

Historical Highlights Related to Magnet Schools

Wake County Public School System

August 2007

Blue text: reviews and realignments of existing magnet programs

Green text: federal awards from the Magnet Schools Assistance Program

1975

Nearly \$1 million in federal funds were cut from the Raleigh City Schools by the Office of Civil Rights related to desegregation issues.

The Boards of Education of the Raleigh City and Wake County school districts voted merger into effect to begin July 1, 1976, despite a non-binding community referendum several years earlier in which voters of the two school districts voted against the idea of merger by more than a two-to-one margin.

Factors influencing the boards' decision:

- White flight from the older, more urban sections of Raleigh.
- The well-documented downward spiral of urban decay occurring cross the country was beginning in Raleigh.
- Raleigh was in danger of becoming racially polarized.
- The likelihood of civil rights action and court mandated desegregation if action not taken locally.
- Equity in educational programs.

The General Assembly of North Carolina approved legislation enabling the creation of the merged system on June 25, 1975.

1976

Dr. John Murphy began as superintendent to lead the system through merger.

Approximately 20,000 Raleigh City students and approximately 33,000 Wake County students were joined to form the Wake County Public School System to create a district of approximately 53,000 students.

1977-1978

A merged student assignment plan went into effect. Along with the reorganization efforts, staff members of all levels were actively encouraged to put new instructional programs into place. Within 24 months of merger, magnet schools had been introduced in the district. The first magnet schools were a self-contained gifted and talented program introduced at Hunter Elementary and a before-and-after school day care program (extended day) introduced at Phillips.

1980

Magnet programs had been expanded to include five schools

GT: Apex, Hunter, Ligon, and Enloe
Extended Day: Phillips

1981

Dr. Walter Marks became superintendent of the Wake County Public School System. Student assignment issues and educational programs remained as high priorities.

1982

Dr. Marks proposed a Schools of Choice program of educational options to the Wake County Board of Education as a cornerstone of a plan for quality education and integration on January 15, 1982.

Major problems/needs for which the plan was developed:

- Under/over utilization of schools
- Inequity of educational opportunity
- Racial balances
- Improving educational programs
- Providing more parental participation through a program of optional schools
- A long-range plan for student assignment and facility use

The board of education adopted the Schools of Choice program on March 11, 1982, which significantly expanded the magnet programs network. The list that follows does not show the programs/sites that were originally recommended in March 1982, but shows the configuration of schools that resulted during the development period from March 1982 to August 1982 when these programs opened.

Gifted and Talented

Elementary: Apex, Baucom, Conn, Carver, Fuller, Fuquay, Hunter, Lincoln Heights, Powell, Underwood, Wake Forest, Washington, Wendell, and Zebulon

Middle: Ligon and Martin

Classical

Elementary: Bugg, Lacy, and Root

Middle: Carnage and Carroll

Extended Day

Elementary: Combs, Fuller, Joyner, Olds, and Phillips

International

Elementary: Poe and Wiley

Magnet High School: Enloe

(A total of five programs directly affecting 28 schools)

1983-1984

Daniels Middle School was added to the magnet programs network with a gifted and talented designation.

Phillips School was closed at the end of the year as a K-5 extended day magnet school.

1984-1985

Dr. Robert Bridges was appointed superintendent.

A director of magnet programs position was established.

1985-1986

In June 1986, the school system is awarded \$3.8 million for the following two years from the federal governments' Magnet Schools Assistance Program. The project was designed to revitalize magnet programs with additional resources, new/revised curricula, staff development, and evaluation.

1986-1987

Carnage Classical Studies Middle School opens as Carnage Gifted and Talented Magnet Middle School.

Wake County Public School System received an award of \$3,800,000 from the Magnet Schools Assistance Program grant for all GT schools.

1987-1988

A task force was appointed to investigate year-round education.

Baucom Elementary was demagnetized and opened as a traditional K-5 elementary school, following the reorganization from K-2 to a K-5 program.

Fuquay-Varina Elementary was demagnetized and opened as a traditional K-5 elementary school and simultaneously moved into a new facility.

1988-1989

Daniels Middle School was demagnetized and program components were phased out over several years.

Following a task force study, Poe Elementary added a technology component to become Poe International/Technology Magnet Elementary School effective the following year. An AG program enhancement also occurred at Poe.

1989-1990

Dr. Robert Wentz became superintendent.

Kingswood Elementary School opened as a single-track year-round K-5 program. It was the first in North Carolina and first year-round *magnet* in the nation.

Primary functions of the magnet programs office were redistributed throughout the Programs Branch, and the magnet director's position was eliminated.

1990-1991

A magnet steering committee comprised of 25 school and community representatives studied ways to enhance and expand magnet programs and proposed recommendations to the board of education. Three of 14 recommendations were adopted by the board:

1. 250-300 additional gifted and talented magnet middle school seats over 3 years were approved.
2. Joyner Elementary was designated as Joyner Language Arts/Communications Magnet.
3. Crosstimbers (Morrisville) was approved as a four-track year-round school with no base population.

Magnet parameters were established related to Senate Bill 2 and site-based decision making.

Lacy Classical Studies Magnet Elementary School and Carroll Classical Studies Magnet Middle School are demagnetized. A three-year phase-out plan was developed for Lacy and a two-year phase-out plan was developed for Carroll.

1991-1992

The Kingswood staff and student body moved to Morrisville Elementary school which opened as a K-5 year-round multi-track program.

The administrative Magnet Enhancement Committee recommended the re-creation of a magnet programs office and the position of magnet director was reinstated.

An AG Basics program was added to the gifted and talented program at Fuller GT Elementary School.

1992-1993

The Academically Gifted Basics program was expanded at the middle school level and added to the Gifted and Talented program at Carnage Middle School.

In June 1993, the Wake County Public School System was awarded a \$1.3 million grant for each of two-years from the federal government's Magnet Schools Assistance Program. The two-year project targeted eight magnet schools: Bugg, Conn, Fuller, Hunter, Poe, Powell, Ligon, and Enloe.

Durant Road Elementary, West Lake Elementary, and West Lake Middle Schools opened as multi-track year-round programs.

1993-1994

Durant Road Year-Round Middle School began with 6th grade students housed on the elementary campus.

Wake County Public School System receives \$2,452,204. from the Magnet Schools Assistance Program grant for programs in the following schools: Bugg, Conn, Fuller, Hunter, Poe, Powell, Ligon, and Enloe.

1994-1995

Durant Road Year-Round Middle School expanded to include the 6th and 7th grades.

Oak Grove Year-Round Magnet Elementary opened at Davis Drive Elementary using the facility until the Oak Grove facility is completed.

1995-1996

Wake County Public School System receives \$6,256,425. from the Magnet Schools Assistance Program grant for Bugg, Poe, Carnage, Ligon, Enloe, and Southeast Raleigh.

Lincoln Heights Magnet School changes to a new theme: Community Model

Program needs and options for East Millbrook Middle School are explored through committees at the school including staff and parents.

International Baccalaureate Programme at Enloe is approved and the application process begins.

Training for Montessori teachers continues at Poe with funding coming from the Magnet Schools Assistance Program to implement Poe International Montessori School.

Bugg changes from Classical Magnet to Bugg Creative Arts and Science Magnet School.

Enloe Enterprises, Inc., a magnet grant initiative, is established through a student-operated enterprise whose purpose is to create real world connections between school and the world of work.

1996-1997

A Magnet Programs Study is completed by Dr. David Bennett including possible strategies related to changes and expansion of the magnet network.

East Millbrook is recommended to become a magnet school with the combination of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme and an arts integration approach to be phased in over a three-year period.

1997-1998

Southeast Raleigh High School opens on a modified calendar as Center for Accelerated Studies: Math, Science, and Technology.

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program proposal is explored to determine strategies, concepts, and programs.

The Wake County Board of Education attends a two-day retreat about magnet programs in the district including a half-day session in the Decision Lab.

1998-1999

Wake County Public School System receives \$7,493,934. from the Magnet Schools Assistance Program grant for Conn, Fuller, Carnage, East Millbrook, and Year-Round Community-Based Accelerated Learning Centers.

A Magnet Schools' Status Report is presented to the Board of Education. Challenges affecting the success and continuation of the magnet program are addressed.

Zebulon Middle School is recommended as a new GT magnet middle school with an emphasis on math, science, and technology.

The Year-Round Community-Based Accelerated Learning Center (CBALC) program is Recommended to expand to other elementary year-round sites to target students in minority and low socio-economic areas.

An updated status report of magnet programs is presented to the Board of Education. This report includes applicants to program magnets, recruitment strategies, building capacities and space utilization at year-round schools, equity magnet information, and future growth and planning.

Magnet programs “Guiding Principles” are approved.

- Utilization of schools
- Equity of educational opportunity
- Diverse student population
- Program improvement
- Parental participation and choice

1999-2000

The Magnet Resource Center opens in a building behind Millbrook Elementary School as a center for recruitment. The Center houses magnet curriculum, magnet grant information, and specific program descriptions and displays.

Adams Year-round Elementary School and Lufkin Year-round Middle School open in western Wake County due to high demand for year-round programs and to ease overcrowding in the area.

Millbrook Elementary, Farmington Woods Elementary, Daniels Middle School, and Broughton High School are recommended to become magnet schools with an International Baccalaureate Programme theme. Broughton will have years 4 and 5 of the Middle Years Programme in 9th and 10th grades and will begin planning for the IB Diploma Programme for 11th and 12th grades. These programs expand IB in the district from the approved IB diploma Programme at Enloe and the Middle Years Programme at East Millbrook.

Wilburn Year-Round Elementary school is recommended for magnet status as year-round magnet school.

Douglas Elementary School is recommended for magnet status as a Creative Arts and Science magnet school (replication of the theme at Bugg).

Combs Extended Day Magnet Elementary School is recommended to revise its theme to include the leadership and science focus. The new name is Combs Leadership and Extended Day Magnet School.

Olds Extended Day Magnet Elementary School is recommended to revisit its theme to include an emphasis on the sciences, humanities, and university partnerships. The new name is Olds University Connections and Extended Day Magnet.

Centennial Campus is recommended to be on the modified instructional calendar for the 2000-'01 school year.

Apex Elementary is approved to begin a three year phase-out of its current GT magnet program to a traditional program beginning with the 2000-'01 school year.

A magnet programs update is presented to the Board of Education with tenets of magnet programs that help reach Goal 2003.

2000-2001

A status report of magnet programs in the district is presented to the Board of Education. Challenges affecting the success of the magnet program are addressed.

Extended Day magnet theme is recommended for elimination due to mounting costs beginning with the 2001-2002 school year. Combs, Olds, and Joyner will retain magnet status with their existing themes.

- Combs Leadership Magnet Elementary School
- Joyner Language Arts/Communications Magnet Elementary School
- Olds University Connections Magnet Elementary School

Brooks Elementary and Moore Square Middle are recommended to become magnet schools offering the museums program beginning with the 2002-2003 school year.

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program proposal is developed to include the following projects:

- Moore Square Museums Magnet Middle School (2002-2003)
- Brooks Museums Magnet Elementary School (2002-2003)
- Joyner Language Explorations Magnet Elementary School (2001-2002)
- Powell GT Magnet Elementary School: Visual and Performing Arts (2001-2002)
- Millbrook Magnet Elementary School: International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (2002-2003)

This proposal is funded for approximately \$7.4 million dollars.

Magnet Feeder patterns are determined, based on theme, to foster program continuation from one level to the next.

2002-2003

Moore Square Museums Magnet Middle School opens in downtown Raleigh as a new school with a museums theme. It will operate on a modified calendar.

Garner High School and North Garner Middle School are approved to convert to magnet schools offering the IB middle years and diploma programmes. East Garner Middle School is approved as an equity magnet offering the IB Middle Years Programme to ensure that those students are prepared to enter the IB programme at the high school.

2003-2004

The classical studies theme at Root Magnet Elementary is eliminated because it is felt that the theme's components are no longer unique in the district. The Leadership theme offered at Combs Magnet Elementary is replicated at Root.

The global communications theme at Conn begins its phase-out due to low application numbers. It is determined that the magnet programs department will work with the school to implement a new Active Learning and Technology theme.

The magnet programs department begins to work on the Magnet Schools Assistance Program grant proposal which includes the following schools/themes:

- Conn Active Learning and Technology
- Joyner Center for Spanish Language with the IB Primary Years Programme
- Southeast Raleigh Center for Leadership and Technology
- Enloe GT/IB Center for Humanities, Sciences and the Arts
- North Garner IB Middle Years Programme

2004-2005

The MSAP grant proposal is not funded but the schools included in the proposal begin implementing their new/revised themes on limited local funds.

2005-2006

The Magnet Programs department participates in a 1.5 day - work session with the BOE to review magnet programs in the district in April 2005. New magnet objectives are recommended and the department is asked to create magnetization and demagnetization guidelines. The new "Magnet Objectives" are:

Magnet programs will be used to create healthy schools throughout the Wake County Public School System through:

- **The utilization of schools** to make optimal use of all facilities
- **Use of choice to help create diverse student populations, increase student achievement and reduce high concentrations of poverty** to promote respect for cultures and beliefs and to enrich the learning experience and achievement
- **The expansion of educational opportunities** to make innovative programs accessible to all students so they can discover and develop gifts and talents
- **Promotion of program innovations that foster system-wide improvement** to raise the standards for the whole district by implementing innovative programs that meet the needs of all students.

The BOE approved the separation of magnet programs and year-round education to begin in 2006-2007 school year. A new department is created – the Office of Year-Round Education with Caroline Massengill named as the special assistant for that department. Ken Branch is named Senior Director of Magnet Programs in March of 2006.

2006-2007

In fall 2006, the board approved the conversion of Forestville Road Elementary to a magnet school to serve the eastern Wake County area. It also approved the conversion of North Garner Middle school from a traditional calendar to a year-round calendar with the removal of the IB programme because of the difficulty of implementing the IB programme on a year-round schedule. Both were to begin with the 2007-2008 school year.

In March 2007, the board of education approved revised objectives for magnet programs:

- Reduce high concentrations of poverty and support diverse populations;
- Maximize use of school facilities; and
- Provide expanded educational opportunities

The magnet programs department continued to present to the board of education a review of magnet programs in the district.

At its August 7, 2007, meeting the school board voted to discontinue the magnet programs at four elementary schools: Lincoln Heights, Olds, Root and Wake Forest. This decision was made after determining that the schools were no longer aligned with the objectives set forth for all magnet schools. It was also decided that the new magnet program at Forestville Road Elementary School would not be implemented.

In addition, the Board agreed to continue the magnet programs that are in place at Daniels Middle, East Millbrook Middle, Zebulon Middle, and Broughton High Schools.

Finally, action was taken to convert Wendell GT Magnet Elementary and Zebulon GT Magnet Elementary Schools to application magnet schools. These two schools were created as equity magnets in 1982.