

Chapter 13

Schools

SCHOOLS: INTRODUCTION

The Guilford County School System is the county's largest employer, with over 7,500 employees. It is the third largest school system in North Carolina, and is one of the top 60 systems in the nation. The School System includes 280 buildings, eight million square feet of space and more than 2,800 acres of land. A total of 660 buses provide transportation for students.

The Guilford County School system includes 97 schools with a total of 62,000 students. The System includes 62 elementary schools, 18 middle schools, 14 high schools, and three special schools. Three of the elementary schools are year-round schools: Brooks Global Magnet and Hampton in Greensboro, and Oak Hill School in High Point. Twelve magnet schools offer the regular comprehensive curriculum, plus specialized themes or studies, such as communications, cultural arts, or math and science. Two centers provide advanced studies: Eastern High School in Gibsonville and Southwest High School in High Point. Weaver Education Center in Greensboro offers advanced academics, performing arts, and vocational and technical training for high school students. Gateway Education Center is internationally known for its outstanding programs for children to age 20 who suffer from cerebral palsy, orthopedic impairments, and those who are severely and profoundly handicapped. McIver is a special school serving mentally challenged/ handicapped children between the ages of 5 and 21.

Due to the increasing number of school aged children, many of the schools within the Guilford County School System are at or exceeding capacity. Current enrollment standards for the various school levels are Elementary: 704, Middle: 878, and High: 1200-1800. Standards for students per classroom for the various school levels are Elementary: 24, Middle: 26, and High: 20. With these standards in place, district estimates are projecting that four to five new schools will be needed within the next ten years to meet the demand caused by rising enrollments in the northeast and northwest. Currently, two new schools are under construction in east Greensboro, and another 34 construction projects totaling \$250 million have been scheduled, including air conditioning, structural repairs, renovations, and expansions. The recent bond passage of \$200 million will fund most of these construction plans.

The School System's volunteer program matches responsible adults with students who need special attention and positive interaction. Volunteers serve as lunch buddies, tutors, mentors, and friends, giving their time and support. During the 1999-2000 school year, a total of 120,463 volunteer visits were made, logging 252,424 hours of service to the Guilford County Schools.

Business partnerships and volunteer programs are increasing each year. Almost 1,500 businesses and community groups in Guilford County, Greensboro and High Point, participate in the Partnerships in Education program. This program is designed to strengthen and enhance the quality of education. Volunteers share their time and knowledge with students in the program, which is sponsored by the High Point and Greensboro Chambers of Commerce and the Guilford County Schools. Businesses also provide apprenticeships and internships for students, part-time jobs, co-op programs, equipment, and supplies.

Parent volunteers are the major participants in the Comer Process. Forty-eight Guilford County schools have adopted this process. Parent Teams use collaboration and communication to solve students' problems with a no-fault-approach. This program calls for parents, teachers, principals, and the community to work together to enhance school achievement.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members are also significant participants in the Guilford County School system. The PTA conducts fund-raising, service projects, and organizes special events. During the 1999-2000 school year, membership in the Guilford County School PTAs totaled 35,568 members.

Subjects covered in this chapter include existing and projected enrollment, school construction activity, capacity, and utilization.

SCHOOLS: SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

School System Statistics

The Guilford County School System is the county's largest employer, with over 7,500 employees. It is the third largest school system in North Carolina and one of the top 60 systems in the nation.

The School System includes 280 buildings, eight million square feet of space and more than 2,800 acres of land. The System's 660 buses provide transportation for students.

The System is composed of 97 schools: 62 elementary, 18 middle, 14 high, and 3 special schools.

Enrollment

Guilford County's school enrollment is expected to increase significantly over the next ten years, from 62,426 in 2000-2001, to 66,168 in 2008-2009, an increase of 6%.

For the same period, projected enrollment growth within each grade level varies greatly: elementary school should have a slight decrease of 1.8 percent, middle school should experience an increase of 8.4 percent, and high school should see the highest increase, 17.7 percent.

Construction Inventory

From 1950-1970, 59 of the System's 97 schools were built; 41 were elementary schools. During the 1990s, five new schools have been built and five expanded at a cost of \$118 million.

The recent passage of a major bond referendum for \$200 million will fund most of the scheduled 34 construction projects that are estimated to cost \$250 million. School officials project

that another \$131 million in improvements will be needed in order to fully implement the re-districting plan.

Regional Dropout and Retention

In 1998-1999 for grades 9-12, Alamance County experienced the highest retention rate at 61.4 percent, followed closely by Guilford and Forsyth Counties with 59.2 percent and 58.8 percent, respectively. Randolph and Rockingham had the lowest retention rates among Triad regional counties, at 56.5 percent and 56.1 percent, respectively.

Conversely, during the same time period for the same grade levels, Randolph County reported the highest dropout rate, followed by Rockingham, Forsyth, and Alamance Counties. Guilford County had the lowest dropout rate in the Triad region.

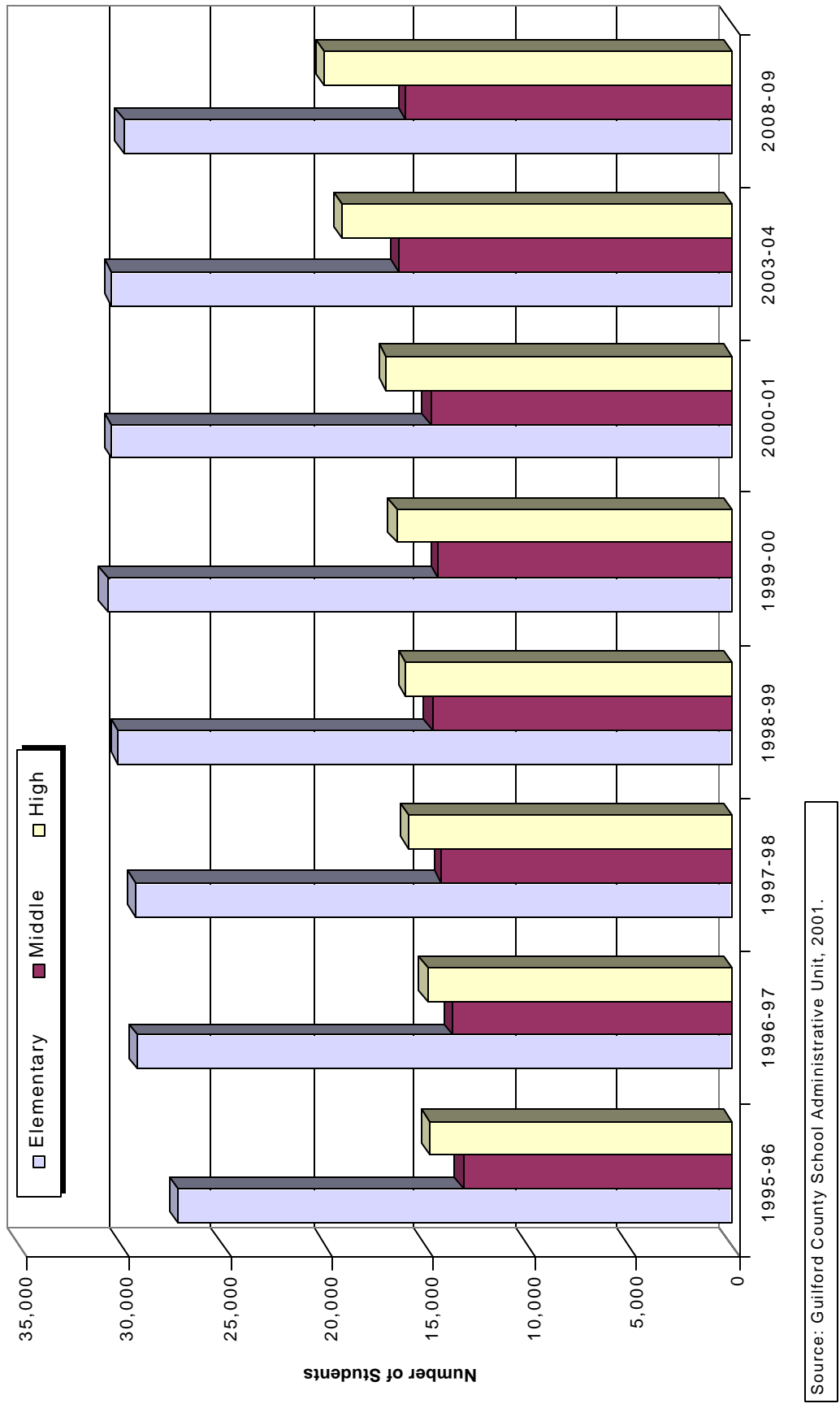
Schools	Minority Percentage			Exceptional Children		English as a Second Language	
	1998-99	1999-00	2003-04	1998-99	1999-00	1998-99	1999-00
Elementary	51.0%	52.1%	52.1%	15.3%	15.6%	3.4%	3.6%
Middle	44.8%	45.8%	45.9%	14.9%	15.5%	2.5%	2.4%
High	40.0%	41.0%	42.1%	9.3%	9.3%	1.9%	2.0%

Source: Guilford County Schools, 2000.

School Year	Elementary Grades K-5		Middle Grades 6-8		High Grades 9-12		Special Needs Students
	No.	Admissions	No.	Admissions	No.	Admissions	Admissions
1995-96	59	27,268	17	13,292	14	14,922	193
1996-97	59	29,281	17	13,846	14	15,058	172
1997-98	60	29,425	17	14,318	14	15,956	172
1998-99	60	30,245	17	14,793	14	16,090	187
1999-00	61	30,804	17	14,474	14	16,582	193
2000-01	62	30,511	18	14,843	14	17,072	207
Projections							
2003-04	NA*	30,560	NA*	16,446	NA*	19,246	--
2008-09	NA*	29,978	NA*	16,090	NA*	20,100	--

Source: Guilford County School Administrative Unit, 2001. *Depends on future construction schedule.

Figure 13-1: Guilford County School Enrollment and Projections, FY 1995-1996 to FY 2008-2009



Source: Guilford County School Administrative Unit, 2001.

Schools	Estimated Students, 2003-04	Estimated Students, 2008-09	Existing* Capacity	Adjusted Capacity
Elementary	30,560	29,978	28,601	33,748
Middle	16,446	16,090	12,616	16,722
High	19,246	20,100	14,205	18,585

Source: Guilford County Schools, 2000. *Fall of 1999.

School System	Grade 9 Enrollment 1995-96	Grades 9-12 Estimated Retention Rate	1998-99 Grades 7-12 Duplicated Dropouts*		1998-99 Grades 9-12 Duplicated Dropouts*	
			Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Alamance-Burlington	1,539	61.4	418	4.75	407	7.09
Forsyth County	3,532	58.8	929	4.95	890	7.15
Guilford County	5,179	59.2	1,152	4.26	1,109	6.34
Randolph County	1,346	56.5	436	6.04	401	8.75
Rockingham County	1,295	56.1	359	5.51	332	7.93

Source: NC Dept. of Public Instruction, The North Carolina Statistical Profile-2000. *Duplicated Dropouts-some persons may be counted more than once if they dropped out more than once during the time period.

Decade	High Schools	Middle Schools	Elementary Schools	Special Schools	Total
1920s	3	1	8	1	13
1930s	0	1	2	0	3
1940s	0	2	3	0	5
1950s	2	5	33	0	40
1960s	6	5	8	0	19
1970s	3	1	6	0	10
1980s	0	0	0	2	2
1990s	0	2	3	0	5

Source: Guilford County Public Schools, 2000.