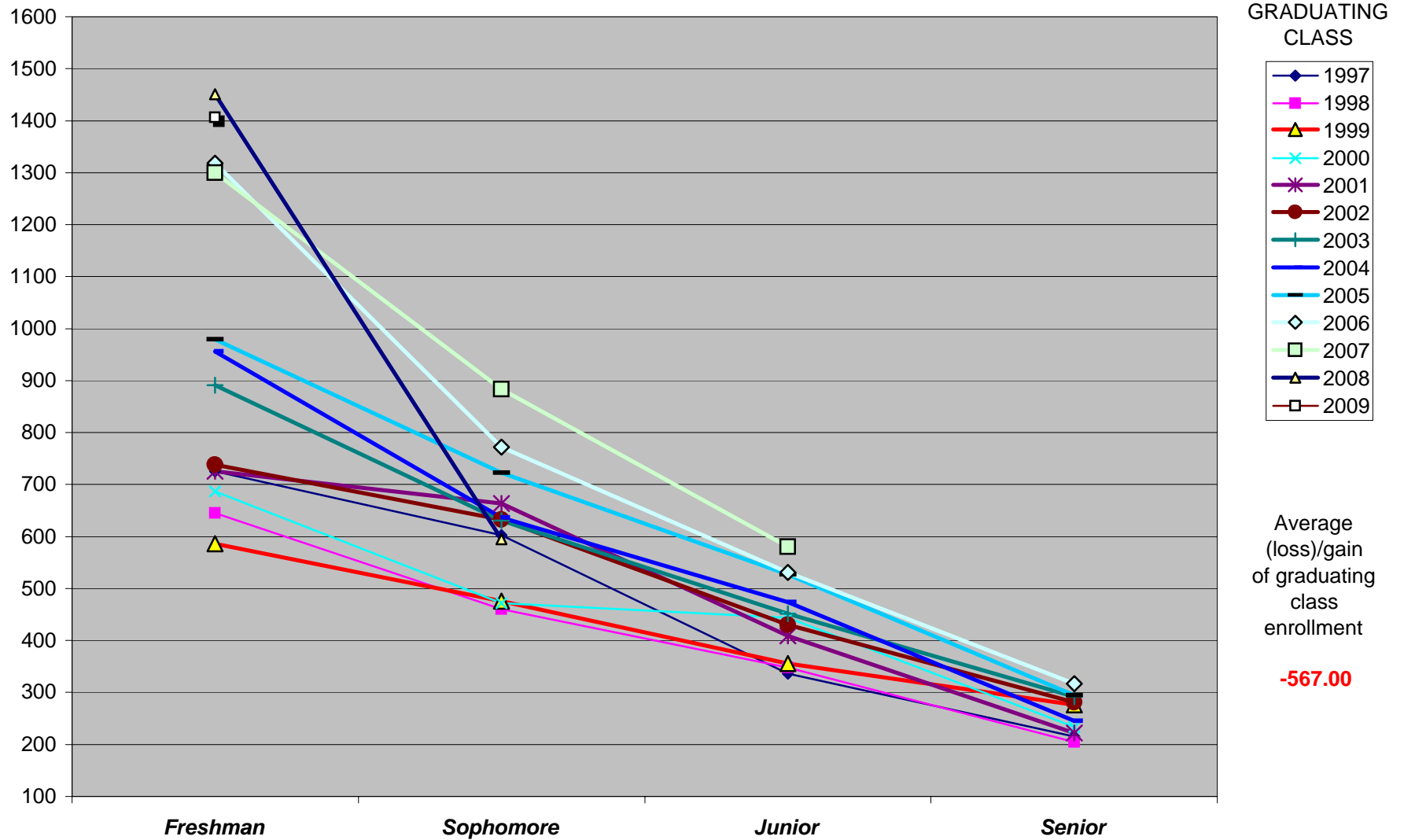


**Losses Have Increased Among Graduating Classes
in LAUSD High Schools Since 1993**



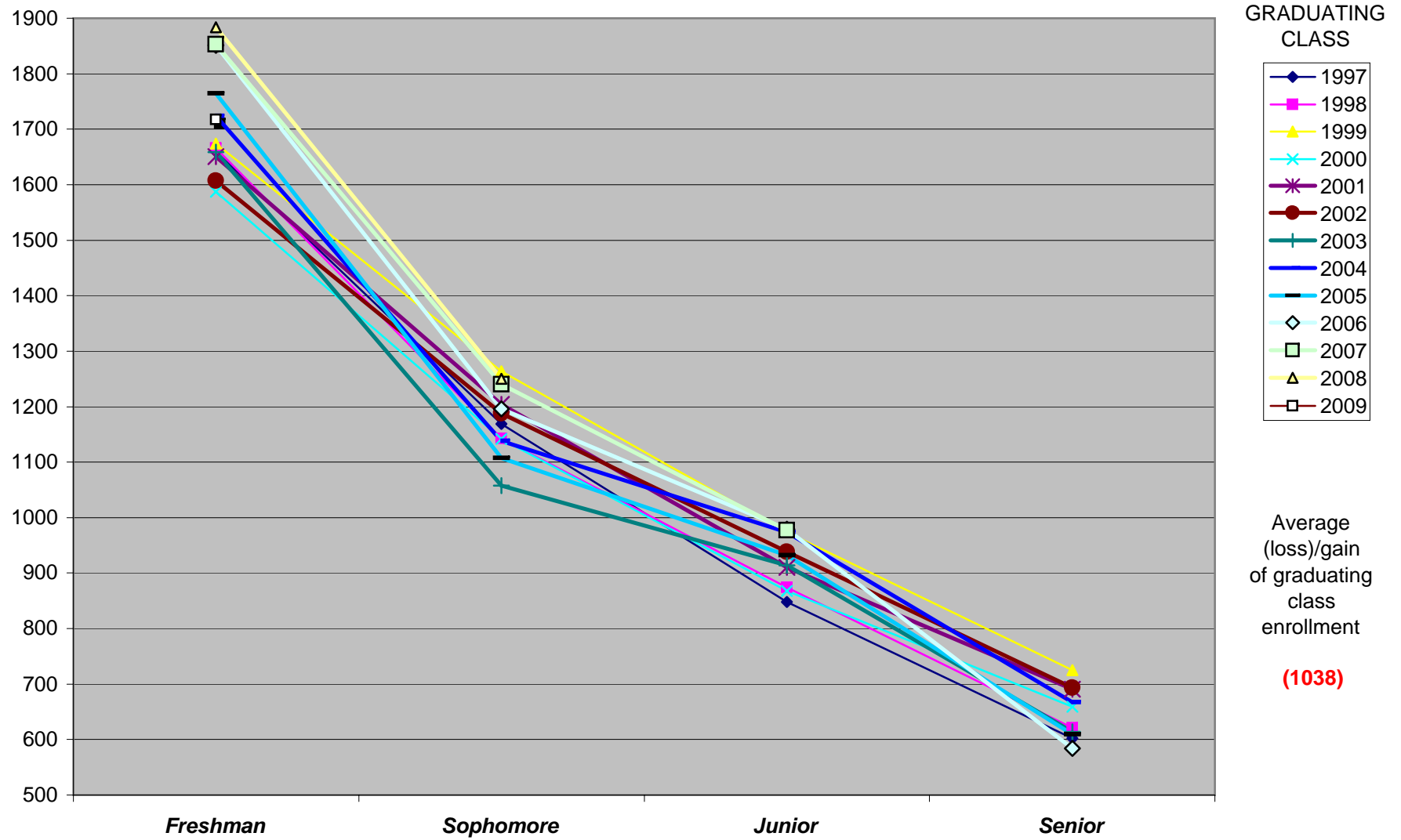
This blank sheet was intentionally placed here

Alain Leroy Locke HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?

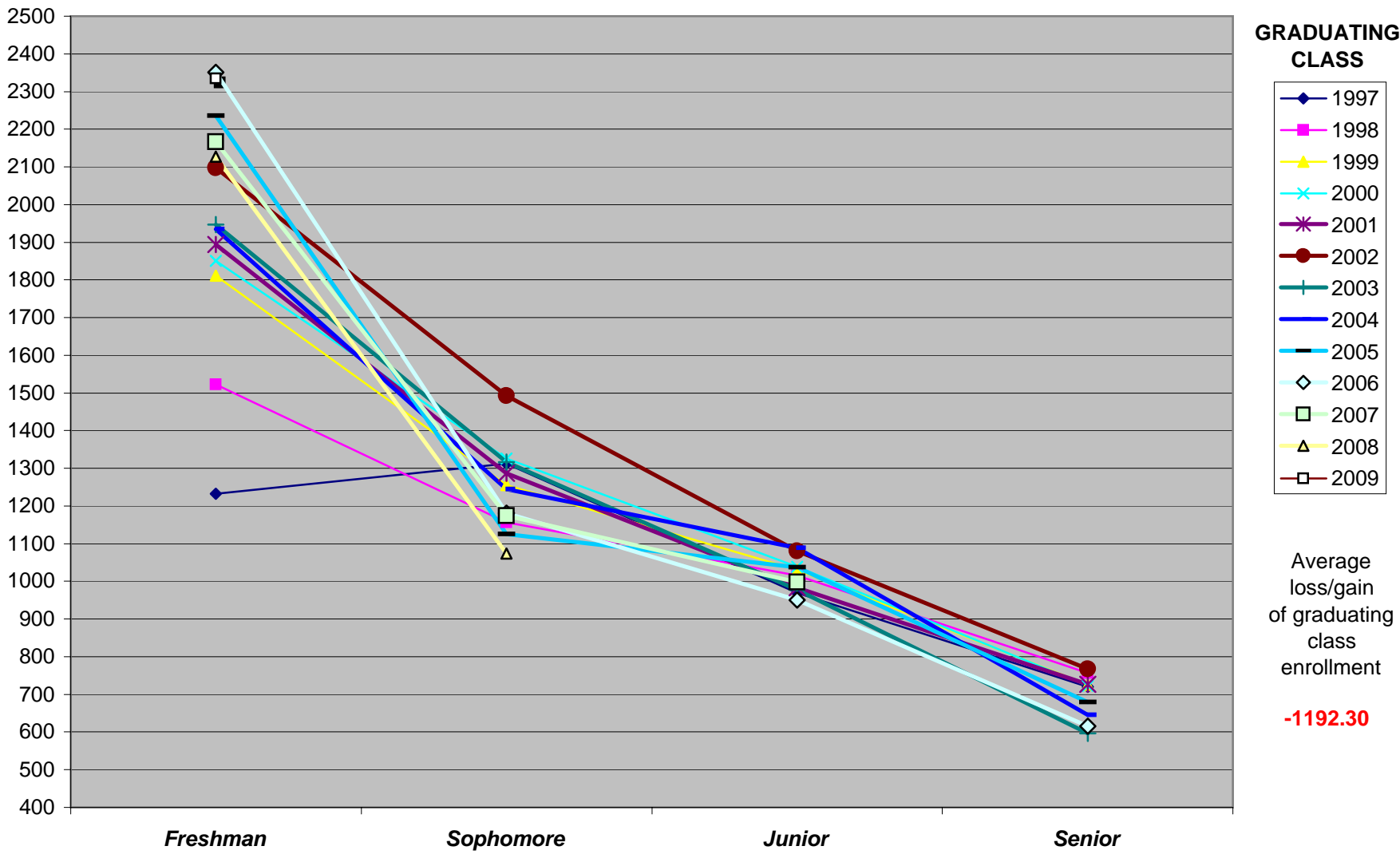


Bell High School

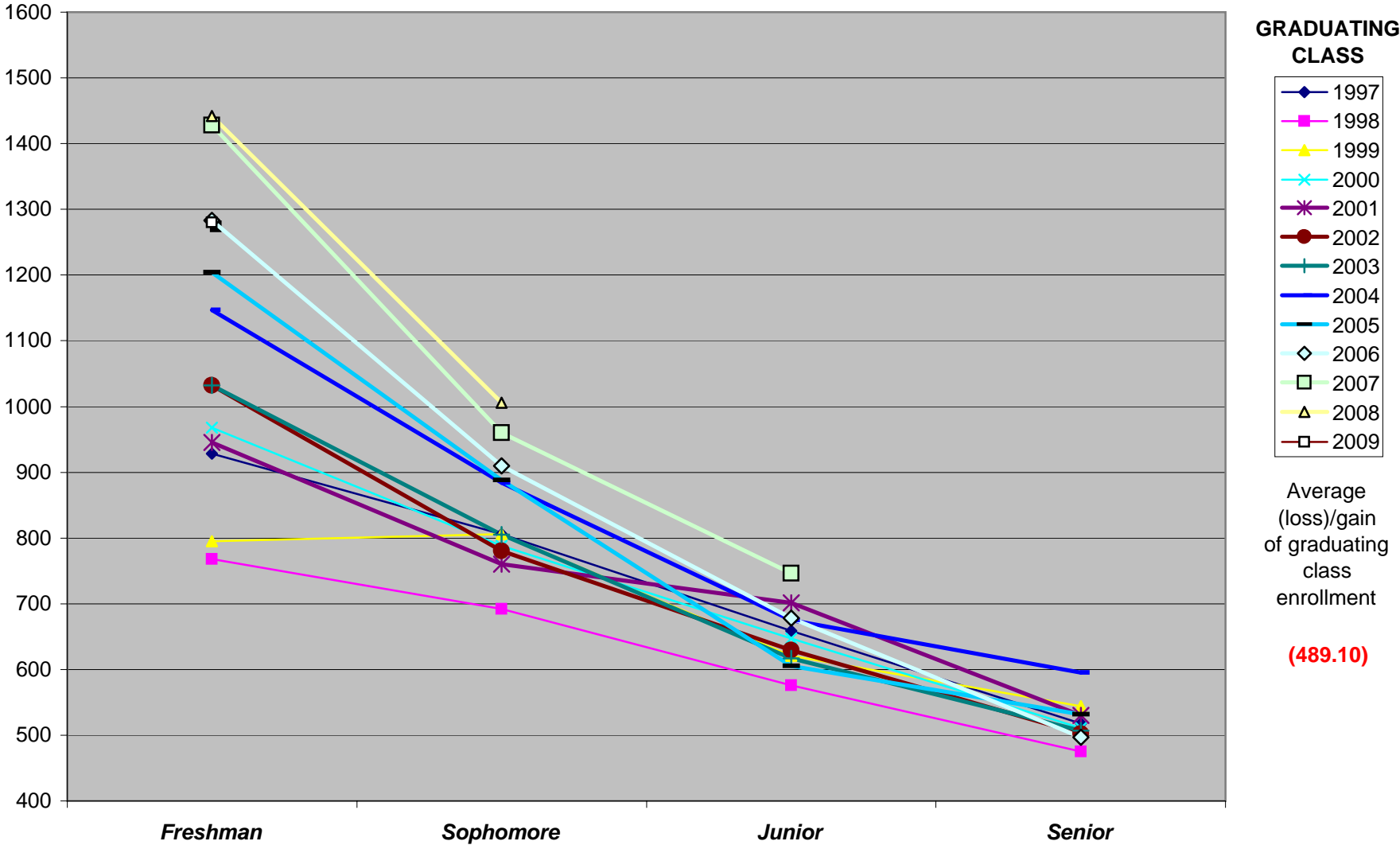
Where have all the Seniors gone?



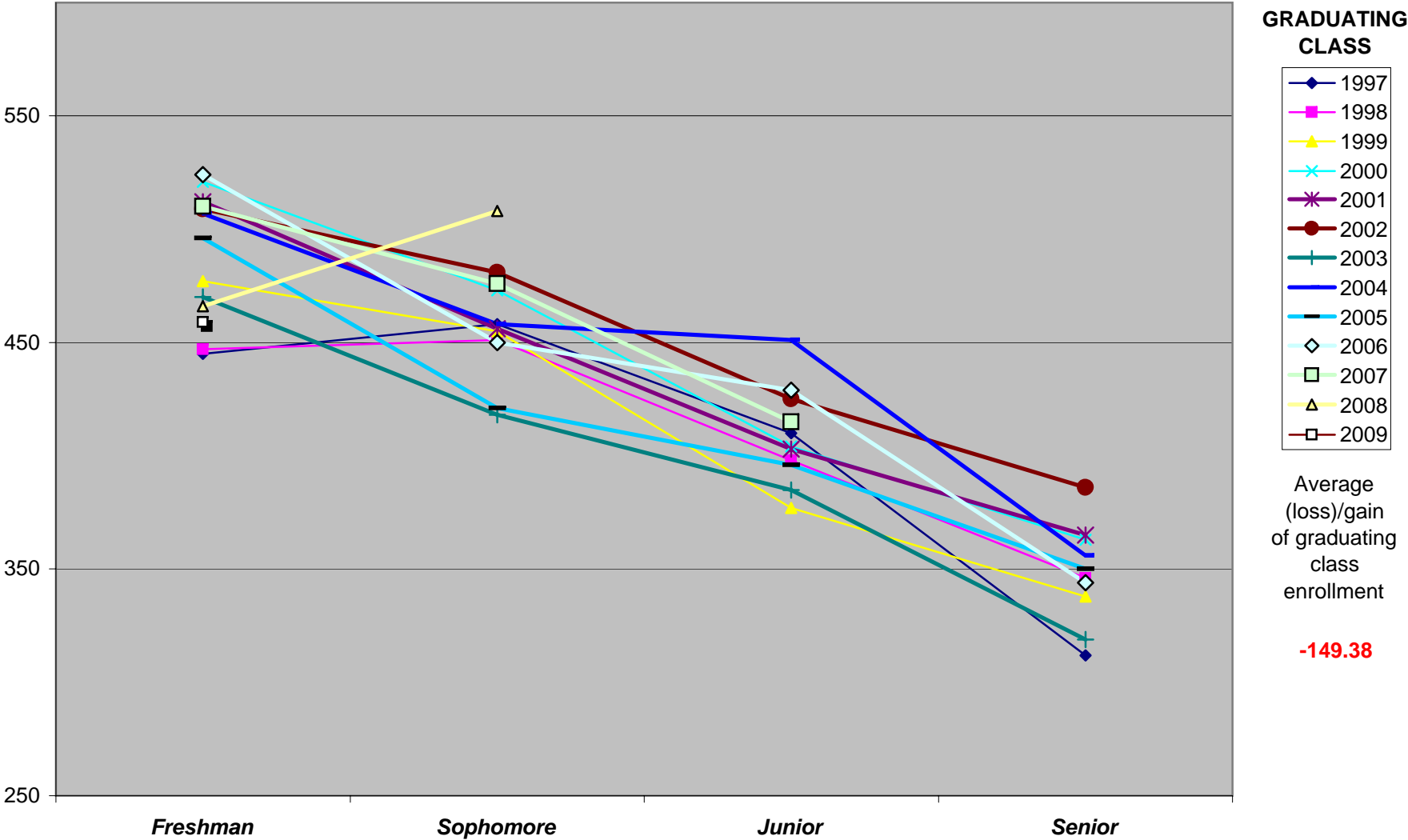
Belmont HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



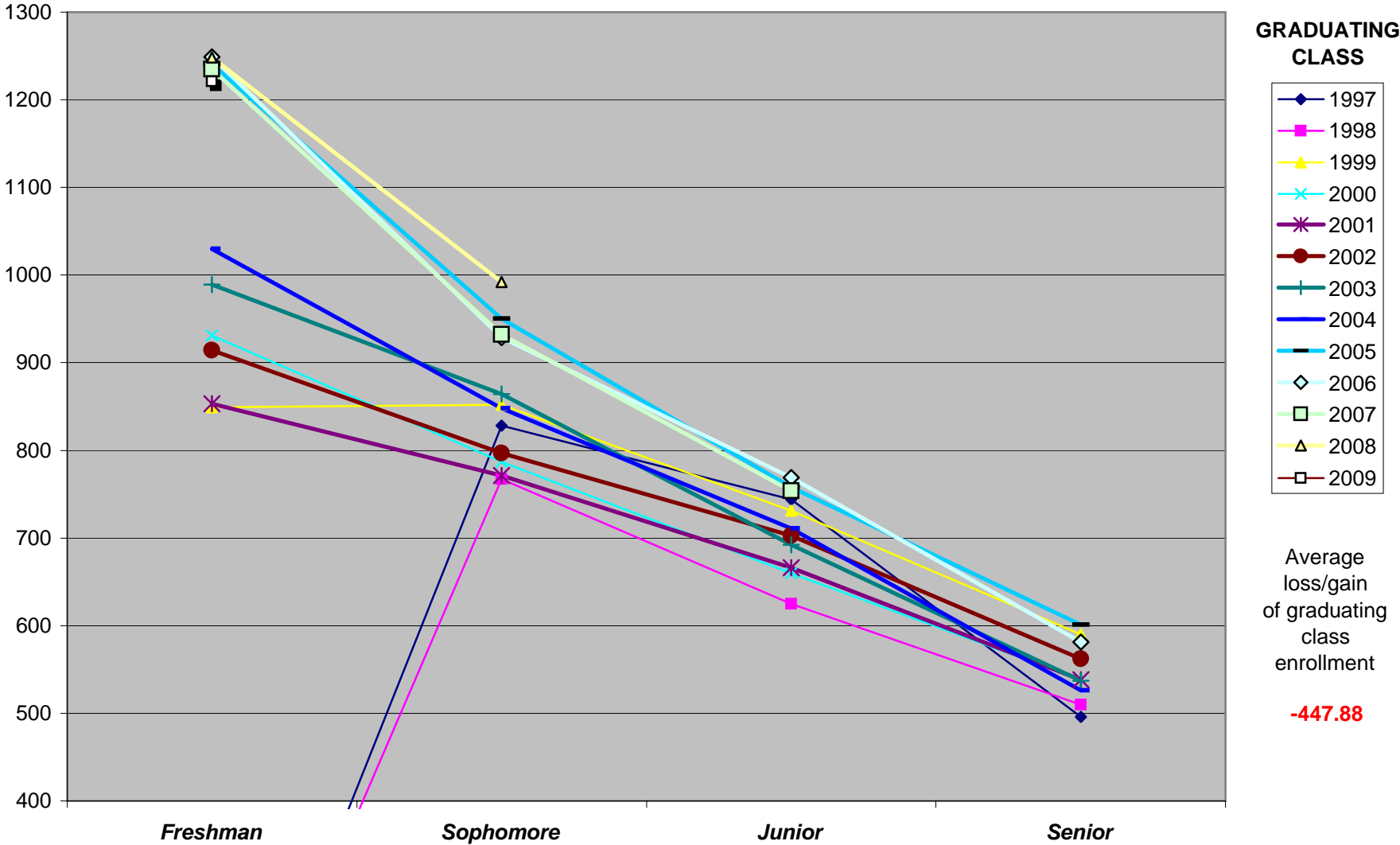
Birmingham HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



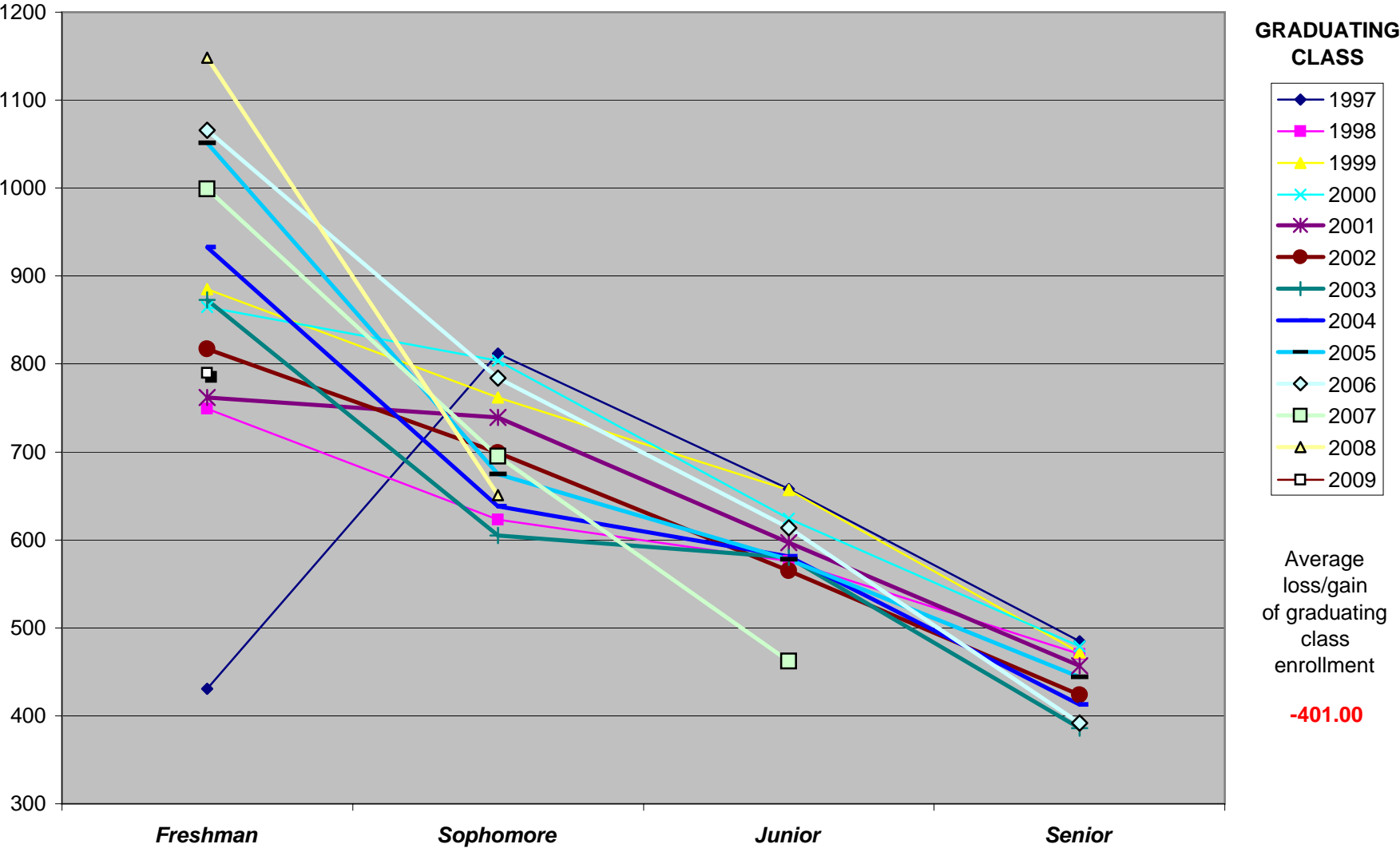
Bravo Medical Magnet HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



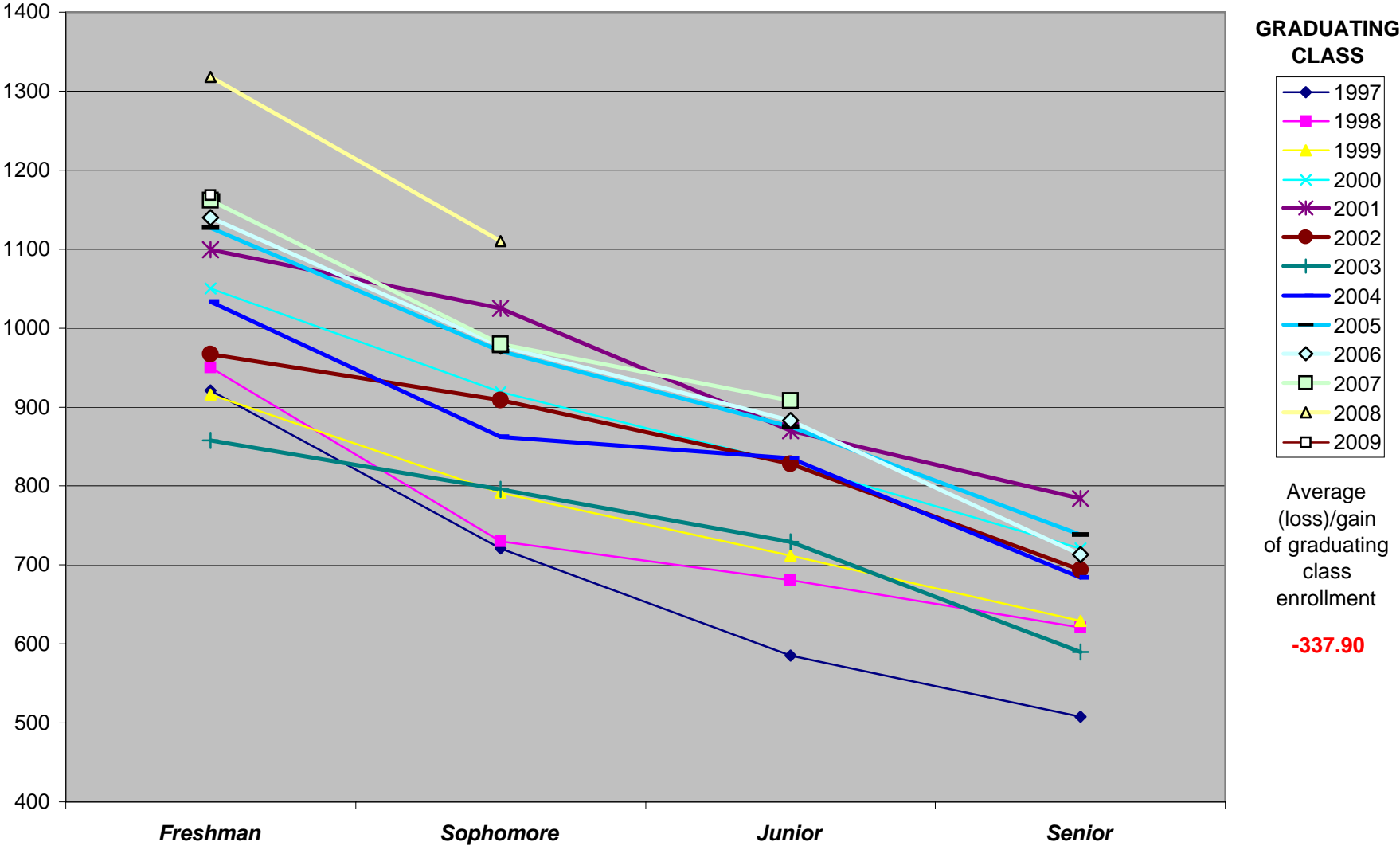
Carson HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



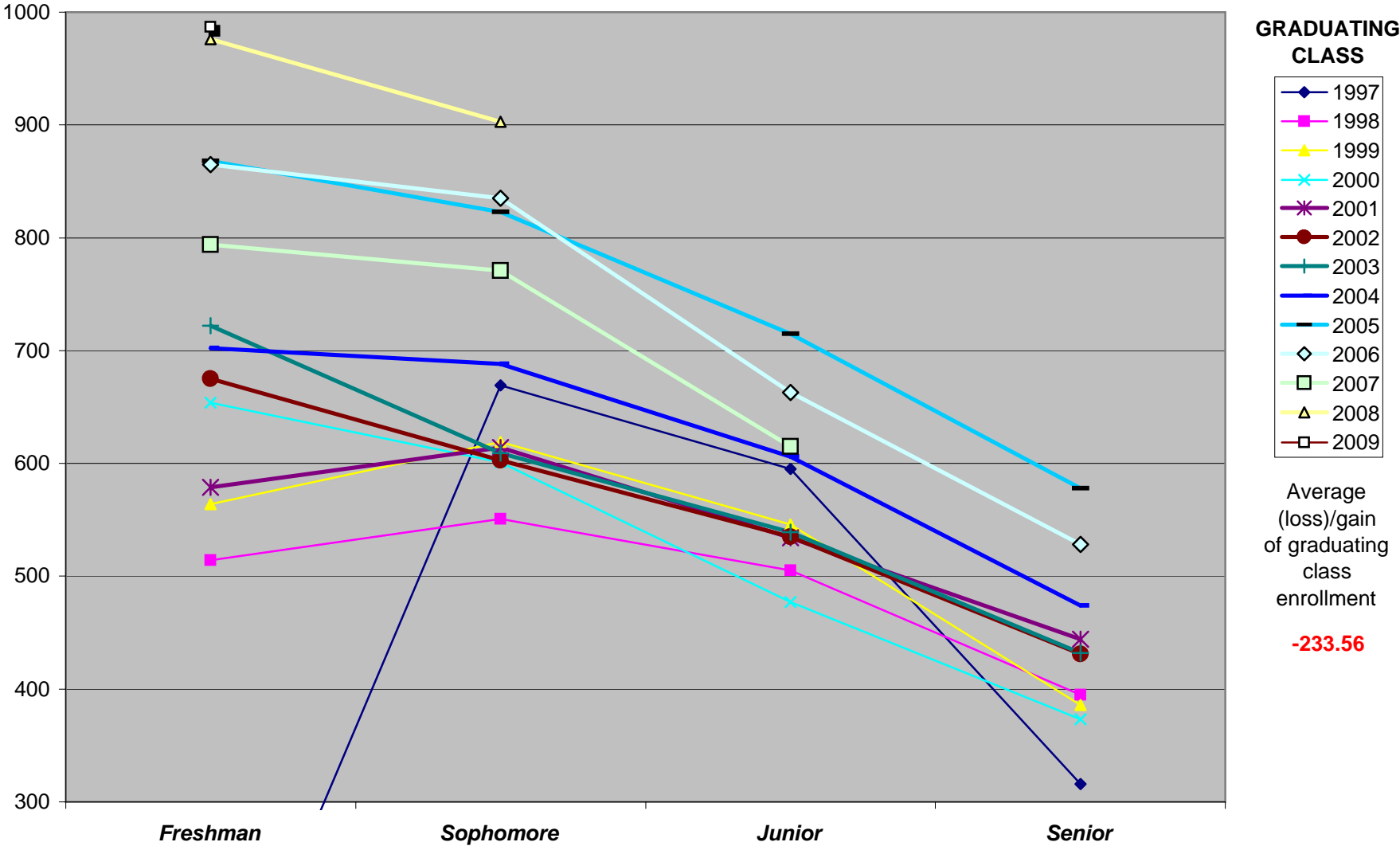
Crenshaw HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



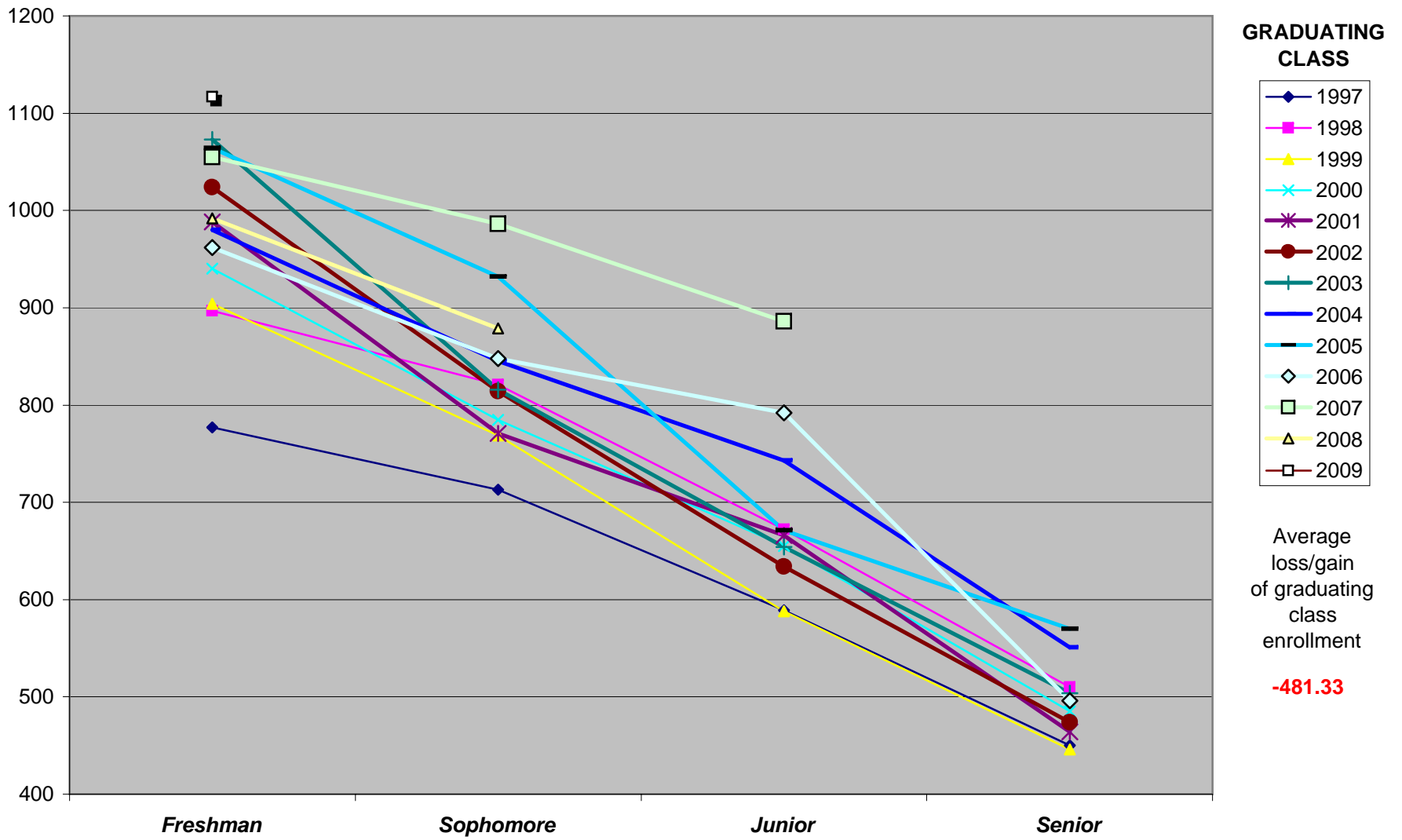
El Camino HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



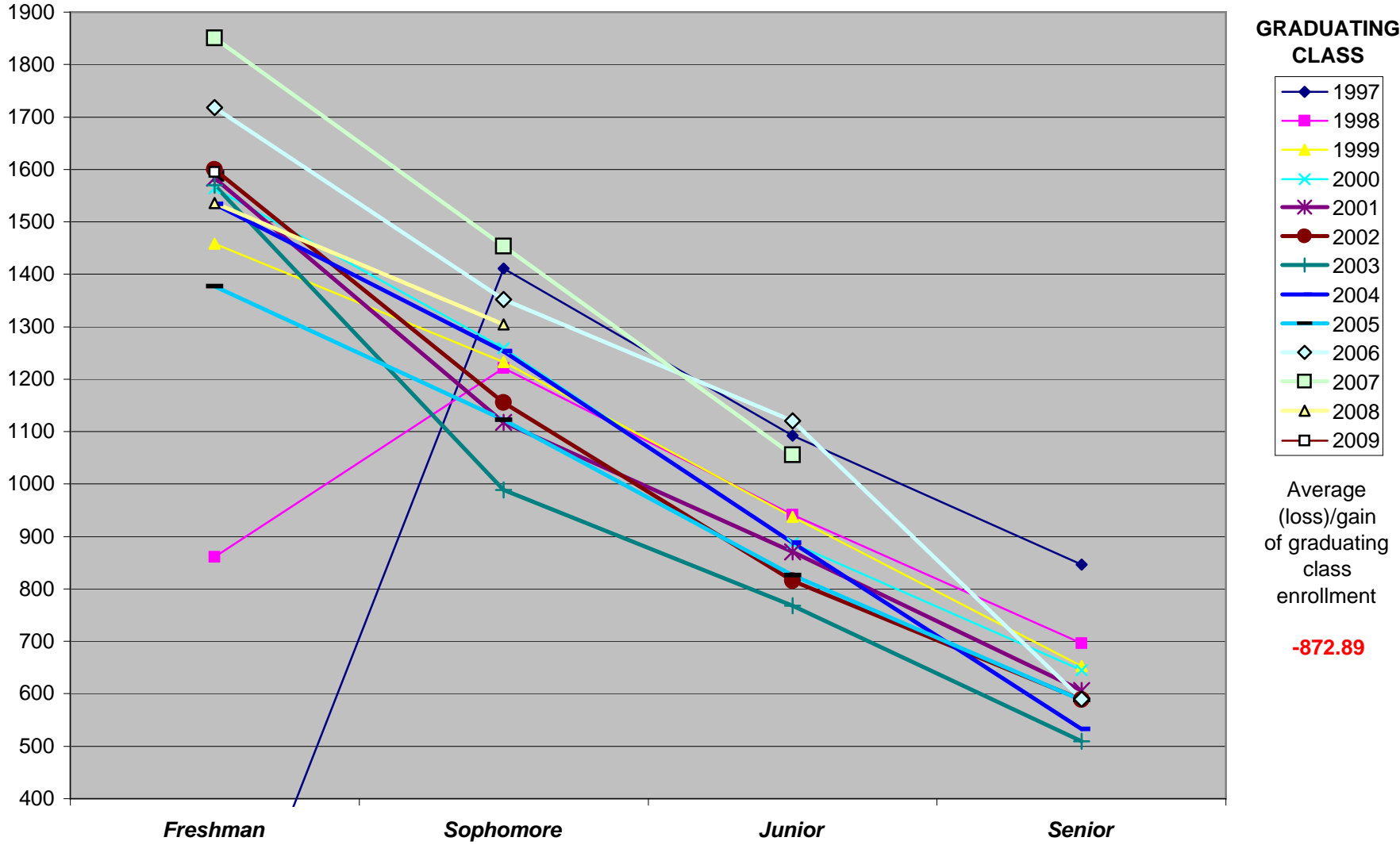
Fairfax HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



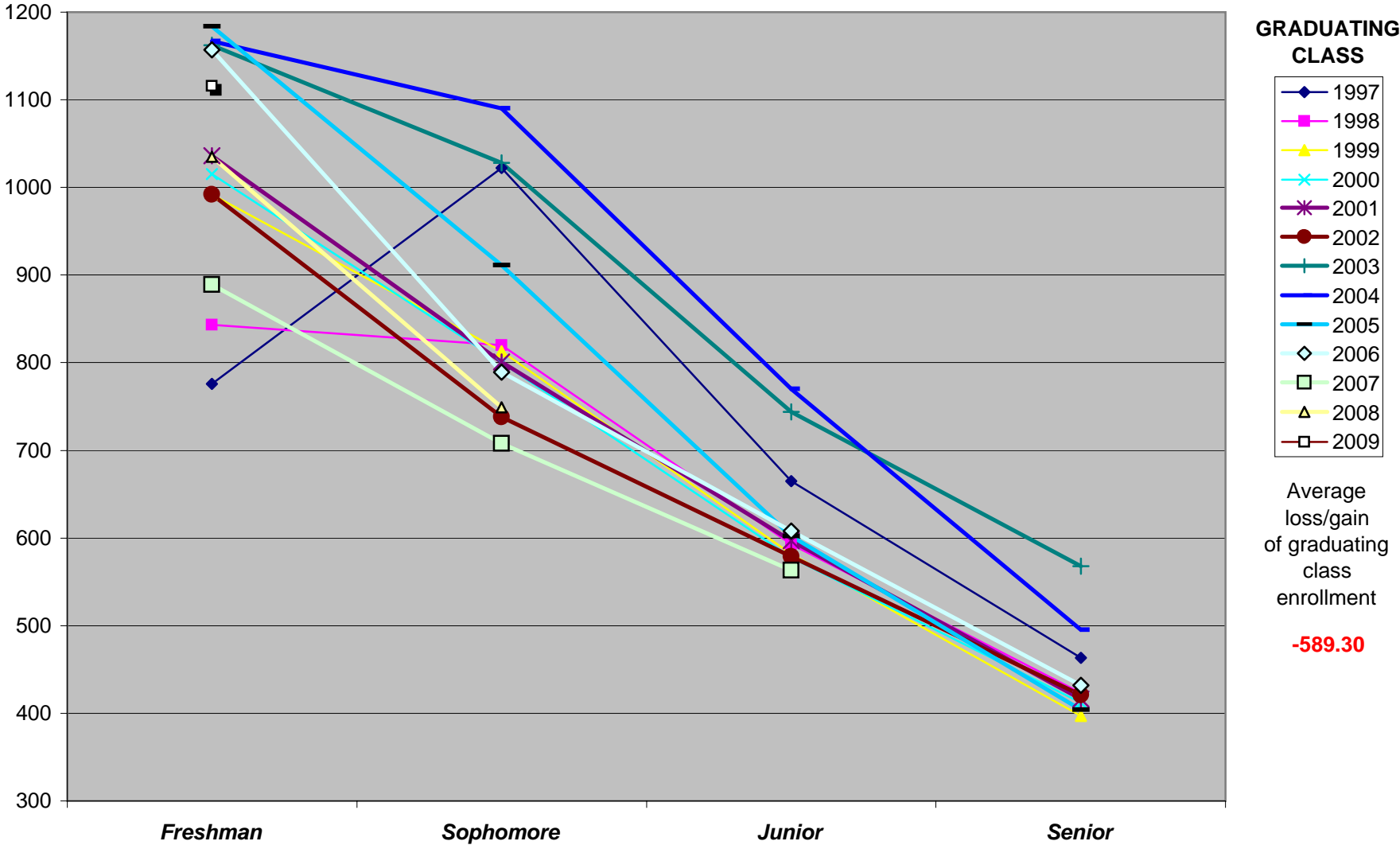
Gardena HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



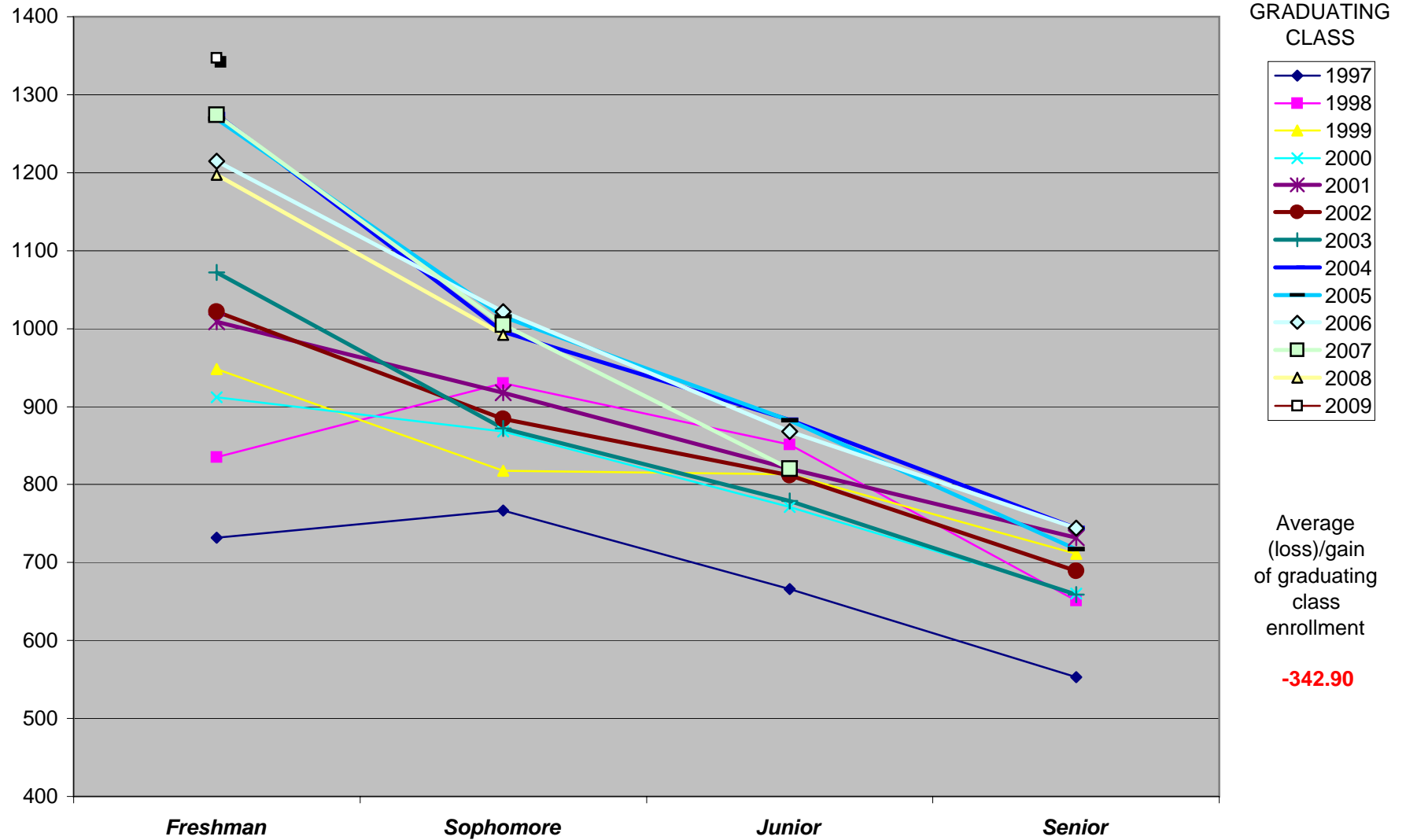
Garfield HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



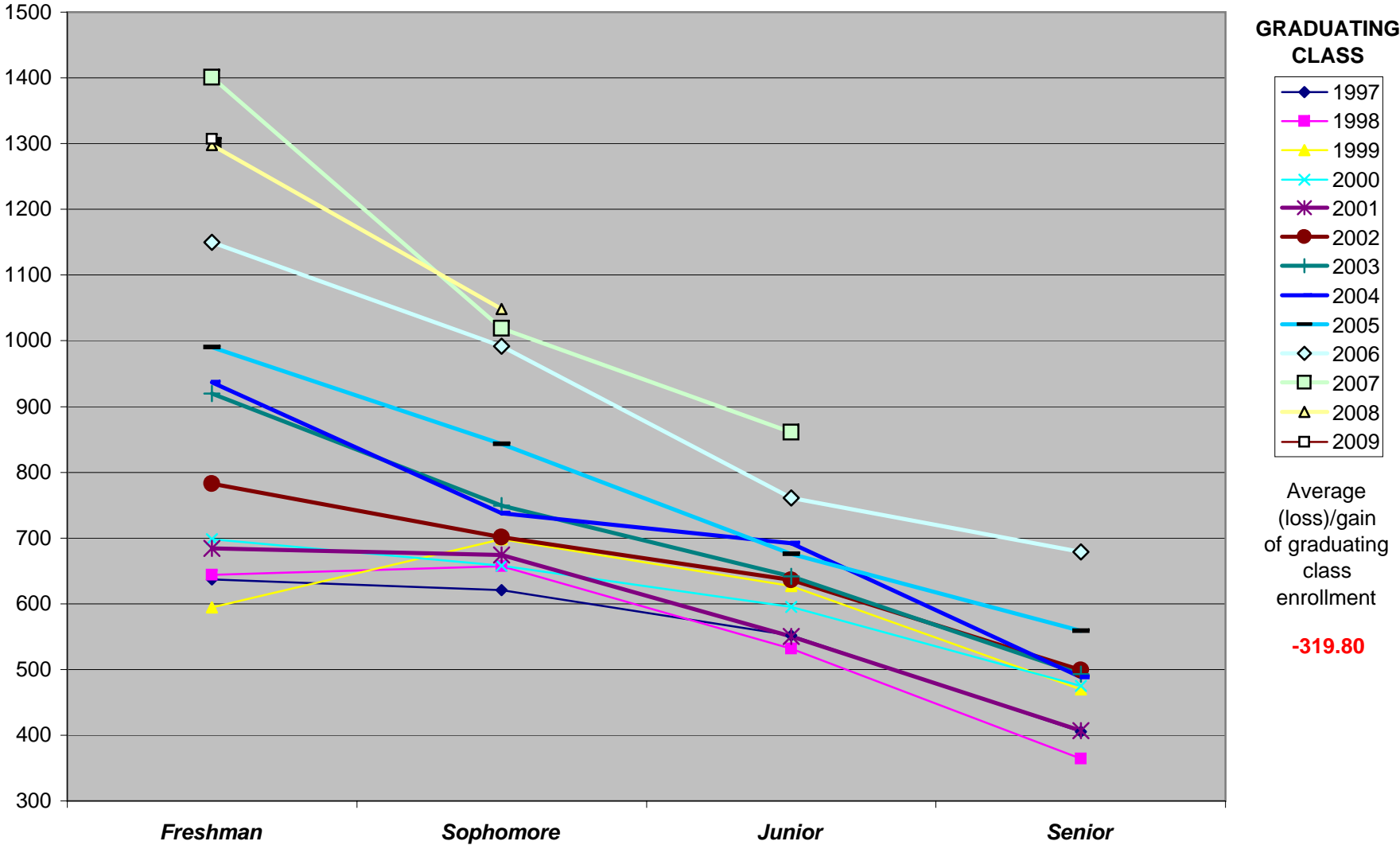
George Washington Preparatory HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



Granada Hills HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



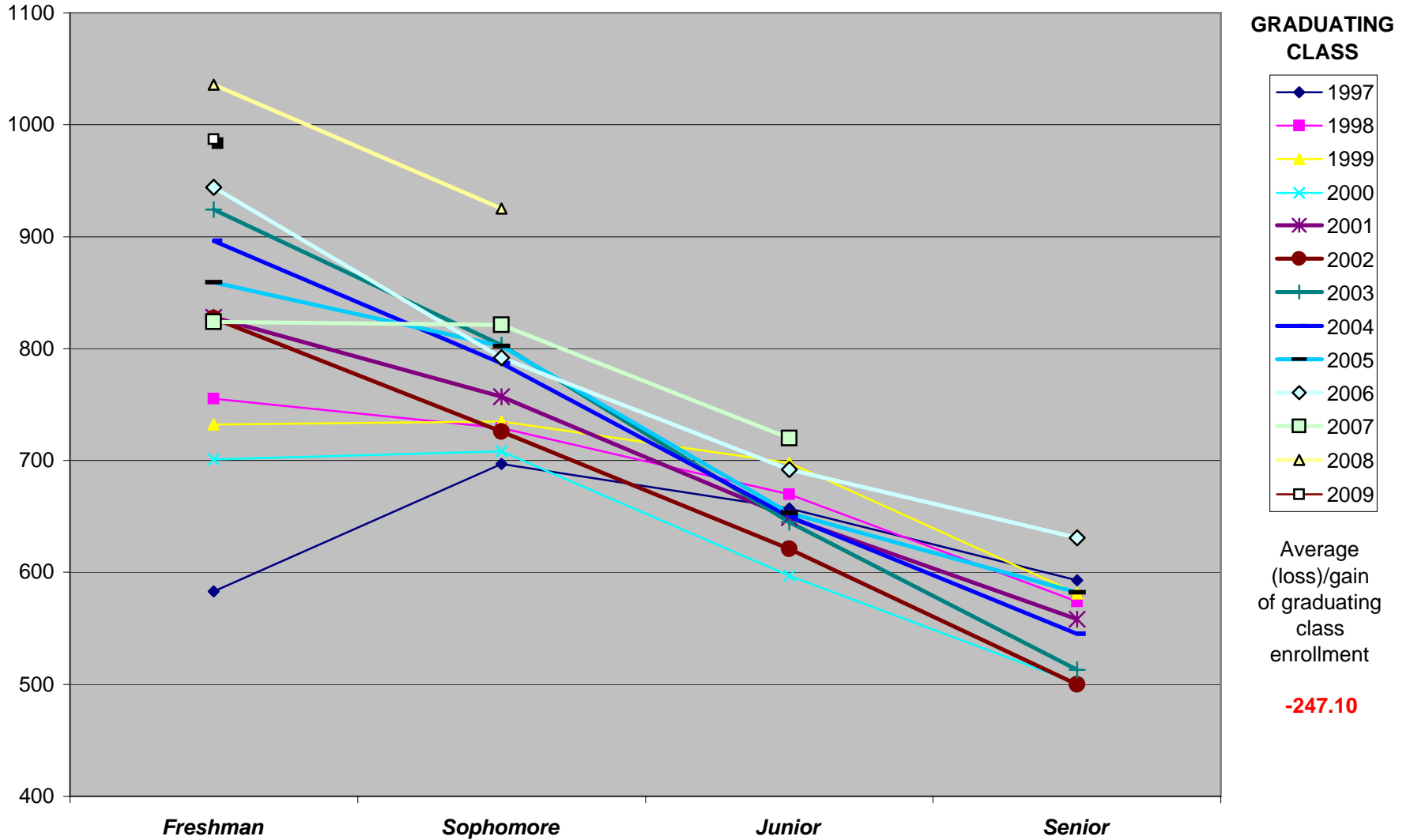
Grover Cleveland HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



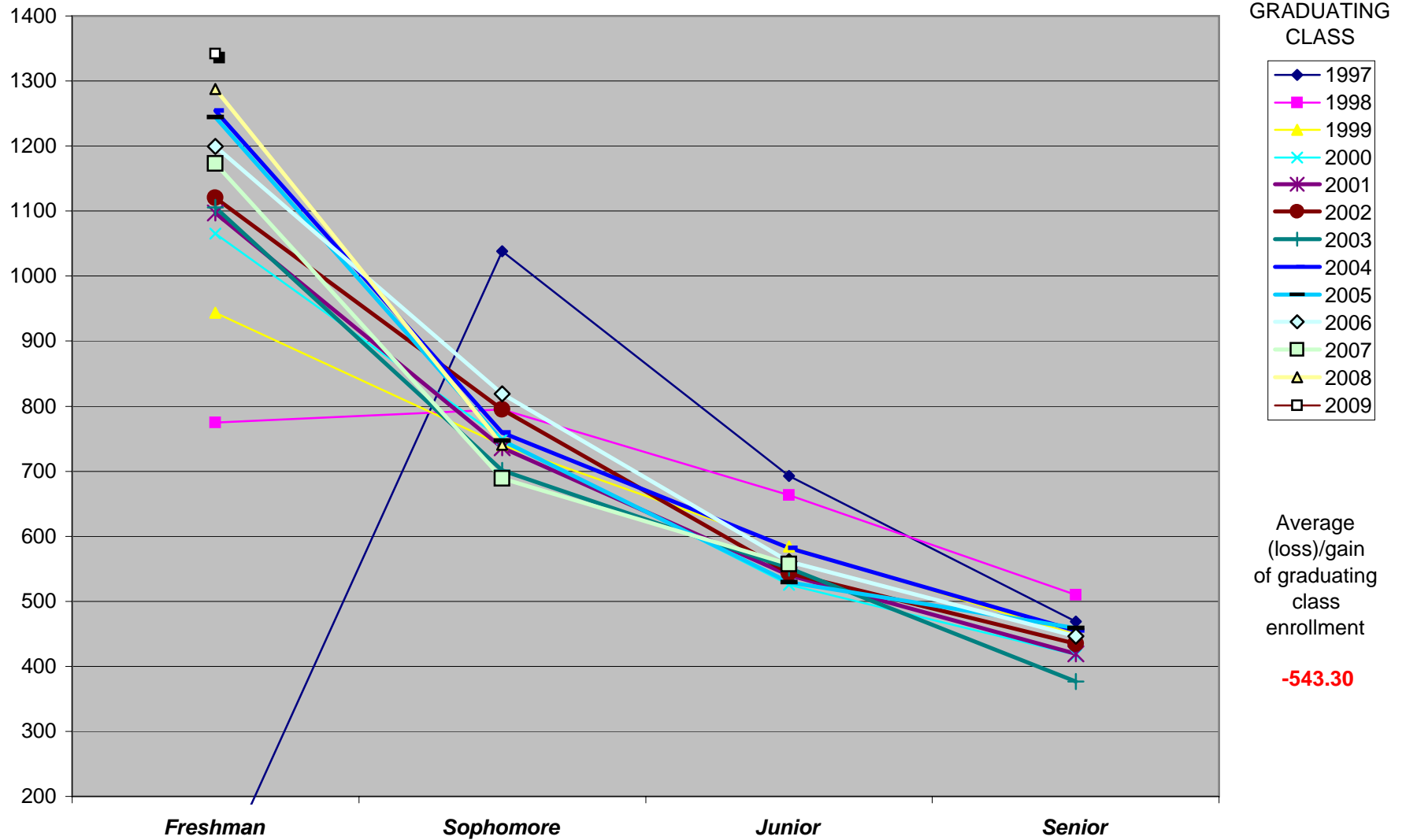
Hamilton HS Enrollment Tracked by Class

Where have all the Seniors gone?

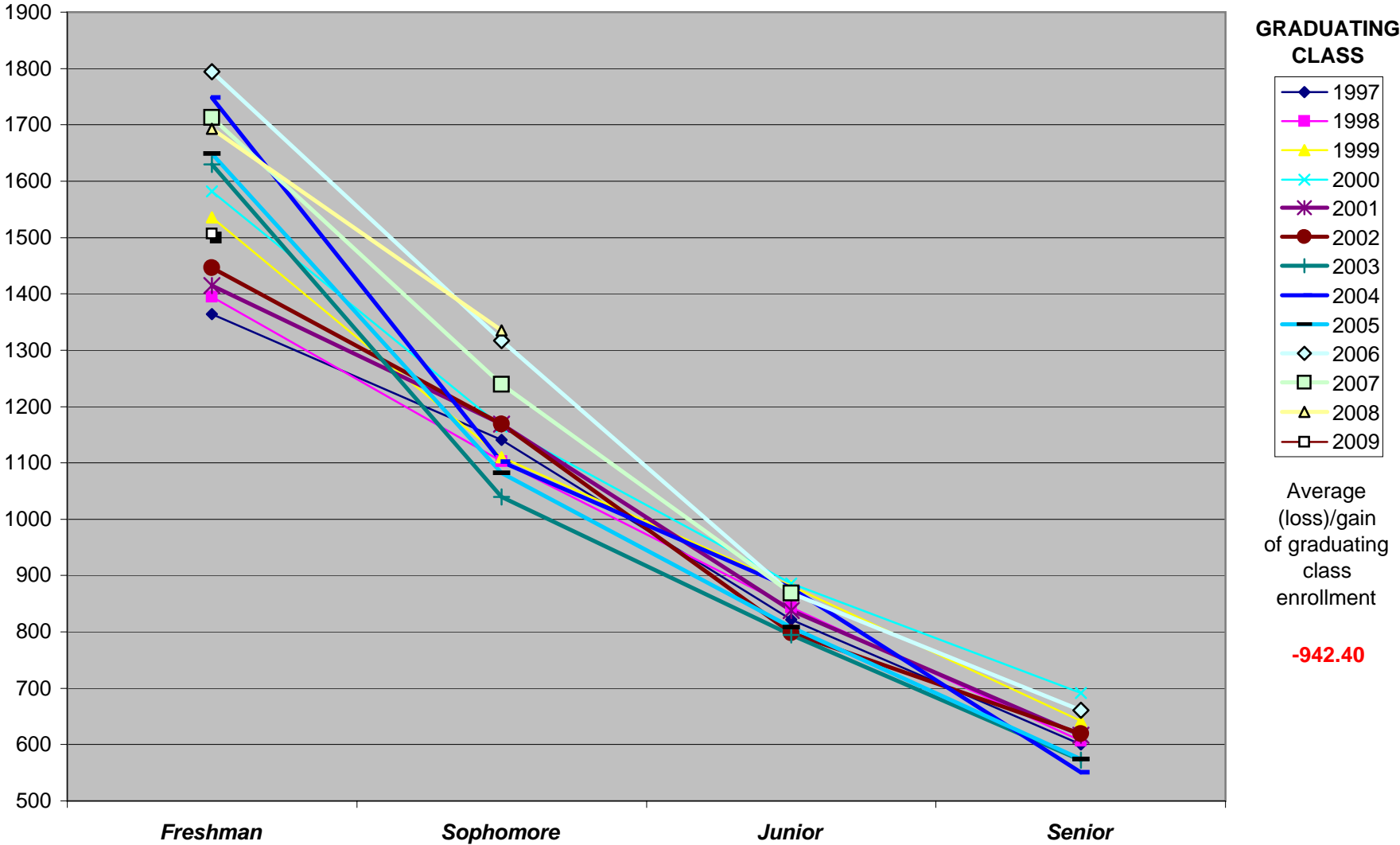
www.westchesterparents.org



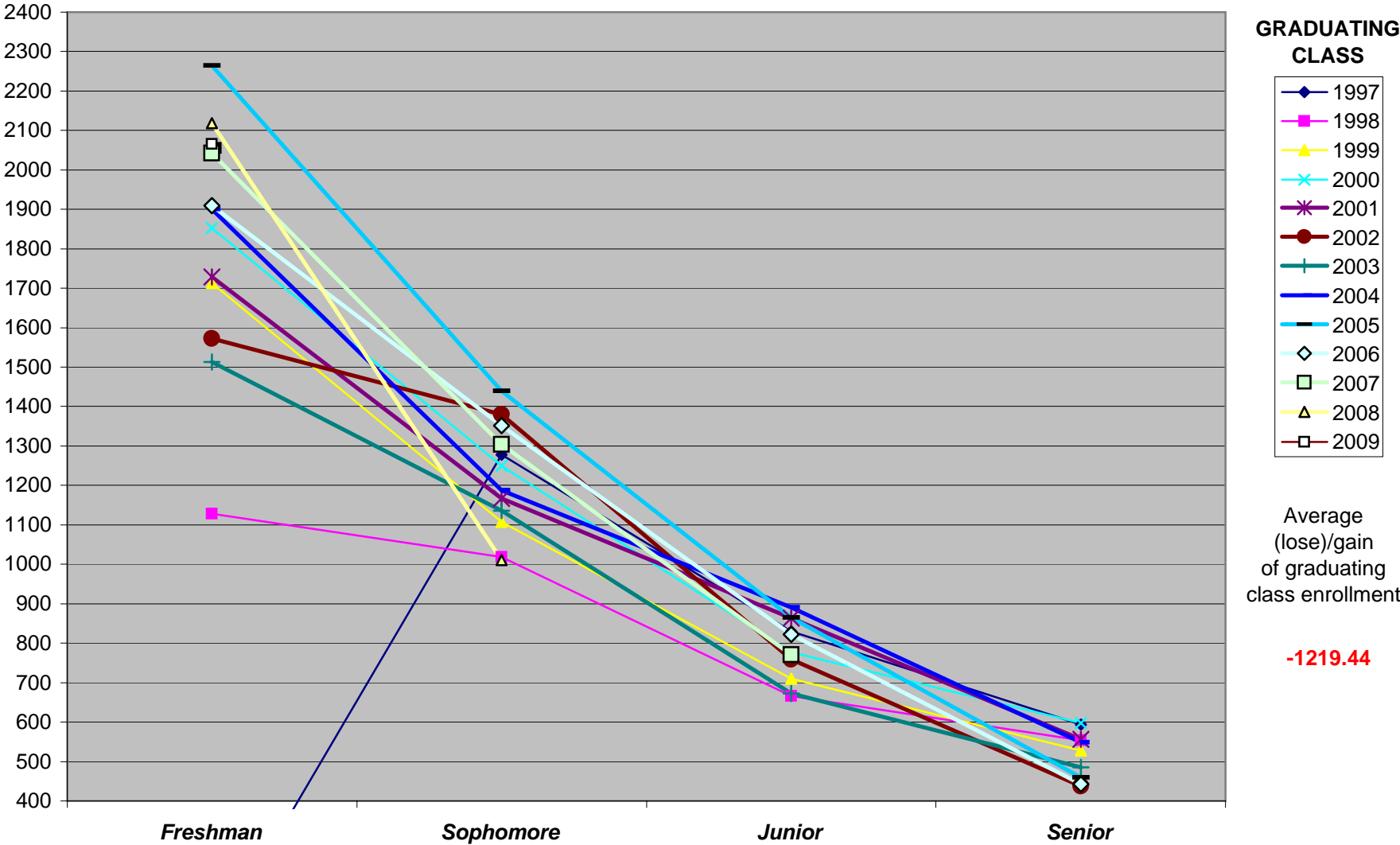
Hollywood HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



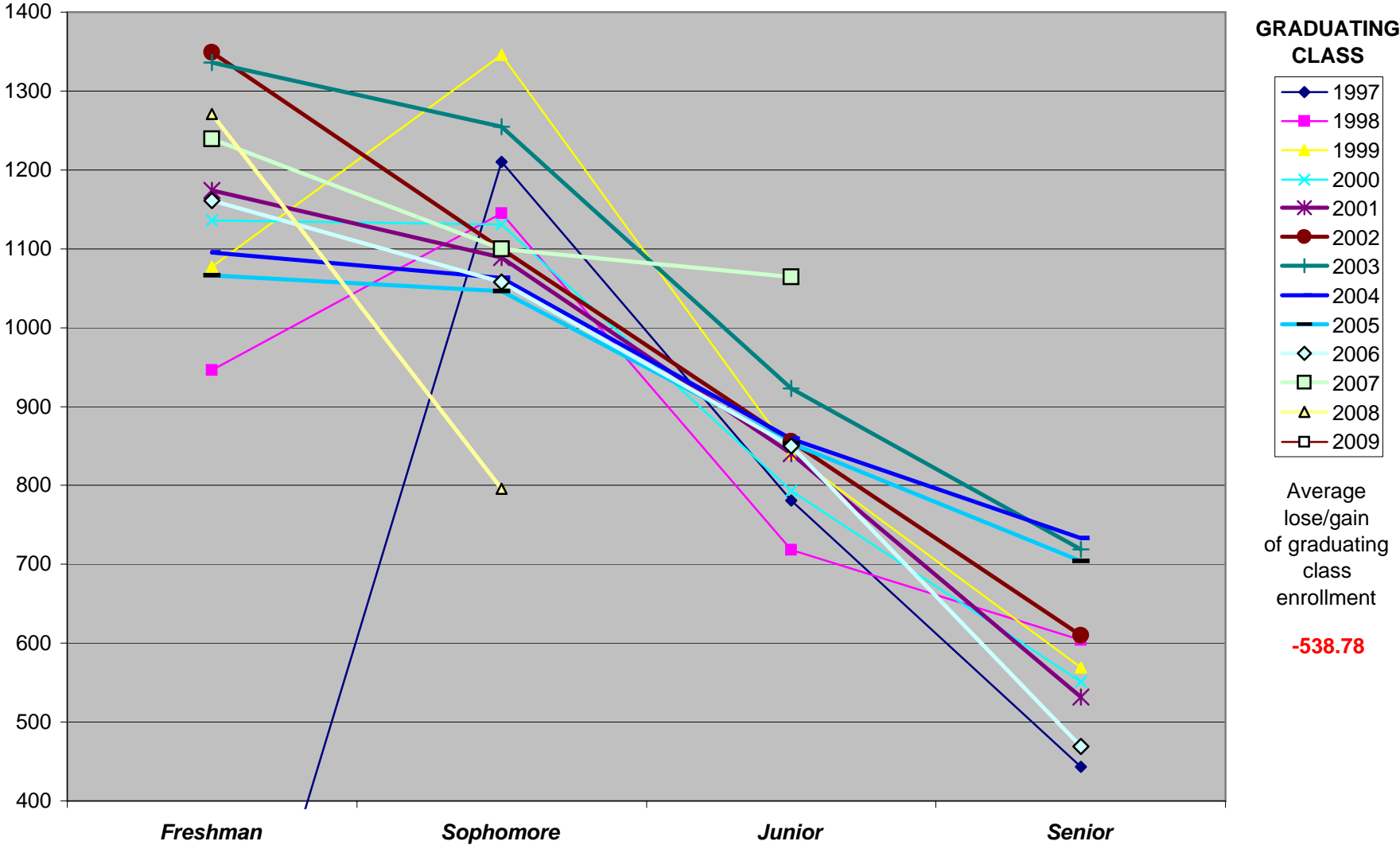
Huntington Park HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



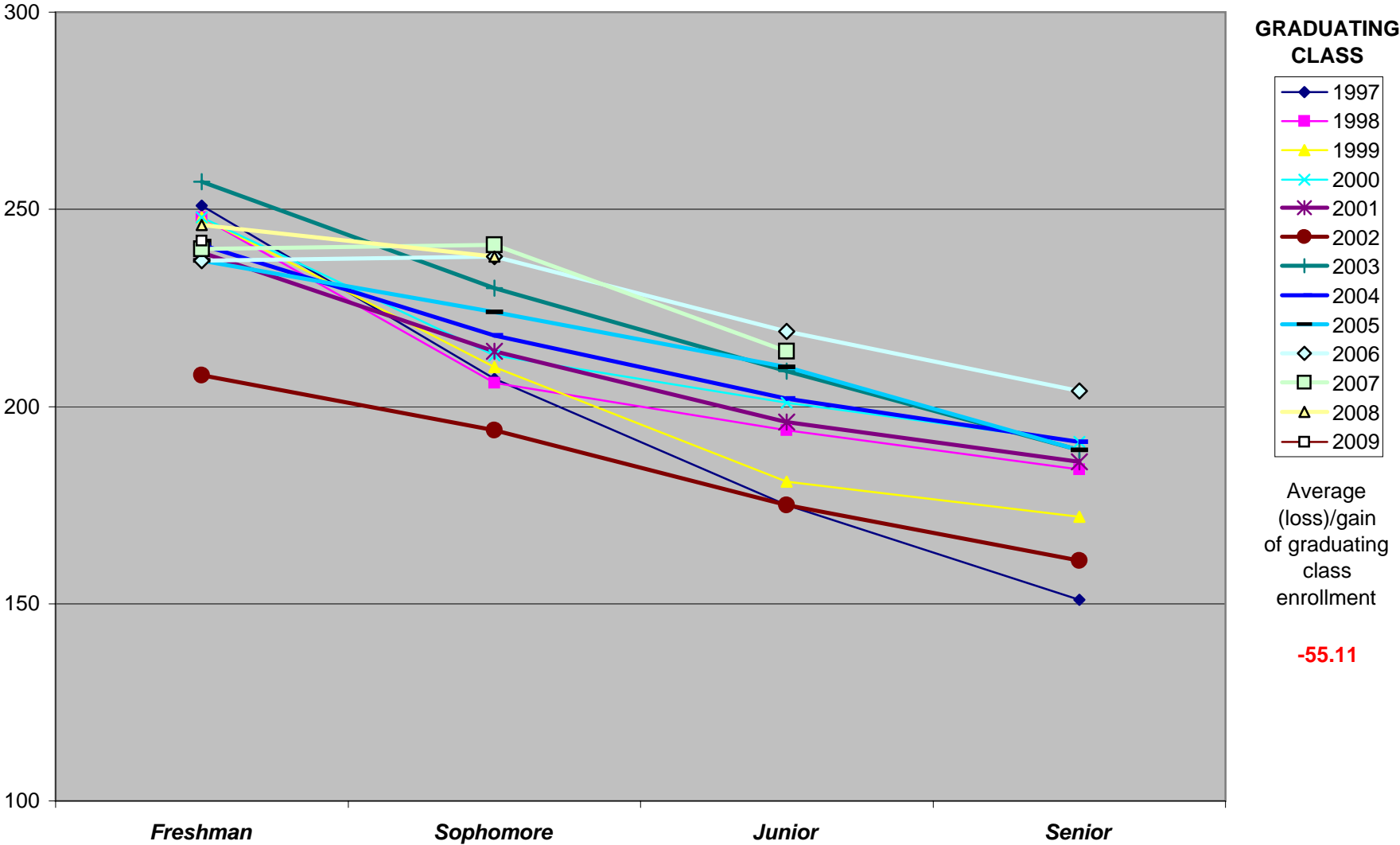
John C. Freemont HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



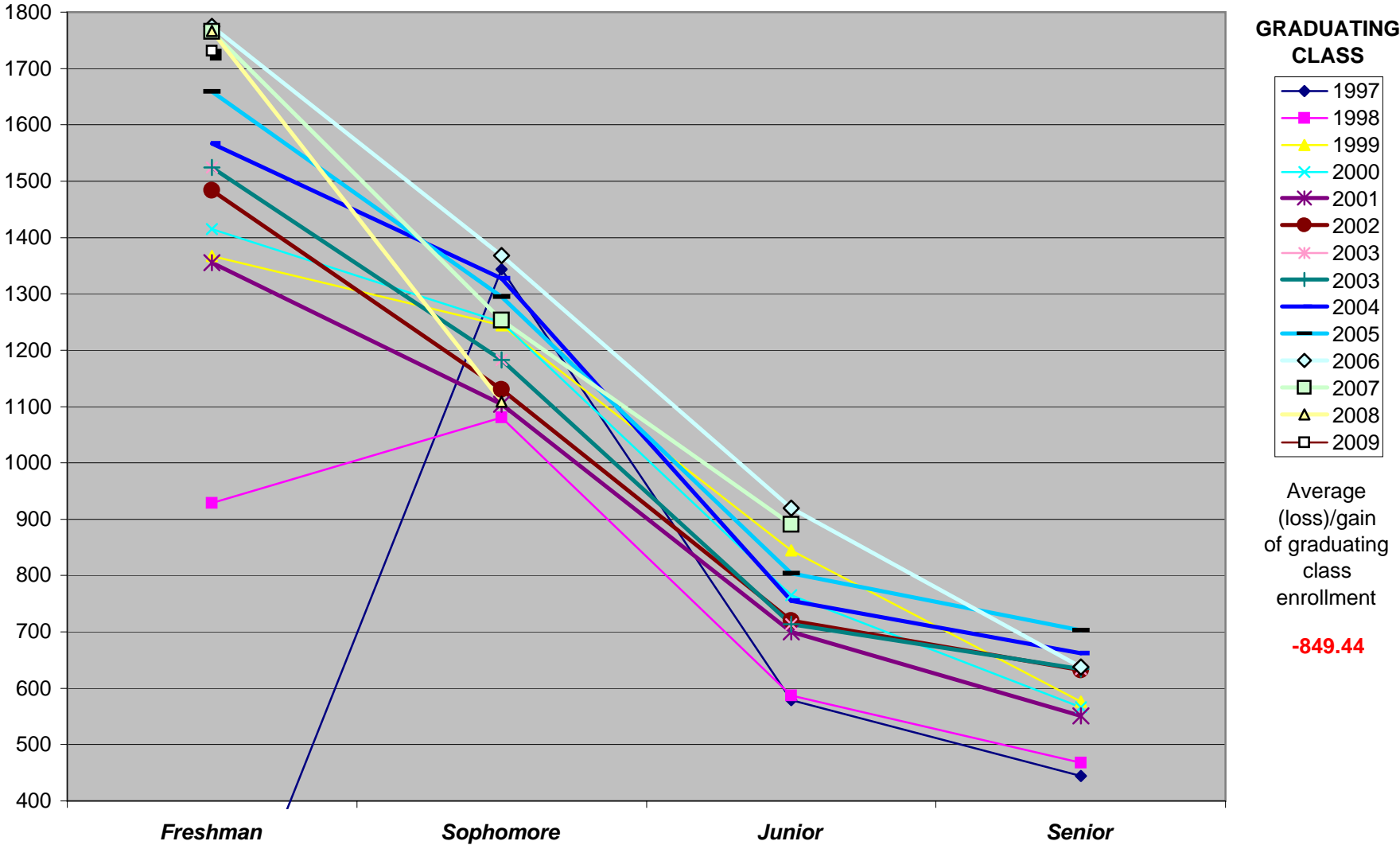
Manual Arts HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



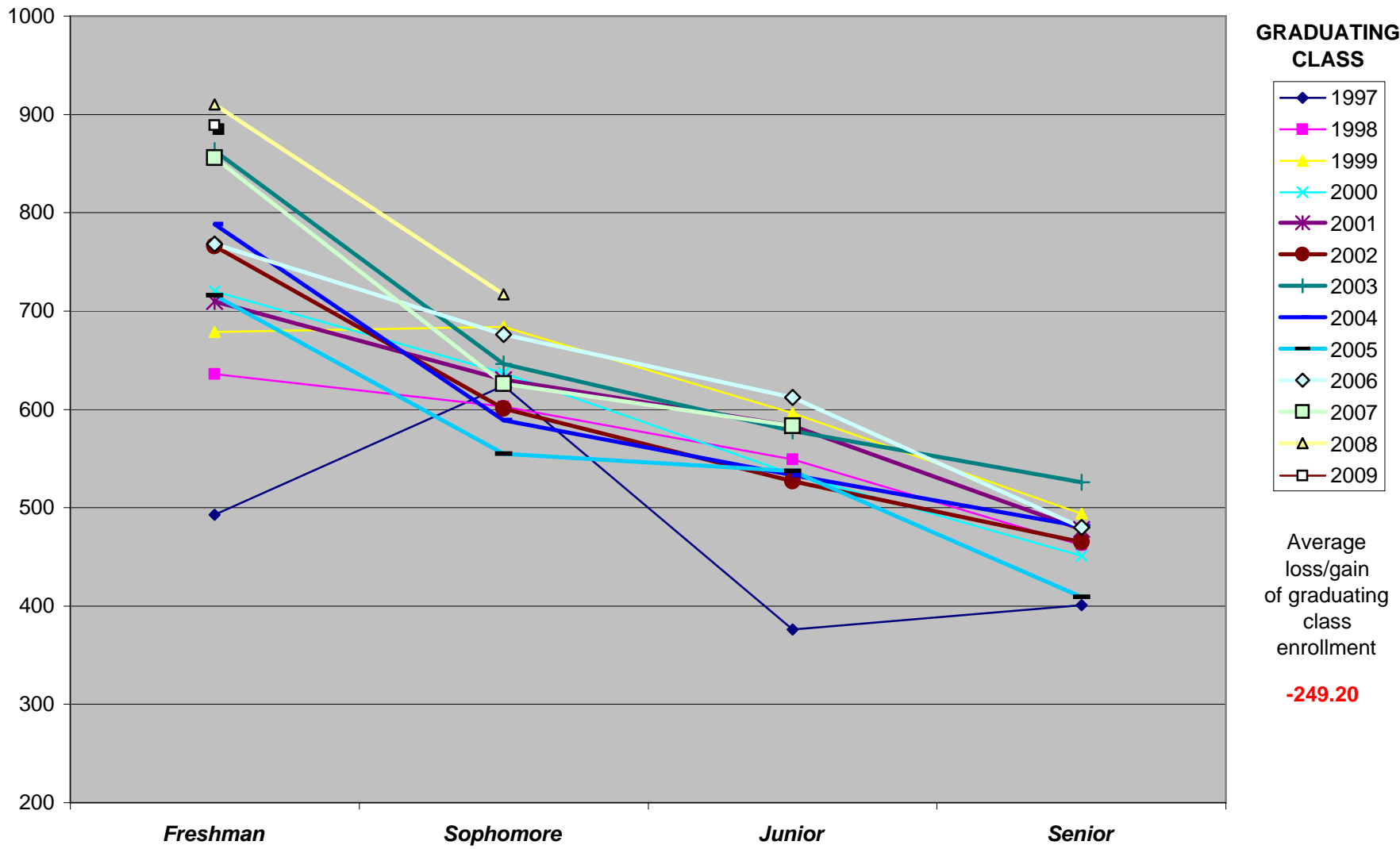
Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



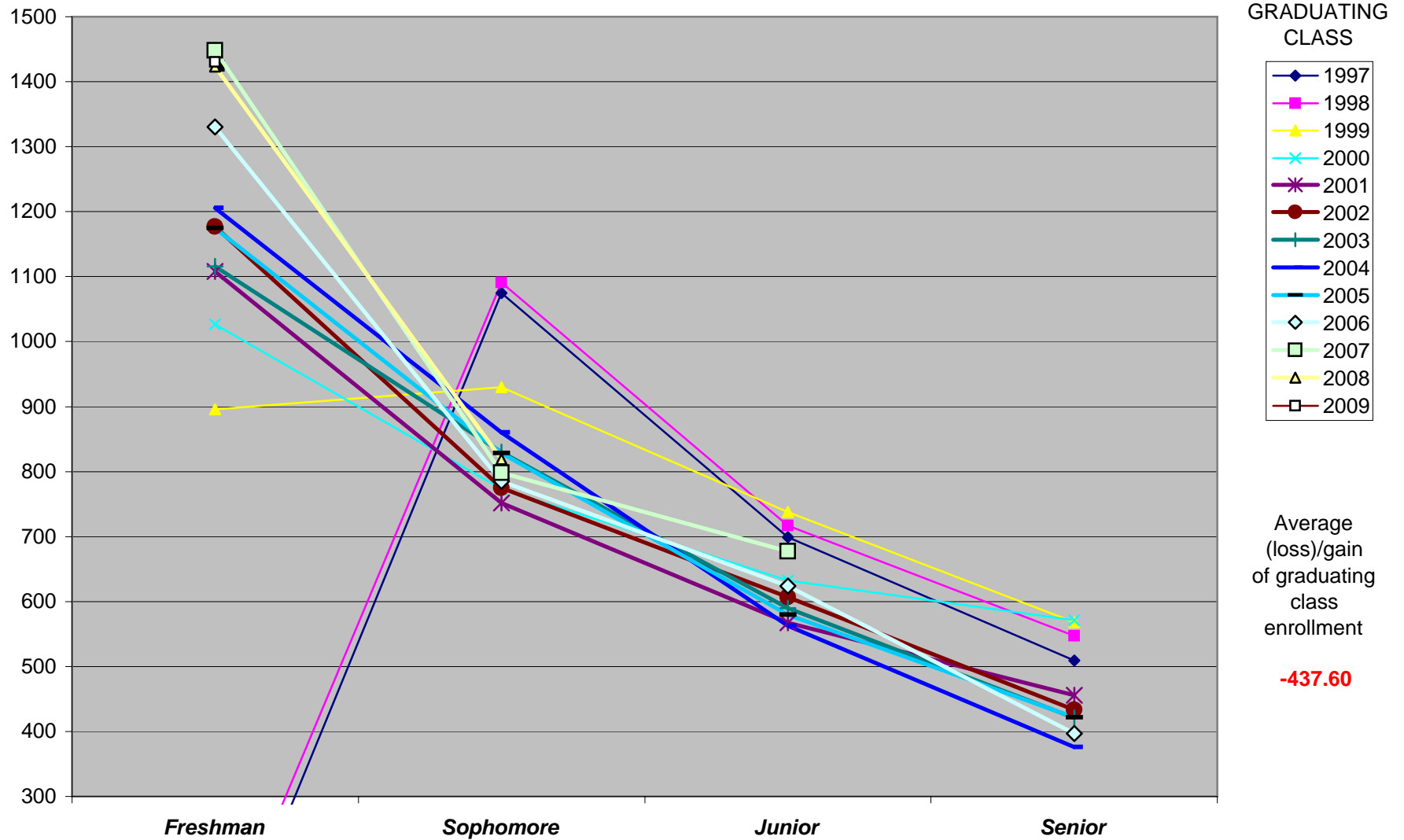
Los Angeles HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



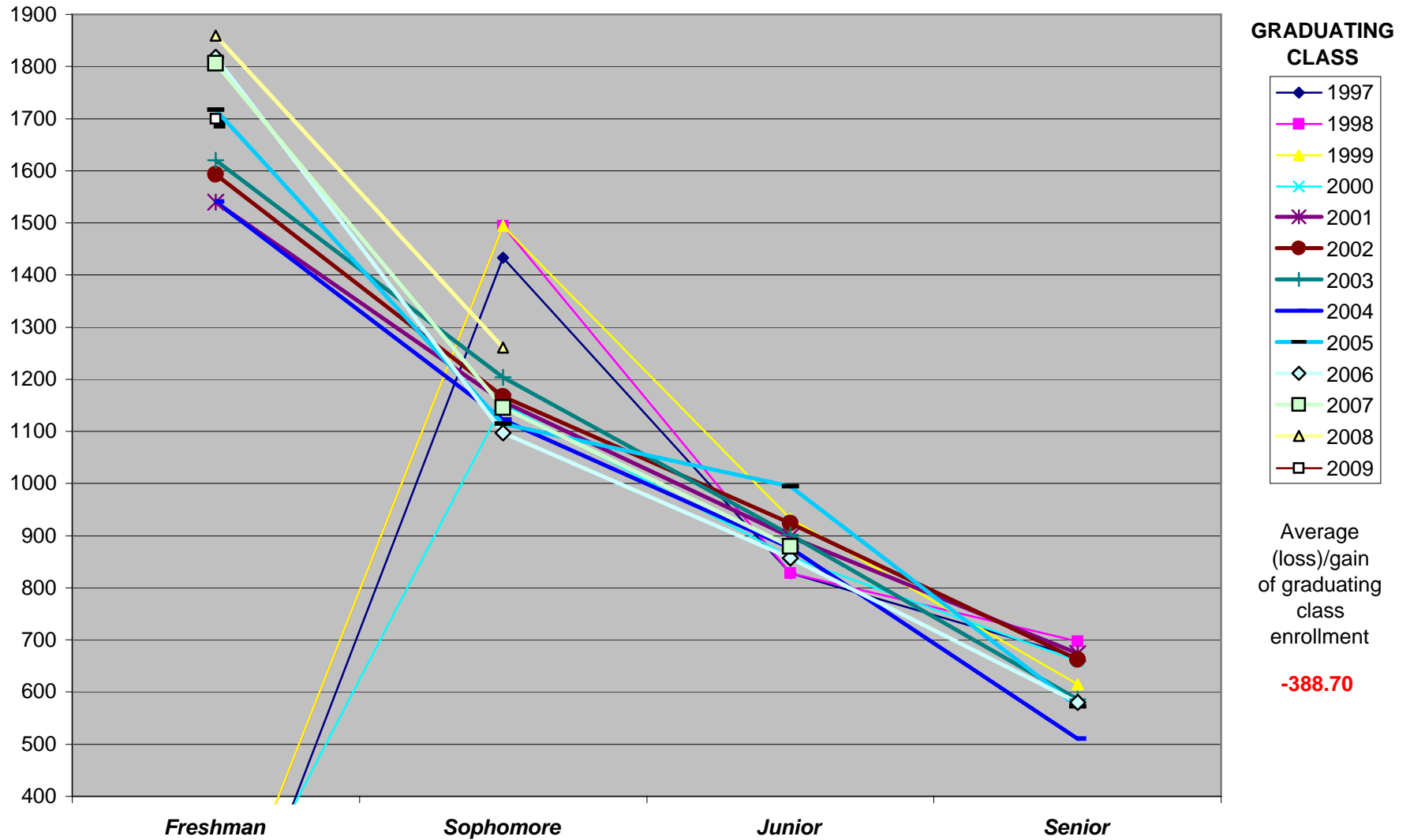
Palisades (Charter) HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



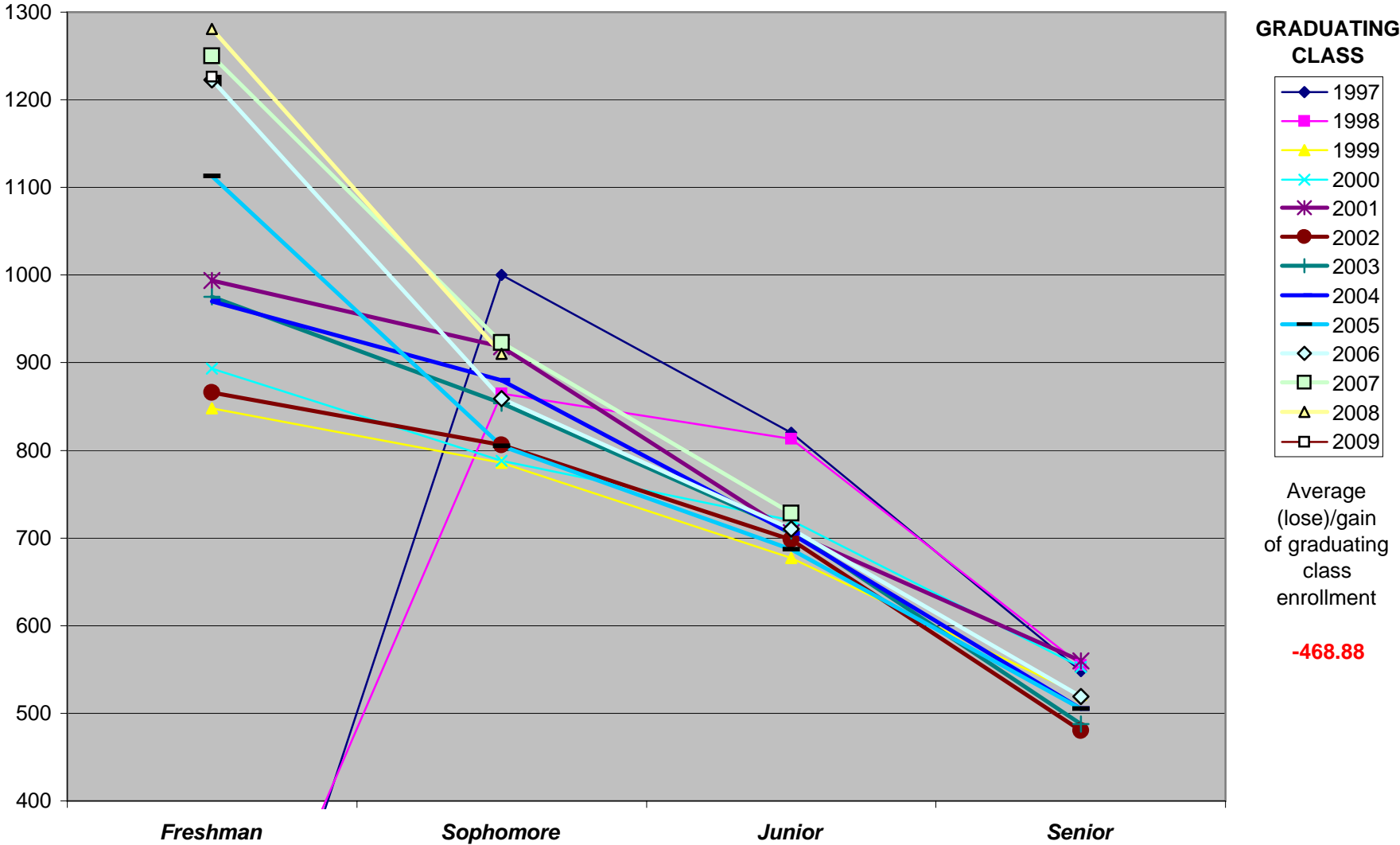
Phineas Banning HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



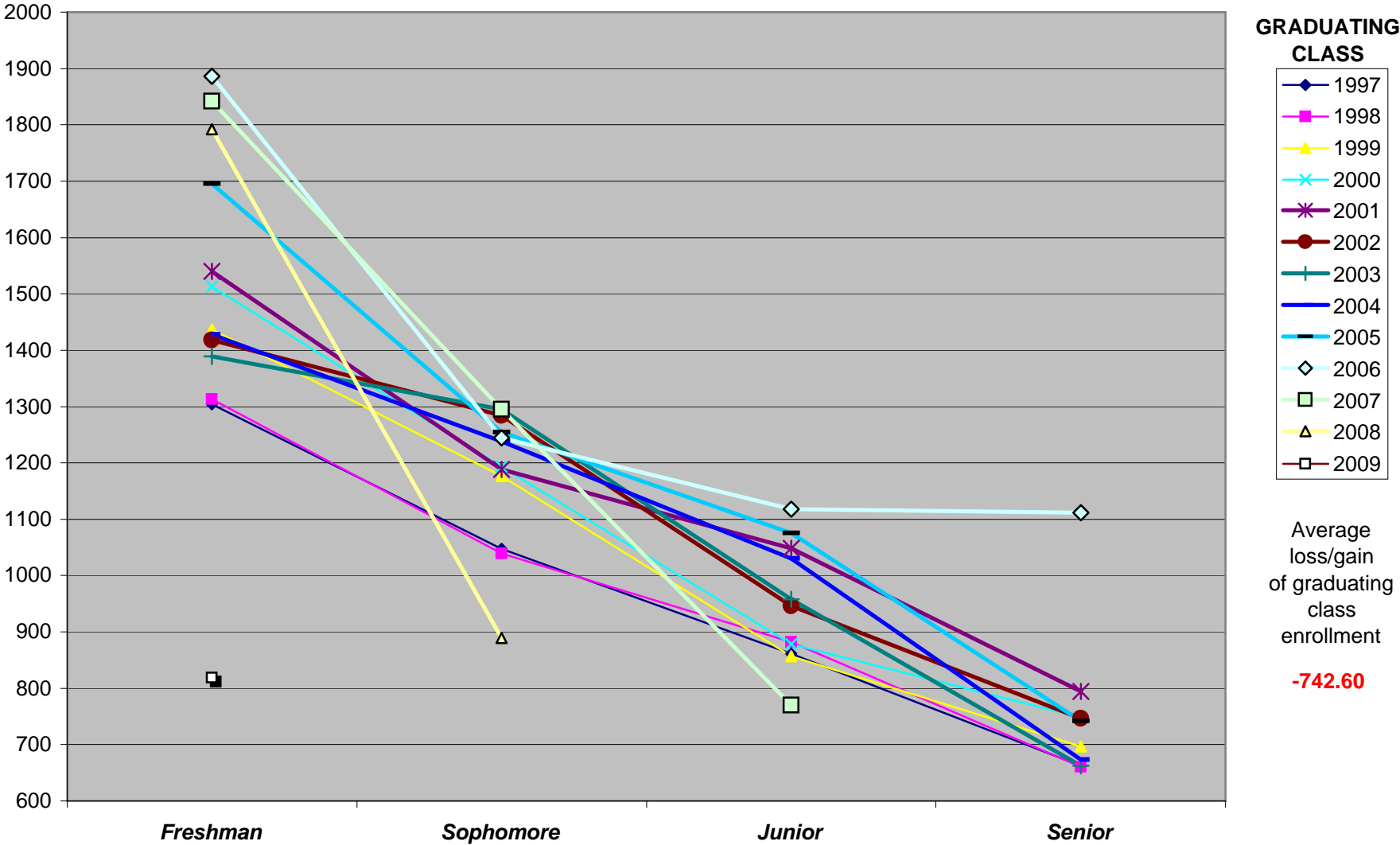
San Fernando HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



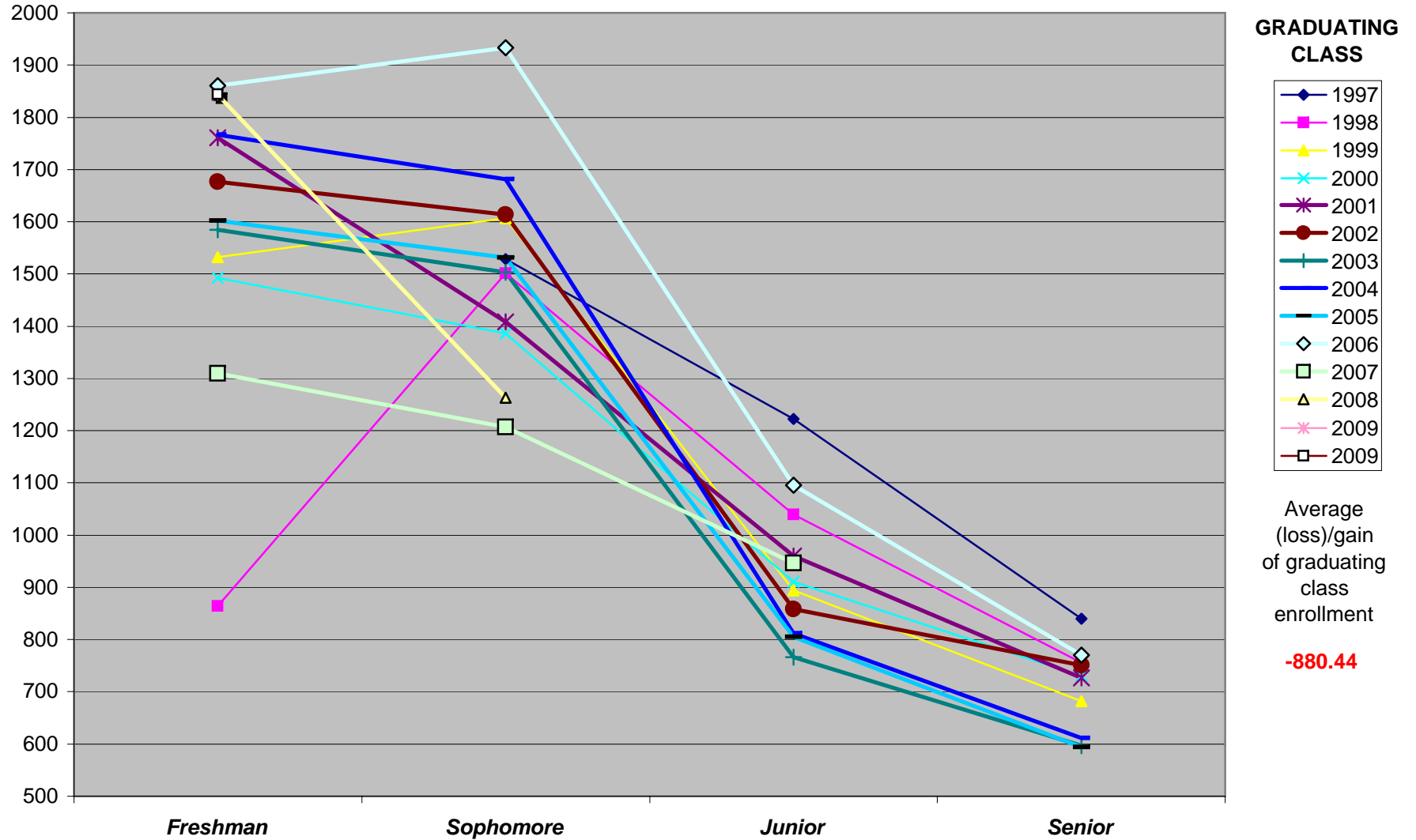
San Pedro HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



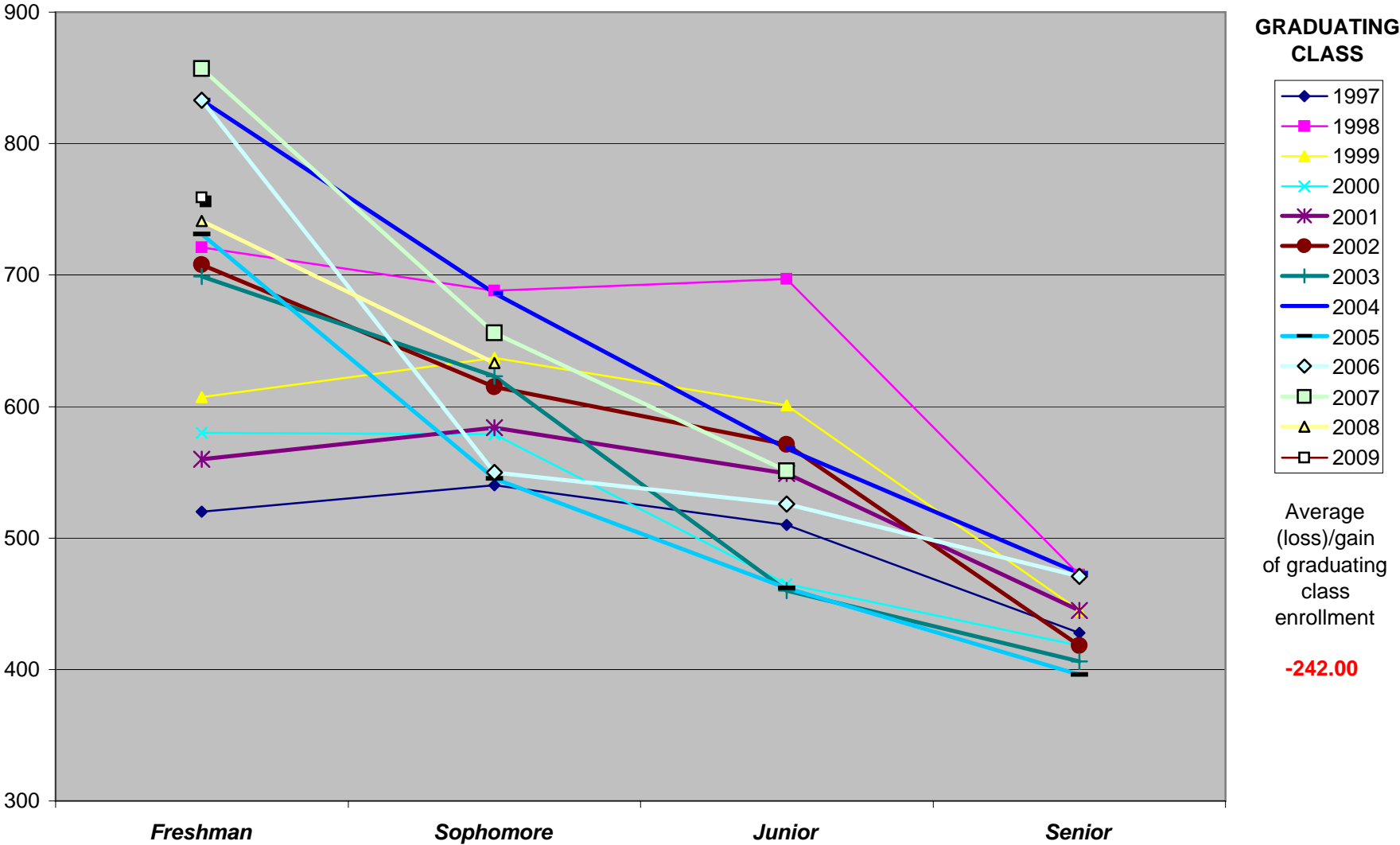
South Gate HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



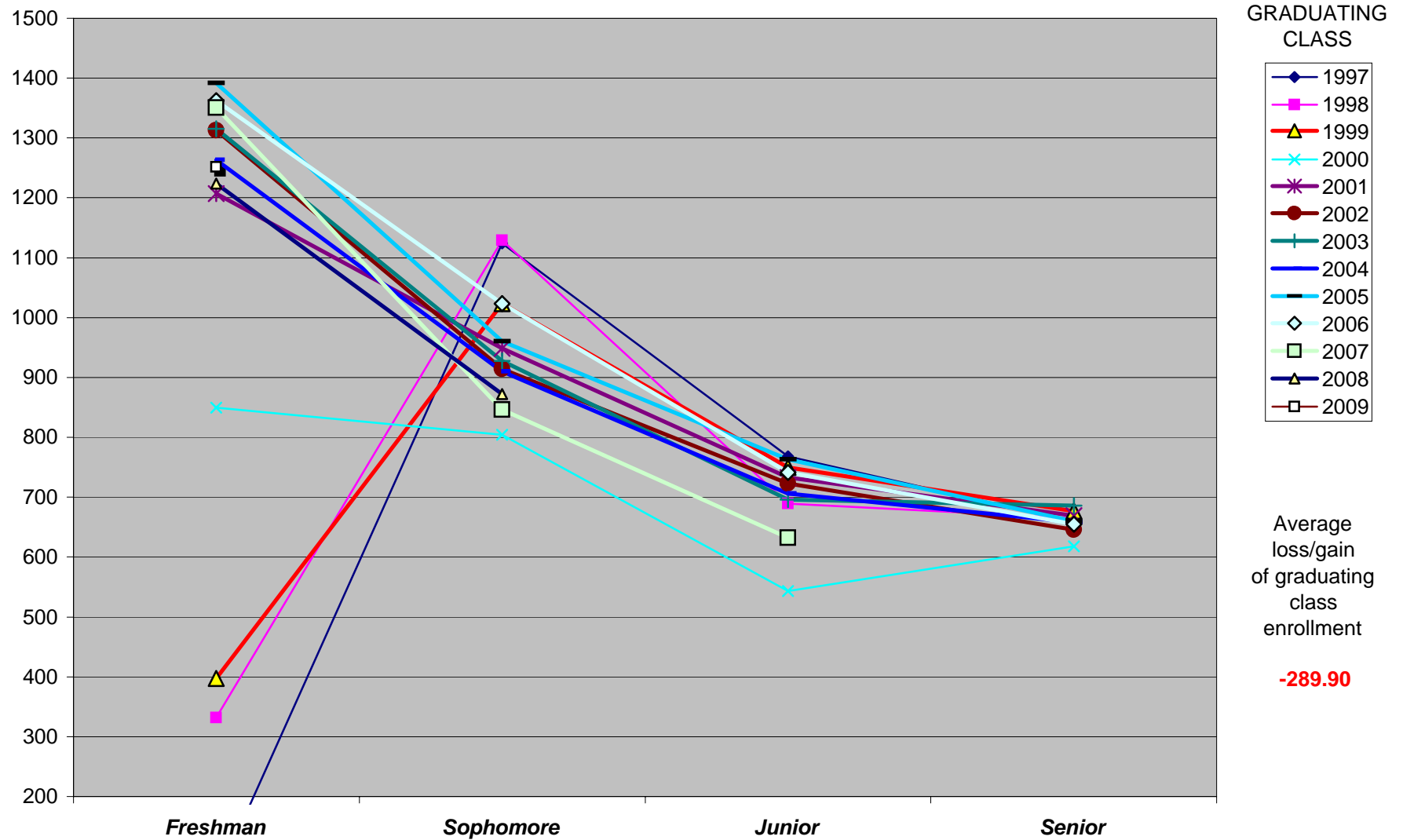
Theodore Roosevelt HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



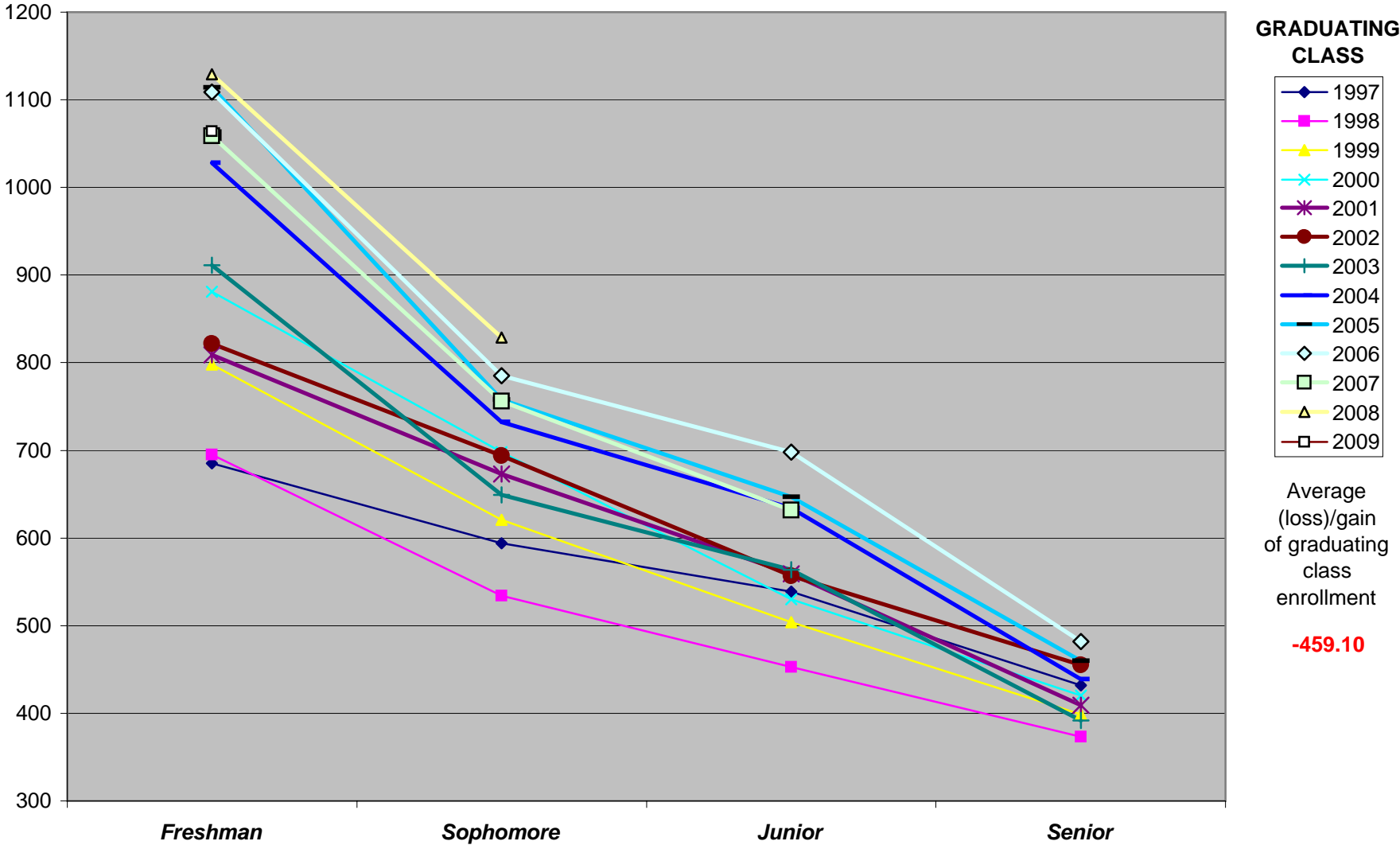
University HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



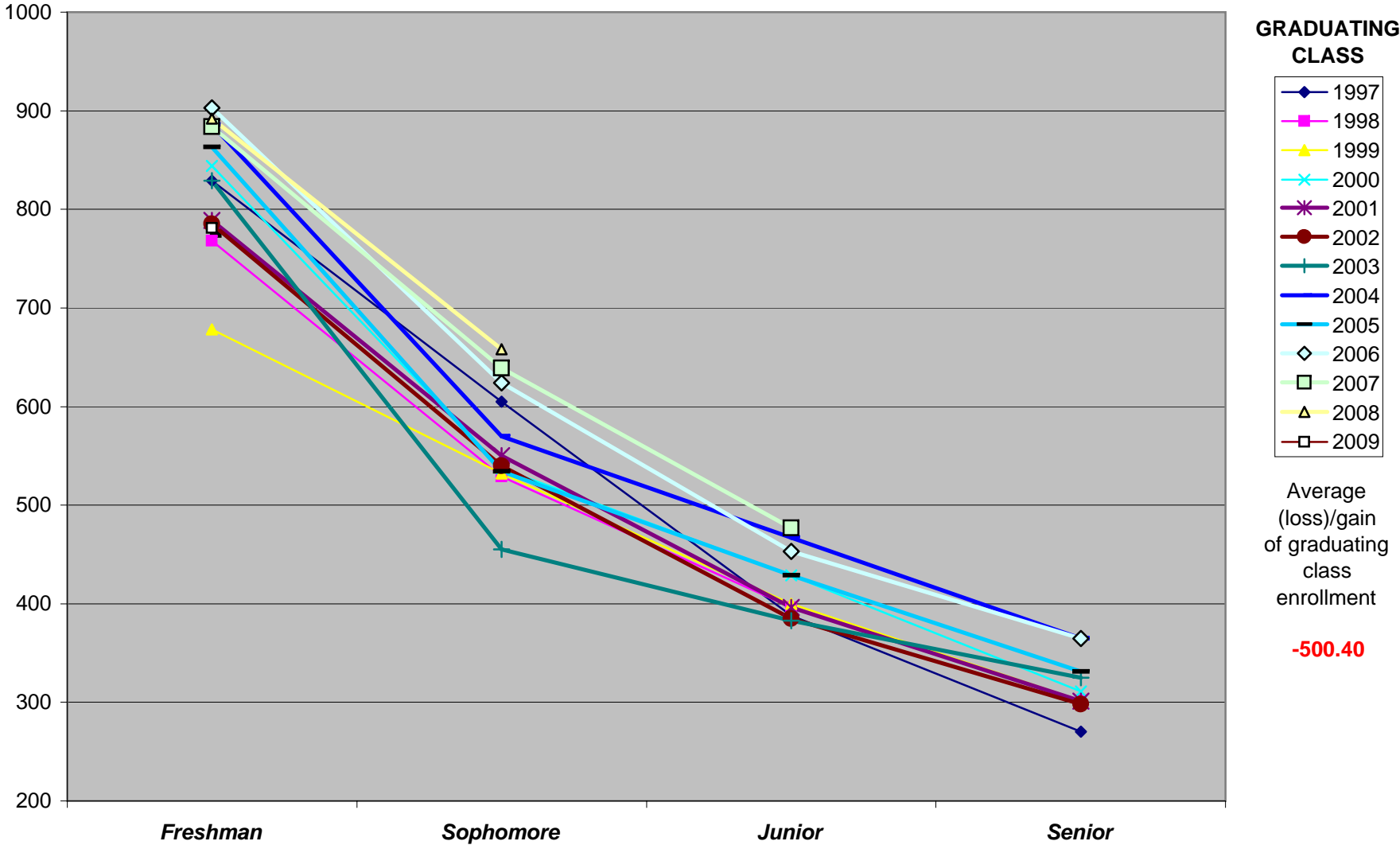
Van Nuys HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



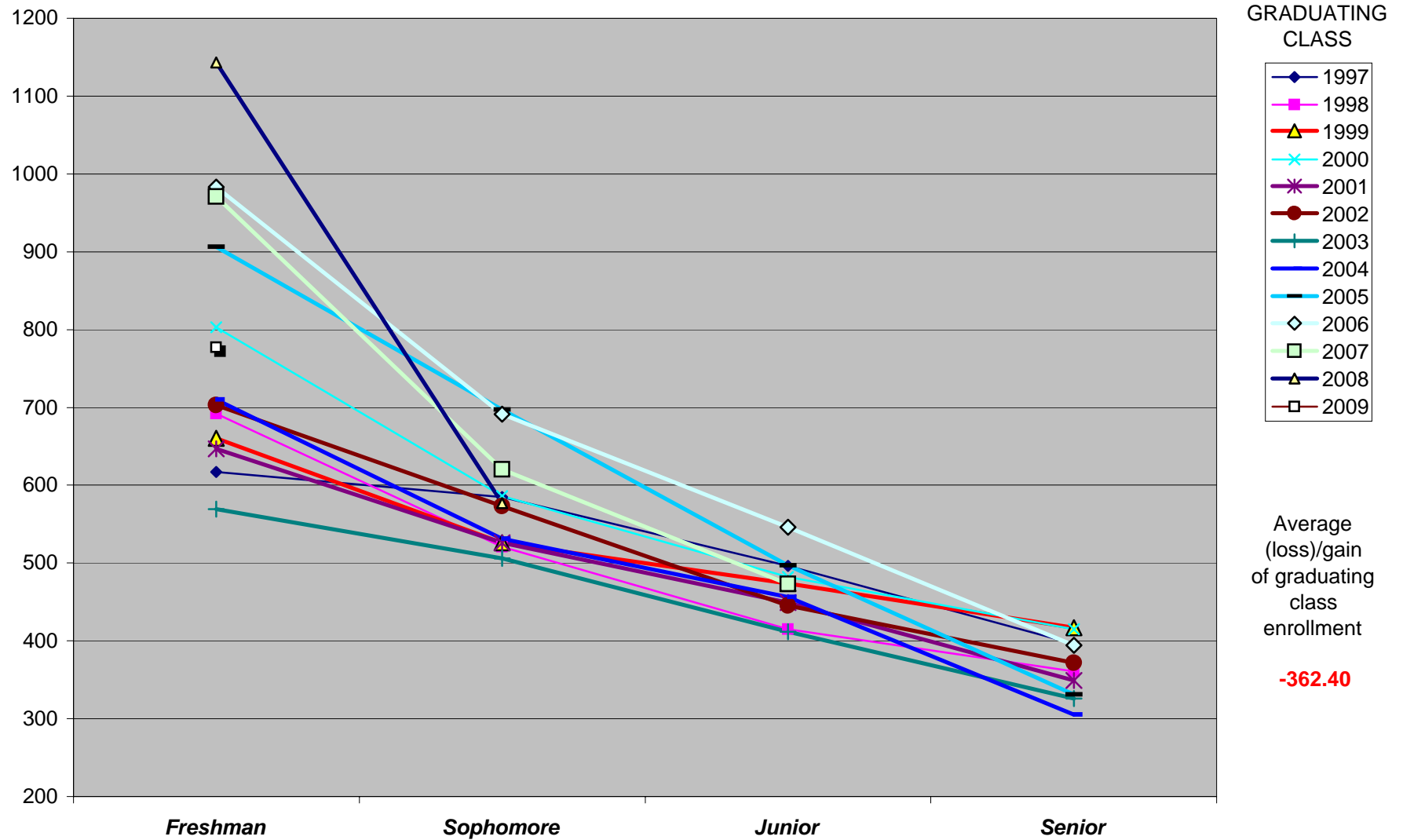
Venice HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



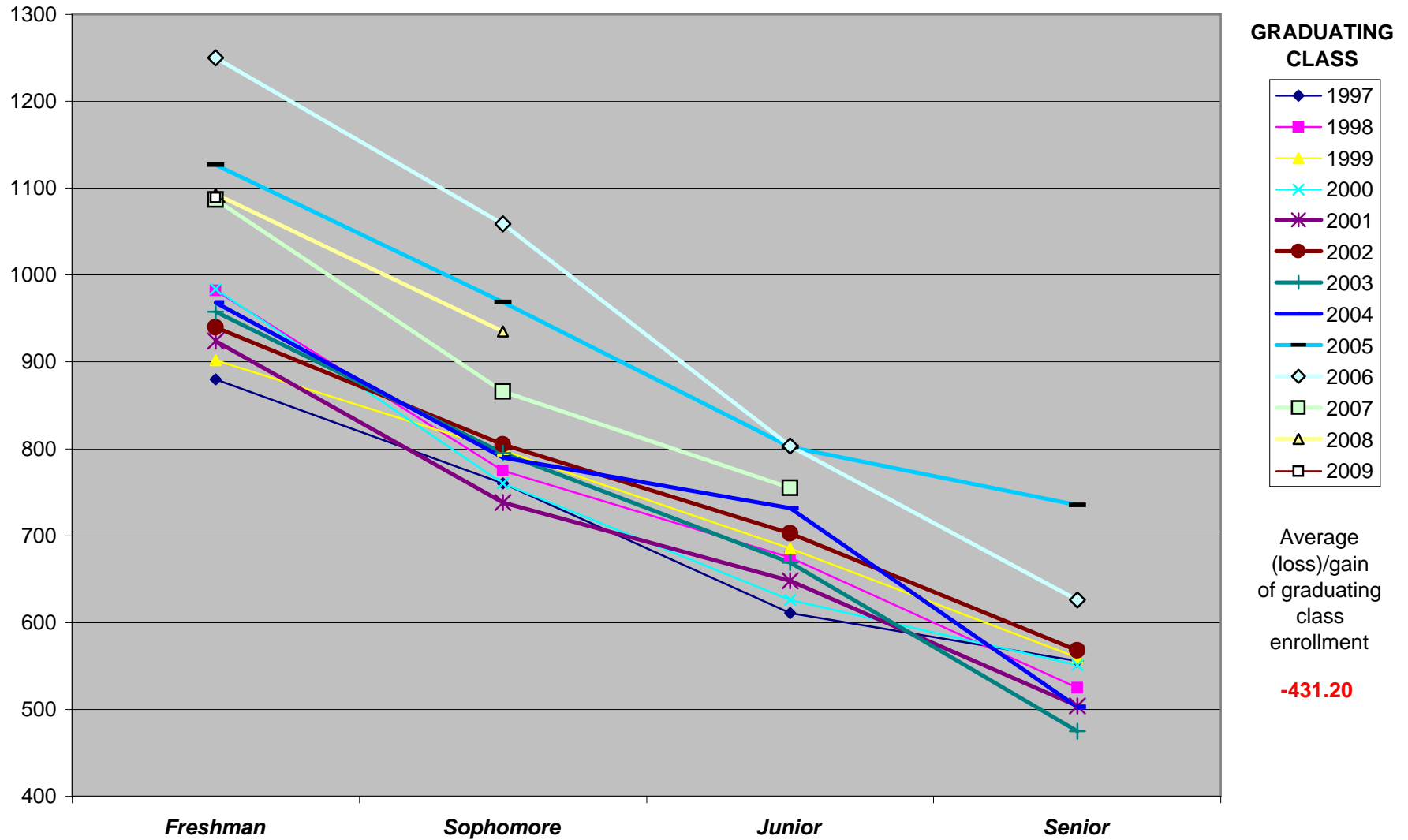
Verdugo HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?



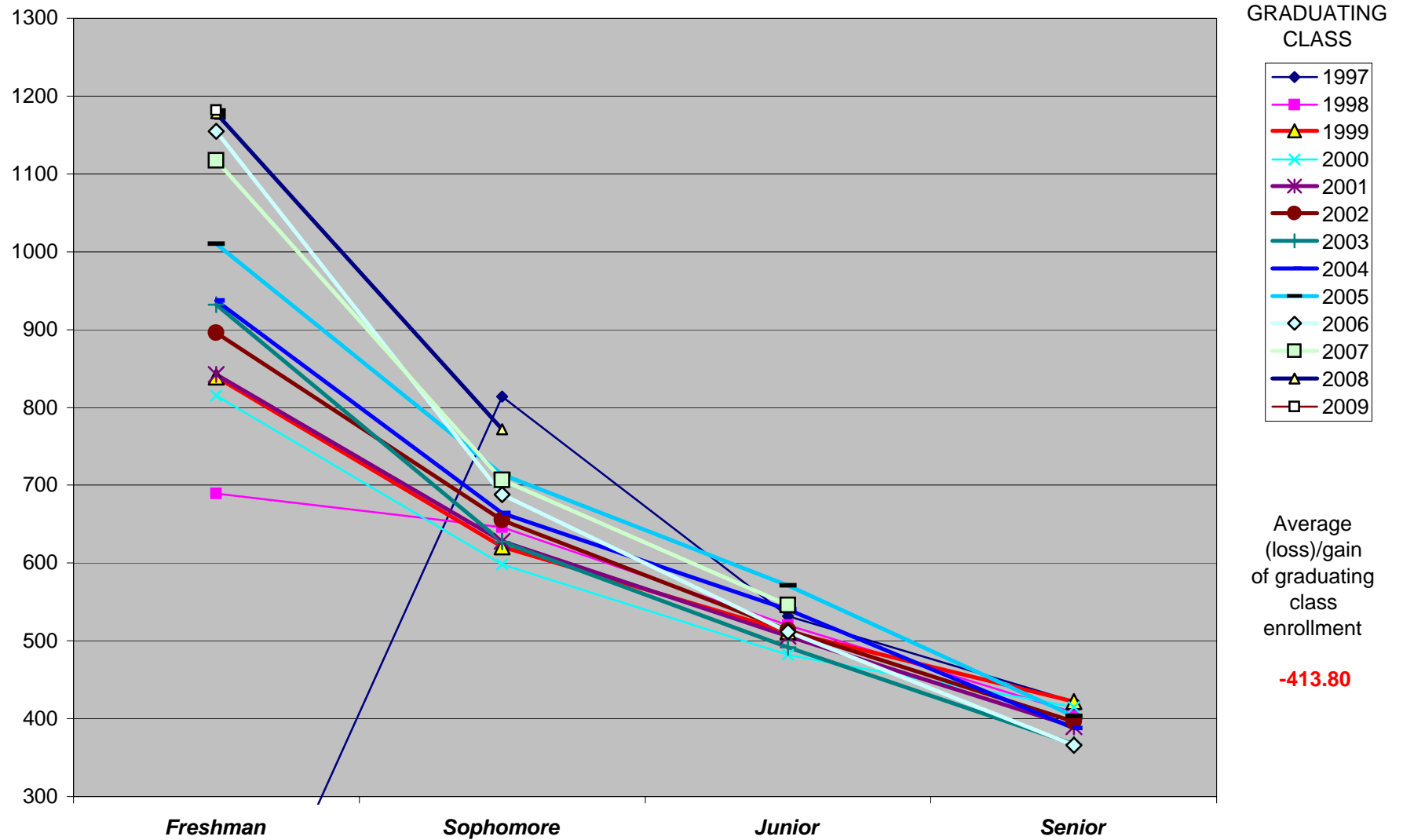
Westchester HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*



William Howard Taft HS Enrollment Tracked by Class Where have all the Seniors gone?

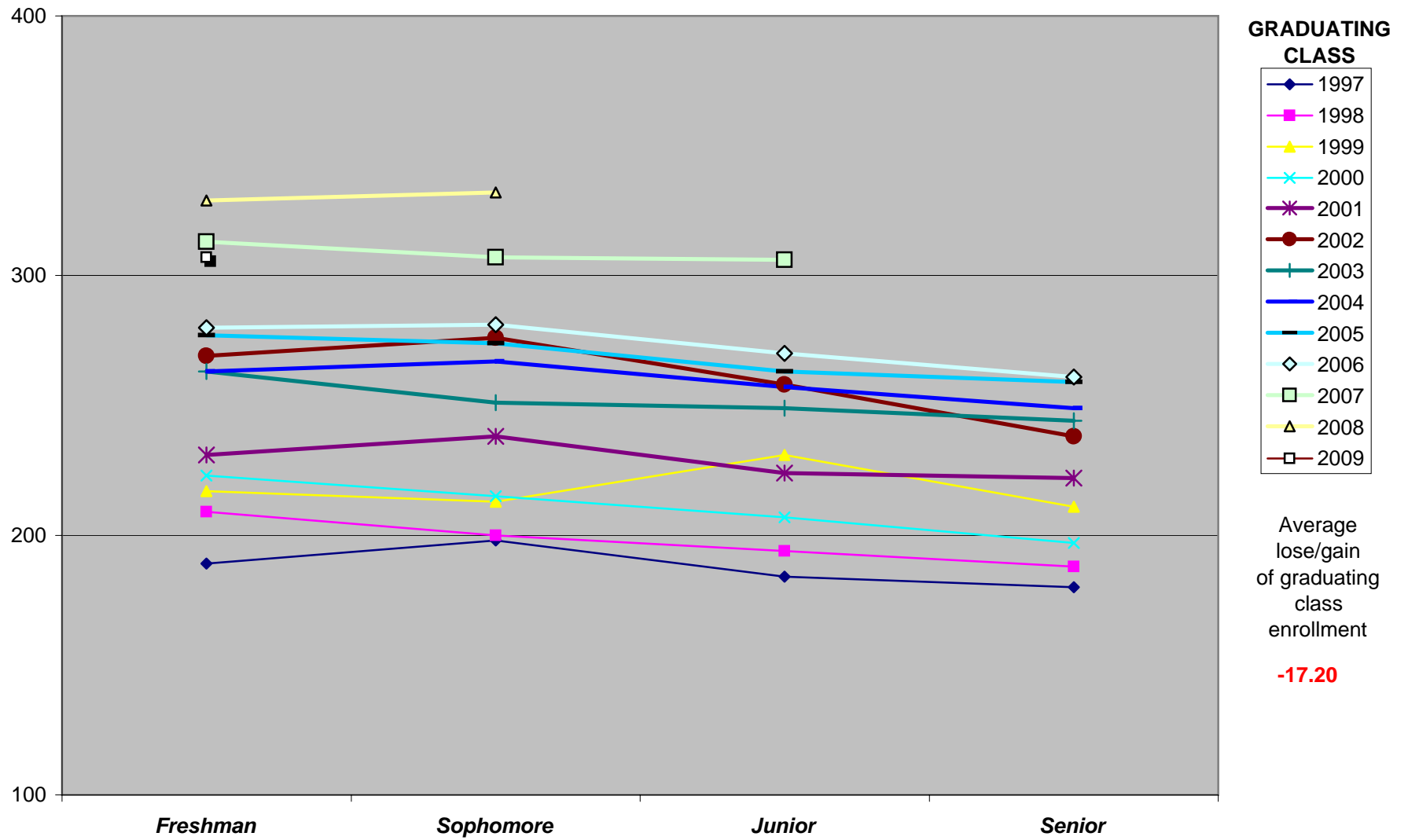


Woodrow Wilson HS Enrollment Tracked by Class *Where have all the Seniors gone?*

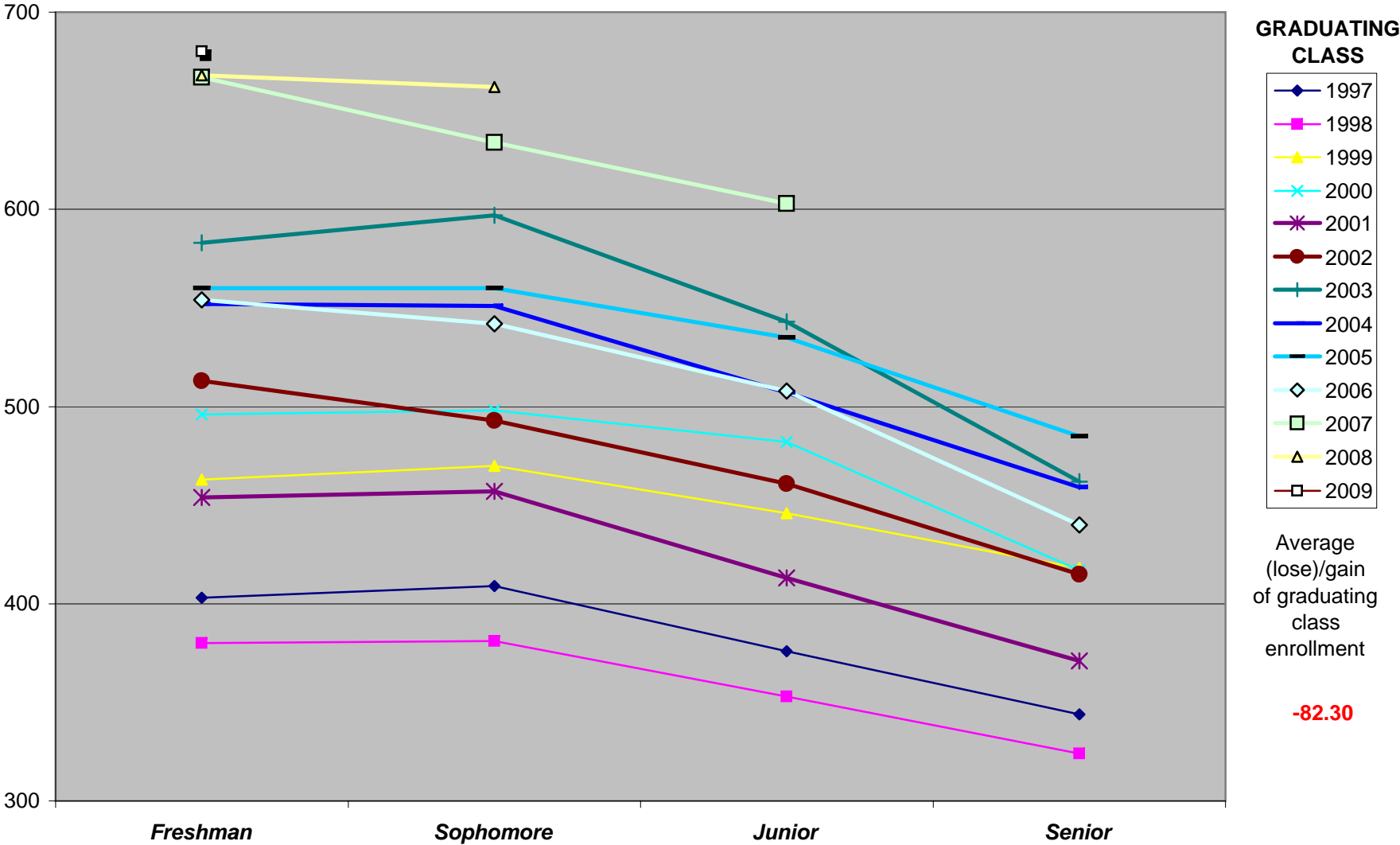


This blank sheet was intentionally placed here

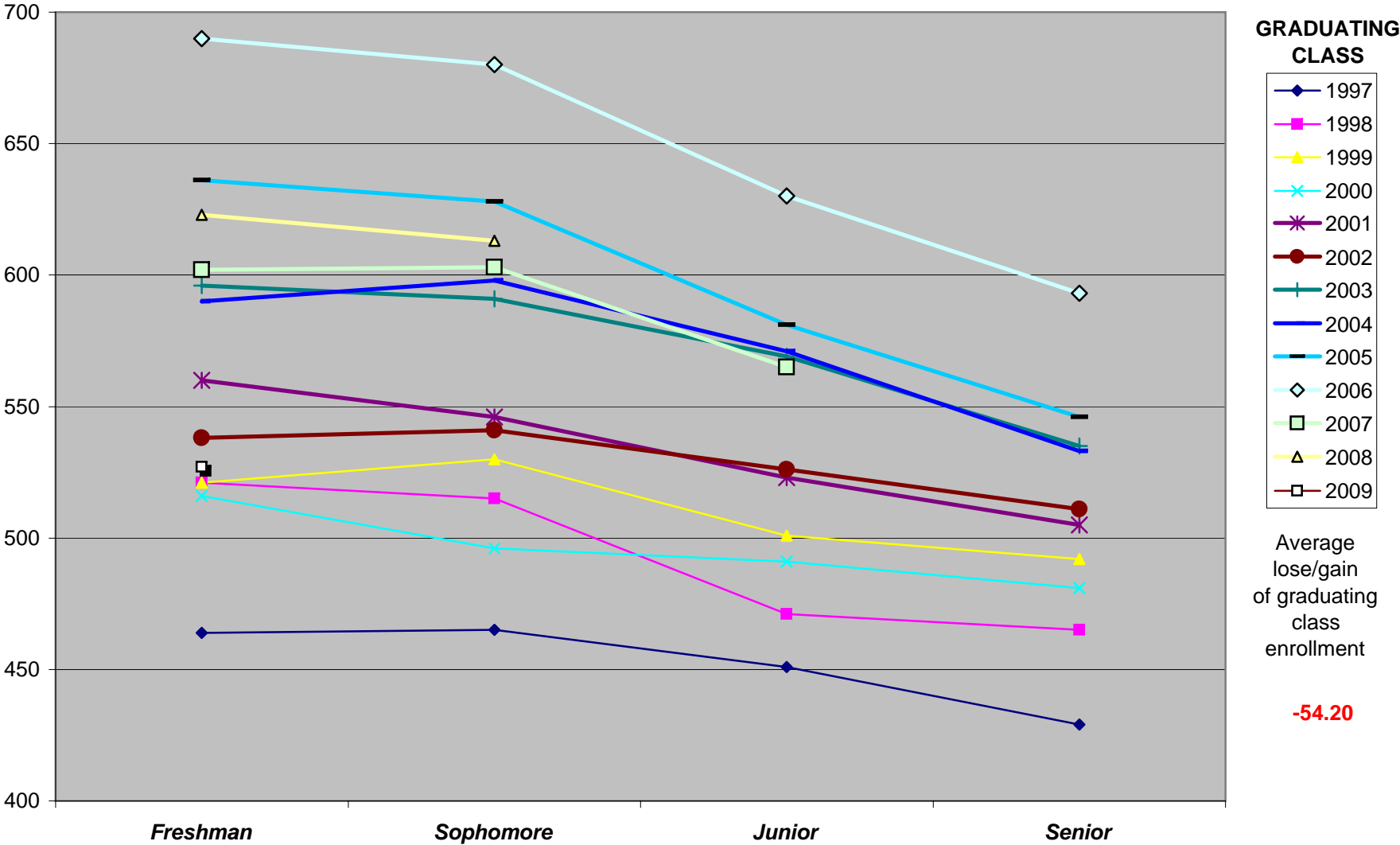
El Segundo HS Enrollment Tracked by Class



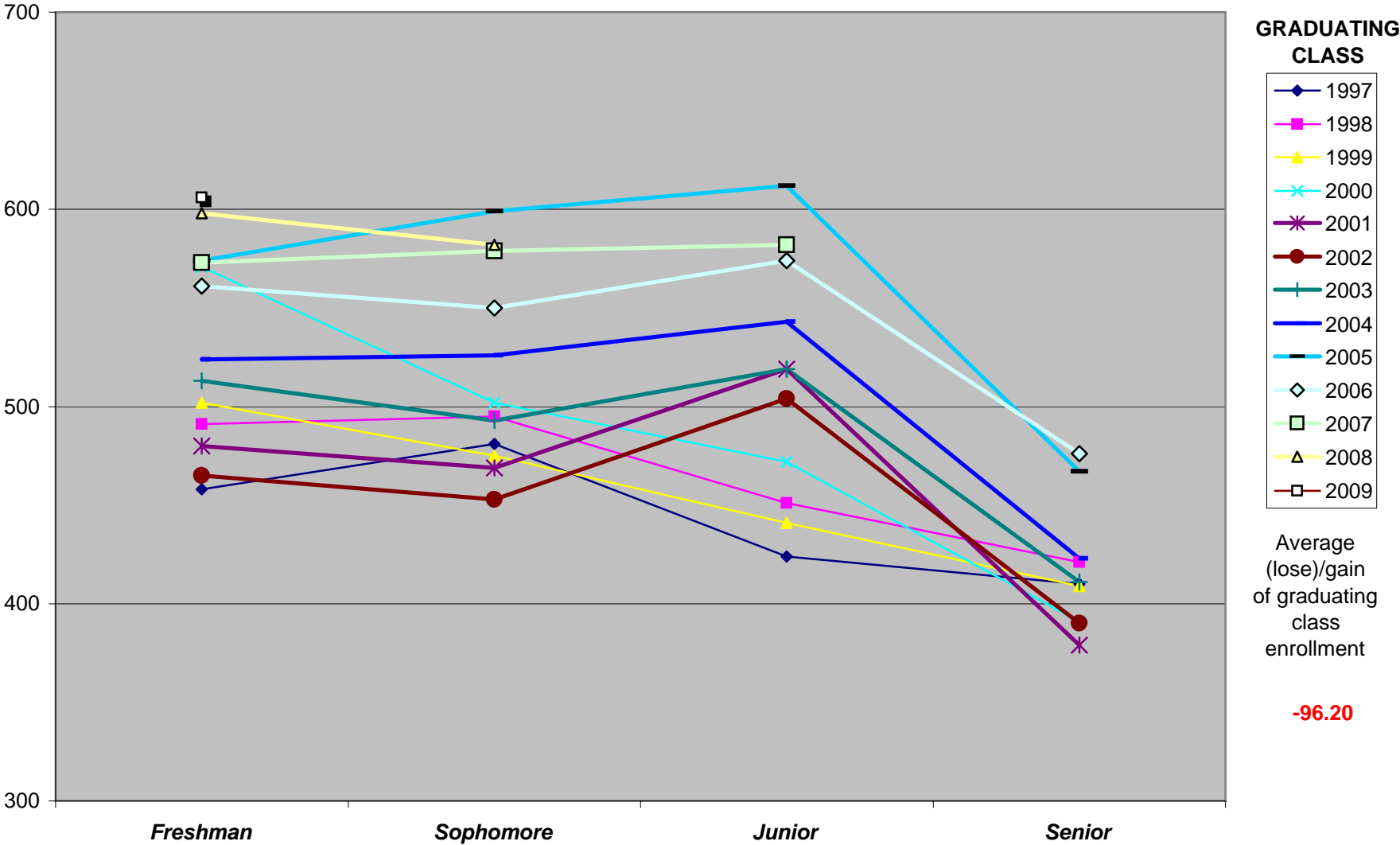
Redondo HS (Redondo) Enrollment Tracked by Class



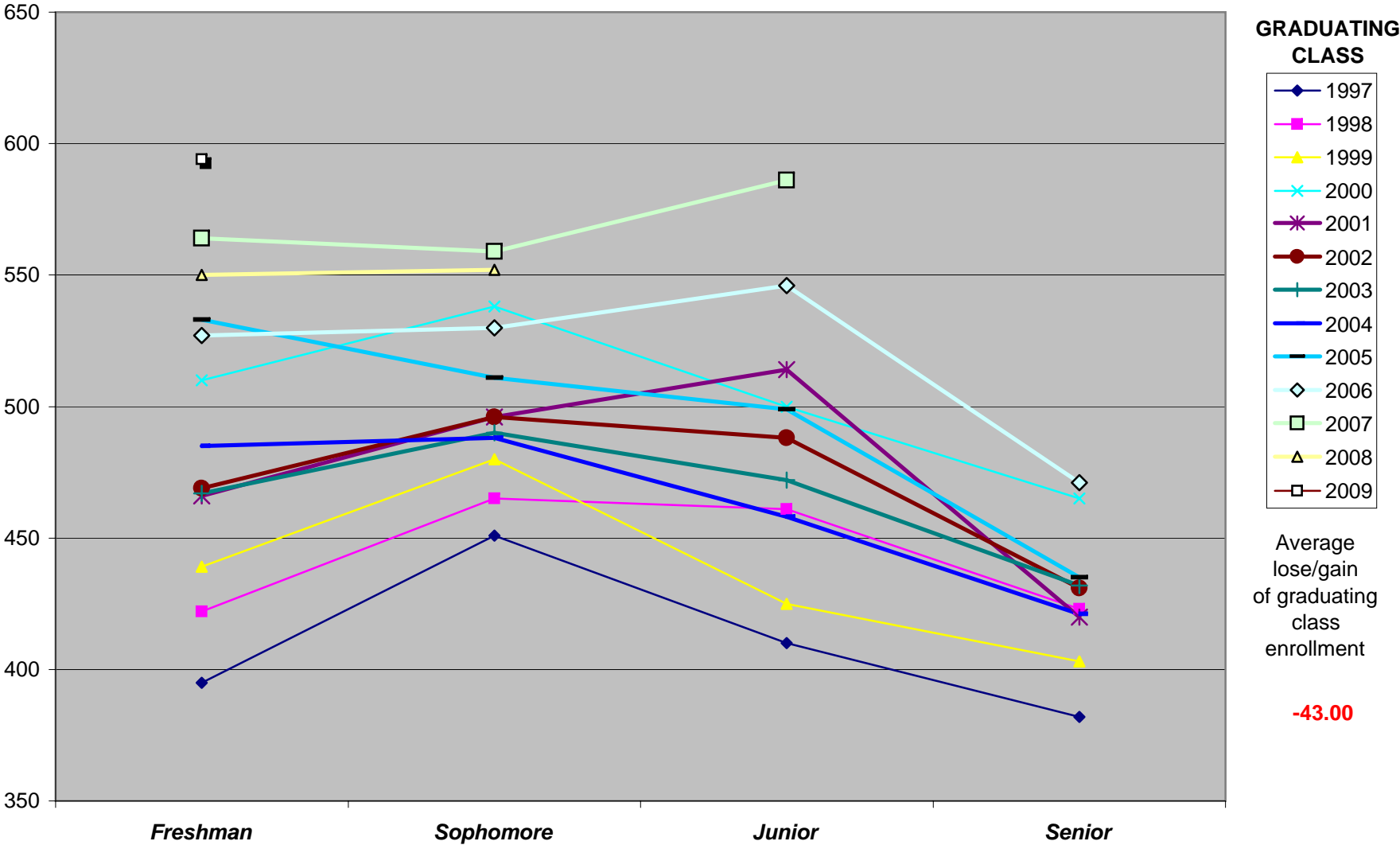
Mira Costa HS (Manhattan) Enrollment Tracked by Class



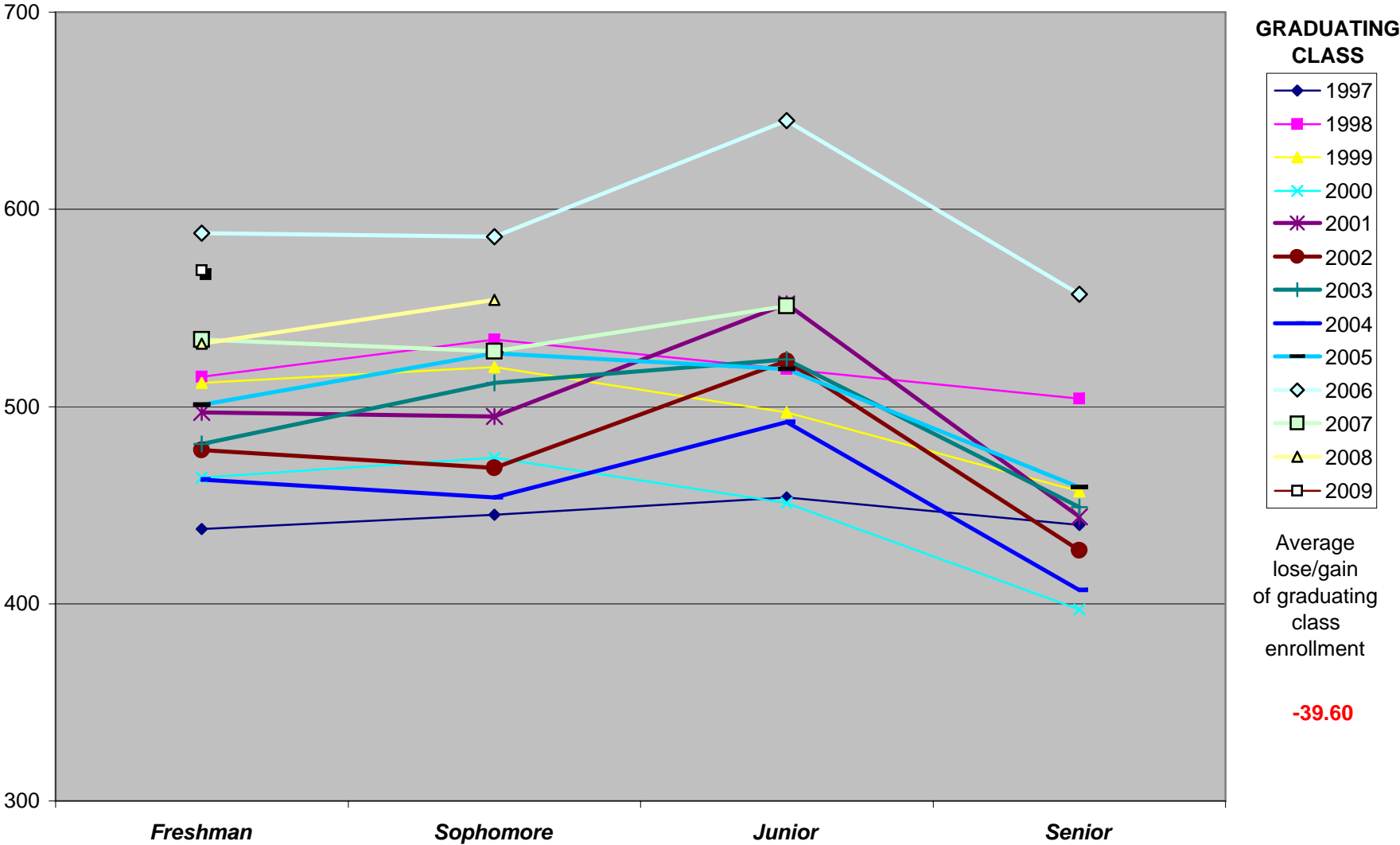
Torrance HS Enrollment Tracked by Class



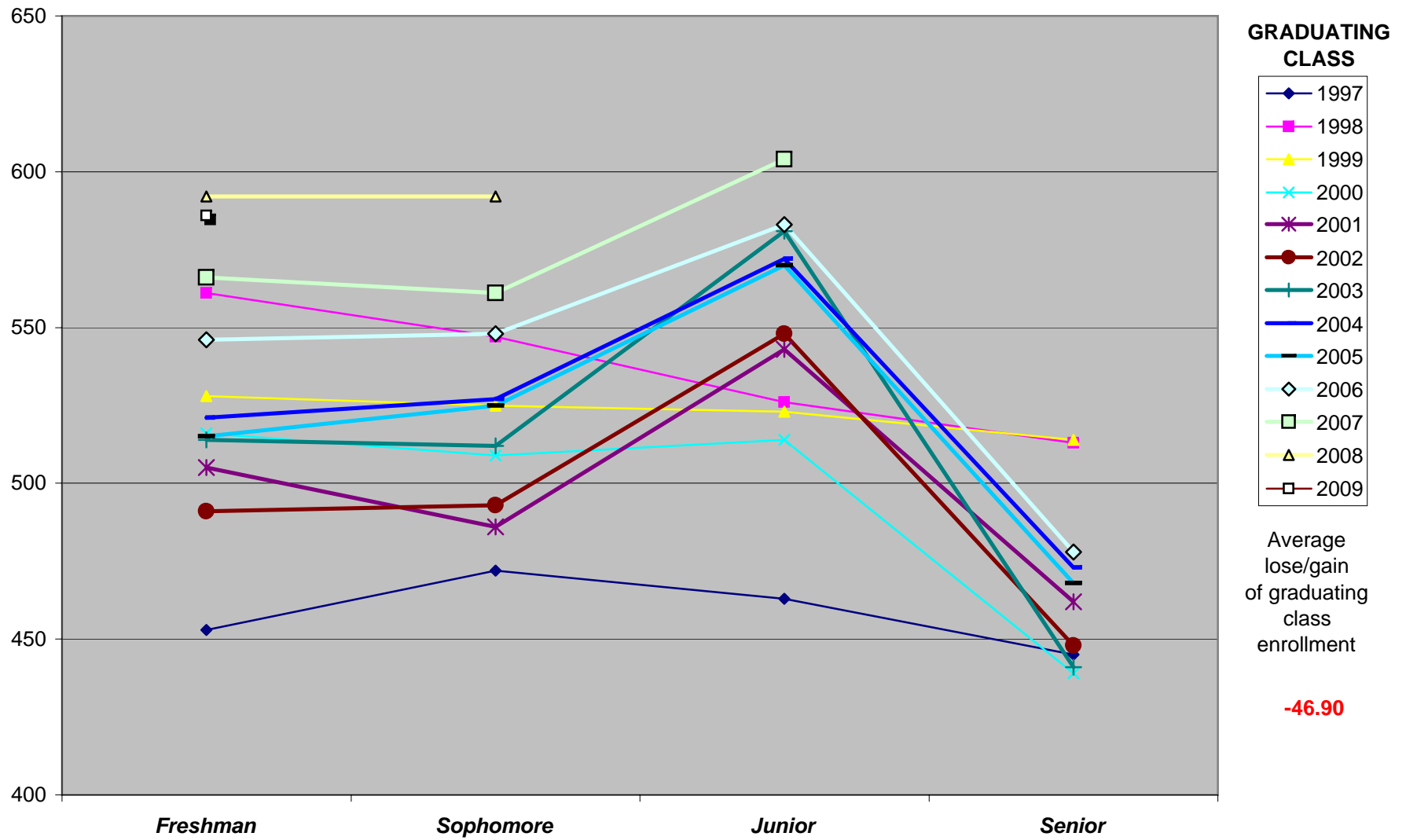
South HS (Torrance) Enrollment Tracked by Class



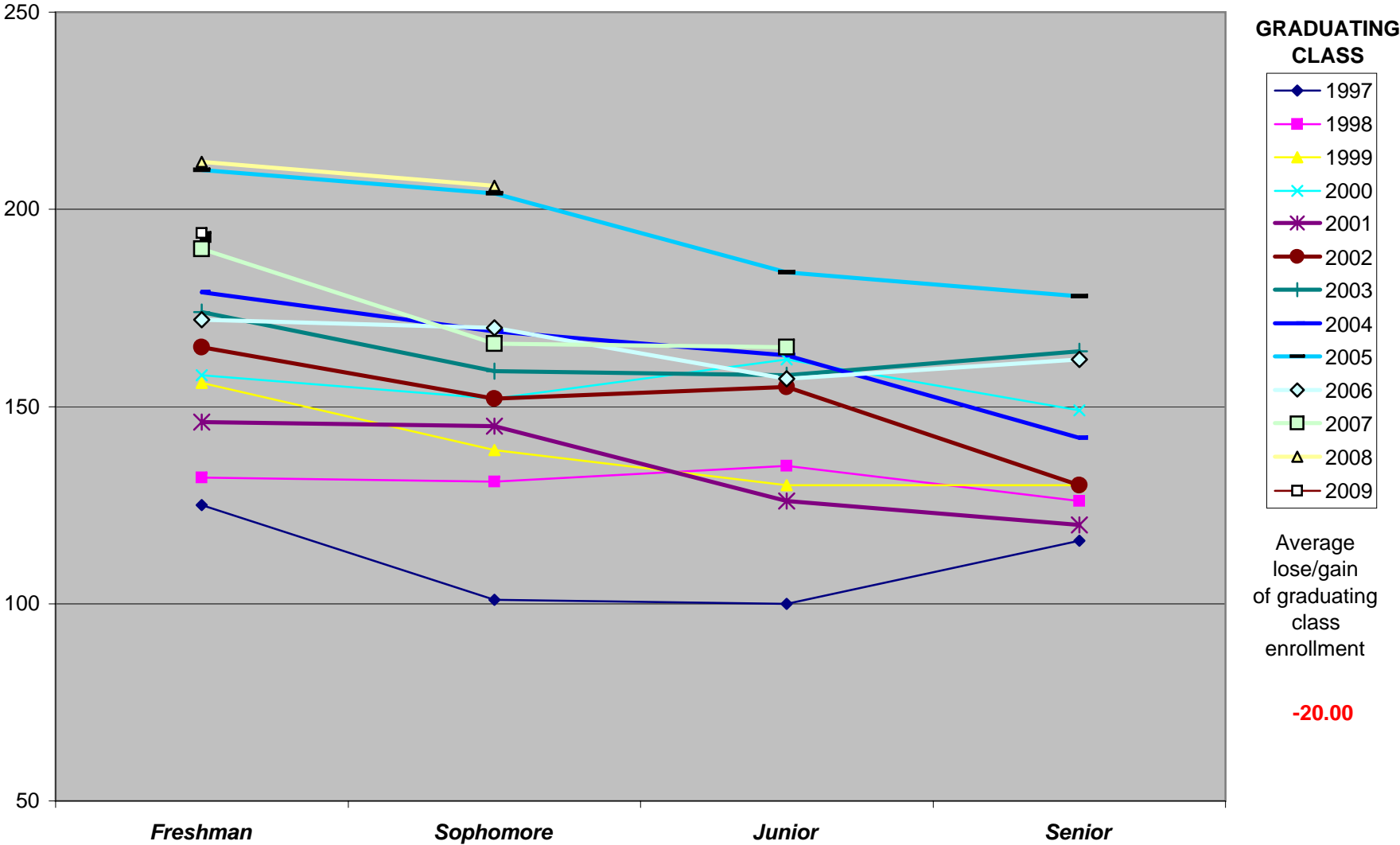
West HS (Torrance) Enrollment Tracked by Class



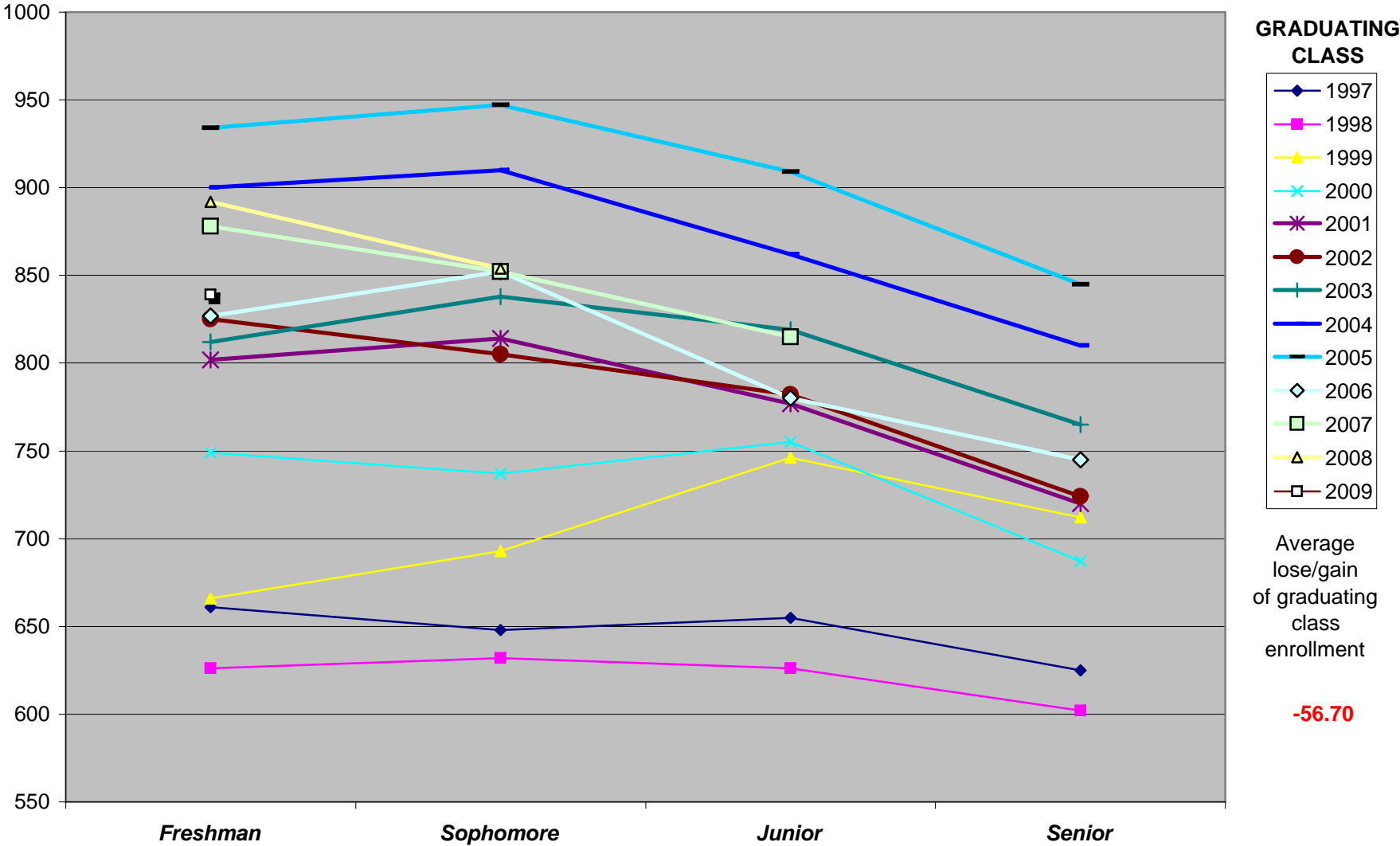
North HS (Torrance) Enrollment Tracked by Class



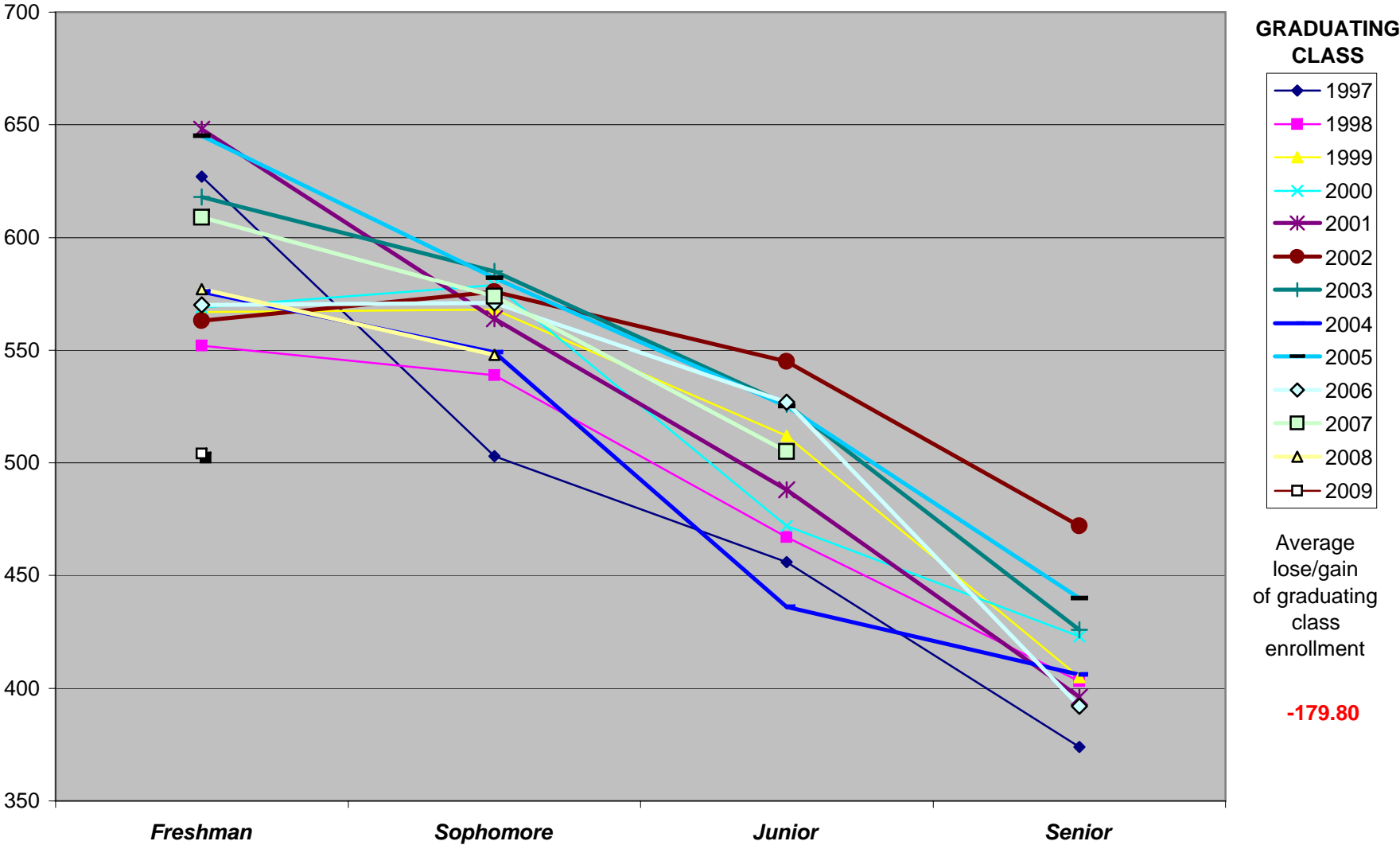
Malibu High School (Santa Monica)



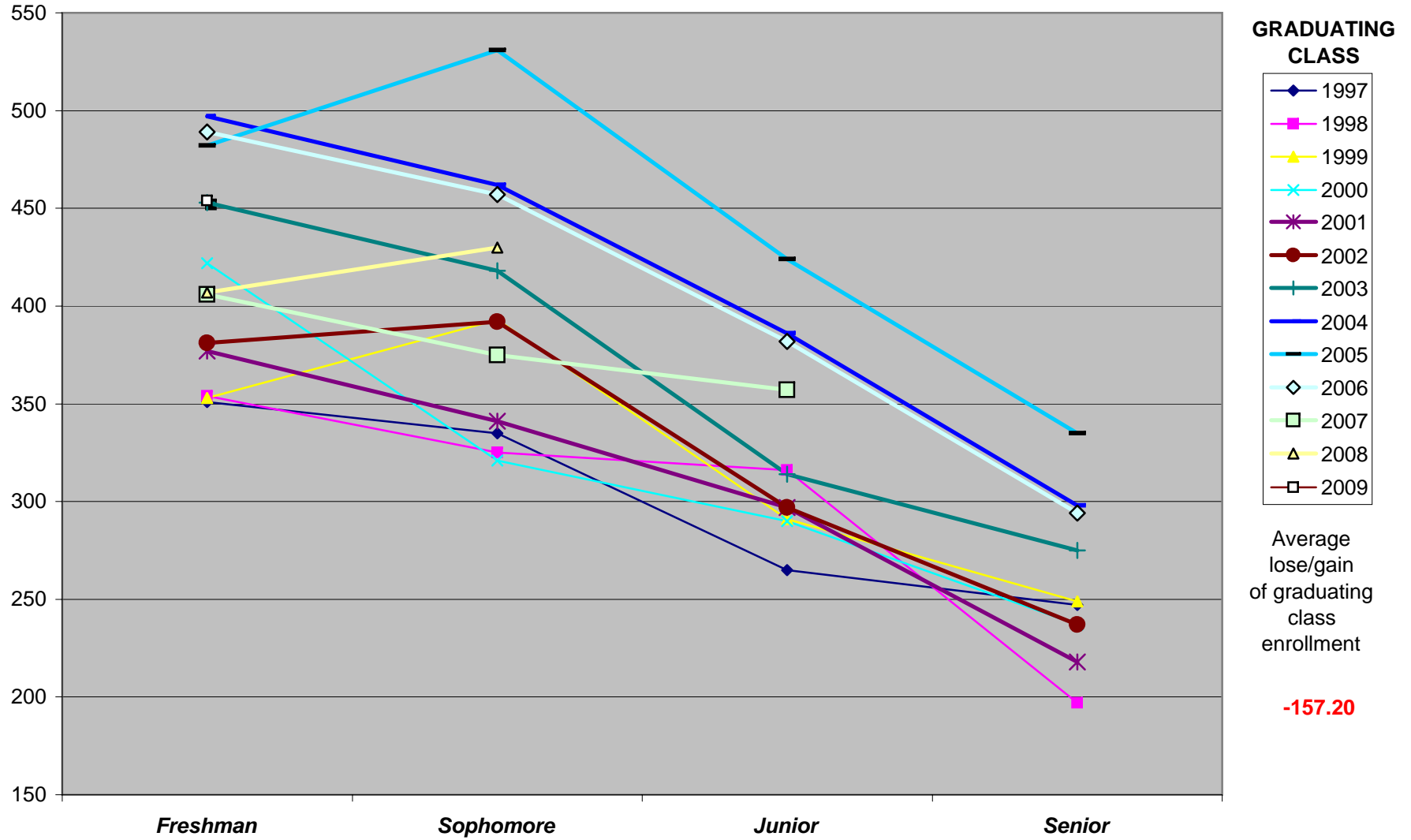
Santa Monica High School (Santa Monica)



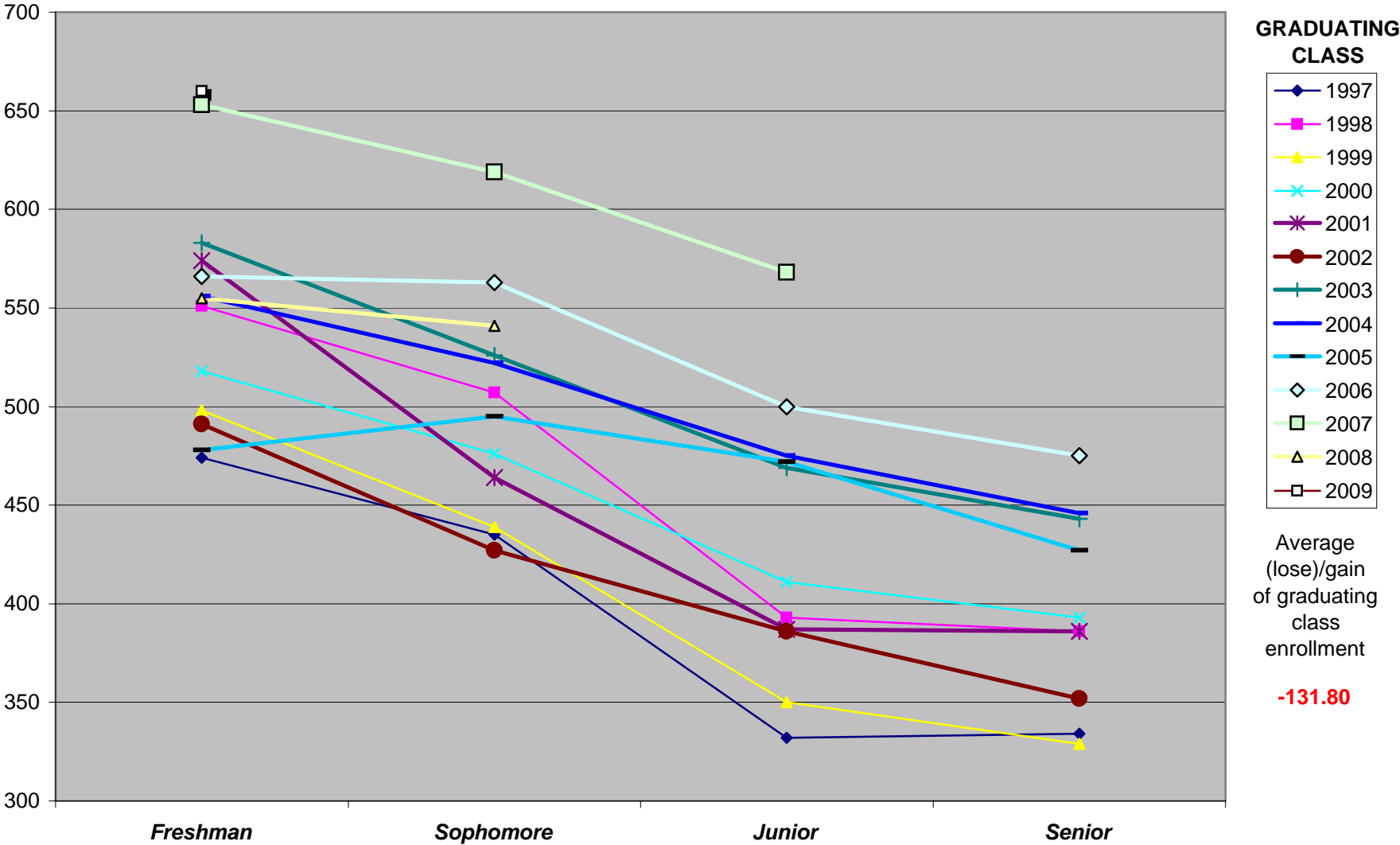
Inglewood High School (Inglewood Unified School District)



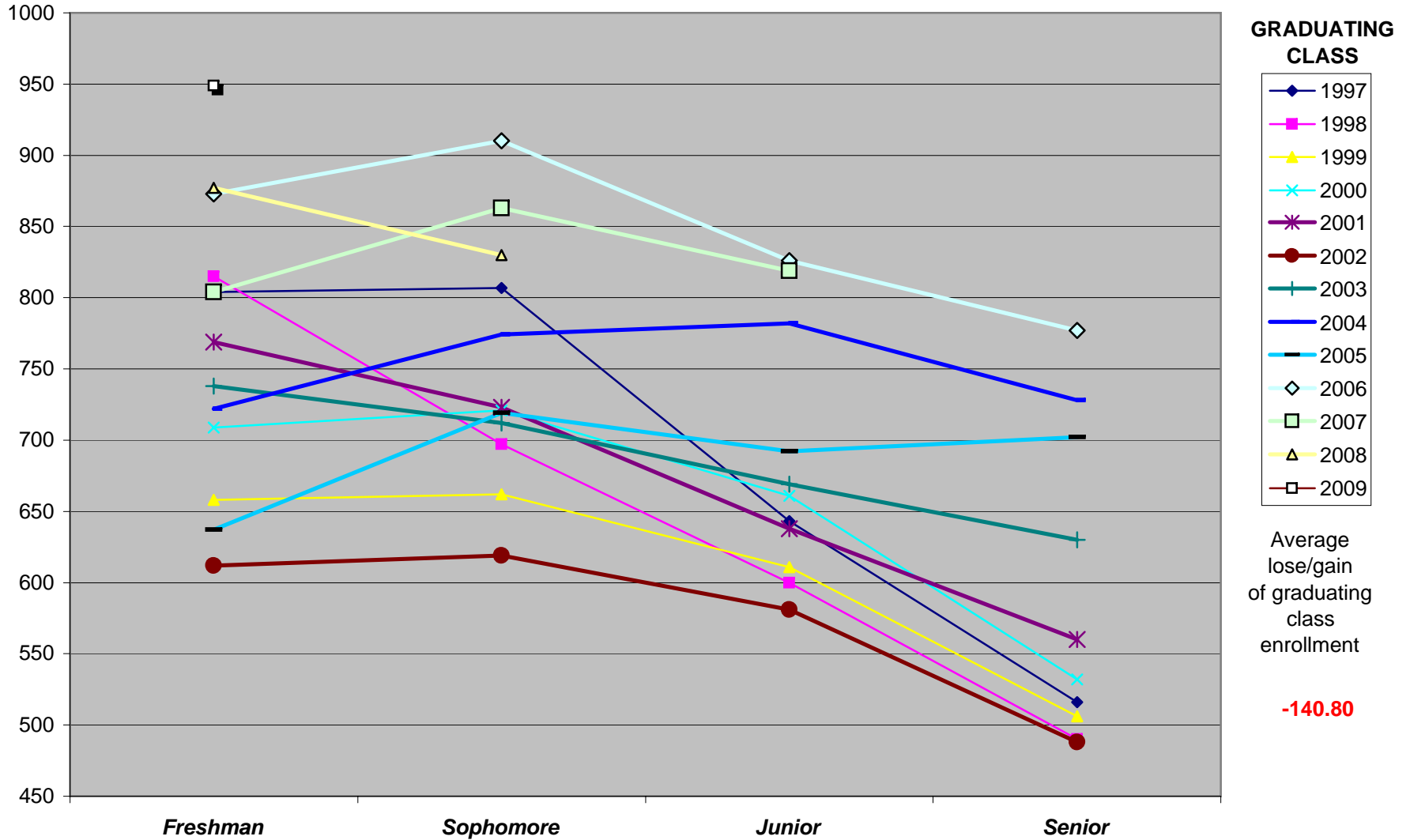
Morningside High School (Inglewood Unified School District)



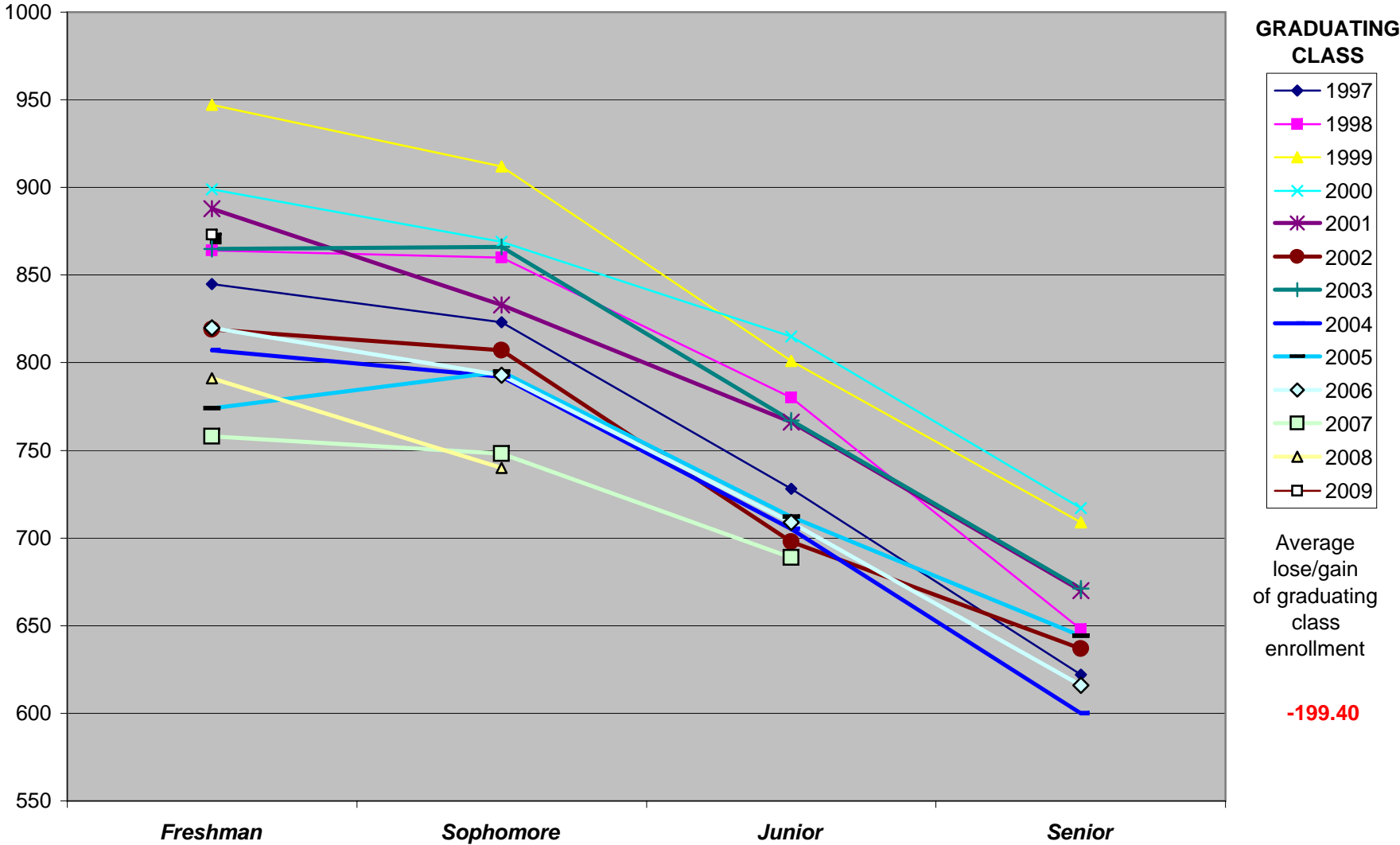
Culver City High School (Culver City)



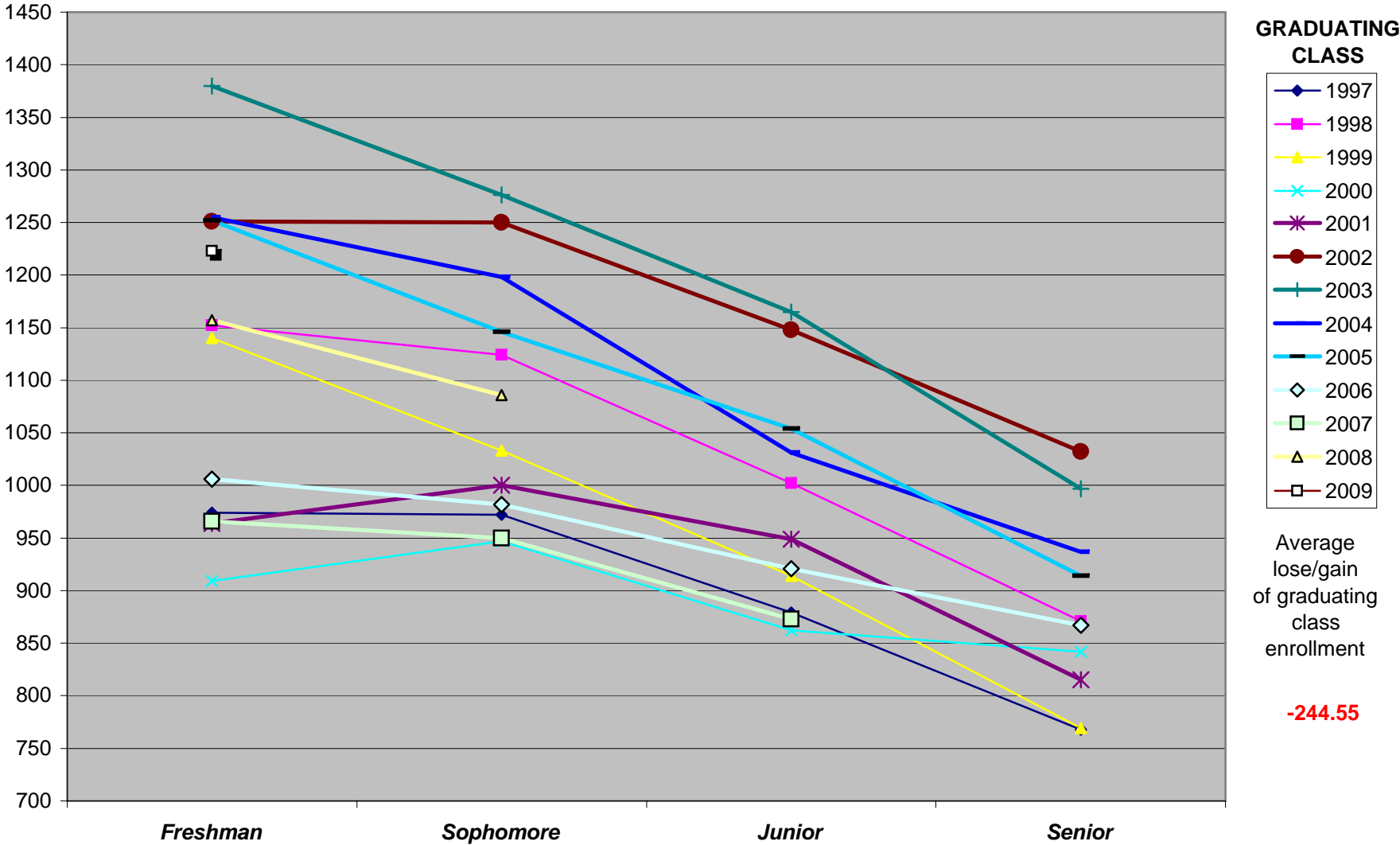
Leuzinger HS (Centinela Valley High School Dist) Enrollment Tracked by Class



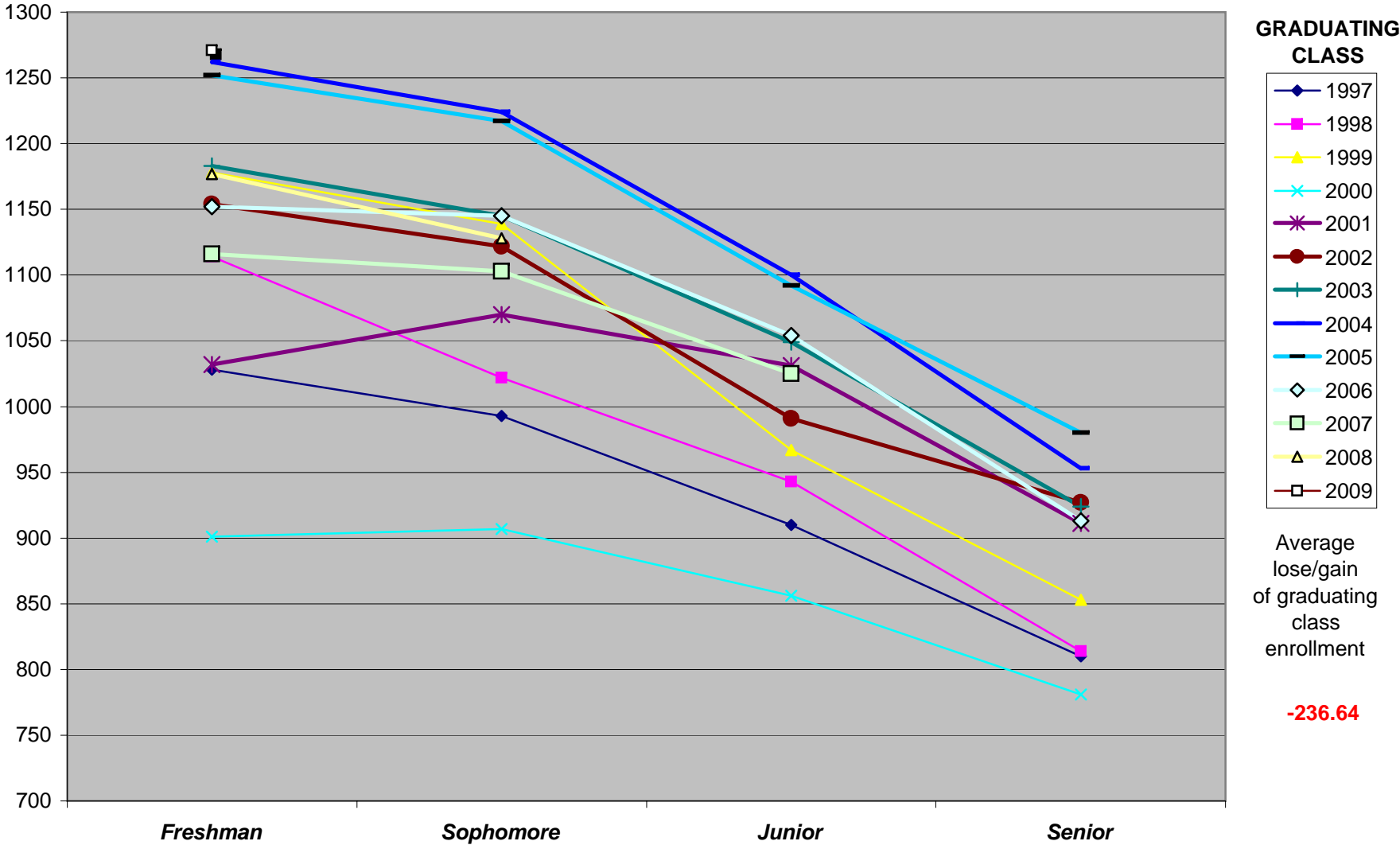
Hawthorne HS (Centinela Valley High School Dist) Enrollment Tracked by Class



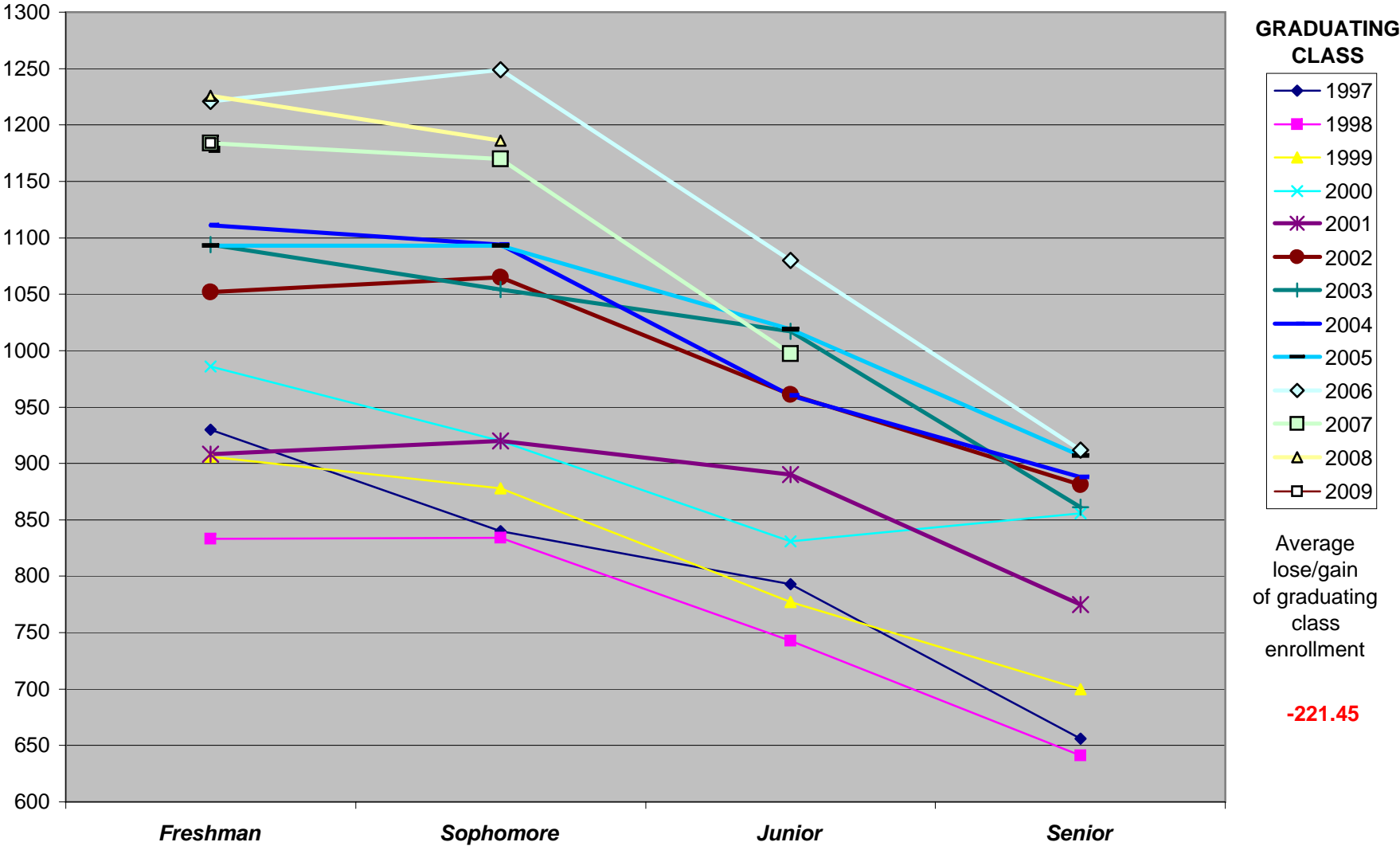
Millikan High School (Long Beach)



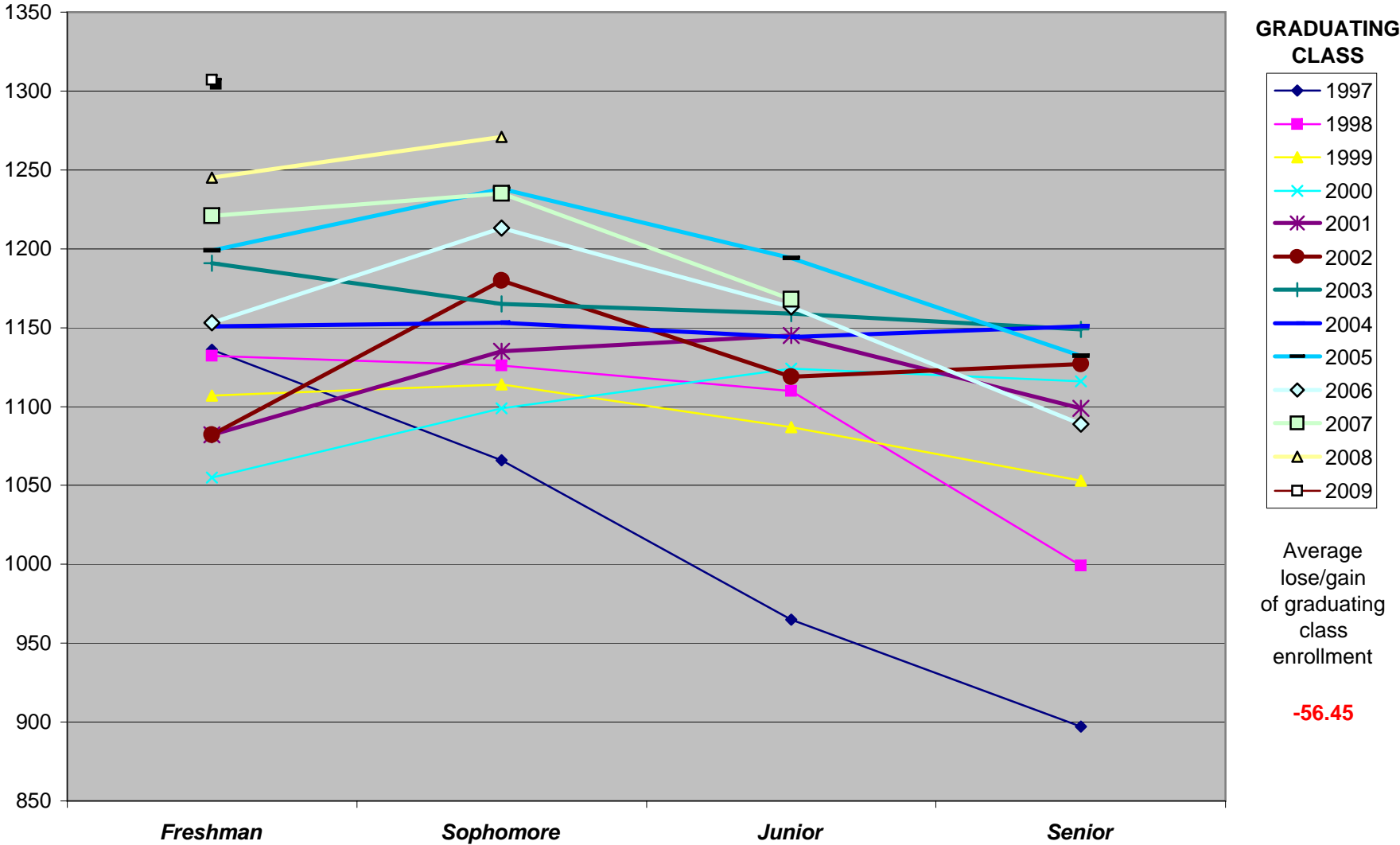
Lakewood High School (Long Beach)



Jordan High School (Long Beach)

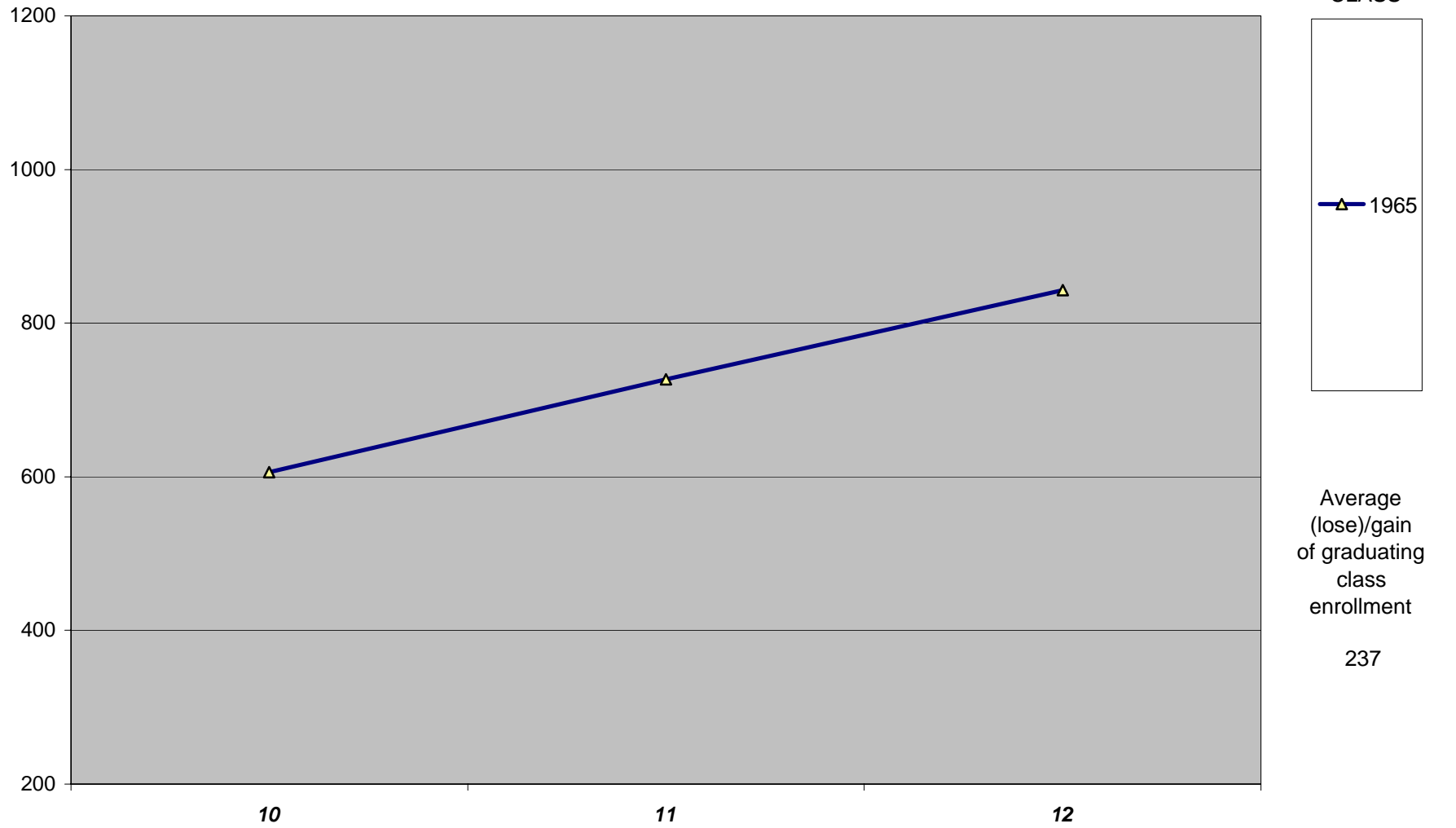


Polytechnic High School (Long Beach)

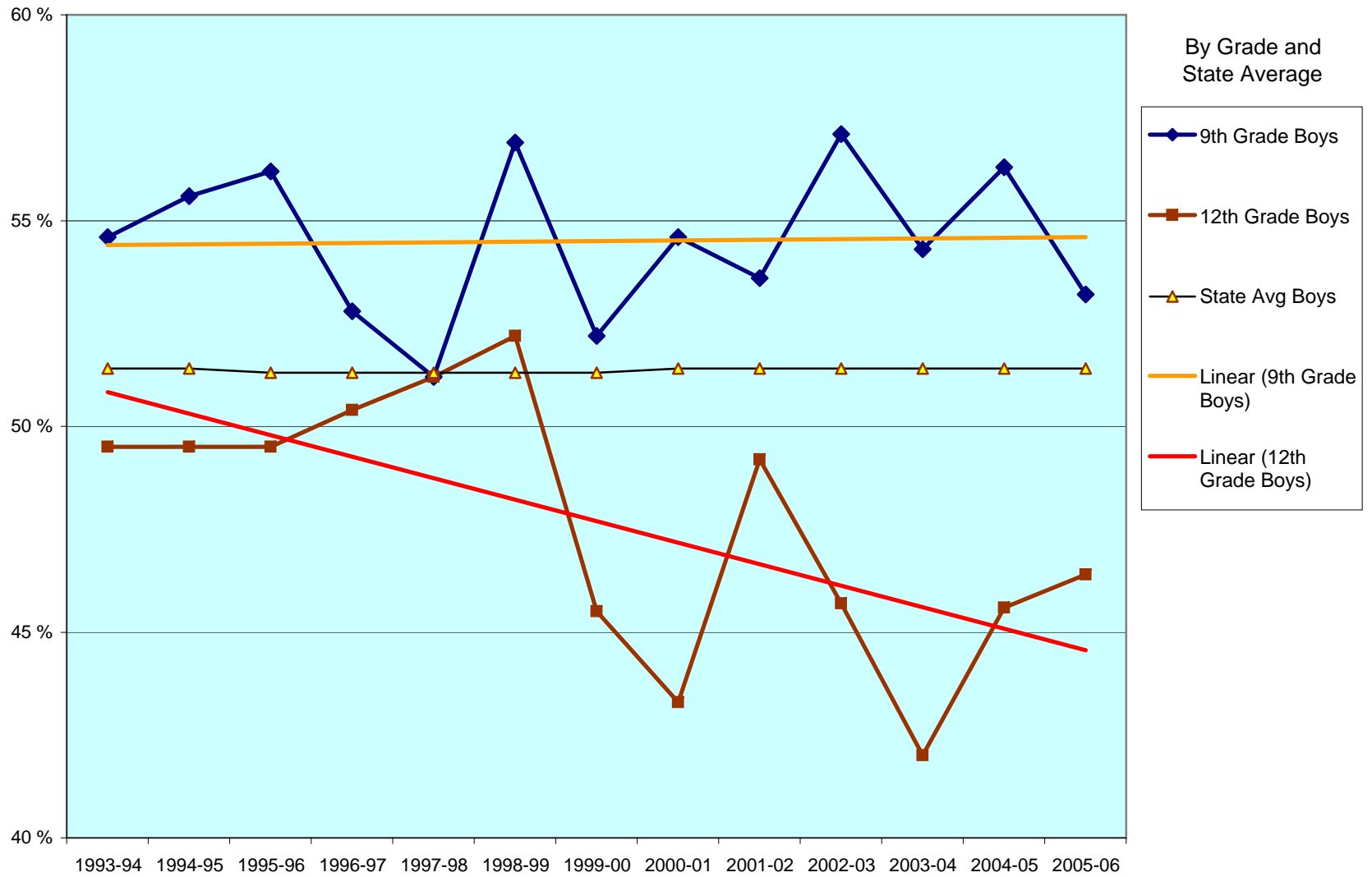


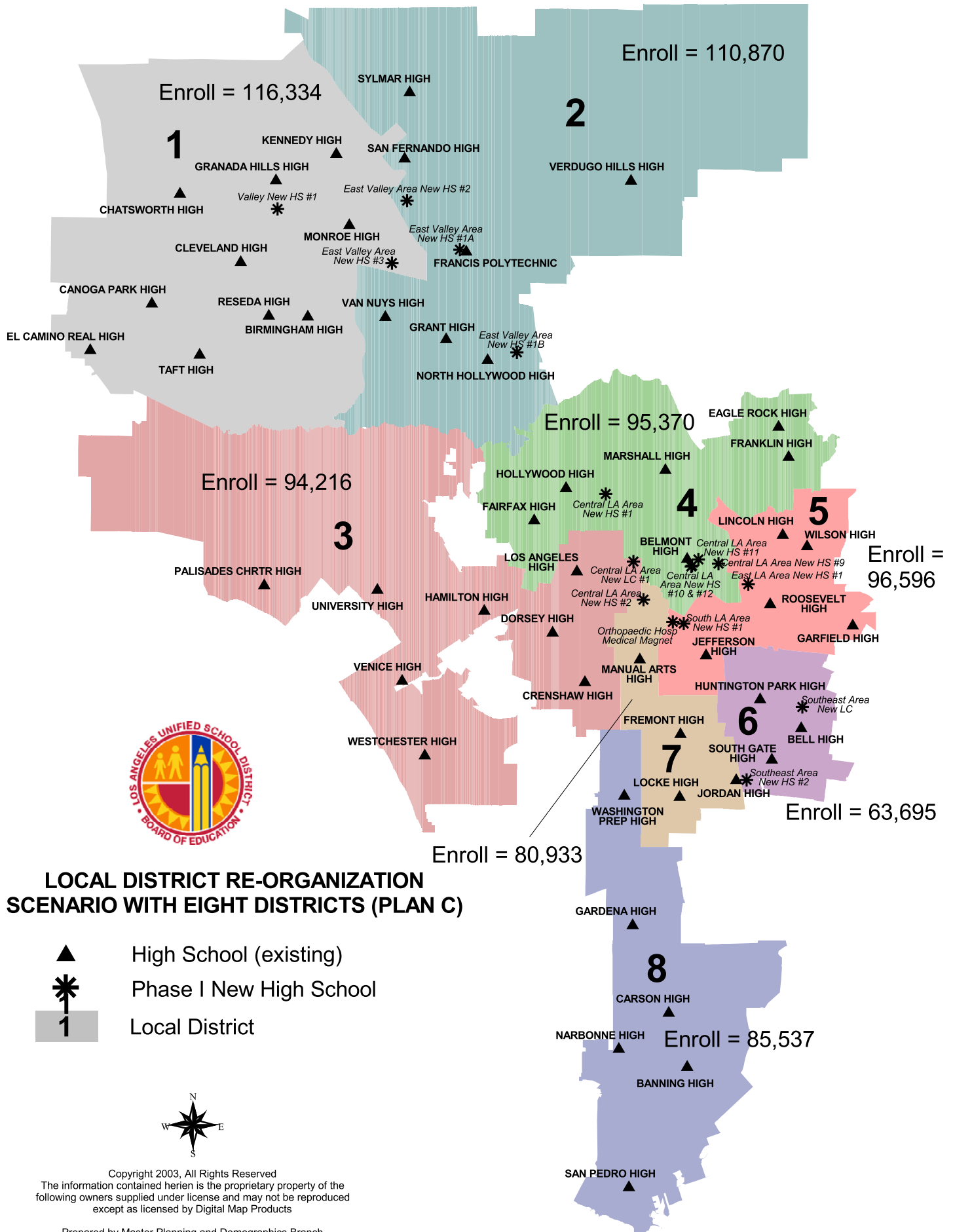
This blank sheet was intentionally placed here

**Westchester HS Class of 1965
Enrollment Tracked by Class
(Source: 1963-1965 Yearbooks)**



Boys Enrollment at Westchester High School





**LOCAL DISTRICT RE-ORGANIZATION
SCENARIO WITH EIGHT DISTRICTS (PLAN C)**

- ▲ High School (existing)
- * Phase I New High School
- 1 Local District



Copyright 2003, All Rights Reserved
The information contained herein is the proprietary property of the following owners supplied under license and may not be reproduced except as licensed by Digital Map Products

Prepared by Master Planning and Demographics Branch
Facilities Services Division
June 2004