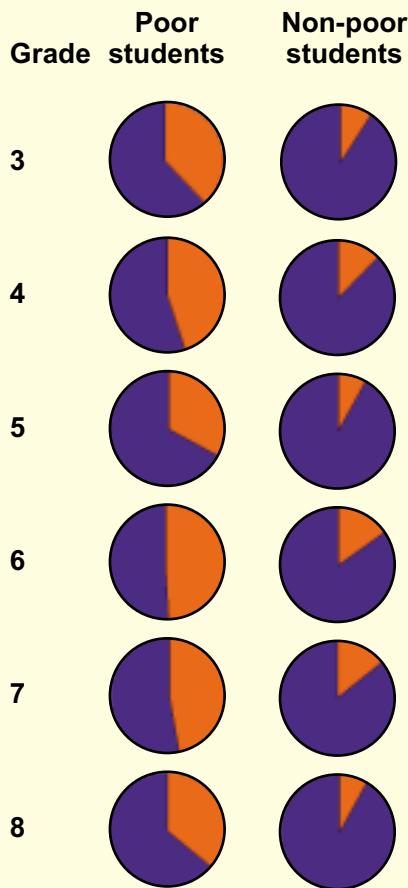


Judging CMS by mandate of Leandro

On April 4, North Carolina came under court order to have all N.C. students achieving at or above grade level.

In the pie charts below, the portion of CMS students not meeting the reading achievement standard set by the court is represented by the red wedge on the top right. Charts are based on preliminary data released by CMS on Thursday. Details, page 6.



Data source: CMS

What will great schools cost?

Citizens group is determined to find the answer so community can work toward locating the funds

A citizens committee wants to know what it will cost to get every Charlotte-Mecklenburg child a quality education.

There's a growing understanding that virtually all children can be brought to grade level – and must perform on grade level if tomorrow's businesses are going to have a competent workforce.

There's also a growing awareness among community leaders that, while there will always be arguments over efficient use of dollars, the schools really don't have the resources needed to educate all children well.

Levels of public funding are in recovery from our nation's history of exclusion: Exceptional children were warehoused. Blacks, once barred from school entirely, were then consigned to inferior schools. And the expectations for most children were tailored to the manual-labor needs of the textile and other industries that dominated North Carolina's landscape.

Everyone agrees that the schools have a different mandate

today. And funding levels have risen considerably since World War II. So what will it cost, in rough dollars, to teach everyone the N.C. course of study to the limits of their abilities?

"I appreciate the opportunity to tell people what our needs are," school board chairman Arthur Griffin said Saturday.

Griffin said he received on Friday commissioners chairman Parks Helms' letter urging the school board to work with the county's Education Budget Advisory Committee to specify the schools' three-year financial needs. Griffin promised a reply this week, and possibly even a public discussion of the issue at Tuesday's school board meeting.

EBAC has sought "a three-year financial plan by the end of this calendar year so long-range planning can begin in a timely fashion." It also asserted that "the objective of the entire Mecklenburg County community is to provide whatever funds are

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Inside

- School board and Supt. Eric Smith agree to terms for his departure for Anne Arundel County, Maryland. Page 5.
- Preliminary end-of-grade test results show gains in most categories. Details, along with historical data. Page 6.
- Elementary schools by level of parent education. Page 3.
- Grade 3 reading scores, sorted by parents' level of education, show dramatic differences in achievement among kids of similar backgrounds, depending on where they go to school. Page 7.

What will great schools really cost?

Continued from Page 1

required to turn the Charlotte Mecklenburg School System into the premier public school system in the State of North Carolina and the country.

"It is everyone's desire," the group said, "to provide an education system where every child is provided access to an equitable, effective school for learning whatever skills are necessary to reach their full potential for success as an adult. The community's leadership must not only acknowledge the unmet educational needs before us, we must also join the Board of County Commissioners in advocating for additional State funding...."

Tuesday, the school board will consider a resolution pressing the General Assembly to pay for the education it tells its school districts to provide. The recent CMS budget debate highlighted numerous schoolhouse and administrative costs that are mandated by the state but are not paid by the state.

The resolution cites the April ruling in the Leandro school financing lawsuit, noting that the court "found that the State had an undelegatable responsibility to provide funds for a sound basic education for all children."

The bipartisan federal education overhaul spearheaded by President Bush puts new money into lower class sizes and other initiatives to improve educational outcomes. The law mandates stiff penalties against schools that do not show through test scores that children in all demographic groups are making progress.

And at EBAC, there is growing awareness that demographics will drive education costs. Today, the fastest-growing groups of children in the system are those whose education costs the most – non-English speakers, exceptional children, low-income children. Any budget "right-sizing" may depend on isolating per-pupil costs by level of educational services, and then adjusting the budget as demographics change.

And while "right-sizing" may ultimately be expressed in terms of per-pupil spending, it's clear that North Carolina can't look to another state's per-pupil costs and pick a number.

Personnel costs vary widely by state. About 84% of the CMS budget is wages and benefits.

And as Supt. Eric Smith has pointed out, there are no districts in the country that are doing a better job closing achievement gaps. "There is no textbook to follow," he said recently. Indeed, when county commissioners were

last discussing the school budget, Smith warned that budgeting too far in advance would limit schools to the status quo. "That's the situation we have been in the last six years," he said.

But as committee member Howard Haworth told EBAC, "spending sources has nothing to do with the cost of the trip.... The challenge of where we're going to get the resources is a totally different question.... What we're asking for is a clear-cut projection

Continued on Page 3

Educate! a journal on public education in Charlotte-Mecklenburg

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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Per-pupil revenue, '00-'01

1	NJ	\$11,742	27	CA	7,510
2	DC	11,418	28	IA	7,428
3	NY	10,992	29	KS	7,402
4	CT	10,446	30	NH	7,388
5	AK	9,773	31	FL	7,373
6	MA	9,669	32	MO	7,246
7	DE	9,514	33	TX	7,222
8	RI	9,317	34	CO	7,103
9	VT	9,054	35	NC	7,103
10	PA	8,954	36	SC	7,021
11	MI	8,904	37	MT	6,970
12	WI	8,884	38	NV	6,906
13	MD	8,757	39	ND	6,856
14	WY	8,531	40	NM	6,753
15	IN	8,515	41	KY	6,678
16	IL	8,458	42	AL	6,593
17	MN	8,341	43	SD	6,589
18	OH	8,273	44	AZ	6,396
19	ME	8,237	45	LA	6,323
	US	7,981	46	AR	6,285
20	OR	7,951	47	OK	6,222
21	GA	7,868	48	ID	5,915
22	VA	7,739	49	TN	5,802
23	WV	7,683	50	MS	5,472
24	NE	7,661	51	UT	5,300
25	HI	7,559			
26	WA	7,540			

– U.S. Census

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For more information, call Steve Johnston at 704-342-4330, message him at sjohnston@educateclt.org, or read the "You Can Help" page at www.educateclt.org.

What will great schools really cost?

Continued from Page 2

over the next three years.... If we have a plan, we ought to be able to present some idea of what the trip's going to cost.

"My guess is it's going to cost \$100 million or more over the next three years." And that's on top of the \$800 million already being spent annually from all sources.

The plan of action itself is in place. First published in March 1999 in connection with the desegregation lawsuit, "Achieving the CMS Vision: Equity and Student Success" laid out in detail how CMS would overcome unequal facilities and boost achievement. Since then, the system has installed a "balanced scorecard."

It's in the balanced scorecard, for example, that the board pledged that the "percentage of students in grade 3, 5 and 8 performing on grade level or above in math skills" will rise from 72%, recorded in 2000, to 95% by 2005.

(On Page 6, note that preliminary 2002 test results for those grades were 78%, 81% and 82%.)

But nowhere in "Achieving the Vision" or in the balanced scorecard are there estimates of how much it will cost to achieve the standards.

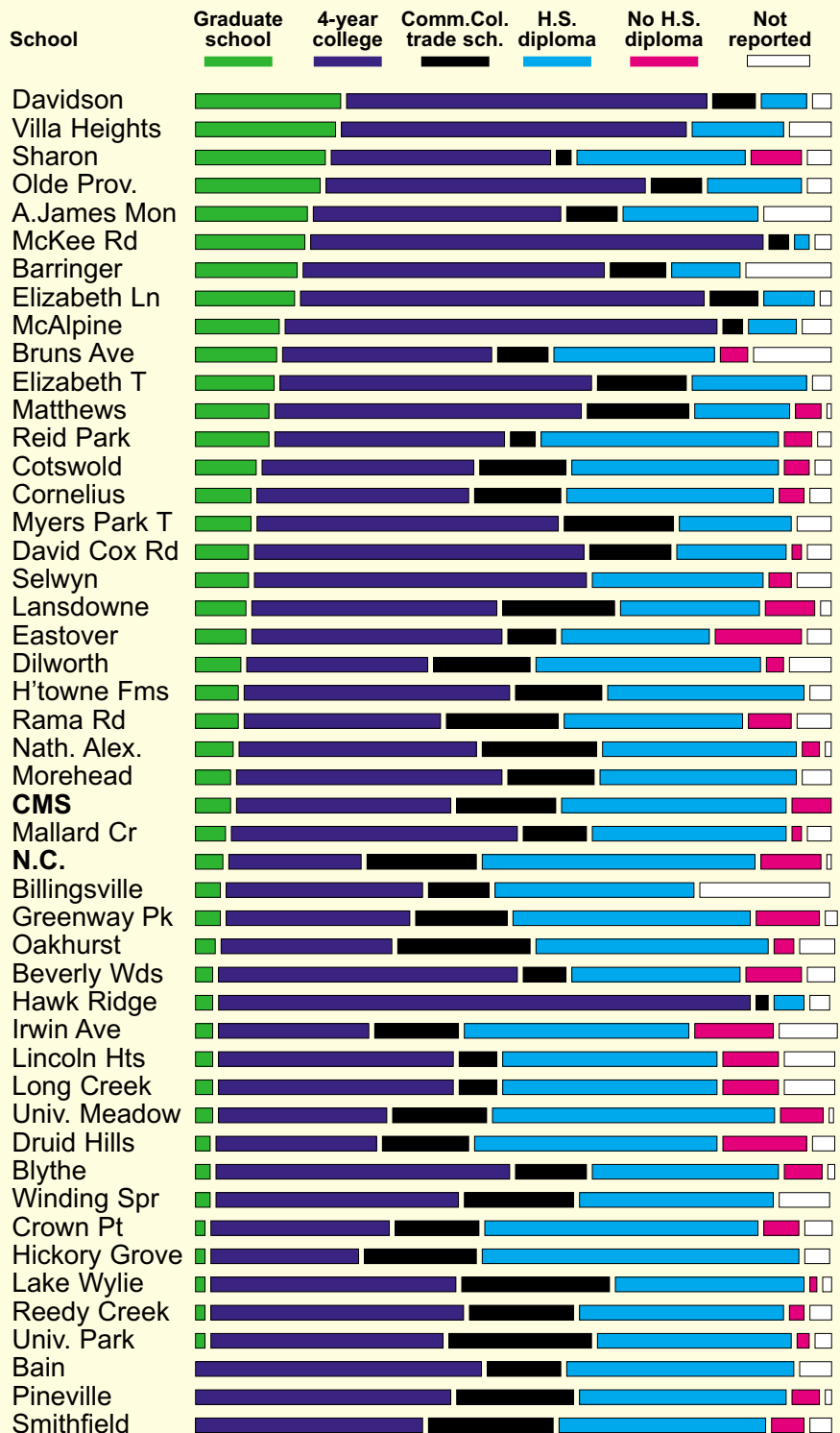
Whatever the past reasons for not outlining the costs to the public – caution, fear of splitting the haves and the have-nots, a preference for private talks with politicians who control the purse strings – a number of changes may push CMS to be far more public and earnest in explaining their financial needs.

– Supt. Eric Smith's departure, likely for Ann Arundel County, Maryland, was sealed Friday with a school board agreement (story, page 5). The superintendent's departure opens an opportunity for the school board to establish a

Continued on Page 4

Elementaries, by parents' education level

Test data is now reported by level of education attained by students' parents. Bars below represent data on parents of 3rd-, 4th- and 5th-graders who last year took reading tests.



Continued on Page 4

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction

What will great schools really cost?

Continued from Page 3

new direction for his successor on issues of openness and development of broad public understanding of the schools' financial needs. Says Griffin, "I personally do not have any objections to the three-year plan." Deputy Supt. and possible Smith successor Jim Pughsley was instrumental in developing the balanced scorecard and the financial data behind it.

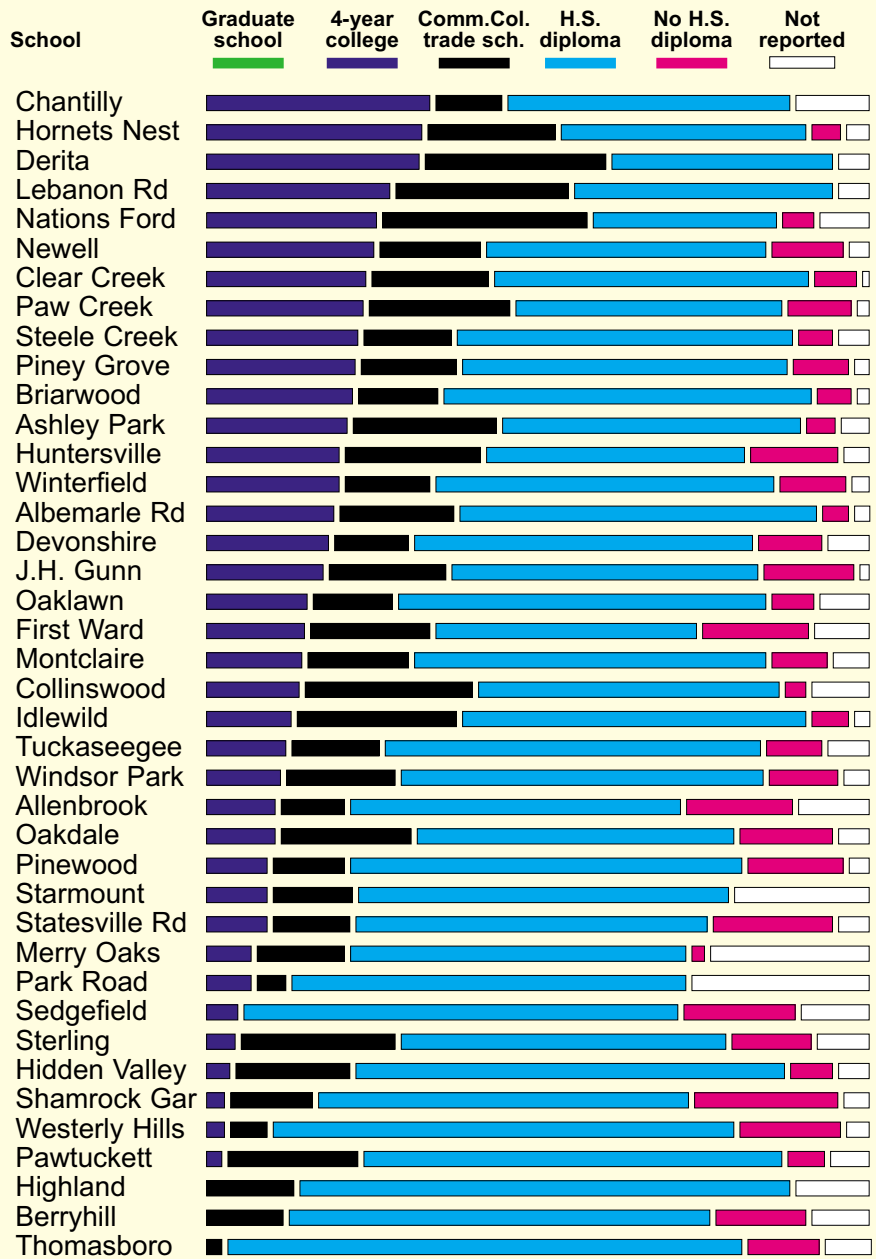
- The Leandro case has government officials nervous at both local and state levels. State legislators may worry about where money to teach all children will come from. But at the local level, one fear is that state officials will so dilute testing standards that all children, no matter how unprepared, will overnight test "at or above grade level." Diluting standards could conceivably get the judge off legislators' backs, but it would transfer the real costs of education to localities.

- Federal law stipulates that over the next 12 years, states must bring all student demographic groups toward acceptable achievement. Interim goals will be placed on states. Only one state, Vermont, is talking about refusing federal grants in order to avoid such federal oversight. To meet the goals, school systems across the nation will have to declare their budget needs.

- Longer term, the CMS student assignment plan going into effect in August will test the notion of whether educators can achieve success with the least-prepared students in neighborhood schools where the plan will concentrate them. Education research and testimony at the pupil assignment trials made clear that experts believe that what CMS has chosen to do is both the least effective and most costly solution. As the evidence piles up and is shared with the public, the board may find public

Parents' education level (continued)

Bars below represent data on parents of 3rd-, 4th- and 5th-graders who last year took reading tests.



Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction

support for alternatives.

Making the schools' case for additional money will not be easy. A cautionary tale:

A decade ago, a school finance debate raged over building needs. Engineers, paid by the county, tallied the cost of bringing schoolhouses to minimal state stan-

dards at \$1 billion. Today, 40% of that has yet to be raised, and commissioners are waiting for advice from a polling firm before even scheduling a bond issue.

Today's debate isn't over roofs and plumbing. It's over how many kids can a teacher teach.

- Steve Johnston

School board, Smith settle departure terms

After a Friday noon closed session, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education settled the terms of Supt. Eric Smith's departure for Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

And while the board went back into closed session for another hour or so, there was no decision when they adjourned at mid-afternoon on his successor, or the terms under which Deputy Supt. James Pughsley might serve as interim superintendent.

According to a statement released by the district, Smith will be employed through June 30. With accrued paid leave, his last day at work will be June 11.

He will receive a performance bonus of \$49,000, the average of his recent annual bonuses.

Because Smith will be employed through June 30, the board also vested the first year of Smith's supplemental pension. The pension will pay Smith \$9,291.69 annually beginning at age 60 (in 8 years) for the rest of his life. The pension was called for in Smith's last contract, signed last year, if Smith were still employed on June 30.

The board voted 6-3 for the agreement, with Larry Gauvreau, Molly Griffin and John Lassiter opposed.

'I look forward...'

The schools' April 9 budget book being handed out last week carries minor revisions from the March 12 edition. The superintendent's "open letter to the community" was not changed. It concludes:

"The 2002-2003 school year in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is destined to be one of the most exciting years the district has ever faced. I look forward to joining this community in what I believe will be a milestone in our district's journey toward greatness."

Superintendents preach positives; dig deeper, researcher says

Charlotte-Mecklenburg will soon launch a search for a new superintendent. An education researcher suggests in a recent article that the public has to ask lots of questions if it's going to find out what it needs to know.

Paul Hill, a researcher at the University of Washington's Center on Reinventing Public Education, says superintendents are similar to CEOs in business. Their "job is to make their organizations look good, however troubled and ineffective they might be."

Research in big-city districts convinced Hill that superintendents tend to "put a bright face on negative circumstances out of fear that creating a crisis may lower public confidence or discourage potential successors."

In private, however, they acknowledge, for example, that "professional development cannot turn schools around" and that "schools serving the poorest children need longer school days and school years than other schools.... Troubled schools cannot improve if schools in the "nicer" neighborhoods always get a disproportion-

ate share of the respected and experienced teachers."

Hill believes superintendents choose initiatives that they can get approved, even if they know they aren't sufficient to solve schools' problems.

"Superintendents have ideas about how to solve the persistent problems of public education. But

like business CEOs they are programmed to pretend that all is well and that all problems will shortly be conquered."

Hill suggests asking "hard and impolite questions."

Hill's article is posted at www-hoover.stanford.edu/pubaffairs/we/2002/hill_0502.html

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EOG results show gains, and much left to be done

CMS celebrated gains in preliminary test score results for end-of grade testing in grades 3 to 8. The gains were most significant in mathematics.

Achievement gaps narrowed. The black-white gap dropped 4 points in reading to 29 points, and 6 points in math to 24. The poor-nonpoor gap dropped 3 points in reading to 30 points, and 5 points in math to 23 points.

Games, however, are still being played. In noting the smaller gap between poor and nonpoor students, a CMS statement said “the gap in mathematics is 17 points in grade 4, 19 points in grade 5, and 18 points in grade 6.” The statement did not mention the 26-point gaps in grades 7 and 8 and the 34-point gap in grade 3.

In his April 4 decision in the Leandro case over statewide school funding issues, Judge Howard Manning ruled, “When at-risk children are not being taught by a competent, certified and well-trained teacher who knows how to teach them, many do not achieve grade level or above academic performance and thus, the Court concludes that they are not receiving the equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education mandated by Leandro and the North Carolina Constitution.”

CMS on Thursday released preliminary test data for end-of-grade testing in grades 3-8. All numbers are percentages of children at or above grade level.

	3	4	5	6	7	8
Poor children						
'02 read.	62	55	67	51	53	64
'01 read.	57	51	68	42	47	58
'02 math	57	78	76	75	64	63
'01 math	51	70	73	61	57	53
Non-poor children						
'02 read.	91	88	92	85	86	92
'01 read.	88	86	92	81	84	89
'02 math	91	85	95	93	90	89
'01 math	86	93	93	89	87	85
Black students						
'02 read.	66	58	70	55	57	70
'01 read.	60	54	70	46	51	63
'02 math	59	79	78	76	66	66
'01 math	53	72	73	63	60	56
White students						
'02 read.	92	90	94	89	90	95
'01 read.	90	88	94	86	89	93
'02 math	93	97	96	96	93	93
'01 math	90	95	95	92	92	90

CMS historical data for grades 3-8.

Reading

All students, percent at or above grade level

Gr.	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02
3	61	63	70	72	72	75	78
4	64	62	68	68	69	72	74
5	59	66	71	72	75	82	81
6	65	62	65	66	64	66	71
7	59	63	65	71	69	71	73
8	68	67	74	75	77	78	82

Black students, percent at or above grade level

Gr.	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02
3	39	39	52	55	57	60	66
4	39	40	46	49	50	54	58
5	35	43	52	54	59	70	70
6	41	39	41	46	42	46	55
7	36	39	44	51	49	51	57
8	47	46	54	56	60	63	70

Poor students, percent at or above grade level

Gr.	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02
3	37	37	50	52	53	57	62
4	38	37	43	46	47	51	55
5	33	41	49	51	56	68	67
6	38	35	38	43	38	42	51
7	32	34	39	47	45	47	53
8	44	42	49	52	55	58	64

Math

All students, percent at or above grade level

Gr.	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02
3	64	65	64	68	69	72	76
4	68	69	75	77	80	84	88
5	66	68	73	78	79	85	87
6	71	69	70	73	73	78	86
7	65	65	70	76	73	76	80
8	64	60	68	69	72	74	80

Black students, percent at or above grade level

Gr.	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02
3	42	41	42	47	49	53	59
4	44	47	55	61	65	72	79
5	44	46	53	61	65	73	78
6	49	47	49	56	55	63	76
7	41	41	49	56	54	60	66
8	40	35	45	48	51	56	66

Poor students, percent at or above grade level

Gr.	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02
3	39	40	40	45	47	51	57
4	41	46	54	59	64	70	78
5	43	44	52	60	62	73	76
6	46	44	46	53	52	61	75
7	38	38	47	54	51	57	64
8	38	33	41	45	47	53	63

Achievement by family education: Take a look

Below is the final installment of Educate!'s look at test scores by parental income. The series has produced a group of charts like the one beginning on page 3 that track education levels of parents at all schools.

A close look at the numbers below also raise useful questions.

Many readers will focus on reading across each line, looking at how subgroups at one school performed last year on reading.

But perhaps even more interesting questions are raised by looking vertically, at all children from similar backgrounds.

It is no surprise, for example, that the children of parents with a doctoral or other graduate degree are, with few exceptions, on grade level.

But useful questions could be raised about, for example, the children of parents who did not receive a high school diploma.

The achievement results of such children vary widely – from 100% on grade level at one school, to 0% at several other schools.

Life situations of the children in any one category are, of course, not identical.

But parents may be able to identify room for improvement by concentrating on what's working better at schools where achievement levels are higher.

– Steve Johnston

Percentage of students at Level III (grade level) or IV on 3rd-grade reading, 2000-2001, by level of educational attainment of their parents

Last week's release of systemwide results from the end-of-grade tests just completed begins the lengthy flow of data from the 2001-2002 assessment cycle. School-by-school results should be released this week. The data below is now a year old. But it may be many months before current data is released to reflect results by educational level of parents. Third in a series.

(# valid tests in 5 categories)*	Graduate School		4-year College		Comm. col., trade school		HS Degree		No HS Degree	
	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV
N.C. (100,692)	4,166	97%	20,645	93%	17,596	83%	47,091	71%	11,194	53%
CMS (8,316)	481	98%	2,697	92%	1,232	79%	3,323	62%	583	43%
CMS Elementary Schools										
Albemarle Road (95)			12	100%	15	80%	68	74%		
Nathaniel Alexander (127)			49	90%	12	83%	66	70%		
Allenbrook (60)			8	63%	5	80%	32	56%	15	73%
Ashley Park (57)			8	88%	6	83%	34	82%	9	56%
Bain (116)			62	95%	6	100%	48	67%		
Barringer (69)	14	100%	34	100%	5	100%	16	100%		
Berryhill (68)					8	63%	46	61%	14	29%
Beverly Woods (77)	8	100%	40	90%	5	60%	14	43%	10	30%
Billingsville (37)	6	100%	11	91%			20	65%		
Blythe (160)	6	100%	72	96%	14	93%	60	55%	8	0%
Briarwood (89)			18	56%	15	67%	49	63%	7	71%
Bruns (41)	8	100%	17	76%			8	50%	8	50%
Chantilly (37)			11	82%			26	65%		
Clear Creek (88)			26	96%	9	100%	43	86%	10	70%
Collinswood (57)			8	100%	16	81%	33	82%		
Cornelius (154)	20	100%	72	94%	21	90%	34	79%	7	71%
Cotswold (75)	6	100%	18	83%	16	81%	26	38%	9	33%
Crown Point (114)	6	83%	29	93%	21	95%	47	83%	11	45%
Davidson (135)	34	100%	91	93%			10	70%		

Continued on Page 8

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction

Notes: Numbers in (parentheses) may understate the number of students tested in each parent education category because if the number of students in a category at each school or district is smaller than 5, those results are not reported.

**Percentage of students at Level III (grade level) or IV on 3rd-grade reading,
2000-2001, by level of educational attainment of their parents**

(# valid tests in 5 categories)*	Graduate School		4-year College		Comm. col., trade school		HS Degree		No HS Degree	
	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV
David Cox Road (127)	16	94%	70	96%	17	71%	19	58%	5	60%
Derita (90)			28	100%	22	59%	40	55%		
Devonshire (78)			20	85%	5	80%	40	43%	13	46%
Dilworth (49)	8	100%	13	92%			23	48%	5	40%
Druid Hills (63)			18	100%	9	78%	27	37%	9	56%
Eastover (70)	8	100%	21	95%	9	100%	13	46%	19	53%
Elizabeth Lane (175)	34	100%	105	97%	15	93%	21	76%		
Elizabeth Traditional (99)	12	100%	57	100%	10	90%	20	80%		
First Ward (53)			15	100%	6	83%	25	72%	7	43%
Greenway Park (143)	6	100%	44	93%	22	82%	53	75%	18	44%
J.H. Gunn (102)			16	100%	13	77%	54	72%	19	47%
Hawk Ridge (136)	8	100%	111	95%	9	89%	8	75%		
Hickory Grove (122)			27	96%	25	84%	70	66%		
Hidden Valley (78)			10	80%	8	88%	53	60%	7	29%
Highland (28)							28	57%		
Hornets Nest (163)			43	93%	26	81%	85	67%	9	11%
Huntersville (106)			37	100%	15	87%	34	71%	20	40%
Huntingtowne Farms (74)			28	100%	15	93%	31	65%		
Idlewild (104)			17	76%	19	58%	58	55%	10	20%
Irwin Avenue (61)			22	91%	5	20%	21	52%	13	54%
Morehead (148)	5	100%	61	84%	18	78%	49	37%	15	20%
Amay James (40)	5	100%	18	89%			17	71%		
Lake Wylie (169)			76	91%	36	83%	50	56%	7	71%
Lansdowne (95)	5	100%	35	97%	12	83%	36	69%	7	43%
Lebanon Road (132)			46	91%	42	81%	44	64%		
Lincoln Heights (67)			25	80%	9	89%	22	41%	11	36%
Long Creek (76)			37	92%			33	45%	6	17%
Mallard Creek (122)	11	91%	55	93%			51	63%	5	40%
Matthews (167)	26	96%	82	87%	27	93%	26	73%	6	83%
McAlpine (104)	27	100%	63	95%	5	100%	9	78%		
McKee (210)	48	98%	150	97%			12	92%		
Merry Oaks (97)			11	73%	30	73%	51	55%	5	0%
Montclair (60)			10	100%	17	76%	33	61%		
Myers Park (77)	11	91%	39	95%	15	93%	12	58%		
Nations Ford (57)			13	92%	24	92%	20	50%		
Newell (104)			27	85%	15	87%	51	78%	11	82%
Oakdale (72)			5	60%	16	75%	42	55%	9	33%
Oakhurst (72)	7	100%	15	93%	20	95%	22	64%	7	57%
Oaklawn (37)			5	80%	8	63%	19	74%	5	100%
Olde Providence (122)	20	100%	71	97%	12	92%	19	74%		
Park Road (20)							20	65%		
Paw Creek (117)			37	70%	23	57%	43	56%	14	43%
Pawtucket (85)					7	71%	72	49%	6	17%
Pineville (128)			46	98%	31	74%	40	63%	11	36%

Continued on Page 9

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction

Notes: Numbers in (parentheses) may understate the number of students tested in each parent education category because if the number of students in a category at each school or district is smaller than 5, those results are not reported.

**Percentage of students at Level III (grade level) or IV on 3rd-grade reading,
2000-2001, by level of educational attainment of their parents**

(# valid tests in 5 categories)*	Graduate School		4-year College		Comm. col., trade school		HS Degree		No HS Degree	
	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV	Tested	III-IV
Pinewood (81)					13	77%	56	57%	12	58%
Piney Grove (101)			21	90%			72	72%	8	63%
Rama Road (78)			21	90%	11	64%	37	49%	9	44%
Reedy Creek (120)	6	83%	58	93%	26	77%	30	53%		
Reid Park (76)	12	92%	41	93%			18	61%	5	40%
Sedgefield (59)							59	59%		
Selwyn (67)	11	100%	31	90%			25	52%		
Shamrock Gardens (65)					5	80%	51	55%	9	56%
Sharon (70)	12	92%	31	87%			27	30%		
Smithfield (120)			50	82%	36	58%	29	52%	5	40%
Starmount (28)					12	75%	16	44%		
Statesville Road (84)					15	67%	52	52%	17	41%
Steele Creek (135)			33	94%	10	90%	83	76%	9	67%
Sterling (65)			5	100%	28	79%	32	72%		
Thomasboro (78)							68	50%	10	40%
Tuckaseegee (110)			18	89%	19	84%	73	59%		
University Park (100)	5	100%	27	89%	21	81%	41	66%	6	33%
University Meadows (139)	7	100%	34	94%	22	82%	65	65%	11	36%
Villa Heights (43)	7	100%	27	100%			9	100%		
Westerly Hills (74)					12	75%	46	48%	16	38%
Winding Springs (84)	6	100%	30	87%	15	67%	33	55%		
Windsor Park (84)			7	86%	8	63%	64	66%	5	20%
Winterfield (79)			15	93%	15	73%	39	51%	10	50%

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction

Notes: Numbers in (parentheses) may understate the number of students tested in each parent education category because if the number of students in a category at each school or district is smaller than 5, those results are not reported.



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Briefs

Assessments: Nebraska education commissioner Doug Christensen calls state and national tests “scorekeeping devices,” and has refocused his state on improving the daily assessments teachers use in the classroom, *Education Week* reported. Quizzes have been rewritten, and students help identify what they still need to learn. “You can’t make people learn,” *Education Week* quoted Kings College London professor Paul Black as saying. “So appraising where you are, where you need to be, and how to cross the gap requires self-assessment.”
www.edweek.com

Online testing: New glitches have appeared in North Carolina’s effort to create an online testing program for exceptional children, the *News and Observer* reported. About 300 students in Johnston County had to retake the test because of a programming error, and other students were delayed because of computer malfunctions. Last year’s pilot program collapsed when demand for the test overwhelmed the state’s computer servers.
www.newsobserver.com

Pledge veto: Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura vetoed a bill popular with the politicians that called on schools to recite the Pledge of Allegiance weekly, the *Pioneer Press* reported. “Patriots serve. Patriots vote. Patriots attend meetings in their communities. No law will make a citizen a patriot,” Ventura said. Harry Boyte at the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota said Ventura was “going back to an older tradition of patriotism that

we’ve lost in the sound-bite age.”
www.twincities.com

Pre-K delayed: Maryland will phase in a move to having pre-kindergartners turn 4, kindergartners 5 and first-graders 6 by Sept. 1, four months earlier than now required, the *Washington Post*. Educators say the younger children are not ready for the more rigorous academic programs youngsters face. (The CMS Bright Beginnings program admits children who are 4 before Oct. 16.)
www.washingtonpost.com

Gifted program: Florida’s state cabinet, after settling a Miami discrimination case, ordered all school districts to suspend use of ethnicity in admissions to gifted programs, the *Times-Union* reported. Slightly lower standards will continue to apply for non-English speakers and low-income children.
www.jacksonville.com

ADD cases: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 6.8% of elementary-age children have been diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder,

the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* reported. The rate is higher than expected, and varies directly with access to health care and insurance, the CDC said.
www.accessatlanta.com

Arts education: The Arts Education Partnership concluded a two-year review of 62 studies by 100 researchers, *USAToday* reported. James Catterall, a California professor who coordinated the study, said arts education may be most valuable in reaching remedial students and poor students.
www.usatoday.com

Mental health: A study of students involved in school shootings underscored the need for school counselors, the *Boston Globe* reported. While the children were in many ways typical teens with friends, two-parent families and decent grades, most had mental health disorders. “We’re so tied up with the pedagogy of academics. We need to have a stronger focus on mental health,” said former Massachusetts school superintendent Paul Andrews.
www.boston.com

Calendar

May

- 28** School board closed session on personnel, 4:30 p.m.
 Regular school board meeting, 6 p.m. Board Room.
- 30** Commissioners hold public hearing on county budget, which includes money for schools, 6 p.m., Government Center.

June

- 11** School board meeting, 6 p.m. Board Room.

- 13** Curriculum Committee, 9:30 a.m. Board Conference Room.
- 18** Bond Oversight Committee, 7:30 a.m., Building Services.
 Personnel/Policy Committee, 3 p.m., Board Conference Room.
 Commissioners to vote on county budget, which includes money for schools.
- 20** Finance, capital and facilities committee, 4 p.m., Room 414, Education Center.
- 25** School board meeting, 6 p.m. Board Room.