

Students Leaving and Entering WCPSS In 2005-06

Growth and Planning Department

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A comparison of enrollment in September 2005 with September 2004 shows a net one-year growth of 6,436 students for the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS). An analysis of student entry and exit coding by data managers shows that a large majority of new students came from other public school systems (69% from U.S. schools and 7% from foreign schools). In addition, the district enrolled more students from private, religious, charter and home schools during the past year than left the district to enter those types of schools.

As shown in Table 2 on the following page:

- While 797 students left WCPSS at the end of the 2004-05 school year to enter private or religious schools, 1,206 students entered grades 1-12 in WCPSS from private or religious schools at the start of the 2005-06 school year.
- While 216 students left to enter home schools at the end of 2004-05, 295 entered from home schools at the start of 2005-06.
- While 442 left to enter charter schools at the end of 2004-05, 495 entered from charter schools at the start of 2005-06.
- While 3,200 left to enter other public school systems outside Wake County at the end of 2004-05, 6,446 entered from public schools outside the county or state at the start of 2005-06.

Enrollment growth in WCPSS results from a complex pattern of children being enrolled or withdrawn by their parents, both prior to the start of a school year and during the school year. While some students leave WCPSS each year to enter home, charter, or private schools or move out of Wake County, many more students enter the school system, resulting in a rising rate of growth. On the 20th day of the 2004-05 school year, there were 114,068 students in WCPSS. By the end of the year, total system membership had fallen slightly to 113,417. However, the changes after the 20th day varied by level with a net gain of 927 students in elementary schools, a gain of 120 in middle schools, and a net loss of 1,692 students in high schools due to mid-year graduation and dropouts. Between the end of the 2004-05 school year and the beginning of the 2005-06 school year, 5,190 students left the school district and 6,014 graduated. Taking their place were 10,438 kindergarten students and 8,539 new students in grades 1-12. On the 20th day of the 2005-06 school year, there were 120,504 students in WCPSS.

The following statements describe the 8,539 new students who entered our school system in grades 1-12 prior to the 20th day of the 2005-06 school year:

- 594 (7%) were from public schools outside the United States;
- 3,798 (44.5%) were from U.S. public schools outside North Carolina;
- 2,054 (24.1%) were from North Carolina public schools outside Wake County;
- 1,206 (14.1%) were from private or religious schools;
- 495 (5.8%) were from charter schools;
- 295 (3.5%) were from home schools;
- 97 (1.1%) prior school unknown;
- 4,093 (47.9%) were White, 2,750 (30.1%) were Black, 957 (11.2%) were Hispanic, 465 (5.4%) were Asian, 409 (4.8%) were Multi-racial, and 43 (0.5%) were American Indian.

The following statements describe the 5,190 students who left the school system after the end of the 2004-05 school year:

- 207 (4.0%) went to public schools outside the United States;
- 1,551 (29.9%) went to U.S. public schools outside North Carolina;
- 1,442 (27.8%) went to North Carolina public schools outside Wake County;
- 797 (15.4%) went to private or religious schools;
- 442 (8.5%) went to charter schools;
- 216 (4.2%) went to home schools;
- 529 (10.2%) were identified as summer dropouts;
- 2,840 (54.7%) were White, 1,480 (28.5%) were Black, 451 (8.7%) were Hispanic, 182 (3.5%) were Asian, 224 (4.3%) were Multi-racial, and 13 (0.3%) were American Indian.

Table 1 shows the changes in student membership that occurred during the 2004-05 school year, after the 2004-05 school year, and during the 2005-06 school year. As noted earlier, elementary schools experience a significant gain in membership after the first month of school. Table 2 shows the students entering and leaving WCPSS between the end of the 2004-05 school year and the 20th day of 2005-06.

	Elementary	Middle	High	Total
Net Change 20th Day 04-05 to EOY 04-05	927	114	-1,692	-651
Net Change EOY 04-05 to 20th Day 05-06	2,566	933	3,588	7,087
Net Change 20th Day 04-05 to 20th Day 05-06	3,493	1,047	1,896	6,436
Net Change 20th Day 05-06 to EOY 05-06	1,316	253	-884	-207

Student membership at the end of the 2004-05 school year	113,417	
Source or Destination of Students	Number Entering The 2005-06 School Year	Number Leaving After The 2004-05 School Year
Students who graduated in May 2005		6,014
Students who were in WCPSS before and after summer break	102,239	
Kindergarten students (20th Day)	10,438	
NC public schools outside WCPSS	2,054	1,442
Public schools outside NC	4,392	1,758
Private or religious schools	1,206	797
Charter schools	495	442
Home schools	295	216
Prior school unknown	97	
Identified as summer dropouts		537
Left WCPSS within the first 20 days of 05-06		709
Student membership on the 20th day of 2005-06	120,504	

Note: The kindergarten students were not all new to WCPSS. This number includes 676 students who were retained in kindergarten from the previous year and 890 students who were served in WCPSS as pre-k students.

Demographics Of Exiting Students

Students who exited WCPSS after the end of the 2004-05 school year can be divided into three groups:

- Students who left WCPSS to enter some other school system,
- Students who dropped out, and
- Students who graduated at the end of the year.

Table 3 shows the ethnicity of those three groups. As shown, the ethnic composition varies by student destination. White students comprise a large majority of those leaving WCPSS to enter private, religious, or home schools, and a smaller majority of those entering charter schools or public schools outside of North Carolina. Black students comprise almost half of the students identified as summer dropouts.

	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Multiracial	Amer. Indian
Unknown	6	3	2	0	0	1	0
		50%	33%	0%	0%	17%	0%
Home School	216	177	19	4	5	10	1
		82%	9%	2%	2%	5%	0%
Private/Relig School	797	592	126	23	31	23	2
		74%	16%	3%	4%	3%	0%
Charters	442	250	153	10	11	18	0
		57%	35%	2%	2%	4%	0%
Public Outside NC	1,758	974	381	223	82	97	1
		55%	22%	13%	5%	6%	0%
Public In NC	1,442	687	550	109	36	54	6
		48%	38%	8%	2%	4%	0%
Subtotal: Exiting WCPSS To Enter Other Schools	4,661	2,683	1,231	369	165	203	10
		57.6%	26.4%	7.9%	3.5%	4.4%	0.2%
Summer Dropout	529	157	249	82	17	21	3
		29.7%	47.1%	15.5%	3.2%	4.0%	0.6%
Subtotal: Exiting Students Grades K-12	5,190	2,840	1,480	451	182	224	13
		54.7%	28.5%	8.7%	3.5%	4.3%	0.3%
End-of-Year Graduates	6,014	3,991	1,392	242	285	86	18
		66.4%	23.1%	4.0%	4.7%	1.4%	0.3%
Total Leaving After 2004-05	11,204	6,831	2,872	693	467	310	31
		61.0%	25.6%	6.2%	4.2%	2.8%	0.3%

Demographics Of New Students

Students served in the 2005-06 school year can be separated into three groups:

- Students who came into WCPSS from various sources after attending other schools in the 2004-05 school year,
- Students who began 2005-06 after attending WCPSS schools in 2004-05,
- Students in kindergarten.

Table 4 shows the ethnicity of those three groups. As shown, the ethnic composition varies slightly. While White students comprise 56% of students who attended WCPSS in 2004-05 and continued in WCPSS in 2005-06, they comprise 52% of new kindergarten students and 48% of new students entering grades 1-12. Conversely, while Hispanic students comprised 9% of continuing students, they comprise 13% of kindergarten students and 11% of new students in grades 1-12. Asian and Multi-racial students increased their representation slightly among both kindergarten and new 1-12 students. The percentage of Black students entering the school system in grades 1-12 was slightly higher than the percentage continuing from 2004-05, while the percentage of Black students in kindergarten was slightly lower than the other two groups.

As a result of these shifts, the overall student population is slightly more ethnically diverse in 2005-06 than it was in 2004-05.

Type of Prior School		White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Multiracial	Amer. Indian
Unknown	97	70	6	5	9	7	0
		72%	6%	5%	9%	7%	0%
Home School	295	254	21	5	2	11	2
		86%	7%	2%	1%	4%	1%
Private/Religious School	1,205	792	234	59	62	56	2
		66%	19%	5%	5%	5%	0%
Charters Outside NC	62	23	23	8	7	1	0
		37%	37%	13%	11%	2%	0%
NC Charters	433	169	2	16	14	14	17
		39%	50%	3%	3%	4%	1%
Public Outside NC	4,391	2,054	1,080	728	295	215	19
		47%	25%	17%	7%	5%	0%
Public In NC	2,054	731	990	138	76	102	17
		36%	48%	7%	4%	5%	1%
Subtotal: New Students Grades 1-12	8,537	4,093	2,570	957	465	409	43
		48%	30%	11%	5%	5%	1%
WCPSS Students From The 2004- 05 School Year	102,238	57,490	27,590	8,847	4,667	3,386	258
		56%	27%	9%	5%	3%	0%
Kindergarten (20th Day)	10,438	5,433	2,546	1,395	555	484	25
		52%	24%	13%	5%	5%	0%

As shown in Table 5, a comparison of 20th day reports of student membership by race and gender shows almost no change for Black, Asian, and Multi-racial students, a slight increase in the percentage of Hispanic students, and a slight decrease in the percentage of White students.

		2004-05		2005-06	
		#	%	#	%
American Indian	Male	147	0.1%	161	0.1%
	Female	161	0.1%	168	0.1%
Asian	Male	2,589	2.3%	2,788	2.3%
	Female	2,511	2.2%	2,864	2.4%
Hispanic	Male	4,782	4.2%	5,659	4.7%
	Female	4,606	4.0%	5,444	4.5%
Black	Male	15,490	13.6%	16,201	13.4%
	Female	15,295	13.4%	16,224	13.5%
White	Male	33,136	29.0%	34,017	28.2%
	Female	31,732	27.8%	32,731	27.2%
Multi-Racial	Male	1,850	1.6%	2,130	1.8%
	Female	1,769	1.6%	2,117	1.8%
Total	Male	57,994	50.8%	60,956	50.6%
	Female	56,074	49.2%	59,548	49.4%
		114,068		120,504	

The Need For Special Services For New Students

In order to analyze the overall level of family poverty and the need for special education services and support for students who have limited English proficiency, a different group of students was studied. Some time is needed after students enter the school district in order to correctly identify, evaluate, and code information in school data systems. Records may need to be transferred from previous schools, applications for the federal lunch assistance program (which can be used as a proxy indicator for family economic status) must be processed and appropriate referral for testing for special education services and limited English proficiency must take place.

Therefore, a dataset was extracted from the student information system on March 1, 2006.

Students were separated into those whose entry code identified them as entering the school district for the 2005-06 school year (new students) and those who were in the school district prior to the end of the 2004-05 school year (prior WCPSS). Only elementary students in grades 1-5 were included in the analysis.

As shown in tables 6, 7, and 8, when compared to prior WCPSS students:

- A higher percentage of new students are from low SES families;
- A lower percentage of new students are identified for special education services;
- About the same percentage of new students as continuing students come from homes where English is not the primary language of the home.

Table 6 Low Family Income Grades 1-5 (as of March 1, 2006)		
Grade Level	Prior WCPSS	New Students
01	32.5%	36.3%
02	30.3%	38.5%
03	31.0%	36.3%
04	29.9%	35.5%
05	28.8%	38.1%
Grades 1-5	30.5%	36.9%

Table 7 Special Program Identification Grades 1-5 (as of March 1, 2006)		
Special Program Group	Prior WCPSS	New Students
Academically Gifted (Gds 4-5)	30.5%	10.0%
Learning Disabled	5.4%	2.1%
Autistic	1.0%	0.5%
OHI	3.1%	1.0%
EMD or TMD	0.8%	0.3%
Speech/Language Impaired	2.3%	1.3%

Table 8 ESL Coding Grades 1-5 (as of March 1, 2006)		
ESL Group	Prior WCPSS	New Students
English is Home Language	87.4%	88.3%
Not LEP	1.1%	1.3%
Receiving ESL Services	5.4%	8.3%
LEP But Not In ESL	1.6%	1.2%
No Longer LEP	4.3%	0.4%

As shown in Table 7, English was the primary home language for about 88% of the new student group and 88% of the students in grades 1-5 who were continuing in WCPSS from the previous year. About 1% of each group lived in a home where English was not the primary language, but the student tested as proficient in English. About 8% of the new students and 5% of the continuing students were receiving ESL services.

Summary

Despite the rapid growth in student membership in WCPSS, the overall makeup of the student population changed only slightly. A large majority (69%) of new students in grades 1-12 came from U.S. public schools outside Wake County, and majority (58%) of students leaving the school system prior to graduation went to other U.S. public school systems. The number of students entering the district from private, religious, charter, or home schools was larger than the number leaving the district to attend those types of schools. Only slight differences were found in the ethnicity of students entering and leaving the school district across the two years.