

Differentiated what? Staff levels vary by school

The conversation about cutting class sizes began in a debate: What percentage of a school's children must be behind, or poor, before class size gets cut to 16 students? Should it be 60% of the students, 70%, even 80%? It was the wrong question.

The right question, asked by staff and board members, was: How do we set a policy that puts resources in front of the children in need of them? Some schools already have a lot of children in need of extra time with their teacher; and there will be more schools like that this fall. Other schools have fewer such kids, but the kids there are just as much in need.

This current school year, school teaching staffs reflect the effort to spread so-called differentiated staffing to all sites where it is needed.

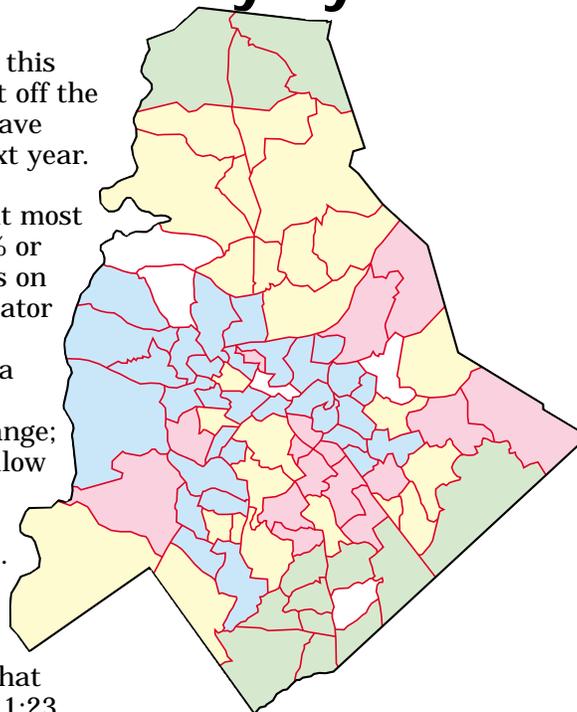
The map shows the effect of a graduated policy on class size. This map shows elementary attendance zones that will be used this fall. The unshaded areas are new schools yet to open

for which there is no data this year. Some schools are left off the map because they won't have such attendance areas next year. That said:

The blue areas represent most of the 33 schools with 60% or more of their K-3 students on subsidized lunch, an indicator of low family income. The ratio is 1:16. The magenta areas are most of the 19 schools in the 40%-59% range; their ratio is 1:19. The yellow areas are most of the 25 schools in the 20%-39% range, with a ratio of 1:22. The green areas are most of the 9 schools with less than 20% of their children on lunch subsidies, that have the highest ratios of 1:23. These statistics likely do not take into account students added during the school year.

In the 4-5 grades, ratios are 1:19 at a list of 49 Equity Plus II schools, 1:26 at the rest.

Middle school ratios are 1:18 at E+II, 1:19 at schools with 50% or more students on subsidized



lunch, and 1:20.5 at the remainder. High school standards are more complex.

Systemwide, 442 or 9% of the teaching positions are allocated to lower ratios. At the lower elementary level, 271 or 15% of the teaching positions are involved in the program.

Site to track federal education reform

Readers trying to make sense of the new "No Child Left Behind" education act have a new place to go for information.

The N.C. Department of Public Instruction has begun placing information about the new law on the following Web site: www.ncpublicschools.org/esea

Few items are posted but one makes fascinating reading. It is a speech by Thomas Corwin, acting deputy assistant secretary for elementary and secondary education in the Department of Education.

His address was given at a National Title I Conference in Tampa just days after President Bush signed the bill into law in January.

In his address, Corwin takes up, among other things, "the qualifications of the staff you employ in Title I programs and in your schools more generally.

"Perhaps in no other area does the new Act attempt to bring about more fundamental changes in the operation of our schools.

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N.C. teacher salaries

Average annual salary, based on latest available year from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as reported by Education Week:

Child care **\$14,500**

Preschool **\$17,670**

Kindergarten **\$32,000**

Educate!

a community journal on
public education in
Charlotte-Mecklenburg

Welcome to this week's edition. Our aim is to supply information useful to you in your role as student, parent or citizen interested in the welfare of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

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Educate! is published by The Swann Fellowship, 1510 E. 7th St., Charlotte, NC 28204. Voice: 704-342-4330 Fax: 704-342-4550. E-mail: SwannFello@aol.com Lucy Bush, president; B.B. DeLaine, vice president; Steve Johnston, executive director. Published since September 2000; 6-week average circulation through last issue: 2,258.

The name: The Swann Fellowship was named for Darius and Vera Swann, who on behalf of their son James became the lead plaintiffs in *Swann vs. Mecklenburg* in the 1960s. Darius Swann was the first African American Presbyterian missionary ever assigned outside of Africa. His experiences in India led him to appreciate the value of an integrated society for human development.

The vision: As people of faith, our vision is that all children in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system will have excellent educational opportunities which are both equitable and integrated.

The background: Formed in 1997 out of several Charlotte religious congregations, the Fellowship focuses on being a witness to the value of diversity, and educating the public on public school issues as they relate to this and allied subjects. The Swann Fellowship is a nonprofit organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code 56-2106776. Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 1-888-830-4989. The license is not an endorsement by the state.

Books Per Student

A recent CMS study compiled library collections as of June 2001, and projected fall 2001 enrollments, to determine a current books-per-student ratio.

Where the ratio is abnormally high, school enrollment was also

low. Some of the schools with very low ratios are overenrolled.

Of course, none of that matters to a student headed to the media center looking for books on which to base a report.

Source: CMS

Elementary Schools

49 Highland	19 Berryhill	Piney Grove
44 Starmount	Devonshire	Smithfield
34 Nations Ford	Idlewild	Statesville Road
27 Irwin Avenue	Olde Providence	Windsor Park
Rama Road	Pinewood	14 Druid Hills
26 Allenbrook	Sedgefield	Greenway Park
25 Dilworth	18 Beverly Woods	Hickory Grove
Long Creek	Chantilly	Pawtucket
McAlpine	Derita	Univ. Meadows
Oaklawn	Oakdale	13 J.H. Gunn
Park Road	Selwyn	Lake Wylie
Villa Heights	Winding Springs	Merry Oaks
23 Bain	16 Crown Point	Pineville
Myers Park Trad.	Elizabeth Trad.	12 Albemarle Road
Sharon	Amay James	Briarwood
22 Ashley Park	Lansdowne	Davidson
Collinswood	Sterling	Paw Creek
Cotswold	Winterfield	University Park
Reid Park	15 Clear Creek	11 Reedy Creek
Thomasboro	David Cox Road	Westerly Hills
21 Barringer	Hidden Valley	10 Cornelius
Billingsville	Hornets Nest	9 Nath. Alexander
Bruns Avenue	Huntersville	Newell
Eastover	Huntingtowne F.	Steele Creek
First Ward	Lebanon Road	8 Elizabeth Lane
Oakhurst	Lincoln Heights	Hawk Ridge
20 Montclair	Mallard Creek	7 Blythe
Shamrock Gard.	Matthews	Morehead
Tuckasegee	McKee Road	

Middle Schools

41 Hawthorne	14 Marie G. Davis	10 Kennedy
20 Alex. Graham	Eastway	Northeast
18 J.T. Williams	McClintock	Quail Hollow
17 Cochrane	Wilson	9 Bradley
Piedmont	13 Albemarle Road	8 Coulwood
Spaugh	12 Smith	7 Northridge
16 Sedgefield	11 J.M. Alexander	South Charlotte
15 Carmel	Randolph	6 Crestdale
Davidson IB	Ranson	5 Martin

High Schools

19 Olympic	10 Northwest Arts	7 Myers Park
13 Garinger	West Meck	Providence
South Meck	8 Hopewell	West Charlotte
11 East Meck	Midwood/TAPS	5 Butler
Harding	North Meck	4 Vance
Independence	Waddell	

Report due on support effort for newest teachers

Ellen Berg is a middle school teacher. She keeps a widely read journal about life as a teacher. It's posted on www.middleweb.com.

In entry 21, she writes, "I really do not want to leave.... I love my kids. I love the community. I love the idea that I am serving a population that desperately needs committed teachers.

"Yet I cannot help feeling I will never reach my potential if I stay where I am, without the support and guidance I think I need.

"There is no one to observe, no more experienced colleague to glean wisdom and ideas from, no person to ask me the hard questions about what I am doing...."

With overall teacher turnover above 20% and first-year losses even higher, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools staff are expected to report this week on a mentoring program to address some of the support issues that Berg wrote about in her diary.

The new teacher support collaborative is a scaled-down version of the \$984,000 initiative proposed in last year's budget. After budget cuts forced a narrowing of focus, the project with the University of California at Santa Cruz was limited to 15 Equity Plus II schools.

Keeping highly qualified teachers at all of the system's 40-some schools with large numbers of

'What do you love'

Massachusetts teacher Mary Ellen Dakin wrote this in the Harvard Educational Review last summer.

"Before last June, I saw an education as the compass to a better future, and in some ways I always will. But true north is different for each pilgrim, and we must learn to navigate within before we navigate without.

"Ask most of the sophomores and juniors in the city where I live and teach what they plan to do after graduation and they shrug their shoulders in bewilderment; ask them what they dream and they look away in awkward recognition of the fact that they have already labeled their dreams unrealistic, unachievable, ridiculous.

"But ask them "What do you love?" and they look at you wide-eyed, incredulous, and somehow hopeful. The answer to this question, I tell them, should point you toward your future.

"But if we could ask "What do you love?" much earlier in their schooling, with greater reverence for its answers, then the task of achieving high standards of excellence would no longer feel like such a burden.

"My own education has taught me that people are motivated to learn by two things, desire and need, and that what we learn out of love is learned best. Only now, after thirteen years of teaching, do I understand this:

"We do not fail when our children become something other than what we dream for them; we fail when our words, our attitudes, and our actions impoverish their dreams. And the very young, I suspect, dream big."

— Excerpt from *"The Poet, the CEO, and the First-Grade Teacher,"* by Mary Ellen Dakin, *Harvard Educational Review, Summer 2001*, at <http://gseweb.harvard.edu/~hepg/dakin.htm>

low-performing or high-poverty children is a system priority. The system reported in a status report on equity a series of faculty statistics for those schools. The statistics were compared with standards based on teacher data dur-

ing 1997-98 at the schools that won state plaudits that year for student achievement. The report tracks licensure, advanced degrees, first-year teachers, average teaching experience, national board certification, and this: The percentage of teachers with five or more years experience at all Equity Plus II schools.

The data:

Elementary: The standard is 71%; actual this year, 58%, with one school at 39%, another as high as 76%.

Middle school standard, 61%; actual, 46%, with low of 31% and high of 56%.

High school standard, 74%; actual, 62%, with low of 48% and high of 77%.

Pineville to be recognized as a 'Super Safe' school

Pineville Elementary is among 30 schools to be recognized this week by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction as "Super Safe Schools." The program honors schools that provide a safe environment for students and staff. Delegations from the schools will be recognized at an awards lunch in Greensboro.

Schools were chosen after on-site visits following voluntary submissions of portfolios written by the school about safety programs they had implemented.

Pineville was the only CMS school recognized. While other award-winners are from across the state, eight of the 30 schools are from Robeson County.



National Jewish leader backs public schools, questions role played by vouchers

Rabbi James Bennett at Charlotte's Temple Beth El recently wrote his congregation about witnessing a stirring address by Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

Bennett wrote, "He challenged Reform Jews to take seriously our obligation to support the public education system in our nation, and he strongly argued against private school vouchers."

Bennett included in his reflections the following quote from Yoffie's address.

The full text of his Dec. 8 address is at www.uahc.org/boston/portal

"I am embarrassed and ashamed when I hear such arguments coming from Jews. The public schools were the ladder that we used to climb from poverty to affluence in American life, and how dare we deny it to others. And I tremble for our nation when I hear the constant drumbeat of attack on our public school system.

"The public schools take the poor and the handicapped, the abused and the foster children, the Christian and the Muslim, the Roman Catholic and the Jew.

"They do more of God's work in a day than most institutions do in a lifetime.

If our public schools are broken, then let's fix them, but let's not destroy them in the name of a high-falutin principle that is often nothing more than naked self-interest dressed up as caring."

N.C. Web site to track impact of federal education reform

Continued from Page 1

The Congress looked closely at the phenomenon of many schools, particularly the schools that educate minority, low-income, and limited English proficient children, employing so many unqualified teachers under emergency certifications and so many teachers teaching subjects that they are not qualified to teach. And they declared this situation unacceptable.

"Section 1119, which previously had very little to say about teacher qualifications, now requires each state to develop a strategy for ensuring that every teacher teaching the core academic subjects in every school in the state is highly qualified by school year 2005-2006.

"The definition of a "highly qualified" teacher is lengthy, it differs somewhat for elementary versus

secondary school teachers, and you will want to read it yourselves, but briefly it means that all teachers must have met the requirements for full certification and have demonstrated competency in each of the subjects that they teach.

"Beyond calling for all teachers to be highly qualified three years from now, the Act flatly prohibits you, effective the first day of school year 2002-2003, from hiring any teachers for programs supported with Title I dollars who do not meet the definition of highly qualified.

"While the department has not issued an official interpretation of this provision, my initial reading is that if you are supporting the program of a whole school with Title I funds, through the schoolwide programs option, then you may no longer be able to hire new teachers for that school who do not meet the definition.

"The Act, in Title II, also calls for states to monitor the annual progress of districts in meeting the goal of all teachers being highly qualified and to take action if districts fail to show that progress."

Why textbooks for national market can fail the test

Robert E. Reys, in a monograph for Phi Delta Kappan entitled "Curricular Controversy in the Math Wars: A Battle Without Winners," comments about some of the reasons that textbooks sometimes aren't a perfect match for a school's curriculum.

"In many ways, the United States is unique in its approach to education.... For example, the United States is the only industrialized country that does not use the metric system, and it is one of the few countries that teaches separate courses in algebra and geometry. This means that curricular recommendations regarding the metric system made by Thomas Jefferson and included in a 1923 report by the Mathematical Association of America, titled 'The Reorganization of Mathematics in Secondary Education', have yet to be implemented....

"The mathematics textbook market in the U.S. is vast, and a number of factors facing the industry make seeking improvements very difficult. Among these are the following:

"1) There is no national curriculum;

"2) Every state has its own state frameworks that influence what mathematical content is taught and when;

"3) About half of the states are 'adoption states,' in which state committees review and approve textbooks;

"4) The rest are 'open states,' in which each district, or sometimes school, chooses its own textbooks;

"5) Most districts adopt new mathematics books within a five-to seven-year cycle, but there is no single time (month or year) when all schools are adopting textbooks;

"6) The availability of technology, including calculators and computers, varies greatly, so assuming the existence of a basic core of

technology across all schools is risky; and

"7) A serious shortage of certified mathematics teachers and a lack of deep mathematical knowledge among many who do teach limit the types of mathematics curricula that can be developed.

"Together these factors translate into a need for textbook publishers, who are driven by sales, to produce materials that are available continuously, marketable in states with vastly different frameworks, and usable by

teachers with a wide range of mathematical knowledge and preparation. Complicating the issue further, decisions about curriculum are often made by people with very limited backgrounds in mathematics.

"These conditions severely restrict the long-term development of products.

"And they help explain why mathematics textbooks, even though prepared by different publishers, are often almost indistinguishable...."

Sound off! for quality education

Your words in support of a quality, equitable, integrated education can help make the case for community support of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Pick up your pen! Or get your mouse in motion! Here's information on how to submit your letters to area media.

The Charlotte Post: By e-mail: thepost@clt.mindspring.com; by fax: 704-342-2160; by mail: Editor, The Charlotte Post, 1531 Camden Road, Charlotte, NC 28203-4783.

The Charlotte Observer: By e-mail: opinion@charlotteobserver.com; by fax: 704-358-5022; by mail: The Observer Forum, The Charlotte Observer, P.O. Box 30308, Charlotte, NC 28230-0308.

The Charlotte World: By e-mail: warren.smith@thecharlotteworld.com; by fax: 704-503-6691; by mail: 8701 Mallard Creek Road, Charlotte, NC 28262-9705.

The Leader: By e-mail: editor@leadernews.com; by fax: 704-347-0358; by mail: 800 E. Trade St., Charlotte, NC 28202-3014

Creative Loafing: By e-mail: charlotte@creativeloafing.com; by fax: 704-522-8088; by mail: P.O. Box 241988 Charlotte, NC 28224-1988.

La Noticia: 6101 Idlewild Road Suite 328, Charlotte, NC 28212.

Educate!: By e-mail: swannfello@aol.com; by fax: 704-342-4550; by mail: 1510 E. 7th St. Charlotte, NC 28204-2410.

Quotables

“Laws for the liberal education of youth, especially for the lower classes of people, are so extremely wise and useful that to a humane and generous mind, no expense for this purpose would be thought extravagant.”

– John Adams, second president of the United States, in his *Thoughts on Government*, 1776

Groups collaborating on resource guide of area literacy efforts

Know of a group that helps tutor children or adults? Mason Ward would like to hear from you.

Ward, who heads the Charlotte Chamber’s Charlotte Reads program, is collaborating with the library system and other groups to create a resource guide.

The idea is to have a booklet that would tell people where to send their friends, employees or acquaintances who need help learning to read. The idea for a guide came out of requests received at the chamber.

Based on the groups she’s turned up so far, “there is not as much going on as I thought there was.”

Reach Ward at mward@charlottechamber.com or 704-378-1338.

The schools’ surplus could be your treasure

A book truck for your home library. A book CASE for your home library. A floor scrubber, two bass drums, 40 used TVs, three sofas – and more. Did we mention 300 computers?

Surplus school equipment will be auctioned on Wednesday, March 6, at 1132 ProAm Drive. Details: 704-343-6213.

Ways to nurture underperforming students

Among the advisories offered by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction is this one on how “To Improve the Achievement of Under-performing Students.” The advice is aimed at educators, but may prove useful for students and parents as well.

- Maintain and support high expectations.
- Align all instruction with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Use additional materials to supplement the textbook. The textbook is not the curriculum.
- Ensure vertical and horizontal alignment of the curriculum to avoid gaps and duplication of competencies.
- Use pacing guides to plan the instruction and ensure that all competencies are addressed.
- Integrate the curriculum.
- Teach comprehension strategies and skills using a variety of texts across all disciplines (use prior knowledge and experiences, identify main idea and details, summarize, make inferences, make connections, etc.).
- Provide additional time for learning such as with a buddy, before school, after school, and with adult tutors and mentors during the school day.
- Maintain high time on task.
- Relate the subject matter to everyday life situations.
- Use various types of ongoing assessment periodically to monitor student learning in benchmark areas and to plan instruction.
- Hold conferences with students regarding their work. Include student-led conferences with parents.
- Allow opportunities for cooperative learning.
- Teach to learning styles.
- Use manipulatives and other active learning strategies.
- Incorporate test vocabulary into daily instruction.
- Provide ongoing review.
- Place emphasis on the application of the new learning.
- Display student work, and provide exemplars of Level III work.
- Differentiate instruction. This consists of identifying needs and then offering multiple options for instructional content, process, product, and environment to promote student achievement.
- Model and demonstrate strategies for students and serve as a coach for them.
- Provide choices for students (e.g., choosing their own books, writing topics, team partners, and research projects).
- Establish procedures and routines for the school and for each classroom.
- Use data and research to improve classroom instruction.
- Provide opportunities for students to assume responsibility for their own learning by requiring them to set goals, keep records of their progress, share their learning, and exhibit and evaluate their work.
- Group students heterogeneously and meet individual needs through inherently individualized activities, not segregation of bodies.
- Provide strong instructional leadership at every school.
- Ensure a safe, orderly, and caring environment.
- Hold true to the mission of the school.
- Develop and maintain positive home-school relations

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction

Briefs

Bonuses gone: Calif Gov. Gray Davis' teacher bonus program, initiated last year, has been eliminated as the state faces a \$12 billion revenue shortfall, the Sacramento Bee reported. The \$100 million program awarded up to \$25,000 to teachers last year. About 765 schools had already been notified that their teachers were potentially eligible this year.

www.sacbee.com

Opting out: House Education Committee Chairman John Boehner inserted into the recently approved federal education act a provision that allows parents to withdraw their children from testing under the NAEP, or National Assessment of Educational Progress, Education Week reported. Students themselves are empowered to decline the test, or to refuse to answer some questions. The test, which involves a small sampling of students in the nation's schools, has always been voluntary, but experts fear the law's provisions will encourage nonparticipation and could skew the results. Conservative groups reportedly had objected to a larger role for the NAEP, and Boehner had inserted the provision to "smooth opposition to the program."

www.edweek.org

Know thy stuff: The Illinois State Board of Education last week recommended that teacher candidates pass subject-area tests before beginning student-teaching, the Chicago Sun-Times reported. But deans at the state's colleges of education say the subject-area tests aren't given often enough, and some candidates haven't finished their coursework before their student-teaching begins. The Sun-Times last year reported that students in high-poverty or high-minority schools were five times more likely to have class-

Post | reported | return
 The Washington | the | of | diagramming

www.washingtonpost.com

room teachers who had failed one or more competency tests.

www.suntimes.com

What's the standard? With all student achievement tests, the question is, how is achievement defined? Maryland professors have questioned that state's algebra standards, saying they don't test for algebra but for fifth- or sixth-grade arithmetic, the Baltimore Sun reported. Students entering ninth grade in 2003 will have to pass the test to graduate; "a huge failure rate won't fly," the Sun reported.

www.sunspot.net

Peter and Paul: The Los Angeles Times reported that, to fund a state mandate to cut primary-grade student-teacher ratios to 20-to-1, districts have cut teacher training, music classes and library budgets, and a third

have shifted teachers out of upper-elementary grades, leaving those classes overcrowded.

A study released last week said the academic gains made at the lower primary grades could not be directly tied to the lower teacher ratios, and disproportionate number of new teachers are reportedly teaching those grades. But the Times quoted State Supt. Delaine Eastin as saying:

"Would you rather have a new teacher with 20 students or 32 students? I think a little bit of common sense has to be applied here."

www.latimes.com

Less testing: Cleveland, Ohio schools, which have 16 sets of standardized tests in grades K-8, will cut back to 13. The Plain Dealer said the schools would save about \$231,000.

www.cleveland.com

Calendar

- 11** Board lunch for its citizen appointees, noon, Board Room.
- 12** School Board, 6 p.m., Board Room.
- 13** Education Budget Advisory Committee, 7:30 a.m., Government Center, 11th floor conference room.
- 14** Curriculum Committee, 9:30 a.m., board conference room.
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Education Foundation annual meeting, 7:30 a.m., Adams Mark. Speaking: Kati Haycock, director of the Education Trust. Details and reservations: CMEF at 704-335-0100 or ldufour@cmeff.org.
- 15** American Association of School Administrators national conference, San Diego. Group will announce its national superintendent of the year. CMS Supt. Eric Smith is one of four finalists.
- 19** Schools in session for snow make-up day.