



WAKE COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Wake County is a smart community and growing at an unprecedented rate. Home to more than 1.1 million people, Wake County is growing by 64 people a day. The combination of top universities and an abundance of job opportunities makes our community a magnet for educated individuals. Our residents and local leaders understand the value of a quality education, which is why Wake County has one of the top performing school systems in the nation.

#1 STATE WITH THE MOST EQUITABLE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

(NC) WalletHub | August 2020



OUR COMMUNITY IS PASSIONATE ABOUT EDUCATION.

MORE THAN HALF OF WAKE COUNTY'S POPULATION

has a four-year degree or higher — a figure that will continue to rise with each passing year.



52.8%

Wake County



32.1%

United States



OVERVIEW

THE WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM (WCPSS) IS BOTH HIGH-PERFORMING AND FAST-GROWING.

WCPSS is the largest school district in the State of North Carolina and the 14th largest in the nation with 161,000+ students. Wake County is **one school district** and covers 857 square miles. The student population has almost tripled since 1980, and is anticipated to grow by an additional 20,000 students in the next four years.

Wake County encompasses **857 square miles** and has **twelve municipalities**: Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Garner, Holly Springs, Knightdale, Morrisville, Raleigh, Rolesville, Wake Forest, Wendell, and Zebulon.

WCPSS has a total of **191 competitive schools**:

- **116** Elementary Schools
- **37** Middle Schools
- **29** High Schools
- **3** K-8, 6-12 Schools
- **6** Specialized Program Schools

49 of the 191 schools are Magnet Schools (43) and early college high schools (6) for the arts, language, engineering, technology and more.

WCPSS's average child to teacher ratio is:

15:1



Wake County is **one of only 39 counties** in the nation with a AAA credit rating from all three rating agencies. This superior rating allows the county to borrow money at incredibly low interest rates.

AAA CREDIT RATING



1,486

WCPSS has more **national board-certified teachers** than any other district in the United States.



47%

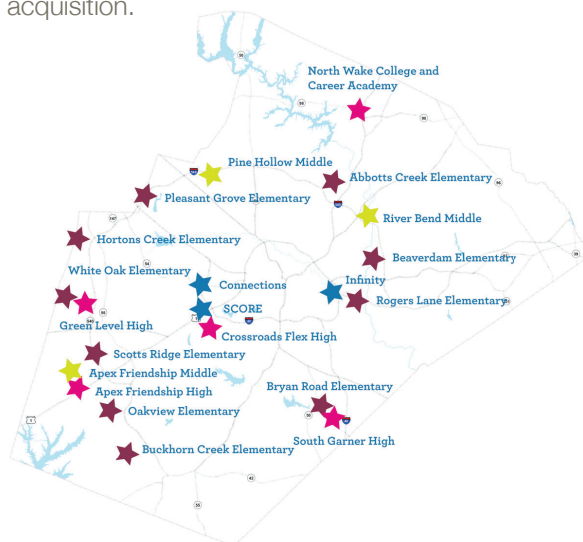
WCPSS teachers, guidance counselors, media specialists, and other school professionals have an **advanced degree**.



For more information visit wcpss.net

Support for Schools

Wake County voters have a history of regularly supporting school bonds, providing funding for capital improvements across North Carolina's largest public school district. In 2013, voters overwhelmingly approved an \$810 million referendum that contributed to the construction of 21 new schools and programs. In addition, bonds provide funding for technology upgrades, life cycle equipment replacement, security, and land acquisition.



The location of these schools are as important as the number of schools. Of the 21 schools and programs, 10 are ES, 3 are MS, 5 are HS, and 3 are Special or alternative schools. 15 come from the current Capital Plan that is just ending, 5 are considered SNAP projects tailored to fit specific needs that differ from full comprehensive schools and 1 is serving as high school swing space until it opens with a new student body in 2019. The majority of these new schools are near the perimeter of the county, especially in the south and west, because that is where most of our population growth is occurring as a county.

Strategic Plan | Vision 2020

In the spring of 2014, hundreds of people gathered on a Friday night to discuss the future of public education in Wake County. What followed was months of conversations among parents, teachers, students, and the community, along with 11,000 survey participants and a town hall meeting with over 750 attendees. The result of this year-long process was the "Vision 2020" Strategic Plan which focuses on the '4Cs' which will accurately reflect a students' knowledge of core curriculum standards:

- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Collaboration
- Creativity

WCPSS Vision

All Wake County Public School System students will be prepared to reach their full potential and lead productive lives in a complex and changing world.

WCPSS Mission

Wake County Public School System will provide a relevant and engaging education and will graduate students who are collaborative, creative, effective communicators, and critical thinkers.

WCPSS Goal

By 2020, WCPSS will annually graduate at least 95% of its students ready for productive citizenship as well as higher education or a career.

The current school bond allows WCPSS to invest close to **\$1 BILLION ON NEW CONSTRUCTION, MAJOR RENOVATIONS, AND TECHNOLOGY ACQUISITION.**



A HIGH-PERFORMING SYSTEM

A GOOD WAY TO COMPARE HIGH SCHOOL PERFORMANCE NATIONALLY is by looking at the graduation rates, test results in Advanced Placement (AP) courses and other standardized tests, like the SAT.

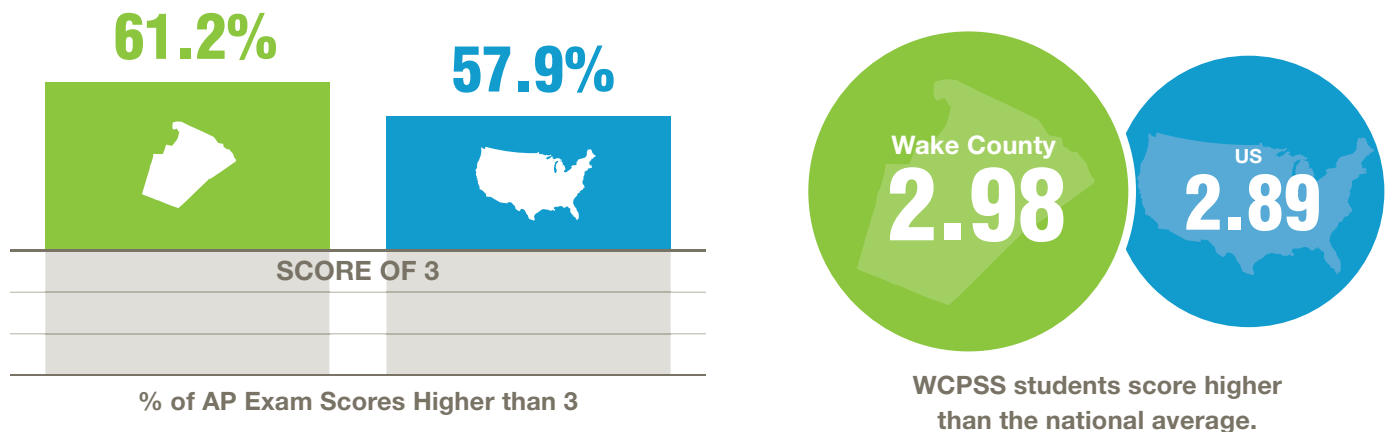
Graduation Rate

Percentage of Seniors Graduating in Four Years or Less



AP Exam Scores

(AP) Advanced Placement Exam scores range from 1 to 5, with 3 being the minimum score required to earn college credit. More than three-quarters of WCPSS students achieve a score of 3 or higher, exceeding the national average by more than half a point.



MORE THAN **72%** OF WCPSS STUDENTS GO ON TO POST SECONDARY EDUCATION.

WAKE COUNTY RANKED **#1** NATIONWIDE IN "GOLD STANDARD" TEACHERS.

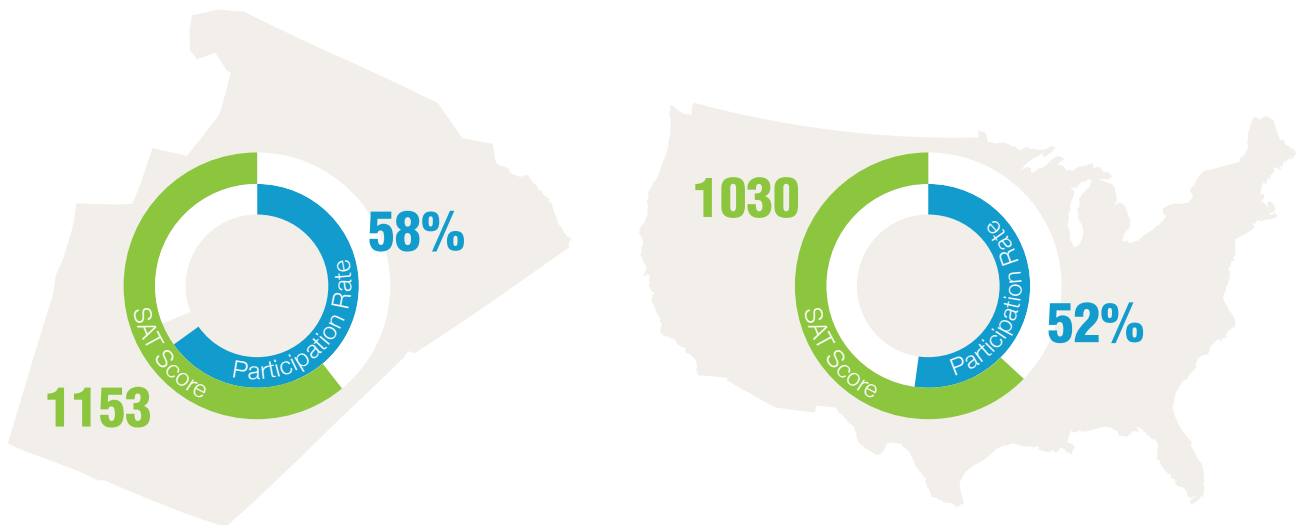




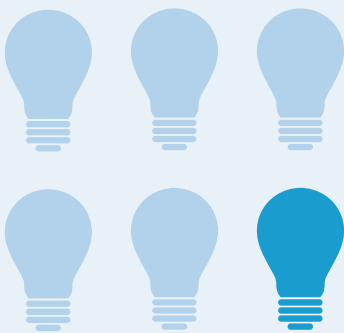
For more information visit wcpss.net

SAT Scores

WCPSS has a higher percentage than the national average of students taking the SAT and outperform their counterparts on SAT test scores.



Source: NC Department of Public Instruction 2020



THE ACADEMICALLY AND INTELLECTUALLY GIFTED PROGRAM provides a challenging educational program for students who perform, or show potential for performing, at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. The standards for inclusion in these programs are set by the State of North Carolina.

1 IN 6 of WCPSS students are in academically gifted programs – almost more than double the statewide average.



4 HIGH SCHOOLS RANKED AMONG TOP 1000 HIGH SCHOOLS IN U.S.

U.S. World News Report | 2020



2 NATIONALLY RANKED PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

Top 30 | Niche | 2021



SCHOOL OPTIONS

WAKE COUNTY PROVIDES A RANGE OF CHOICES FOR FAMILIES to meet their scheduling and educational preferences. In addition to the choices within WCPSS, there are also a wide range of options for private and charter schools.

Wake County Public Schools

Students are assigned to a base school and are given up to two alternative options (traditional or year-round) based on their address of residence. Parents may also apply for placement in one of the county's magnet schools or other specialized programs. Students new to the district and incoming kindergartens will be assigned to their base school. To be eligible for kindergarten, students must be five years old on or before August 31. Parents should visit their base school to enroll their student.

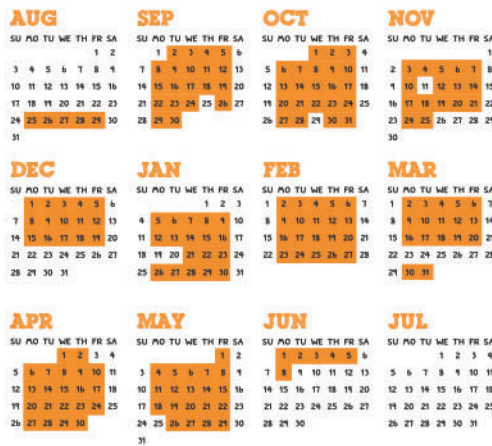
TWO-THIRDS of WCPSS schools (134) operate on a traditional calendar



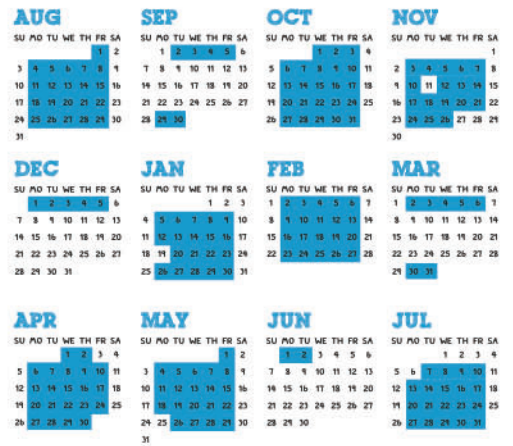
ONE-THIRD of WCPSS schools (47) operate on a year-round calendar

The remaining schools (10) operate on a modified or alternative schedule to coincide with the community college, colleges, or university schedule.

TRADITIONAL CALENDAR



YEAR-ROUND CALENDAR



WCPSS Sample Calendars: Unlike the traditional calendar, a student in year-round school goes for nine weeks on and then three weeks off.

Sample from 2014-2015 school year.

©2014 Wake County Schools. Sample of one possible schedule from the 2014-2015 school year.



For more information visit wcpss.net

Specialized Programs

Students' interests and abilities differ — so Wake County has a wide range of specialized programs available including:

- Career academics including finance, health science, and environmental sciences
- Early Colleges where students can earn up to two years of college credit at no cost to the student
- Gifted and Talented, Gifted and Talented/AIG Basics, International Studies
- Leadership
- International Baccalaureate, Creative Arts

WCPSS Magnet Programs are important in helping to promote diverse populations, maximize use of school facilities, and provide expanded educational opportunities. WCPSS has over 49 magnet schools, 37 of which have a focus on leadership, technology, world languages, gifted and talented, language immersion/global studies, and international baccalaureate.

International Enrollment

WCPSS has over 14,000 English language learners, with over 5,100 students born outside of the United States.

In addition to ESL instruction, WCPSS provide language support to ensure English Language Learners have access to grade level instruction throughout the school day.

Center for International Enrollment: The center helps students who speak a language other than English enroll in WCPSS. A Communication Specialist guides the student and their family through the enrollment process.

Private and Charter Schools

Private Schools

For those interested in private schools, Wake County is home to a number of great options:

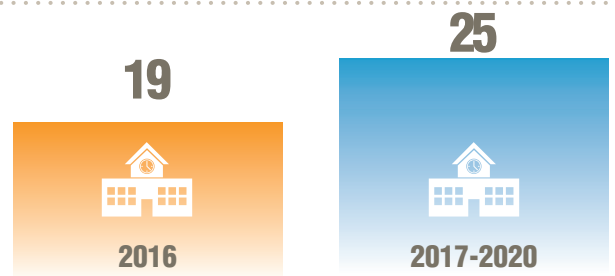
- **77** private schools in Wake County
- Religious – **34**
- Independent – **43**
- **19,095** students

Charter Schools

In addition to private schools, parents may also want to consider charter schools.

Your first question might be “What is a charter school?” The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction defines charter schools as public schools operated by private nonprofit boards. The primary funding sources for charter schools are local, state, and federal tax dollars. The schools have open enrollment with no discrimination, no religious associations, and no tuition.

Learn more at www.ncpublicschools.org/charterschools



Wake County is home to 25 charter schools, 6 of which are new in the last 3 years.



Specialized services available at every school include:

- Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG)
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Special Education



Resources

Wake County Public School System

www.wcpss.net
919-431-7333

Triangle Independent School Consortium

www.tiscnc.org

Charter Schools

www.ncpublicschools.org/charterschools

Communities in Schools of Wake County

www.ciswake.org
919-834-5663

Wake County PTA Council

www.wakepta.org

Wake Education Partnership

www.Wakeedpartnership.org
919-821-7609

Review and Compare K-12 Schools

www.Greatschools.org
www.Schooldigger.com

Wake County Economic Development

www.Raleigh-Wake.org

Work in the Triangle

www.WorkintheTriangle.com



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