

Wake County Public School System

Summary

	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2004	FY 2005
	Actual	Adopted	Current	Adopted
	Expenditures	Budget	Budget	Budget
Current Expense	\$ 198,600,519	218,701,514	218,701,514	231,570,793
Capital Outlay	4,399,481	4,998,486	4,998,486	2,834,207
Community Use of Schools	410,000	410,000	410,000	410,000
Debt Service	82,694,059	91,870,430	91,870,430	104,677,115
Expenditure Totals	\$ 286,104,059	315,980,430	315,980,430	339,492,115

Description

The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS), the second largest local education agency in North Carolina, provides regular and special instructional programs for children in kindergarten through high school. WCPSS provides such programs as early intervention for pre-kindergarten age children, school bus transportation, child nutrition, counseling, athletic programs, and other operations to support the instructional programs. The school system currently operates 82 elementary schools, 27 middle schools, 16 high schools, and six special/optional schools.

The Wake County Board of Education provides general policy management and oversight of the school system, consistent with policies and regulations enacted by the State Board of Education. The Wake County Board of Commissioners provide funding for the construction and maintenance of school facilities through the operating budget appropriation and in the capital improvement plan appropriations. Other voluntary funding by the Board of Commissioners includes appropriations for increased instructional and non-instructional personnel, salary supplements, and other operating support. In 2004-05 the school system expects membership of 112,970, an increase of 4,000 students (or 3.7 percent) over 2003-2004.

During the 2003-2004 school year, 3,443 students were enrolled in charter schools and an additional 482 students are estimated by WCPSS to attend these schools in 2004-2005. The legislation providing for charter schools requires WCPSS to remit to each of the charter schools the local current expense per pupil funding for those students residing in Wake County.

WCPSS will open six new schools during FY 2005, including Carpenter Elementary, Forestville Road Elementary, Highcroft Drive Elementary, Turner Creek Elementary, Heritage Middle, and Knightdale High. These schools will add a combined facilities area of approximately 775,000 square feet. The total estimated operating costs for these new schools is \$3.4 million.

For FY 2005, the total request by the Board of Education to the County Commissioners was approximately \$239.4 million, an increase of \$15.7 million (or seven percent) from the 2003-04 funding level. The financial model employed by the County to fund the school system takes into account the operational costs associated with opening new schools and the prior year's per-pupil costs applied to the projected membership for the coming year. Based on the model, the Wake County Public School System will receive just over \$234.4 million, which represents an increase of \$10.7 million (or 4.8 percent).

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Goals

Goal 2003 was an achievement goal set by the Wake County Board of Education. The goal stated that by 2003, 95 percent of all students tested would be at or above grade level in reading and math as measured by North Carolina End-of-Grade testing at grades three and eight. While the schools fell just short of this target, the academic achievement gained during the Goal 2003 years led them to reach even higher for the next achievement goal.

On November 5, 2003, the Board of Education adopted an ambitious new goal for the Wake County Public Schools. Goal 2008 states, “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 (NC EOG) or Course tests, and all student groups will demonstrate high growth.”

Priorities

- Increase the availability of 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 workforce to ensure student success
- Identify and seek resources necessary to support student success
- Build consensus support through community collaboration

Highlights

- The Wake County Public School System ranked third in the nation on the Top Ten List for “The Best Education in the Biggest Cities”

as published in *Forbes Magazine*.

- Superintendent Bill McNeal was named the 2004 National Superintendent of the Year by the American Association of School Administrators.
- More than 85 percent of the schools in Wake County were honored as Schools of Excellence or Schools of Distinction as defined by the ABCs of Public Education, the statewide model for educational accountability adopted by the State Board of Education. To be awarded the title of School of Excellence, ninety percent or more of the students must test at or above grade level and meet expected or high growth for the year. No school in Wake County was listed as low-performing.
- The number of Wake County students attending charter schools is projected to continue expanding. Over the last three years, charter school membership increases have averaged approximately 450 students per year, with an increase of 309 students from the 2002-03 school year to 2003-04, and a projected increase of 482 students from 2003-2004 to 2004-2005.
- Projected WCPSS student membership is 112,970 students, an increase of 4,000 students (3.7 percent increase) over the 2003-04 school year.

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Performance Measures

ABC PERFORMANCE RESULTS SUMMARY					
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Number of Schools in ABCs Program	102	112	117	117	123
Schools of Excellence	8	9	30	52	49
Schools of Distinction	39	55	53	37	61
Schools of Progress (meets expected growth)				14	7

Schools of Excellence—90 percent or more of the scores achieved by the students in a school on mandated tests are in levels III or IV, and the school exceeds expected growth requirements.

Schools of Distinction—80-89 percent of the scores on mandated tests are in levels III or IV, and the school meets expected growth targets.

Schools of Progress—60-79 percent of the scores are in levels III or IV and the school meets expected growth targets.

WCPSS Achievement Levels Over Time Percentage of Students at Levels III and IV						
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Reading						
Grade						
3	80.4	83.1	85.3	87.6	89	88.1
8	87.1	88.7	90.6	91.4	92.2	91.6
Math						
Grade						
3	77.1	80	84	87.1	93.5	91.7
8	83.8	85.7	86.9	88.3	88.6	88

Level I—Insufficient mastery of knowledge and skills to be successful at next grade level.

Level II—Inconsistent mastery of knowledge and skills and minimally prepared to be successful at the next grade level.

Level III— Consistently demonstrates mastery of grade level subject matter and skills and are well prepared for next grade level.

Level IV— Performs in a superior manner clearly beyond that required to be proficient at grade level work.

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Note: End of grade tests are designed to measure student achievement of the knowledge and skills of the NC standard course of study for students in grades 3 through 8.

