

Quality Matters 2005

A Wake Community Review of the Public's Schools



Wake
Education
PARTNERSHIP

Snapshot of Wake County Public School System

Student Enrollment (September 2005)	119,497
Projected Student Enrollment (2010)	138,687
Total Operating Budget (2005–06)	\$909,676,924
Number of Schools (2005–06)	139
Number of Mobile/Modular Classrooms (2005–06)	926
Number of Full-Time Employees (2004–05)	13,974
Number of Teachers (2004–05)	7,776
Teacher Salaries (2004–05)	\$28,725 to \$65,566
National Board Certified Teachers (March 2005)	837
Students Currently At or Above Grade Level <small>(As measured by 2004–05 End-of-Grade and End-of-Course Tests)</small>	Grades 3–8: 90.84% Grades 9–12: 83.2%
Average SAT Score (2005)	1075
Number of Graduates (2005)	6,524
Superintendent	William (Bill) R. McNeal
Chair, Board of Education	Patti Head

Quality Matters 2005 is the fifth report from an annual process sponsored by Wake Education Partnership. This year-long study of issues related to the financial and academic performance of Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) was conducted by the Quality Matters Committee. This committee of local business and civic leaders worked hard to identify key areas to review and then collected information to assist in understanding the facts and implications of the issues the school system is confronting. You will find that the impact of our high rate of growth is a common theme throughout our report.

Introduction

Our community is growing, and, as is typical in any high-growth urban area, our public infrastructure is struggling to keep up. From roads to schools, the needs are obvious, and the revenues to pay for these needs are not. Growth has its challenges, but with challenges come opportunities.

First, what is working? Fortunately, there is a long list of achievements. Here are just a few:

- In five short years we improved the percent of students in grades 3 through 8 who were at or above grade level from 81.9 percent in 1998 to 91.3 percent in 2003¹
- For the 2004–05 school year WCPSS had 61 Schools of Excellence—the most of any system in the state²
- From 1998 to 2005 we added 28,600 students to our rosters, and we were named the third best urban school system in the country³
- Despite an ongoing national shortage of teachers, we continue to fill our classrooms with high quality teachers, including over 800 National Board Certified Teachers, the *second highest number of any district in the country*⁴
- WCPSS developed a long-term capital spending plan, Vision 2020, and a three-year budget—a first for our community—titled The Board of Education’s Plan for Student Success

While it is important to celebrate our success, we must also recognize the challenges we still face. Our challenges include:

- Following five years of impressive growth in academic achievement, the percent of students in grades 3 through 8 at or above grade level has slipped for the past two years and now stands at 90.84⁵
- We had nearly 20 schools that did not meet their expected growth targets on state end-of-grade tests in 2004–05⁶
- For three years running our actual student enrollment has exceeded the projections by nearly 1,000 students, and it is estimated we will need to build well over 80 new schools by 2020⁷

- Wake County must hire approximately 1,000 teachers every year—over 300 of those positions are due to growth⁸
- To fill these teaching positions, the school system must go to greater distances to recruit teachers—in 2005–06 more than 50 percent of teachers new to Wake County come from out of state⁹
- \$17.5 million of the budget request to implement the Plan for Student Success was not funded¹⁰

As a community with a history of a shared vision for excellence in our public schools, how do we overcome these challenges and turn barriers into opportunities? We believe this report will provide useful information, dispel myths, and suggest solutions for how we can continue to raise the bar for excellence in our public schools. It is our hope that we can turn our shared vision for excellence into reality.

The Governance of Our Schools

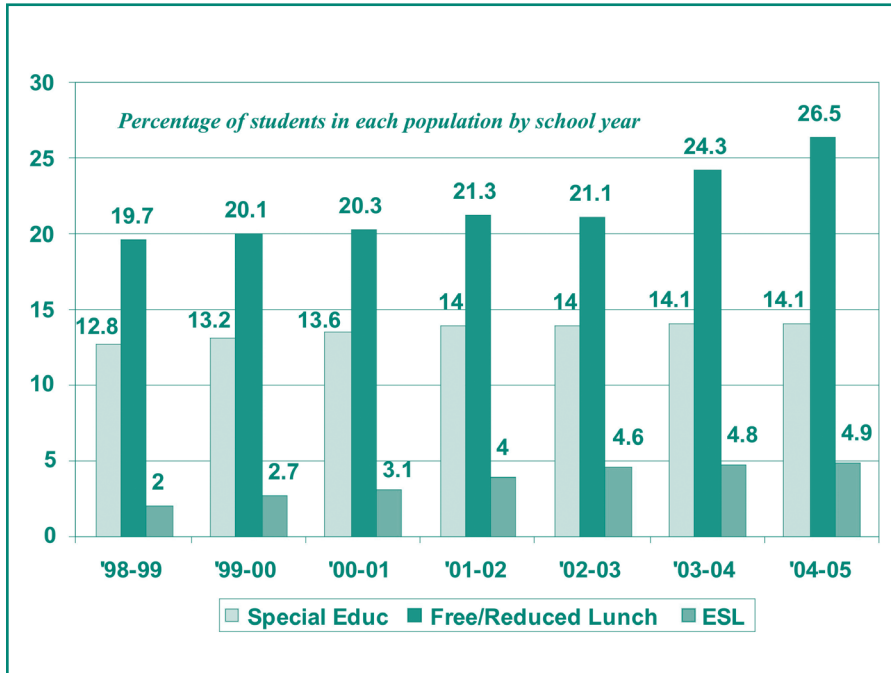
Boards matter when it comes to education in Wake County. Countless chalkboards communicate teachers’ lessons. Bulletin boards illustrate mathematical concepts and showcase historic individuals and events. Keyboards are used for typing research papers. Scoreboards track students’ performance on the field or court. And circuit boards fascinate our future computer scientists and programmers.

Wake County’s governing boards may be the most important of all because they chart the course for our schools. As Wake County continues to grow, its residents continue to hear and read about two governing boards—the Wake County Board of Commissioners and the Wake County Board of Education. Most of us do not understand the roles of these critical groups. Accordingly, this section of *Quality Matters 2005* summarizes the respective roles of the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education in Wake County.

The Wake County Board of Commissioners

North Carolina law recognizes counties as governmental agencies. County boards of commissioners generally supervise and control governmental matters in North Carolina’s counties. The state legislature determines the

FIGURE 1: Growth of Special Needs Student Populations: 1998–2005



powers that counties and their agencies may exercise. Wake County, which includes Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Holly Springs, Knightdale, Morrisville, Raleigh, Rolesville, Wake Forest, Wendell, and Zebulon, operates under the council-manager form of government. Elected by the public, the Board of Commissioners is charged by statute to develop and direct Wake County’s fiscal policy. The County has legislatively derived powers to borrow money and levy taxes.

North Carolina law allows counties to “levy property taxes without restriction as to rate or amount” for several purposes, including “to provide for the county’s share of the cost of kindergarten, elementary, secondary, and post-secondary public education.” In addition, as agencies of the state, counties are required to provide adequate school buildings for their public school systems so they are authorized to issue bonds and notes for land acquisition and school construction.

The Wake County Board of Education

Like county commissioners, boards of education in North Carolina are elected by the public. Boards of education generally control and supervise all public school matters in their respective local school administrative units, or

school districts. North Carolina law also provides that boards of education determine when new schools are needed and where they will be located. In Wake County, the Board of Education sets policy and chooses a superintendent who, as chief executive officer of the school system, manages the school system’s operation. But school boards in North Carolina do not have the power to levy taxes on their own. Each year the Board of Education submits its annual budget request to the county Board of Commissioners. The county commissioners then allocate funds to the district, and the district must decide how the allotted funds are spent. Each spring, Wake County residents have an opportunity to

weigh in on the Board of Commissioners’ allocation and, subsequently, the Board of Education’s budget.

North Carolina law requires boards of education to adopt balanced budget resolutions by July 1 of each year. The budget considers federal, state, and local funding sources.

Student Population Growth

With the student population increase from 92,000 in 1998–99 to the projected amount of over 120,000 in 2005–06, and the estimated increase to nearly 140,000 in 2010–11, come not only the demands to provide the physical environment in which to educate students but also the imperative of meeting the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population. Between 1998 and 2005 the number of students for whom English is a second language more than doubled in the district—going from 2 to 4.9 percent of the student population. During that same time, the percentage of special education students rose from 12.8 to 14.1 percent, and those students qualifying for free and reduced lunch increased from 19.7 to 26.5 percent. (See Figure 1.)

The projections of student enrollment used by the district are developed by the Wake County Planning Department, a division of Wake County Government. (See Appendix A.) The current budgets are based on two assumptions related to these projections: First, there will be a smaller increase in growth than the rate experienced in the last two years. Second, the percentage of students enrolling in our public schools (rather than attending private, charter, or home schools) will remain constant.

The committee has concerns regarding the projections provided by the County's Planning Department, as they have underestimated growth for the last two years. In addition, based on the student population on the opening day of the 2005–06 school year, the estimates are significantly short of actual enrollment for a third year. In recent years, County projections have been much lower than other projections done for the district, and in 2005–06 were off by more than 2,000 students. These inaccurate projections put the system at a disadvantage on several fronts, including preventing the timely hiring of teachers and being able to effectively serve the numbers of students who arrive on the first day of school each year.

As demonstrated in the upcoming sections of this report, the impact of high growth is being felt in all areas of the system—from recruiting and retaining great teachers to the academic achievement of our students. The large number of new students entering our schools every year is taking its toll. This growth is also creating funding challenges for both our operating and capital budgets.

Next Steps: The Wake County Planning Department should adjust its methodology to provide the Board of

Commissioners with more accurate student population numbers for the purpose of improved budgeting and planning for WCPSS.

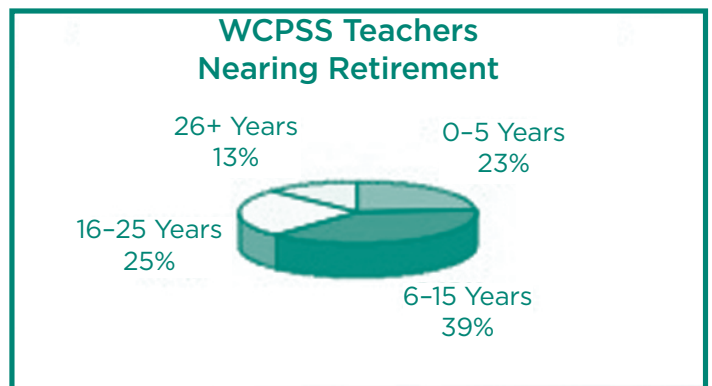
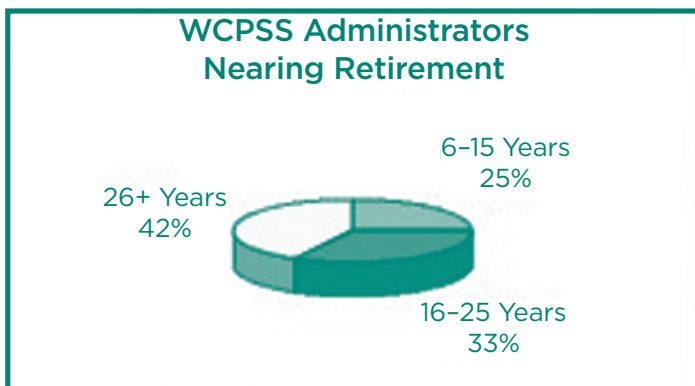
Keeping Excellent Teachers

The county simultaneously has more students to educate and more students with special needs that require additional resources. With those additional students comes the need for more teachers and teachers with the special training and skills required for more effectively meeting the needs of all students.

If you think our current success in maintaining an excellent teaching staff means challenges are not ahead, consider these statistics:

- WCPSS hires 1,000 teachers a year; growth alone accounts for approximately 300 of these positions.
- The annual turnover rate for teachers has grown from 9.2 percent in 2001 to 11.3 percent in 2004. A conservative estimate, based on recent research, for the cost of this teacher turnover in Wake County in 2004 is \$9,172,800.¹²
- Thirteen percent of our teachers and 42 percent of our school principals and assistant principals are currently eligible to retire. (See Figures 2 and 3.)
- Twenty-three percent of our teachers have 0–5 years of experience.
- Over 50 percent of new teachers leave the profession in the first five years.

FIGURES 2 and 3: Percentage of WCPSS Administrators and Teachers Nearing Retirement¹³



Why Are Teachers Leaving?

A review of the 2003–04 WCPSS Teacher Exit Survey results shows the following to be the top contributing factors to WCPSS teacher resignations:

1. Inadequate salary and benefits
2. Lack of support from supervisor
3. Unreasonable work load
4. Lack of support from Central Office
5. Lack of encouragement in work
6. Contributions at work not valued
7. Student discipline procedures inadequate

When teachers can transition rather easily into another career and earn more money in the process, it becomes increasingly challenging to keep them energized about their teaching career. Comparable positions in the greater Raleigh metropolitan area, such as a Training and Development Specialist, pay median salaries from \$42,000 to \$50,000 while the median salary for a WCPSS teacher is \$40,299.¹⁴

When we consider teaching salaries from one school system to another, Wake County does not stand out from other area systems. All teachers in the State of North Carolina are paid on the same base-level salary schedule regardless of the system in which they teach. What differentiates the pay from district to district is the local salary supplement a system offers on top of the base state pay. Wake County has traditionally had a higher local salary supplement, and thus a higher total salary, than most other area districts. In recent years, however, Wake’s competitive advantage has eroded as nearby school systems have increased the supplement they offer. (See Figure 4.)

While compensation plays a part in teacher retention, this issue is about more than just money. In spring 2005, the Wake Task Force on Teaching Excellence published a report, *Recruit, Retain, and Respect*, which examined the challenges of teacher retention and offered a series of recommendations to address teacher turnover. The Task Force found that our educators are looking for respect—from their leaders as well as from the students and

FIGURE 4: Comparison of Area Salary Schedules¹⁵

School System	Salary for a First-Year Teacher	Salary for a Mid-Career Teacher (15th Year)
Wake County Public School System	\$28,724	\$42,273
Durham Public Schools	\$28,698	\$42,051
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools	\$28,571	\$42,607

parents they serve—and they seek the development and advancement opportunities that will allow teaching to be a lifelong career choice comparable to other professions. The full report containing these and other findings from the Wake Task Force on Teaching Excellence can be found at www.WakeEdPartnership.org.

WCPSS has begun to act on the recommendations of the Task Force. This spring, for example, it proposed \$677,000 in the 2005–06 school budget that would go towards providing additional opportunities for new teachers to collaborate and work with mentor teachers and other experienced teachers during the school day. This effort, which would have benefited 800 teachers in the district, builds on multiple recommendations in the Task Force report. Funding for this initiative and several other new programs could not be provided through the reduced budget approved by the Wake County Board of Commissioners.

While we have excellent teachers in our classrooms today, if we do not keep them there, we cannot expect to maintain our progress or further improve our schools.

Next Steps: WCPSS and our community must find the political will to implement the recommendations of the Wake Task Force on Teaching Excellence.

Student Achievement— A Broader Perspective

The Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 was highlighted in detail in *Quality Matters 2004*. This act has called attention to the performance of all students in our nation’s public school system. The only assessment that is nationally representative of student achievement is the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is based on a sample of students across the country and assesses their performance in multiple subjects. Unfortunately, it is not possible to directly compare this testing information with the End of Grade Tests and End of Course Tests used in North Carolina for student assessment. The committee, however, believes that these results are helpful in providing some context for this area. Standard & Poor’s reports the NAEP results for our nation as of 2003. In the report they indicate that only 27 to 31 percent of students nationally scored “at or above proficient” in reading and math at the fourth- and eighth-grade levels.¹⁶ When you consider this poor performance, it is evident that the nation still has a long way to go in improving the performance of our students.

The Pursuit of Academic Excellence—Goal 2008

Our community has been a leader in setting high goals for student success. Our system was ahead of the curve in adopting a public target for improving the achievement of our students. In 1998 Wake County adopted Goal 2003.¹⁷

Under the state-mandated ABCs in Public Education measurements, 90.8 percent of our third- through eighth-grade students are at or above grade level as of the end of the 2004–05 school year. As a next step after Goal 2003, and following months of community input, our Board of Education adopted Goal 2008 on November 5, 2003:

The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) is committed to academic excellence. By 2008, 95 percent of students in grades 3 through 12 will be at or above grade level as measured by the State of North Carolina End of Grade or Course tests, and all student groups will demonstrate high growth.

In pursuit of this goal, WCPSS will:

- Increase challenging educational opportunities for all students
- Increase student participation and success in advanced classes at the high school level
- Increase the percentage of ninth-grade students graduating from high school within four years
- Recruit, develop, support, and retain a highly qualified work force to ensure student success
- Identify and seek resources necessary to support student success
- Build a consensus of support through community collaboration

WCPSS has over two dozen prioritized action steps planned to meet Goal 2008. The estimated costs of these programs range from \$102,000 for the implementation of a parent leadership development curriculum to over \$4.6 million for class size reduction in Title I schools. (See Appendix B.)

FIGURE 5: Percentage of WCPSS Students At or Above Grade Level on EOG and EOC Tests¹⁸

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Grades 3–8	81.90	83.90	84.90	87.50	89.40	91.30	91.07	90.84
Grades 9–12	N/A	73.50	75.20	79.00	82.90	83.10	83.20	83.20

For the 2004–05 school year, 90.84 percent of students were at or above grade level in grades 3 through 8, and for grades 9 through 12 that figure was 83 percent. For two consecutive years there has been a decrease in the performance of students in grades 3 through 8 from the high-water mark of 91.3 percent of students at or above grade level set in 2003. While these dips have been modest, we worry about the prospect of making up this loss and reaching the 95 percent goal in 2008 with high growth for all students. We balance this concern, however, with the knowledge that the district has made tremendous gains during the past five years. Consider the achievements of special education students and low-income students, even as these populations have increased dramatically. In 1998, for example, only

50.9 percent of special education students were at grade level, and by 2005 that figure had soared to 70.9 percent. (See Appendix C for details on student achievement by race and special populations.)

In addition to increasing achievement for special populations, the system has made efforts in providing challenging educational opportunities for all students. From 1998 to 2005, for instance, the number of Wake County students taking Advanced Placement (AP) exams jumped from 1,480 to 3,212. More students are taking a more rigorous course of study, and yet the average score on the AP exams remains constant.¹⁹

One factor in achieving Goal 2008 is increasing the percentage of ninth graders who graduate in four years. In 2004, for the first time in six years, Wake County saw an increase in the percentage of its ninth- through twelfth-grade students that dropped out. According to North Carolina's current reporting system, the dropout rate rose to 3.45 percent, with 1,130 students failing to complete and/or continue their education.²⁰

However, methods used by North Carolina and many other states across the nation to calculate dropouts have come under fire for the accuracy of their claims. Those working towards more accurate measures of graduation rates must be pleased that, as a result of a 2005 task force convened by the National Governors Association, the governors of 45 states (including North Carolina) have agreed to adopt a common formula for calculating graduation rates.²¹

Still, Wake County reports 1,130 dropouts for the 2003–2004 school year, and this is a figure that has costs not only for the students but for our community overall. For example, consider the impact of high school dropouts on Wake County's economy. It has been estimated that over a lifetime a high school graduate will earn \$280,000 more than a high school dropout.²² The economic cost in Wake County is staggering, and repeats itself every year. By this measure, those 1,130 students in Wake County who dropped out of high school in 2003–04 surrendered approximately \$316.4 million in lifetime earning potential.²³ Only with a renewed sense of commitment and responsibility on behalf of all Wake County citizens can we hope to reduce these numbers. We have the choice of helping

our students become an economic drain or an economic asset. With only one viable option, the choice is clear.

Numerous studies have also shown correlations between high school dropout rates and crime rates. On average, more than 80 percent of U.S. prisoners are high school dropouts.²⁴ With 1,130 dropouts and 1,572 prison admissions in one year, Wake County has room to improve. On average, each inmate in North Carolina costs the public \$24,016.²⁵ At the same time, each student in Wake County costs the public on average only \$6,989.²⁶ Which is the better investment in our community's future?

The committee commends WCPSS for focusing on a broad range of education strategies including increasing graduation rates, urging students to partake in a more challenging high school curriculum, and fostering the support of the community. We believe, however, that serious attention needs to be paid to the continued progress of our students. While we have maintained nearly all of the ground gained in Goal 2003, we find that growth in student achievement on the ABCs tests (which is the ultimate measure in Goal 2008) has stagnated since 2003. At the same time, our high school dropout rate has increased. These trends are disturbing.

Next Steps: WCPSS must provide the community more information about which of the 26 action steps it has proposed are linchpins in meeting Goal 2008 in order to garner support for funding this goal.



Budgeting for Wake County Public Schools

Operating Budget

The operating budget for WCPSS is prepared by the school administration, approved by the Board of Education, and then submitted to the county Board of Commissioners for funding. This budget covers all of the instructional and administrative expenses of operating the daily business of our schools (for example, teacher salaries, support personnel for the schools, transportation, food services, etc.). (See Figure 6.) This budget also includes all maintenance expenses for projects costing less than \$100,000. (Maintenance projects in excess of \$100,000 are funded through the capital budget.)

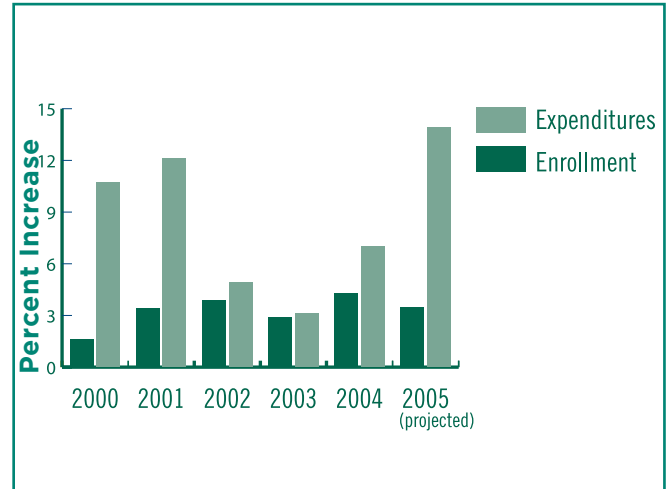
FIGURE 6: Financial Results (in millions)²⁷

	2002	2003	2004	2005*	2006**
Revenues					
County	194	199	219	234	248
State	423	438	460	502	537
Federal	33	35	41	46	65
Other	30	25	27	32	60
Total:	680	697	747	814	910
Expenditures					
Instructional	489	503	539	589	604
Administrative	47	48	52	54	56
Bus/Ctrl Supp.	108	117	123	128	165
Other	35	32	35	40	85
Total	679	700	749	811	910
Capital Revenue	143	180	164	144	354
Capital Outlay	143	176	161	148	354

* Figures for the 2004-2005 school year have not been audited and are not final.
 ** Figures for the 2005-2006 school year are budgeted.

The most recent budget (including federal, state, and local allocations) was approved in the amount of \$910 million. This figure, which covers the 2005-06 school year, represents an increase of 21.5 percent from the budget of \$749 million for 2003-04. During this same time period there was an 8.3 percent increase in the number of students enrolled in our system—from the 108,969 enrolled in 2004 to a projected enrollment of 118,041 used to budget for the 2005-06 school year. The lack of direct correlation between the growth in the student population and the expansion of the budget dollars results in much

FIGURE 7: Increase in Student Enrollment vs. Increase in Expenditures



speculation in our community as to the right level of funding for our operating budget.

One method of analyzing the spending by WCPSS is comparing the Per Pupil Expenditure (PPE) for our local portion of the budget as compared to neighboring systems. (See Figure 8.) The graph shows that PPE in our county is less than all but one of the neighboring counties used as benchmarks. In addition, the increase in the PPE over the last few years has been less than 2 percent. WCPSS does not believe that this increase has been enough to keep up with the rising costs associated with running our schools.

Another factor in analyzing the budget is the increased expense of educating our growing numbers of students in special populations (such as special education students and economically disadvantaged students). There are additional costs in ensuring the educational needs of these students are met. According to Standard & Poor's "cost adjuster" formula, these populations require anywhere from 1.2 to 2.1 times the investment as students who do not have special needs.²⁸

As mentioned above, drilling into the budget reveals that most programs related to moving us toward achieving Goal 2008 have not yet been funded. The budgetary concerns are not only related to local funding. To balance the state education budget, there have been "discretionary reductions" required of the school districts by the state during the past three years. This means that each school

FIGURE 8: Local Per-Pupil Expenditure (“PPE”) 1998–2004²⁹

	Wake*	Chapel Hill/ Carrboro*	Charlotte- Mecklenburg*	Durham*	Guilford*	Winston-Salem/ Forsyth*	Fairfax, VA**	Gwinnett, GA**
1998–99	1,723.51	3,187.13	2,191.09	2,355.02	1,870.96	1,875.29	6,055.00	2,332.00
1999–2000	1,840.76	3,538.89	2,344.93	2,593.26	1,970.98	1,929.95	6,357.00	2,628.00
2000–01	2,078.23	3,866.99	2,534.03	2,672.73	2,032.99	2,002.35	7,189.00	2,806.00
2001–02	2,214.56	4,173.84	2,425.87	3,366.31	2,060.91	2,198.15	7,452.00	2,947.00
2002–03	2,177.63	4,027.82	2,426.45	2,731.53	2,223.80	2,128.75	9,388.00	3,446.00
2003–04	2,256.49	4,180.14	2,363.77	2,725.16	2,373.08	2,114.75	10,113.00	Not Available

* North Carolina district figures include child nutrition and exclude capital outlay.
 **Georgia and Virginia have different funding structures.

system in the state had to cut amounts from its state funding. The amount has increased each year. Last year WCPSS had to return \$5.9 million in funds it had been allotted by the state. For the 2005–06 school year the system expects to have to return approximately \$3.9 million to the state.

This funding situation does not bode well for our continued success, as evidenced by the stagnation in academic performance in the past two years. While the Board of Education stays focused and committed to Goal 2008, they have not been successful in garnering the support needed from the Board of Commissioners for funding the goal beyond what can be provided without increasing taxes.

It is critical that all stakeholders in our public schools understand how all of the budget dollars are being spent and the results expected by the system if the funding for additional programs is received. In order for our community leaders to support full funding for the operating budget as outlined by our superintendent, WCPSS must better explain how all budget dollars are being utilized.

Next Steps: WCPSS must improve its communication of financial results and budget needs. With this improved information, the Board of Commissioners must be willing to provide funding to meet Goal 2008.

Capital Budget

The high rate of growth is also putting pressure on our capital budget. Our community is already preparing for a

bond referendum in 2006, with the expectation that additional bonds will follow in subsequent years. Based on the building projections outlined in the system’s Vision 2020 plan, we will need to build 80 schools in the next 15 years. As student enrollments have exceeded projections in recent years, current estimates of capital needs are being revised, and indications are that 80 new schools will not be enough.

In addition to planning for having a sufficient number of schools for students, we must also consider the types of classrooms students are placed in. Due to the tremendous growth in certain parts of the county, Wake County is averaging approximately 84 percent of our students in permanent seats, and this is not projected to improve in the foreseeable future. The district’s stated goal is to have no more than 8 percent of our students in temporary seats.³⁰ During the 2005–06 school year there are 926 mobile or modular classrooms being used on our 139 campuses, and 24 percent of elementary students in our system are in temporary seats.³¹

With the rapidly rising construction costs that have been experienced in the last two years, the building fund financed by our last bond issue is estimated to be short \$76.2 million. A 3.5 percent construction cost increase was built into the last bond package, but the actual cost increase has been between 10 and 15 percent.³²

Other factors with which school officials are grappling that will continue to put pressure on the community’s resources are:

- Further increases in construction costs and availability of materials, which will likely be exacerbated by the fall 2005 destruction in the Gulf Coast states
- The difficulty and expense of purchasing sites for new schools
- The continued high rate of growth

Alternative ideas to contain this building expense at a level our community will support are being discussed across the county. From year-round schools to public/private partnerships and alternative funding sources, all ideas are on the table. Because less than 40 percent of our taxpayers have children in the public schools,³³ it is critical that we garner the support of all taxpayers to understand why the investment of their property taxes in the system will benefit them.

Many assert that the strength of the Wake County Public School System has been an important part of the county's value to the business community. Without a strong public school system, Wake County would not have made the first, much less the last, cut in attracting businesses.

Next Steps: The Board of Education, Board of Commissioners, and the WCPSS must work together to:

- 1) Develop a clear and consistent message when explaining the amount needed in the 2006 bond package and why the community should support it in the referendum, and,
- 2) Develop alternative approaches to building and funding new schools.

The Financial Management of Our Schools

In 2004 the school system uncovered fraud involving nearly \$2 million worth of funds that had been stolen through a conspiracy among several employees of the school system and an outside contractor. Due to cooperation among district officials and law enforcement personnel, nearly 75 percent of the embezzled funds have been recovered and half a dozen former employees have been arrested. In August 2005, the Board of Education responded to lingering concerns about the financial

practices of WCPSS by issuing a Request for Proposals to have an independent auditor perform a fraud examination and fraud vulnerability assessment of the internal accounting and administrative controls of the system.³⁴

Keeping the public knowledgeable about what is being done to protect the tax dollars given to the schools is especially important to ease the minds of voters as they consider the bond referendum that will be given to them for consideration next year. We commend the Board of Education for taking this proactive step in reestablishing trust in our community by commissioning this audit.

Next Steps: The Board of Education must continue to keep the community informed as the audit process unfolds, and, ultimately, to share the findings of the auditors and act upon any recommendations they provide.

Conclusion

As we look to our neighbors across the state and the country, we are fortunate to have the well-run school system we have in Wake County. We continue to receive statewide and national recognition for our achievements, while other systems struggle to emulate our success.

But we cannot let our success prevent us from continuing to move forward. And we cannot let the distraction of our growth cause us to lose ground. Our committee's work has led us to make several suggestions that we believe will help us regain our forward momentum.

For the WCPSS and Board of Education, we ask that they:

- Implement the recommendations of the Wake Task Force on Teaching Excellence
- Provide concrete and clear information about the action steps we must take to achieve Goal 2008
- Improve their communication of financial results and budget needs
- Continue to work with all community stakeholders to formulate and execute a long-range capital building plan that provides quality facilities for all students and includes alternative approaches to building and funding new schools

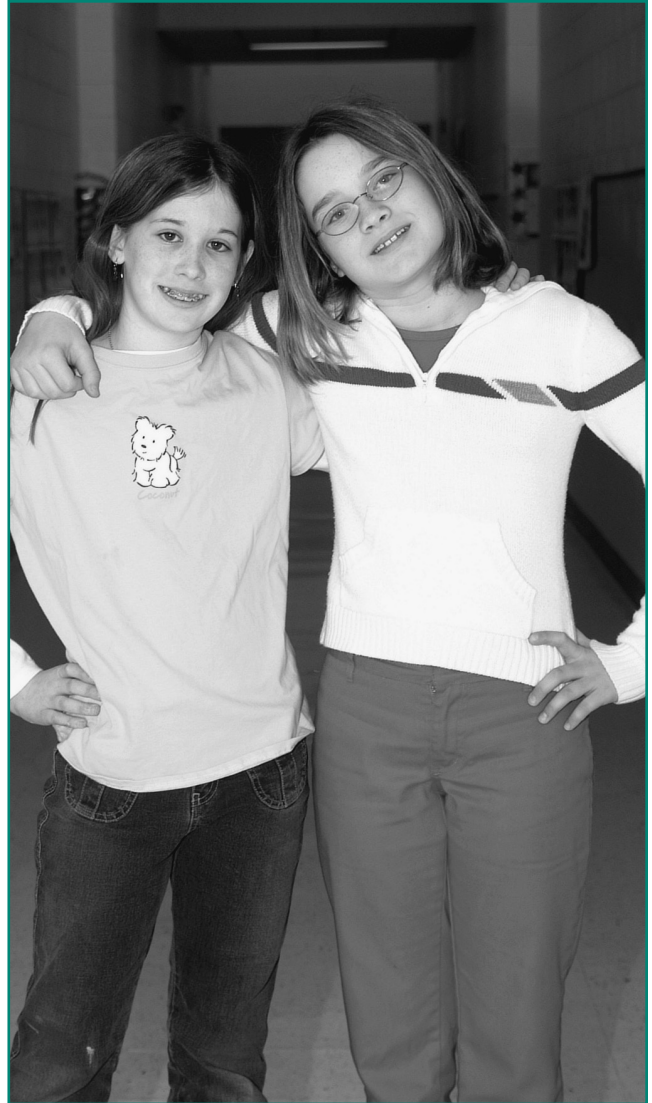
For Wake County and the County Board of Commissioners, we ask that they:

- Improve their methodology for projecting student populations
- Give the financial support that is necessary to ensure that we have excellent teachers in all of our classrooms
- Fund the budget requests from WCPSS when they are backed by sound data and clearly linked to achieving community goals
- Work with WCPSS publicly, as well as behind the scenes, to present a cohesive message to the community pertaining to steps needed to build schools that will accommodate the growth of our student population

Running a fast-growing school system for our community is a huge and complicated challenge. The Quality Matters Committee found that with every answer uncovered, a new question was revealed. Some of these items are being considered for further research in the coming year.

As our conversations continue about the issues the committee explored, including keeping excellent teachers in our classrooms and funding both our population growth and Goal 2008, we must also look beyond these goals. We must always strive to provide all students—from our most struggling to our most high achieving—with a world-class education and opportunities for every student to prepare for competing in the global economy. This vision for success for all students must be shared by the members of our community and supported in both word and action. And the time for action is now.

The Quality Matters Committee



APPENDIX A: Calculations of Growth Projections

The growth projections that were presented to the Wake County Planning Department on February 14, 2005, are based on two previous projects supervised by Oleh Wolowyna of Research Triangle Institute, and a third project performed later by Informed Decisions, Inc. The first project, implemented in 1992, produced yearly detailed population projections and enrollment projections by grade for WCPSS from 1990–2010.

In 1995, at the request of WCPSS, the 1992 enrollment projections were expanded to produce enrollment estimates by school and by grade on a yearly basis. A new methodology was developed for this purpose, applying the multidimensional proportional adjustment methodology. Enrollment projections by grade were also adjusted to take into account recent trends in actual enrollment.

In 2001, WCPSS requested Informed Decisions, Inc., to update the enrollment projections, taking into account the 2000 population census, as well as recent enrollment trends. They were also asked to disaggregate the county projections by Planning Areas. A new methodology was developed for this disaggregation utilizing the multiproportional adjustment methodology.

Figure 1 below represents yearly population projections for Wake County, for ages 5 to 17 years, and for the period 2000–2025. This projection was used as one of the inputs for the WCPSS enrollment projection model and presents somewhat higher population growth in the long run, compared to the projection done four years ago. The projection shows that the school age population is expected to increase, on the average, about 5,000 per year for the next 20 years.

Figure 1:

POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY SCHOOL LEVEL AGE GROUPS Wake County, 2000–2025

YEAR	5–10	11–13	14–17	TOTAL	Difference	% Change
2000	56,477	27,102	31,812	115,361		
2001	57,436	28,920	34,204	120,560	5,199	4.5%
2002	58,364	30,528	36,822	125,714	5,154	4.3%
2003	59,431	31,494	39,505	130,430	4,716	3.8%
2004	60,516	32,098	42,359	134,973	4,543	3.5%
2005	62,077	32,710	44,548	139,335	4,362	3.2%
2006	64,160	33,357	46,434	143,951	4,616	3.3%
2007	66,516	33,960	47,738	148,214	4,263	3.0%
2008	69,098	34,489	48,721	152,308	4,095	2.8%
2009	71,803	35,124	49,647	156,574	4,266	2.8%
2010	74,678	35,822	50,587	161,087	4,513	2.9%
2011	77,362	36,973	51,496	165,831	4,744	2.9%
2012	79,684	38,676	52,444	170,804	4,973	3.0%
2013	82,079	40,545	53,428	176,052	5,249	3.1%
2014	84,493	42,172	54,867	181,532	5,480	3.1%
2015	86,918	43,359	56,945	187,222	5,691	3.1%
2016	89,346	44,561	59,103	193,010	5,788	3.1%
2017	91,760	45,784	61,421	198,965	5,956	3.1%
2018	94,150	47,034	63,505	204,689	5,724	2.9%
2019	96,514	48,313	65,136	209,963	5,274	2.6%
2020	98,884	49,572	66,782	215,238	5,275	2.5%
2021	101,263	50,803	68,452	220,518	5,280	2.5%
2022	103,660	51,992	70,144	225,796	5,278	2.4%
2023	106,076	53,172	71,818	231,066	5,270	2.3%
2024	108,512	54,324	73,443	236,279	5,213	2.3%
2025	110,945	55,460	75,003	241,408	5,129	2.2%

Results from the updated enrollment projections for WCPSS are summarized in Figure 2. The total number of students is expected to grow from an enrollment of 114,068 in 2004-05 to 138,687 in 2010-11 (an increase of 22 percent in six years), to 187,363 in 2020-21 (an increase of 64 percent in 16 years) and to 211,313 in 2025-26 (an increase of 85 percent in 21 years).

Although it was projected that the very high enrollment rate of growth (4.5-5.0 percent) in the early 1990s was not likely to be duplicated in the near future, the school system is still experiencing that level of growth. While it was projected that WCPSS would enroll 118,041 students in 2005-06, the tenth day enrollment was already 120,379 students.

Figure 2:

ACTUAL AND PROJECTED TOTAL ENROLLMENT Wake County, 1985-86 through 2025-26

YEAR	TOTAL	ANNUAL GROWTH	YEARLY INCREASE
1985-86	57,268		
1986-87	58,211	1.65%	943
1987-88	59,687	2.54%	1,476
1988-89	60,932	2.09%	1,245
1989-90	62,462	2.51%	1,530
1990-91	64,243	2.85%	1,781
1991-92	66,915	4.16%	2,672
1992-93	70,052	4.69%	3,137
1993-94	73,192	4.48%	3,140
1994-95	76,731	4.84%	3,539
1995-96	81,203	5.83%	4,472
1996-97	85,411	5.18%	4,208
1997-98	89,441	4.72%	4,030
1998-99	91,911	2.76%	2,470
1999-00	94,850	3.20%	2,939
2000-01	97,691	3.00%	2,841
2001-02	101,432	3.83%	3,741
2002-03	104,462	2.99%	3,029
2003-04	108,969	4.32%	4,508
2004-05	114,068	4.68%	5,099
2005-06	118,041	3.48%	3,973
2006-07	122,394	3.69%	4,354
2007-08	126,509	3.36%	4,114
2008-09	130,445	3.11%	3,936
2009-10	134,496	3.11%	4,052
2010-11	138,687	3.12%	4,191
2011-12	143,025	3.13%	4,336
2012-13	147,556	3.17%	4,531
2013-14	152,289	3.21%	4,733
2014-15	157,245	3.25%	4,956
2015-16	162,390	3.27%	5,144
2016-17	167,539	3.17%	5,419
2017-18	172,768	3.12%	5,230
2018-19	177,828	2.93%	5,060
2019-20	182,592	2.68%	4,763
2020-21	187,363	2.61%	4,771
2021-22	192,147	2.55%	4,784
2022-23	196,945	2.50%	4,799
2023-24	201,750	2.44%	4,805
2024-25	206,546	2.38%	4,796
2025-26	211,313	2.31%	4,767

APPENDIX B: Goal 2008 Initiatives

The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) is committed to academic excellence. By 2008, 95 percent of students in grades 3 through 12 will be at or above grade level as measured by the State of North Carolina End of Grade or Course tests and all student groups will demonstrate high growth.

In pursuit of this goal, WCPSS will:

1. Increase challenging educational opportunities for all students;
2. Increase student participation and success in advanced classes at the high school level;
3. Increase the percent of ninth-grade students graduating from high school within four years;
4. Recruit, develop, support and retain a highly qualified workforce to ensure student success;
5. Identify and seek resources necessary to support student success; and
6. Build a consensus of support through community collaboration.

	Action Steps	Category	Goals Addressed	Recurring Cost for Full Implementation
1	Expand English as a Second Language (ESL) into all schools to serve children in their base school.	ESL	1,5	\$3,458,340
2	Expand full-time Academically Gifted (AG) service to each school.	IV/AG	2,5	\$1,537,040
3	Develop and implement an instructional Management Software that monitors student achievement based on state and local standards.	Tech	1,4	\$537,000 (2005–2006) \$237,000 thereafter
4	Expand participation in Partnership for Educational Success (PES) to 15 additional schools each year (2004–2008).	At-Risk	1,3,5	\$1,890,000
5	Support the integration of technology into classroom instruction.	Tech	1,2,4,5	\$3,460,000
6	Expand ALP and Challenged Schools Program, grades K–8.	At-Risk	5	\$2,932,600
7	Provide one full-time coordinator for implementation of parent leadership development in district schools; half-time office assistant for program support in development and implementation of CIPL curriculum.	Parent	5,6	\$102,000
8	Expand Pre-Kindergarten Programs for four-year-olds who lack the skills they will need for entry into kindergarten.	At-Risk	1,5	\$4,428,800
9	Provide instructional and materials support for science education.	Tech	1,5	\$273,222
10	Reduce class size in Title One schools.	At-Risk	5	\$4,611,120
11	Expand Fast ForWord Program in all schools.	Tech	5	\$700,000
12	Expand Project Achieve to 5 additional schools that have below average performance composites.	SpEd	1,5	\$625,720
13	Expand Special Education Reading Initiative to all schools/special education classrooms.	SpEd	1,5	\$124,000
14	Fund ½ Instructional Resource Teacher position per middle school (25 schools @ \$ 38,426).	SpEd	1,4	\$744,000
15	Implement AVID curriculum in each non-program magnet middle school.	At-Risk	1,2,3,5	\$719,000

16	Implement applicable recommendations of the AP Task Force: Administer PSAT to all students in grades 10 and 11, utilize AP Potential software, centrally fund half of the cost of AP testing, fund school-based tutorials one hour per subject per week at each high school, increase training for teachers.	IV/AG	1,2	\$542,250
17	Implement a high school program using non-traditional classrooms to expand opportunities for over age and other high school students needing alternative instructional settings. Explore partnerships with colleges and universities and virtual school possibilities, including Star Net, Learn NC's on-line AP offerings, and Cumberland County's web academy.	HS	1,2,3,5	\$659,300
18	Implement the initiatives identified in the <i>Smaller Learning Communities</i> grant in 5 high schools not identified in the grant.	HS	3,5	
19	Provide a non-teaching coordinator of Special Education Services in each high school to help assure an effective transition to high school for these students and facilitate services to improve graduation rates.	SpEd	1,3,4,5	\$1,054,000
20	Establish an additional non-traditional school.	At-Risk	1,3,4,5	
21	Restore funding for high school tutorial assistance.	HS	3,5	\$221,850
22	Provide staffing to reduce class size in courses with an End-of-Course Test.	HS	3,5	\$2,612,968
23	Provide transition services to students entering the ninth grade.	HS	3	\$768,520
24	Provide coordination and support for special education students in the middle and elementary schools.	SpEd	4,5	\$1,984,000
25	Provide training and support to elementary school staff in monitoring, managing, and appropriately responding to student behavioral problems.	At-Risk	4,5	\$372,000
26	Provide an alternative school for middle school students experiencing multiple suspensions from school.	At-Risk	3,5	\$1,100,000

Categories:

ESL: English as a Second Language student services

*HS: High school achievement issues

IV/AG: Level IV and Academically Gifted student issues

*SpEd: Special Education services

*At-Risk: Services for At-Risk students

Tech: Technology investment

Parent: Parental Involvement Initiatives

*The majority of initiatives fall into these categories

*The categorization and sorting of the proposed initiatives is intended to provide insight into the actions deemed necessary by WCPSS to reach Goal 2008. It is not intended to provide an exhaustive look at each initiative, as many may serve additional purposes that have not been captured.

Source: Wake County Public School System with analysis done by the Quality Matters Committee.

APPENDIX C: Supplemental Student Achievement Data and Disaggregated Data

Figure 1: Percent of Reading EOG Scores At/Above Grade Level (Grades 3–8)

(Regan, Roger and Glenda Haynie. "End-of-Grade Multiple-Choice Test Results: 2003–04." Wake County Public School System, August 2004. <http://www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research/reports/2004/0422eog2004.pdf>. Last accessed June 22, 2005.

FRL = Free and Reduced Lunch Recipients

LEP = Limited English Proficient Students

Percentages reported as composite of grades 3 through 8.

	1998	2003	2004	2005
Total	81.7	90.4	90.0	90.3
White	90.6	96.6	96.6	96.8
Asian	90.8	96.4	96.5	96.4
Multiracial	80.0	92.6	91.8	91.5
Hispanic/Latino	66.5	78.2	76.1	76.8
Black	57.6	78.3	78.4	79.7
FRL	53.8	74.9	75.2	76.9
Not FRL	89.0	95.5	95.4	95.7
Special Education	50.9	68.9	69.0	70.9
Not Special Education	82.3	92.6	94.1	93.9
LEP	Not available	66.6	64.2	62.1
Not LEP	Not available	91.2	91.1	91.5

Figure 2: Percent of Math EOG Scores At/Above Grade Level (Grades 3–8)

(Regan, Roger and Glenda Haynie. "End-of-Grade Multiple-Choice Test Results: 2003–04." Wake County Public School System, August 2004. <http://www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research/reports/2004/0422eog2004.pdf>. Last accessed June 22, 2005.)

	1998	2003	2004	2005
Total	82.2	92.2	92.1	91.4
White	91.5	97.3	97.5	97.5
Asian	94.1	97.8	98.3	97.7
Multiracial	80.7	93.8	93.9	92.4
Hispanic/Latino	66.5	87.2	85.4	82.2
Black	57.2	81.3	81.5	80.6
FRL	54.6	79.9	81.1	79.7
Not FRL	89.5	96.3	96.2	96.1
Special Education	54.3	73.0	73.8	73.6
Not Special Education	82.5	94.4	95.7	94.7
LEP	Not available	80.1	79.7	73.0
Not LEP	Not available	92.6	92.6	92.3

Percentages reported as composite of grades 3 through 8.

Figure 3: Percent At/Above Grade Level in Reading, Grades 3–8 (2003–04)

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Reports for 2003–04. <http://disag.ncpublicschools.org/2004/>

	All	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Economically Disadvantaged	LEP	Students with Disabilities
Wake	90.0	89.3	>95	78.4	76.1	91.8	>95	75.2	64.2	69.0
Chapel Hill/Carrboro	94.5	93.8	>95	82.0	78.9	>95	>95	78.7	74.4	79.3
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	82.6	80.6	88.9	72.9	73.8	88.3	94.4	70.6	60.3	47.7
Durham	79.3	87.5	92.5	73.7	66.7	89.6	94.2	68.3	54.8	43.6
Guilford	84.1	80.6	84.6	75.4	75.7	86.6	93.1	73.5	60.5	59.7
Winston-Salem/Forsyth	82.6	72.4	92.9	71.7	68.2	87.8	92.6	70.3	47.6	56.5

Figure 4: Percent At/Above Grade Level in Math, Grades 3–8 (2003–04)

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Reports for 2003–04. <http://disag.ncpublicschools.org/2004/>

	All	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Economically Disadvantaged	LEP	Students with Disabilities
Wake	92.1	89.9	>95	81.5	85.4	93.9	>95	81.1	79.7	73.8
Chapel Hill/Carrboro	>95	>95	>95	82.9	86.7	93.9	>95	83.2	88.0	83.1
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	88.4	88.0	>95	80.6	84.8	93.4	>95	80.3	78.1	62.1
Durham	83.8	87.5	>95	78.3	80.9	91.9	>95	75.8	75.4	56.9
Guilford	88.1	86.6	94.1	79.8	86.6	90.9	>95	80.0	81.4	70.8
Winston-Salem/Forsyth	87.0	81.0	>95	77.2	80.9	90.2	94.8	77.7	70.4	67.9

Figure 5: Percent At/Above Grade Level in Reading, Grade 10 (2003–04)

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Reports for 2003–04. <http://disag.ncpublicschools.org/2004/>

	All	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Economically Disadvantaged	LEP	Students with Disabilities
Wake	75.8	85.0	83.8	53.0	48.1	76.9	86.3	44.8	30.2	41.2
Chapel Hill/Carrboro	89.6	~	85.4	60.5	57.5	>95	>95	60.2	14.3	65.6
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	63.2	64.0	65.5	44.7	45.4	74.6	82.7	38.6	23.3	16.7
Durham	65.0	~	83.3	53.2	37.1	68.5	84.9	42.0	21.3	33.3
Guilford	66.8	46.7	62.6	47.7	50.0	66.7	82.3	45.8	23.1	32.5
Winston-Salem/Forsyth	69.6	37.5	86.7	50.0	40.1	62.1	84.6	41.4	17.1	31.4

~ = not calculated due to insufficient data (fewer than 40 students in the subgroup)

Figure 6: Percent At/Above Grade Level in Math, Grade 10 (2003–04)

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Reports for 2003–04. <http://disag.ncpublicschools.org/2004/>

	All	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Multiracial	White	Economically Disadvantaged	LEP	Students with Disabilities
Wake	78.4	75.0	89.4	55.5	61.1	81.5	88.0	50.3	49.1	45.8
Chapel Hill/Carrboro	90.6	~	>95	63.2	61.9	>95	>95	69.0	37.5	64.9
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	66.3	68.0	78.1	46.6	54.7	75.9	85.1	44.8	40.7	19.6
Durham	66.7	~	89.9	52.0	52.4	71.4	88.3	47.0	38.8	41.4
Guilford	72.0	60.0	79.0	54.3	54.2	72.0	85.6	55.2	37.2	38.3
Winston-Salem/Forsyth	72.8	37.5	90.0	54.7	49.4	71.9	86.1	48.8	31.8	35.4

~ = not calculated due to insufficient data (fewer than 40 students in the subgroup)

APPENDIX D: Definitions and Sources of Data

Benchmarking School Systems: Additional information regarding the school systems mentioned in this report can be found on their Web sites.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools: www.cms.k12.nc.us
 Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools: www.chccs.k12.nc.us
 Durham Public Schools: www.dpsnc.net
 Guilford County Schools: www.guilford.k12.nc.us
 Fairfax County Public Schools, VA: www.fcps.k12.va.us
 Gwinnett County Public Schools, GA: www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards:

The National Board examination process maintains high standards for teachers and recognizes teachers who complete this process. The WCPSS Human Resources Department keeps records of National Board Certified Teachers in Wake County. For more information about the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, visit <http://www.nbpts.org/>.

North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile 2004. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction,

summer 2004: The Statistical Profile is a publication from the state DPI containing information about students, teachers, transportation, and finances, both for the state and local levels. View the Statistical Profile at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/stats/statprofile04.pdf>.

Per-pupil expenditure: These data are collected by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and reported in the 2004 Statistical Profile. The figures include child nutrition. Figures for the Gwinnett County Public Schools are available on the Georgia Department of Education Web site, <http://www.gadoe.org/>. Figures for the Fairfax County Public Schools are available on the Virginia Department of Education Web site, <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/>.

Percentage of students on free and reduced lunch:

These data for Wake County come from WCPSS' Department of Evaluation and Research. The report, "Free and Reduced-Price Lunch Participation in the Wake County Public School System: 1993–2004," can be accessed at http://www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research/reports/2004/0402_frl.pdf. For other systems, evaluation departments maintain the data.

Teacher salaries: Teacher salary schedules for North Carolina are available on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Web site, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/>. Fairfax County Public Schools' salary schedules are available on the system's Web site, <http://www.fcps.k12.va.us/>. Salary schedules for Gwinnett County Public Schools are available on the Web site, <http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us/>.

Teacher turnover rate: The WCPSS Human Resources Department maintains data on turnover rates, including the years of experience that these teachers have. The department also maintains records on reasons for teachers' resignations. Call (919) 850-1600 for more information.

Wake Task Force on Teaching Excellence: A citizen-led task force, convened by Wake Education Partnership, charged with making recommendations on the current state of recruiting and retaining the best teachers in Wake County public schools. Released in April 2005, the Task Force's report, "Recruit, Retain and Respect," includes local and national research on teachers and teaching, as well as recommendations about recruiting, retaining, supporting, and developing quality teachers for all of Wake's public school classrooms. View the report at <http://www.wakeed-partnership.org/Pdfs/WTFTEreport.pdf>.

WCPSS Facilities and Vision 2020: The WCPSS Auxiliary Services Division includes Facility Planning & Construction, Maintenance & Operations, Child Nutrition Services, Organizational Development, Long-range Planning, and Real Estate Services. For more information, visit <http://www.wcpss.net/auxiliary-services/>.



End Notes

- ¹ Research and Evaluation Department, Wake County Public School System
- ² North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, ABCs of Public Education reports: <http://abc.ncpublicschools.org/abcs/>
- ³ *Forbes*, February 2004
- ⁴ Wake County Public School System: http://www.wcpss.net/news/2005_back-to-school/facts.pdf
- ⁵ Research and Evaluation Department, Wake County Public School System
- ⁶ North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, ABCs of Public Education reports: <http://abc.ncpublicschools.org/abcs/>
- ⁷ Growth and Planning Department, Wake County Public School System
- ⁸ Del Burns, Deputy Superintendent for Administrative Services, Wake County Public School System, in remarks at Wake Education Partnership Board of Directors Meeting on August 31, 2005
- ⁹ Human Resources Division, Wake County Public School System
- ¹⁰ Wake County Public School System: <http://www.wcps.net/budget/2005-06-bpss/budget-reductions-final.pdf>
- ¹¹ Growth and Planning Department, Wake County Public School System
- ¹² Based on 819 teachers at a cost of \$11,200 per teacher. See *Teacher Attrition: A Costly Loss to the Nation and to the States* from the Alliance for Excellent Education, downloaded at <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/TeacherAttrition.pdf> and *The Cost of Teacher Turnover* from the Texas Center for Education Research, downloaded from <http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/txbess/turnover-rpt.pdf>
- ¹³ Human Resources Division, Wake County Public School System
- ¹⁴ US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Raleigh Metropolitan Area, November 2003, www.bls.gov

- ¹⁵ WCPSS: <http://www.wcpss.net/salary-schedules/teachers/a.html> DPS: <http://www.dpsnc.net/welcome.nsf/EtcByTitle/Salary%20Schedule%20for%20Teachers?OpenDocument> CHCCS: <http://www.chccs.k12.nc.us/HumanResources/TeacherSupplementSchedule.pdf>
- ¹⁶ School Matters: www.schoolmatters.com
- ¹⁷ Goal 2003 stated: By 2003, 95 percent of students tested will be at or above grade level as measured by N.C. End-of-Grade testing at grades 3 and 8
- ¹⁸ Evaluation and Research Department, Wake County Public School System, August 2005. These figures include the results of eight End-of-Course tests mandated by the state, but omit results for the two required tests in Social Studies. Those tests were not administered in 2004 and 2005 and thus were not included in ABCs results. The results for 1999–2003, when all ten tests were given, have been recalculated without the Social Studies results included to allow for an accurate comparison across all seven years
- ¹⁹ Research and Evaluation Department, Wake County Public School System
- ²⁰ Information on NC dropout rates comes from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Dropout Data Report, 2003–2004, released February 2005
- ²¹ See the full NGA task force report and a press release on the governors' compact at: <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0507GRADCOMPACT.PDF> and <http://preview.nga.org/Files/pdf/0507GRAD.PDF>
- ²² Educate! February 6, 2004
- ²³ North Carolina Department of Pubic Instruction. 2003-2004 Dropout Data Report, February 2005
- ²⁴ "Fight Crime: Invest in Kids." www.fightcrime.org/dropout
- ²⁵ North Carolina Department of Corrections: www.doc.state.nc.us/
- ²⁶ North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile: www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/stats and North Carolina Report Card: www.ncreportcards.org/src/
- ²⁷ Per the fund financial statements, presented on a modified accrual basis; McGladrey and Pullen, LLC, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report 2004; and Budget Department, Wake County Public School System
- ²⁸ Standard and Poor's School Evaluation Services, see: http://www.schoolmatters.com/pdf/NYRAS_041504.pdf
- ²⁹ North Carolina information: North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profiles www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/stats and North Carolina Public School Report Cards www.ncreportcards.org/src/; Other state information: www.fcps.k12.va.us/mediapub.htm and http://app.doe.k12.ga/us/ows-bin/owa/n_pack_revenue.display_proc
- ³⁰ Wake County Public School System Building Program 2004–2020, Wake County Public School System: <http://www.wcpss.net/auxiliary-services/vision2020.pdf>
- ³¹ Ramey Beavers, Senior Director of the Office of Growth Management, Wake County Public School System, in remarks at the Institute for Wake County School Leaders on September 14, 2005
- ³² Ramey Beavers, Senior Director of the Office of Growth Management, Wake County Public School System, in remarks at the Institute for Wake County School Leaders on September 14, 2005
- ³³ Wake Public Education Community Assessment: Fourth Biennial Study of Citizens' Perceptions of Public Education in Wake County, September 2004 <http://www.wakeedpartnership.org/Pdfs/CommunityAssessment04.pdf>
- ³⁴ For more information on this audit, please review the RFP at: www.wcpss.net/rfp/audit-rfp-august-2005.pdf

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Quality Matters 2005 highlights the results of a year-long study of issues related to the financial and academic performance of Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) conducted by the Quality Matters Committee. This committee of local business and civic leaders identified key areas to review and then collected information to assist in understanding the facts and implications of the issues the school system is confronting.

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