

GrowthMatters

January 2005

New Schools Opening in 2005-06

In 2005, the Wake County Public School System will open Cedar Fork Elementary School in Morrisville as originally planned. To cover the majority of an estimated 5,900-seat shortfall — due to higher than projected enrollment and state mandated class size reduction at third grade on top of existing overcrowding — Wake will also add 146 mobile or modular classroom units at existing campuses and open three modular schools.

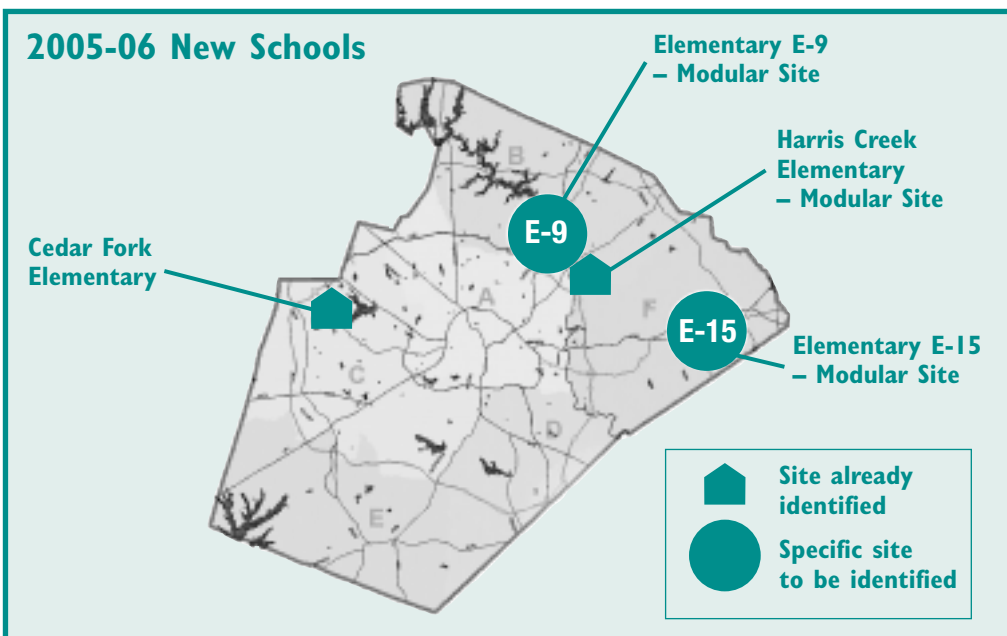
Growth Management will identify students for the proposed E-15 Elementary (planning name for the school), and have them begin school two years early in a modular school at the new Wendell location. Then, students and staff would move together to the new campus once it is ready. If lease negotiations with the DuBois Foundation and Magellan Charter School are successful, Harris Creek Elementary (E-11) students would start a year early in a modular school on the Wake Forest site, and Magellan's new building in North Raleigh would serve as a start-up for E-9 Elementary. If negotiations are not fruitful, WCPSS will need to use Wildwood Forest Elementary and East Millbrook Middle as modular school locations.

Community Engagement Meetings

WCPSS held a series of 12 Community Engagement Meetings to inform and involve the public in the upcoming student assignment process. While the first round of meetings looked at long-range planning, growth projections and school construction needs, the second round delved into short-range student movement, timing of future school openings and specific school information. All the sessions provided parents and community members the opportunity to share ideas and ask questions.

The school system's efforts to reach out to parents and the community were well received. Of the 491 surveys completed in both rounds, 82.3 percent agreed they were given appropriate opportunities for input; and 82.0 percent said the information helped them better understand some of the issues surrounding managing growth in Wake County schools.

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Community Meetings *(continued from front)*

"This year's Community Engagement Meetings reaffirmed what we learned at last year's sessions," said Ramey Beavers, senior director for Growth Management. "Parents want a plan that provides close proximity, stability, keeps neighborhoods together, alleviates crowding and provides grandfathering. When possible, we'll incorporate these priorities into the plan."

Another suggestion that WCPSS adopted from last year is joint long-range planning between Facilities and Growth Management. Together they developed Vision 2020, which forecasts facilities and student assignment needs for now through the year 2020. By integrating the facility planning and student assignment processes, the school system can better schedule construction completion dates to lessen student assignment's impact on families.

Presentations, comments and survey results from these meetings are posted on the school system's website at <http://www.wcpss.net/growth-management/community-engagement/2004>.

Definitions:

Attendance area — Each year, the Board of Education reviews its growth management plan and makes adjustments to each school's attendance area when needed. Attendance area boundaries are shown on maps approved by the board. Policy calls on the board to complete its growth management plan by May 1 of each year, including assignment of exceptional children.

Base population — A school's base population includes the students assigned to the school serving the attendance area in which the students' parent or court-appointed custodian resides. The Board of Education designates each school's attendance area in the growth management plan.

Diversity — Diversity is a consideration in the growth management process. It is a strategy used to positively impact student achievement. Research has shown that if there is a high concentration of either low student achievement (more than 25 percent) or students receiving free and reduced price lunch (more than 40 percent) in a single school, the academic achievement of all students may be negatively impacted.

Grandfathering — Students who have been assigned to an existing school may remain at their original school, with the condition that they provide their own transportation. Fourth-, fifth-, seventh-, eighth-, 10th-, 11th- and 12th-graders are

Timeline

January 2005:

A draft growth management proposal will be released in mid-January. The public will have two weeks to offer feedback.



February 2005:

A revised, formal proposal will be sent to the Board of Education in February.

March/April 2005:

The school board will hold public hearings on the plan in the middle of March, and vote on the plan at the end of March or beginning of April.

given the option to remain at their original school, when reassigned to an existing school.

Modular classroom unit — A modular unit is similar to a building wing. Typically, there are three or four classrooms on either side of a hallway, as well as restrooms and administrative space. Modulares must meet the same building codes as brick and mortar schools.

Node — A geographic area designated by the school system when the student assignment process first began in the 1980s to assign groups of students to schools. Each node has a defined profile and is assigned to a specific elementary, middle and high school. Nodes may be subdivided as the area population grows. A group of nodes make up a school's designated base attendance area.

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WAKE COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

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