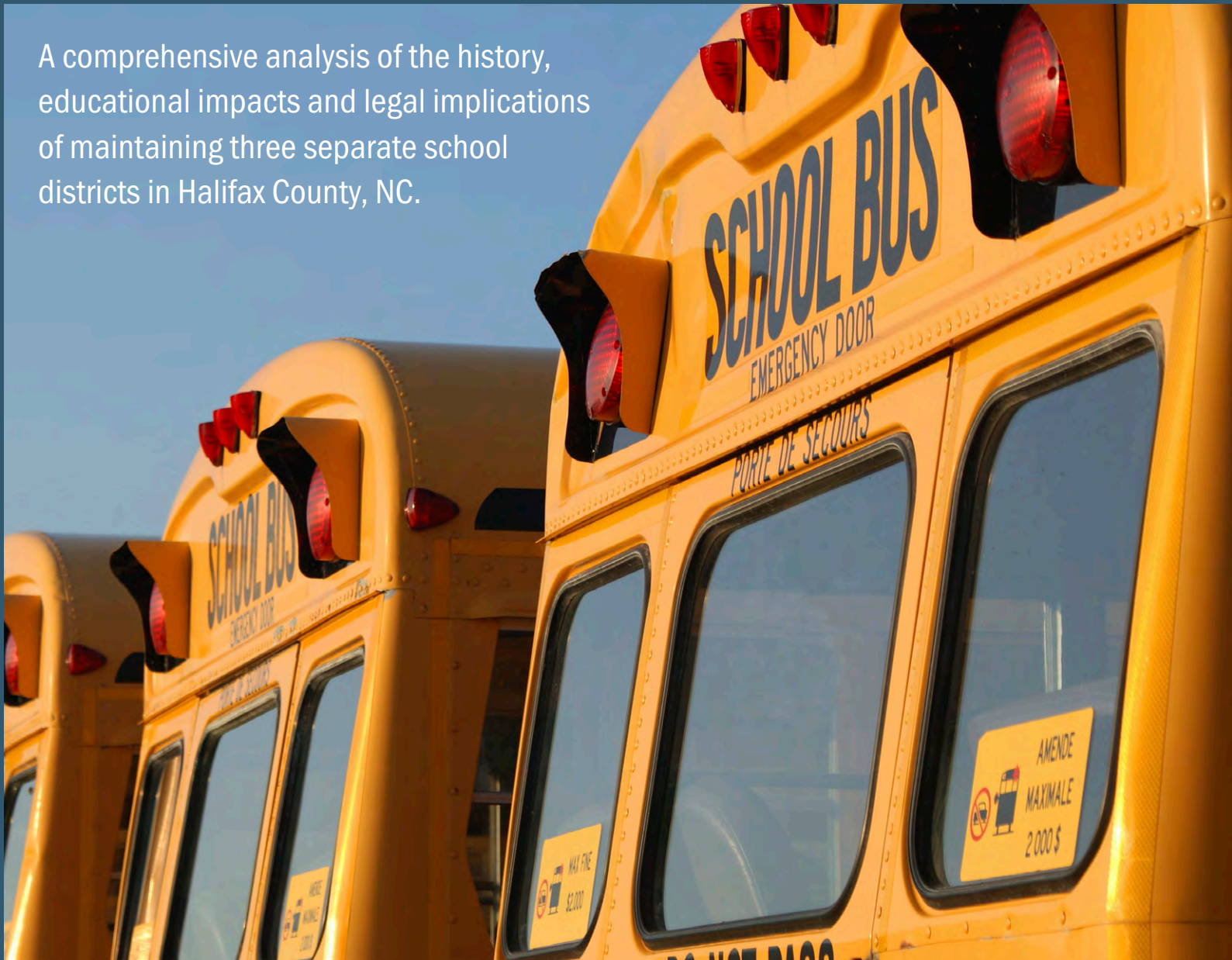


*The UNC  
Center for  
Civil Rights*

# “Unless Our Children Begin to Learn Together...”

## The State of Education in Halifax County

A comprehensive analysis of the history, educational impacts and legal implications of maintaining three separate school districts in Halifax County, NC.





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*“Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together.”*

— JUSTICE THURGOOD MARSHALL,  
*MILLIKEN V. BRADLEY* (1974)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

*“I cannot subscribe to this emasculation of our constitutional guarantee of equal protection of the laws and must respectfully dissent....We deal here with the right of all of our children, whatever their race, to an equal start in life and to an equal opportunity to reach their full potential as citizens. Those children who have been denied that right in the past deserve better than to see fences thrown up to deny them that right in the future. Our Nation, I fear, will be ill served by the Court’s refusal to remedy separate and unequal education, for unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together.”*

— JUSTICE THURGOOD MARSHALL, DISSENTING, *MILLIKEN V. BRADLEY* (1974)

In 2009, the UNC Center for Civil Rights began working in Halifax County on a seemingly unrelated number of education and community inclusion cases. Despite the range of issues our clients were facing, a consistent theme soon emerged, as the parents, teachers, activists and community members with whom we worked all repeated, in various ways: “Something is very wrong with the schools in this county.”

Center attorneys spent much of the last year listening to and gathering information from various communities across the county and from education researchers across the country about the challenges faced by schools in Halifax County. Data was collected on the history of public education in the county, on student achievement and educational resources, and on the school desegregation and adequate finance lawsuits that have focused on Halifax County over the last forty years. This information and our analysis of related civil rights and education law provide a compelling case study and highlight the most significant impediment to genuine education reform and progress in Halifax County: the enduring manifestation of Jim Crow segregation inherent in the continued maintenance of three separate and unequal public school systems.

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The Center for Civil Rights’ ongoing work with parents, communities and education advocates across the state has demonstrated why North Carolina is an ideal state to critically examine the issues of school segregation and integration. School districts across the state are at various stages of the historical trajectory from segregation to integration and, more recently, back to resegregation. At one extreme is Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), a district that produced the seminal Supreme Court case authorizing the use of busing to achieve integration. Following that litigation, CMS so successfully desegregated its schools that in 2000, the federal court declared it was fully integrated (legally, “unitary”) and released the district from judicial oversight. Since that time, Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools have resegregated and now are nearly as racially isolated as they were before the 1971 Court ruling.

There are also counties like New Hanover and Wayne, which operate school districts that, like CMS, were once under court order to desegregate but have since achieved unitary status. In the wake of their removal from the court’s jurisdiction, these districts have created and continue to pursue racially resegregative student assignment and attendance plans that reinforce patterns of residential segregation and create high poverty, racially isolated schools. In Pitt County, the school district remains under an active 1970 federal court desegregation order, but the board there still refused to consider race in its most recent student reassignment plan, and adopted a model that closes a historic African American school and increases racial segregation and isolation of high-poverty students. Finally, at the other extreme, there are a number of counties like Halifax, which never actually or effectively desegregated in the first place.

Halifax County is one of the most economically distressed counties in North Carolina – a geographically large rural county with low-density population and stagnant or declining public school enrollment. It is also one of the few counties in North Carolina that maintains three separate school districts: Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), Weldon City Schools (WCS), and Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS). All three are small; together they serve approximately 8,000 students. The most unique characteristic of the three districts, however, is the stark racial and socioeconomic isolation among their students, which has its roots in the Jim Crow segregation that led to creation of the tripartite system. In a county that is only 39 percent White overall, WCS and HCPS are both almost 100 percent Non-White, while RRGSD is over 70 percent White. The school districts' free and reduced lunch (FRL) percentages, the standard measure of poverty in schools, are similarly disparate: 90 percent of HCPS and 95 percent of WCS students receive FRL; in RRGSD, only 51 percent of students get FRL.<sup>1</sup>

The education outcomes in Halifax County provide a stark example of the adverse impacts of racial and socioeconomic isolation on student success. By the primary measure of school performance – test scores – HCPS and WCS are home to many of the lowest performing schools in the state, and are consistently outperformed by RRGSD. There are also significant differences among the three school districts in teacher turnover, teacher quality (as measured by various indicators), and teacher-reported working conditions. Given the primacy of high-quality teachers in ensuring effective educational outcomes, these differences have serious implications for student performance in each district.

The research contained in this report highlights a number of challenges facing public education in Halifax County. Nevertheless, the comprehensive analysis presented here leads to one primary conclusion: that the development and maintenance of three separate, racially segregated school districts in Halifax County are continuing violations of the constitutional rights of students and severely undermine the quality of education provided by the public schools throughout the county. The three districts in Halifax County remain among the most segregated in the state, and both students and the community as a whole are tainted by the ongoing impacts of this segregation. By maintaining the divided system, the county and the state more deeply entrench patterns of racial segregation, cause irreparable harm to the academic opportunities for all children in Halifax County, and stunt the economic viability of the region.

While this report comes at a time when both major education policy changes currently under consideration and budget cutbacks at the state and federal level will likely have substantial impacts on schools across North Carolina, the fundamental conclusion remains unaffected. The opportunity and ability to make real educational progress in Halifax County will inevitably be constrained and ultimately unsuccessful unless the issue of racial segregation is forthrightly confronted and resolved.

To the Center's knowledge, this is the first document that combines a discussion of the history of the three school districts in Halifax County with a detailed analysis of the educational outcomes of all three districts. The Center for Civil Rights is uniquely poised to release this report because of its community connections in Halifax, the pervasive segregation in rural communities that are the focus of the Center's education and inclusion work, and the unique legal and policy issues at play in Halifax County.

## II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

*“At the common schools, where both sexes and all kinds of children mingle together, we have the great world in miniature; there they may learn human nature in all its phases, with all its emotions, passions, and feelings, its loves and hates, its hopes and fears, its impulses and sensibilities; there they may learn the secret springs of human actions, and the attractions and repulsions, which lend with irresistible force to particular lines of conduct. But on the other hand, persons by isolation may become strangers even in their own country, and by being strangers, will be of but little benefit either to themselves or to society. As a rule, people cannot afford to be ignorant of the society which surrounds them; and as all kinds of people must live together in the same society, it would seem to be better that all should be taught in the same schools.”*

— BOARD OF EDUCATION V. TINNON, 26 KAN. 1 (1881)

Although racial segregation in public schools was held unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, enforcement and implementation of the Court’s ruling did not begin in earnest until the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, under which the federal government required school districts to make good faith effort to start to desegregate. As state and local governments began to be held legally accountable to end segregation within school districts, the continued separation of Black students from White students was most effectively accomplished by the creation and maintenance of separate school districts. In North Carolina, White lawmakers determined where the district lines should be drawn, and they took advantage of residential segregation patterns and concentrations of wealth in the White community resulting from slavery and Jim Crow. This strategy, revised in the wake of the Civil Rights Act, has its roots in the founding of public education in North Carolina, and is still reflected in the eleven counties in the state that still have more than one school district.<sup>2</sup>

### SEGREGATION BY LAW (1900-1964)

Halifax County is a stark example of this historical gerrymandering. When the legislature separated the Weldon City and Roanoke Rapids school districts from the county system, both towns had significant White majorities, in sharp contrast to the rest of the county, where African Americans were the overwhelming majority.

In 1907, when the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District was first chartered,<sup>3</sup> the town was populated almost entirely by Whites, who held significantly more wealth than the county’s Black residents.<sup>4</sup> This segregated residential pattern stemmed from the fact that Whites exclusively either owned or worked in the town’s paper and cotton mills, relegating Blacks to labor in the outlying cotton fields for much lower wages.<sup>5</sup> Weldon, located just a few miles from Roanoke Rapids, was a manufacturing center and railroad hub at the turn of the century, with a larger African American population than Roanoke Rapids.<sup>6</sup>

The legislation that established the Weldon City Schools in 1903, like that establishing the Roanoke Rapids district, expressly directed the Board of Trustees to “establish graded public schools for the white and colored children of said district,” and stated that, pursuant to the “separate but equal” doctrine established by the Supreme Court decision in *Plessey v. Ferguson*, all funds collected for the school system must be used “in such manner as shall be deemed just to both races, providing equal school facilities for each.” Even this express commitment included exceptions, however: in allocating funds between black and white schools, the enabling legislation allowed the school board to give “due regard . . . to the differences in the cost of maintaining said schools.” The statute also required that any donations to the school system “be applied as directed by the donors.”



The first school in the Roanoke Rapids district, Central School, opened in 1908 with five teachers and 265 students. A separate school for Black students, simply called the “Negro School,” opened at the same time, with one teacher for approximately thirty students.<sup>8</sup> Textile magnates donated industrial arts equipment and curricula to the town’s White school, thereby ensuring a future White labor pool for the growing industry.<sup>9</sup> By 1921, following the passage of school bond votes, two new White schools had been constructed, including a high school with an indoor track, gymnasium, swimming pool and showers.<sup>10</sup> A junior high was added in 1924. That same year, following a donation of land by John Armstrong Chaloner, the Chaloner School for Negroes, grades 1-12, also opened, albeit without any of the amenities enjoyed by the district’s White students.<sup>11</sup> The disparities between the White high school and the Chaloner School continued to grow over time. By the late ’20s and early ’30s, the White school had award-winning orchestra and athletic teams. In 1946, a building trade class was added to the vocational education program, which had included agriculture and home economics since 1917. Meanwhile, a playground was first added to Chaloner in the mid-1950s.<sup>12</sup>

The Chaloner School was located on the very edge of the Roanoke Rapids district and drew a number of African American students from outside the district. The inclusion of those county school district residents enabled Roanoke Rapids, with its relative small population of Black residents, to maintain its only Black school. This “sharing” of a segregated facility also accommodated the county district’s needs, as Halifax County Public Schools did not have to build another school for its Black students in the northern end of the county. As discussed further below, in 1965, when all three districts first came under federal pressure to desegregate their schools, this sharing arrangement between HCPS and RRGSD became known as the “Chaloner problem,” due to the prohibition under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 against inter-district transfers that furthered racial segregation in schools.<sup>13</sup> By the late 1960s, when the district-crossing arrangement was rejected by the U.S. Department of Justice, 80 percent of the school’s 1,100 students lived outside the Roanoke school district.<sup>14</sup>

Halifax County Schools’ inter-district arrangement with Roanoke Rapids to maintain segregation was not unique. In 1948 a group of Black parents from Enfield petitioned the board to create a Black high school in their community. With no Black high school in the southern part of the county, their high school age children were crossing county lines to attend Bricks High School in Edgecombe County. The Board turned down the request, and those students were forced, because of segregation, to continue to attend school in another county for several more years.<sup>15</sup>

In the Halifax County Schools, there were far fewer White students than Black. However, due primarily to economic segregation and residential discrimination, Whites were often the majority in the district’s largest towns (Enfield, Littleton and Scotland Neck). Conversely, the rural population was 75 percent non-White. As was true across the state, these towns operated their own schools through the mid-1930s, when they were consolidated with the Halifax County district by state statute.<sup>16</sup>

In August 1949, the Division of Negro Education in the State Department of Public Instruction (DPI) presented a report to the Halifax County Board of Education entitled “A Study of Negro Schools in Halifax County.” The report began, “Halifax has the most monumental task of providing adequate school buildings for its colored children of any other county in the state,” and noted that in 1936-’37, there were 11,509 African American children in Halifax attending 52 different schools.<sup>17</sup> The majority of these were what was known as “Rosenwald Schools” located within the Halifax County Public School District. The brainchild of Booker T. Washington and Sears Roebuck president and philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, the Rosenwald School program was based on collaboration between the local Black communities, White school boards and the Rosenwald Fund. If the community would raise some of the money (and often in-kind contributions of material and labor) and the board would agree to operate the school, the Fund would contribute the remainder of the money needed to build the school. By 1932, there were over 5,300 Rosenwald Schools and buildings (including teachers’ residences and shop buildings) throughout fifteen Southern states.<sup>18</sup> Halifax County, with over 40 Rosenwald Schools, had more than any other county in the South except one in the Mississippi Delta.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the county was also the home of the Eastman Community School, built and funded by Kodak founder and philanthropist George Eastman.<sup>20</sup>

The DPI noted in its 1949 report that, of the forty buildings that were being used for Black elementary schools, “perhaps only three [were] at all fit to be saved for continued use by children.” The schools, which ranged from one to six teacher programs, were uniformly dilapidated, substandard and dangerous. The report detailed some of these conditions:

...these buildings were painted a dull, unattractive gray which is drab and uninviting. The porches, floor, and steps at many of the schools are in need of repair. Window panes are out at too many schools. Several schools have shingle roofs, which creates a fire hazard. The plaster has cracked and fallen in at practically all the schools. ... The schools are poorly equipped. Old fashioned desks were found in all classrooms. ... (T)here is some modern furniture in the larger units, but it is not adequate by any means. There is no water in the elementary building, which means the children are exposed in all kinds of weather. ... The toilet facilities are primitive and very unsanitary. The outdoor toilets ... are not 100 feet from the elementary building.<sup>21</sup>

The report concluded with a series of recommendations for consolidating programs and renovating or constructing new schools, urging that each school contain a sufficient number of classrooms to adequately house its pupils, an auditorium, principal's office, library room, lunchroom, central heating system and inside lavatories. The report recommended that units to be used for high school purposes, in addition to the above, should also contain gymnasiums, science rooms and space for vocational Home Economics and vocational agriculture.<sup>22</sup>

By the early 1960s, the schools in all three of Halifax County's districts were still separate and unequal. Weldon City had just four schools: Weldon Elementary and Weldon High School for white students, Bunche Elementary and Bunche High School for Black students. State mandated annual reports for the school year 1959-'60 show 166 students attended Weldon High, while Bunche High School enrolled 260 students. According to these reports, as well as school board minutes from the period regarding funding and expenditures, Weldon High had better educational resources than Bunche, including a lower student-teacher ratio and more educational materials.<sup>23</sup>

Halifax County Public Schools' White students also enjoyed better facilities and educational resources than Black students. Enfield, with a total population in 1960 of almost 3,000 people, half of whom were non-White, had an all-White school for grades 1-12, which in 1963 enrolled around 500 students and had 24 teachers.<sup>24</sup> Black students living in or near the town of Enfield attended Inborden School, which was also grades 1-12, but much more crowded, with 1,670 students and only 45 teachers. Black parents recognized the advantages offered by the White school and attempted to access it for their children. In early August, 1963, four Black children applied for a transfer from Inborden to Enfield. The Board denied all four applications, stating that "after full consideration of the facts submitted and available to the Halifax County Board of Education, the Board is of the opinion that it is for the best interest and welfare of the pupil" that the applications be denied.<sup>25</sup>

## THE DESEGREGATION ERA (1964-1975)

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 ushered in long-awaited federal enforcement of the desegregation of public schools, led by the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). The law was enforced not only by HEW agents, but also through private civil rights lawsuits and community activism, so that by the mid- to late-1960s, the doors of educational opportunity slowly began to open for non-White children.

HEW required every *de jure* segregated school district to produce a written plan for compliance with the Civil Rights Act, which would in turn be reviewed and approved by the department. The Halifax County school board submitted its "Plan for Compliance" to HEW in April 1965. According to the preamble of its plan, the Halifax County school board first adopted a "voluntary desegregation proposal" in August 1964, effective for the 1964-'65 school term.<sup>26</sup> Despite the preamble, the schools remained completely segregated that term because the Board denied transfer requests from Black parents. On July 6, 1964, Whites from Enfield presented the Halifax board with a petition signed by 334 residents of the "Enfield School District" requesting that the Board "deny admission to any and all Negro applicants who have applied or who may apply for admission as students to the Enfield Graded School ... for the school year 1964-'65." While the Board officially "took no action" on the petition, its consistent denial of transfers to Black students effectuated the discriminatory desires of Whites in Enfield.<sup>27</sup> Additionally, the very language of the petition and its reference to the non-existent "Enfield School District" foreshadowed the strategy of using school district lines to undermine desegregation efforts within the county.

On August 17, 1964, parents of the children who had applied for the transfers from Inborden to Enfield the previous year and again in July 1964, along with parents of two other Black children who had applied for transfers to Enfield, appeared before the Board with their attorney to request a justification for the denial of transfers. None was given, according to the minutes. Not until a year later, under pressure from HEW to comply with the Civil Rights Act, did the Board finally approve the transfers.<sup>28</sup> Those students were the first and only children to integrate Halifax schools that year.

Meanwhile, in Roanoke Rapids, the RRGSD had fewer than 300 Black students, all of whom attended the Chaloner

school along with some 900 county residents,<sup>29</sup> so compliance with federal desegregation enforcement did not threaten a White majority presence in the schools. Instead, the challenge facing RRGSD was HEW's prohibition against an agreement between districts enabling students to cross district lines if such arrangement "tends to perpetuate a racially segregated school."<sup>30</sup> RRGSD and HCPS were forced to change their Chaloner "sharing" arrangement, and both boards initially sought to redistrict the school into HCPS, which RRGSD included in its desegregation plan submitted to HEW.<sup>31</sup> But HEW rejected the redistricting on the grounds that such action would impede desegregation.<sup>32</sup> The RRGSD Board then sought to transfer Chaloner to the county board, but could not get the HCPS Board to agree to that option, presumably because of the poor condition of the school.<sup>33</sup> Finally, both boards agreed that RRGSD would lease the school to HCPS for the county students' use, and the Roanoke Rapids residents from Chaloner would be given "freedom of choice" to attend any RRGSD school.<sup>34</sup> HEW approved the lease agreement, which was in effect for the 1966-'67 through 1969-'70 school years.<sup>35</sup> By the spring of 1970, Chaloner was in need of extensive repair, as the RRGSD Board had repeatedly postponed any significant spending for improvements on the building and grounds.<sup>36</sup> For that reason, and because the Chaloner students could be housed in other HCPS schools, the lease was terminated.<sup>37</sup> When it reopened (after substantial improvements) as a RRGSD middle school in 1971, Chaloner's student body was majority White.<sup>38</sup>

While the RRGSD board sought to remove its sole "Negro school" from the district, the HCPS board resisted the reality of desegregating an overwhelmingly majority-Black district: White children would attend majority-Black schools. Perhaps motivated by this prospect, the HCPS Board sought to consolidate the three districts in the county, thereby increasing the number of White children in a unified district. On April 12, 1965, the Board unanimously passed a resolution calling for consolidation, and forwarded it to the State Board of Education (SBE).<sup>39</sup> Although the SBE promptly approved the resolution on May 6, 1965,<sup>40</sup> no further action toward merger occurred.

During this same period, White residents of Enfield, Scotland Neck and Littleton sought to establish separate city school districts in which their race would constitute a majority – just as in Roanoke Rapids.<sup>41</sup> Scotland Neck was populated almost evenly by Whites and Blacks, with White students attending school in Scotland Neck and Black students attending the Brawley School just outside the town limits.<sup>42</sup> Although State Senator Julian Allsbrook introduced a bill in the General Assembly in early 1965 authorizing the creation of a new, separate school district in Scotland Neck, the HCPS board opposed the bill, stating that creating a separate unit would be inconsistent with its Plan for Desegregation.<sup>43</sup> A few years later, however, the legislature passed a bill establishing a Scotland Neck district. As discussed further below, the new statute was eventually declared an unconstitutional obstruction to desegregation efforts.

All three districts' boards espoused limited "freedom of choice" as the centerpiece of their initial desegregation plans. The plan the HCPS board submitted to HEW in April 1965 stated that the board would consider all applications for Change of Pupil Assignment for students in grades 1, 10, 11 and 12 (only), provided that the legal residence of the student is "within the attendance area for which school assignment is requested."<sup>44</sup> Immediately after the plan was publicized, members of the Southern Conference Educational Fund and the Halifax County Voters' Movement (which board minutes refer to as "a Negro organization within the county") coordinated widespread protests to various aspects of the plan, including its narrow limitation of "free choice" to certain grades and its failure to address the integration of faculty.<sup>45</sup> These protests, according to board minutes, resulted in disapproval of the plan by U.S. Commissioner of Education Francis Keppel. The board had to open "freedom of choice" to all grades, provide transportation on an equal basis, and ensure that principals, teachers and other staff would not be demoted or discharged due to actual or expected reassignment of students away from their school to achieve desegregation.<sup>46</sup> This last requirement was won at the insistence of activists in the Black community, who saw Black schools being closed and their children moved into the White schools, despite the fact that Black students substantially outnumbered White students in the county.<sup>47</sup>

The HCPS board continued to delay compliance with federal desegregation orders. Its August 1965 student assignment revisions to its desegregation plan consisted solely of moving Black students to White schools. The plan's minimal desegregation of faculty was also limited to Black teachers being moved to White schools.<sup>48</sup> The board did not reassign any White students, but instead continued to offer Whites a "freedom of choice" student assignment option. In July 1968, the HCPS board received a letter from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) warning that "continued adherence to a freedom-

of-choice plan of desegregation ... is constitutionally impermissible” under the United States Supreme Court’s decision a few months earlier in *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County* (discussed below).<sup>49</sup> The DOJ gave the school board 10 days to submit a desegregation plan to produce an “effective conversion to a unitary system.” At a meeting in Washington, DC following the issuing of that letter, district leaders were warned that they must make “substantial progress” toward desegregation in 1968-’69, and complete the process by the 1969-’70 school year. The DOJ also wanted specific information about the use, operation and inter-district student transfers involving the Chaloner School.<sup>50</sup>

Under pressure to comply with the DOJ’s mandate, the HCPS board asked the state DPI to conduct a survey to determine the steps necessary for the board to meet its desegregation obligations, and to recommend “the most effective organizational patterns for the county schools in order to ensure the best education possible for the children.”<sup>51</sup> The resulting survey proposed as an interim plan a combination of geographic zoning with grade reorganizations at some schools – for example, consolidation of junior high grades in the predominantly White Scotland Neck school and the all-Black Brawley school. The board declined to implement this proposed desegregation plan, which would have resulted in a majority of Black students in 17 of the 18 schools in the Halifax County system.<sup>52</sup>

The DPI’s final survey report, issued in December 1968, went even further. Following its complete review of school segregation in the county and the educational need of students there, the agency recommended that the three districts in Halifax County be consolidated.<sup>53</sup> This recommendation was not only ignored, but completely inverted, as White political forces in the county re-focused their attention on the creation of separate districts as a means to maintain segregation.

When the board submitted its revised plan to the DOJ in February 1969, it still included freedom-of-choice assignment of some students in the district, faculty reassignments to match the racial ratios of student assignments, and a “permissive” transfer policy.<sup>54</sup> In March, the DOJ again rejected the plan, stating that it would “likely result in the continued operation of all-Negro schools and will promote segregation rather than desegregation.”<sup>55</sup> In a recalcitrant response to this rejection, the board adopted a resolution to use a freedom-of-choice plan for all students, and to make no changes to the student assignment plan in place for the 1967-’68 school year. The board also voted to request to continue the inter-district, racially segregative use of the Chaloner school.<sup>56</sup>

Not long after the final DPI report and consolidation recommendation, the General Assembly adopted legislation to create a new city school district in Scotland Neck. Critics of the bill charged that the new district was an attempt by Whites in Scotland Neck to avoid the desegregation of HCPS. The proposed Scotland Neck district would create a “White enclave” in the majority non-White county that would be approximately 60 percent White. In addition, an open transfer policy suggested for the new district promised to increase White enrollment to nearly 80 percent.<sup>57</sup> Nonetheless, the bill’s supporters claimed that the new district would be “a pure unitary system.” During the debate, Representative Henry Frye from Greensboro (later the first Black Chief Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court) asked whether anyone had considered consolidating the existing three districts in the county. A former Halifax board member explained that the wealthier city districts would be opposed to consolidation.<sup>58</sup>

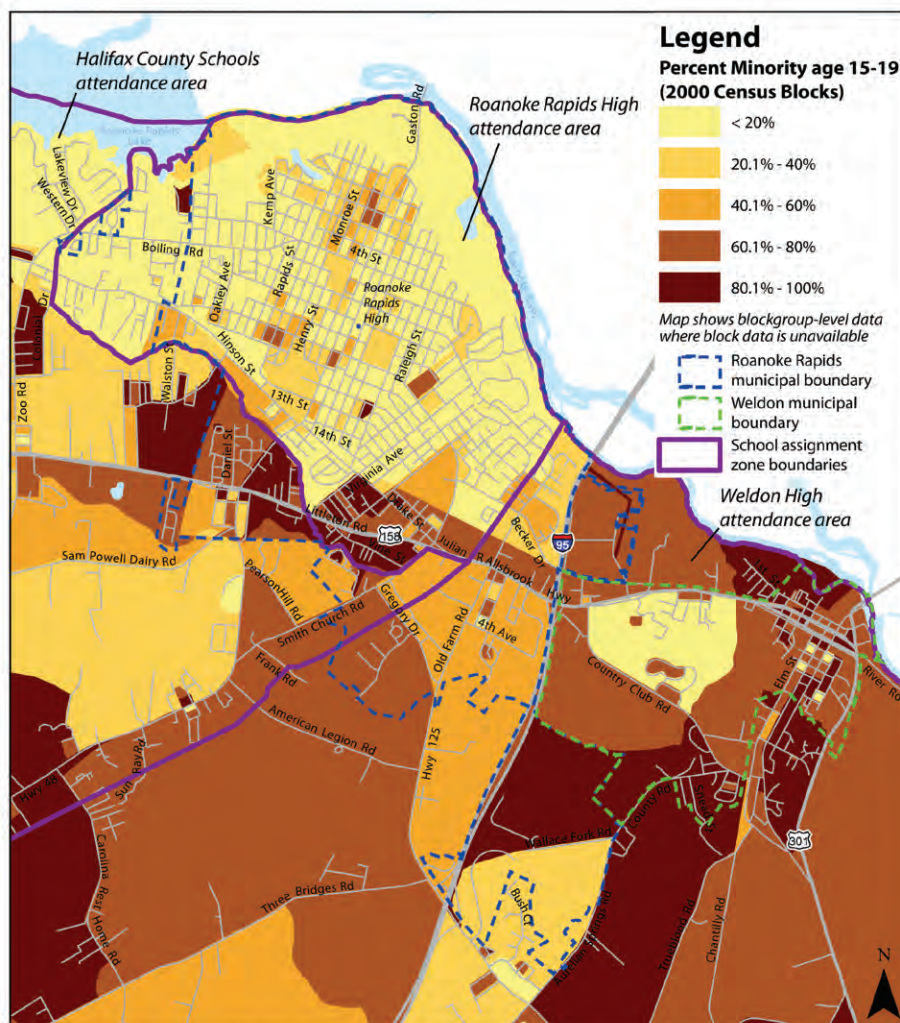
The state legislature approved the bill, and in April 1969 the residents of Scotland Neck approved a referendum creating the new district. At the same time, the legislature also approved the creation of another “White enclave” district in Littleton-Lake Gaston, straddling the Halifax-Warren county border. The creation of these new districts brought a quick reaction from the Department of Justice, which sought an injunction to prevent the creation of the Scotland Neck district, asserting that it violated the state’s duty to dismantle the segregated school system in Halifax County.<sup>59</sup> In May 1970, the federal district court ruled that the statute created a “refuge for White students,” which undermined desegregation, and was therefore unconstitutional.<sup>60</sup> The case was appealed all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.<sup>61</sup>

In finding that the creation of a new, majority-White school district was unconstitutional, the district court focused on “the desire on the part of the leaders of Scotland Neck to preserve a ratio of Black to White students ... that would be acceptable to White parents and thereby prevent the flight of White students to the increasingly popular all-White private schools in the area.”<sup>62</sup> The Court of Appeals reversed this ruling on the grounds that the separation of Scotland Neck from the Halifax County district was not related to “a desegregation plan proposed by the school board but was instead an action by the Legislature redefining the boundaries of local governmental units.”<sup>63</sup> But the Supreme Court had this to say about that rationale:

This suggests that an action of a state legislature affecting the desegregation of a dual system stands on a footing different from an action of a school board. But in *North Carolina Board of Education v. Swann*, decided after the decision of the Court of Appeals in this case, we held that “if a state-imposed limitation on a school authority’s discretion operates to inhibit or obstruct . . . the disestablishing of a dual school system, it must fall; state policy must give way when it operates to hinder vindication of federal constitutional guarantees.” The fact that the creation of the Scotland Neck school district was authorized by a special act of the state legislature rather than by the school board or city authorities thus has no constitutional significance.<sup>64</sup>

The Supreme Court affirmed the district court decision holding that the statute that created the Scotland Neck district was unconstitutional because it would result in the Scotland Neck schools being the “White schools” of the area, while the other schools in the southeastern part of the county would remain “Negro schools.”<sup>65</sup> Thus the statute had the effect of undermining desegregation in Halifax County. And although the Scotland Neck supporters argued that creation of the district was necessary to avoid further “White flight” into private schools, the Court found that “while this development may be cause for deep concern to the [school board], it cannot . . . be accepted as a reason for achieving anything less than complete uprooting of the dual public school system.”<sup>66</sup>

By 1975, HCPS consisted of 2,793 White and 9,475 Black students; RRGSD had 2,800 White and 1,150 Black students; and WCS had 956 White and 1,782 Black students. WCS was the most integrated of the three districts, due in part to its small size and the fact that a single new high school was constructed for all of the district’s students. Over the years, many Whites left both the HCPS and WCS districts, opting either for private schools or transfer to RRGSD. The county district’s lease on the Chaloner School ended in the early 1970s, and the school reverted back to RRGSD, where it reopened, following major investment and renovation, as a majority White school because few African Americans lived within the town.<sup>67</sup>



Despite changes in the Roanoke Rapids municipal boundaries, the Roanoke school district lines remained racially gerrymandered, extending beyond city borders to take in majority White communities to the northwest of Roanoke Rapids, while excluding majority Black neighborhoods within the city, leaving the children in those communities in either the county or Weldon City system, and thereby preserving the White enclave. As the next section demonstrates, the demographics of the three school districts are as racialized today as they were in 1965, but with even more significant educational impacts for the children still struggling with the county’s maintenance of racially segregated school districts.

**Figure II.1** School District, Municipal Boundaries and Minority Population (ages 15-19), Roanoke Rapids and Weldon, 2000

Source: US Census 2000 and Halifax County data digitized by Tim Stallmann for CGISC  
Map produced January, 2011

### III. A Statistical Profile of the Tripartate Educational System in Halifax County

*“If students come to school in unequal circumstances, they will largely, though not entirely, leave schools with unequal skills and abilities, in both cognitive and non-cognitive domains.”*

— RICHARD ROTHSTEIN<sup>68</sup>

Enrollment in HCPS, the largest district in the county, has continually decreased since the 1980s.<sup>69</sup> During 2009-'10, HCPS had just under 4,000 students in its six elementary schools, two middle schools, two high schools, and one primary school (pre-K age through third grade).<sup>70</sup> Student enrollment in WCS has steadily decreased during the same period.<sup>71</sup> In 2009-'10, WCS (the smallest district in Halifax County and one of the smallest districts in the state) had just over 1,000 attending its four schools and school programs: one elementary school, one middle school, one high school, and an early college program through the local community college serving only seventh and eighth graders.<sup>72</sup>

In contrast to the decreases seen in HCPS and WCS since the 1980s, enrollment in RRGSD generally has increased over time.<sup>73</sup> During 2009-'10, RRGSD had approximately 2,900 students in its two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school.<sup>74</sup>

Although relatively small and similar in size, the three districts have vastly different demographics. While HCPS and WCS are almost all Black, RRGSD is predominantly White. In 2009-'10, the HCPS student population was 88 percent Black, 4 percent White, 2 percent Hispanic, and 6 percent American Indian.<sup>75</sup> The WCS student population was 95 percent Black, 3 percent White, 1 percent Hispanic, 1 percent American Indian, and 1 percent Asian/Pacific Islander.<sup>76</sup> In stark contrast, the student body of RRGSD was only 24 percent Black, but 72 percent White, 2 percent Hispanic, and 2 percent Asian/Pacific Islander.<sup>77</sup>

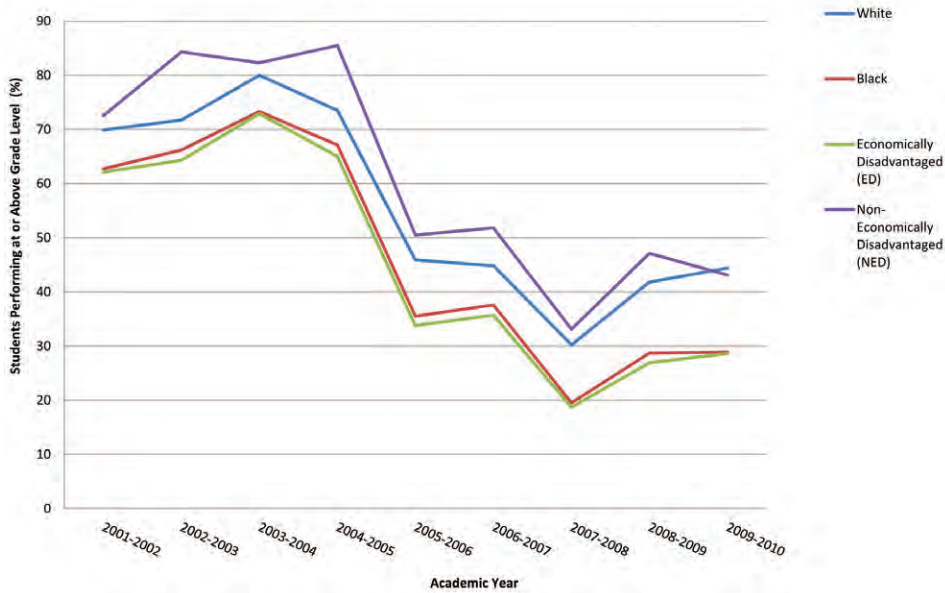
In addition to declining enrollment and racial isolation, poverty is a pressing challenge for schools in Halifax County. Within HCPS, 90 percent of all students are eligible to receive free or reduced lunch (FRL), which breaks down as 97 percent of elementary school students, 89 percent of middle school students and 77 percent of high school students.<sup>78</sup> Ten of HCPS's 11 schools have more than 85 percent FRL students.<sup>79</sup> Additionally, five of HCPS's six elementary schools have more than 90 percent FRL students.<sup>80</sup> In WCS, 95 percent of the students are FRL eligible<sup>81</sup>, including 100 percent of elementary school students,<sup>82</sup> 93 percent of middle school students and 100 percent of high school students.<sup>83</sup> RRGSD has a significantly lower population of FRL students than either HCPS or WCS, however, with only 51 percent of RRGSD students eligible for FRL,<sup>84</sup> including 59 percent of elementary school students, 48 percent of middle school students and 41 percent of high school students.<sup>85</sup>

#### ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

While this report provides a broad spectrum of critical data on education in Halifax County, one of the primary data points widely utilized (and too often the only one utilized) to evaluate effective school performance are End-of-Grade tests (“EOGs”). At the conclusion of each school year, students in grades 3-8 must complete state EOGs in reading and mathematics. Additionally, high school students enrolled in English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics and Economics, and U.S. History must complete state End-of-Course tests (“EOCs”) at the end of each course.

In 2009-'10, 37 percent of HCPS students scored at or above grade level on the EOGs for reading and 47.5 percent scored at or above grade level on the EOGs for mathematics.<sup>86</sup> The state achievement levels for the same tests were 70.1 percent in reading and 81.8 percent in math.<sup>87</sup> Only 30.4 percent of all students passed both the reading and math EOGs (44.4 percent of White students, 28.9 percent of Black students, 27.5 percent of Hispanic students, 43.2 percent of American Indian students, 83.3 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander,<sup>88</sup> and 31.6 percent of multi-racial students).<sup>89</sup> For the district, 28.6 percent of economically disadvantaged (ED) students scored at or above grade level on their reading and math EOGs, while 43.1 percent

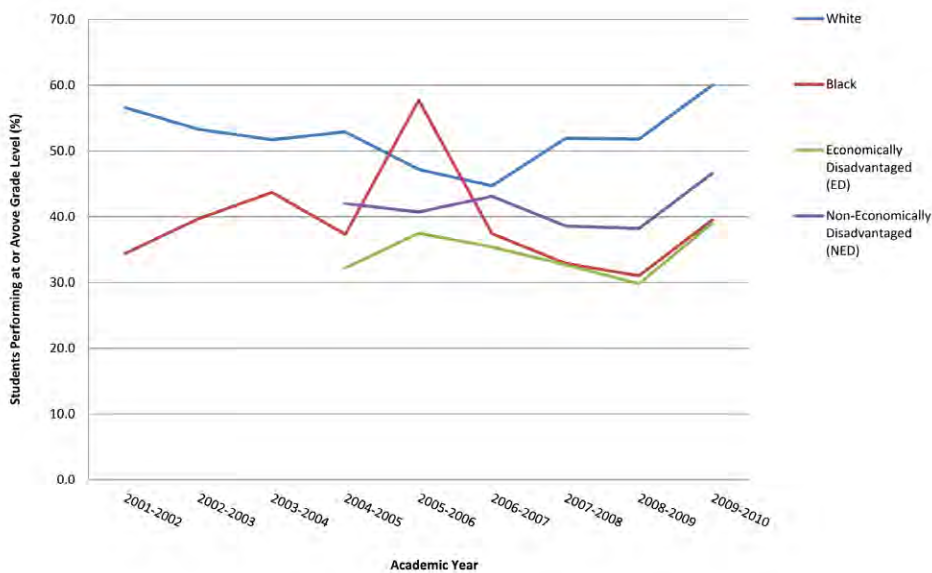
of non-economically disadvantaged (NED) students scored at or above grade level on both tests.<sup>90</sup> Additionally, only 24.2 percent Limited English Proficient (LEP) students scored at or above grade level on their reading and math EOGs. Ultimately, less than 50 percent of students passed in all categories, with the exception of the relatively small Asian/Pacific Islander student population. With one exception, these scores have consistently declined since 2005.



**Figure III.1** Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Percent 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math by Race and Economic Status

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

Of the students who took EOCs in HCPS in 2009-'10, 40.5 percent of all students scored at or above grade level (60.0 percent of White students, 39.5 percent of Black students, 47.4 percent of Hispanic students, 50.8 percent of American Indian students).<sup>91</sup> For the district, 39.0 percent of economically disadvantaged students, 46.6 percent of non-economically disadvantaged students, and 33.3 percent of LEP students passed their EOCs.<sup>92</sup>

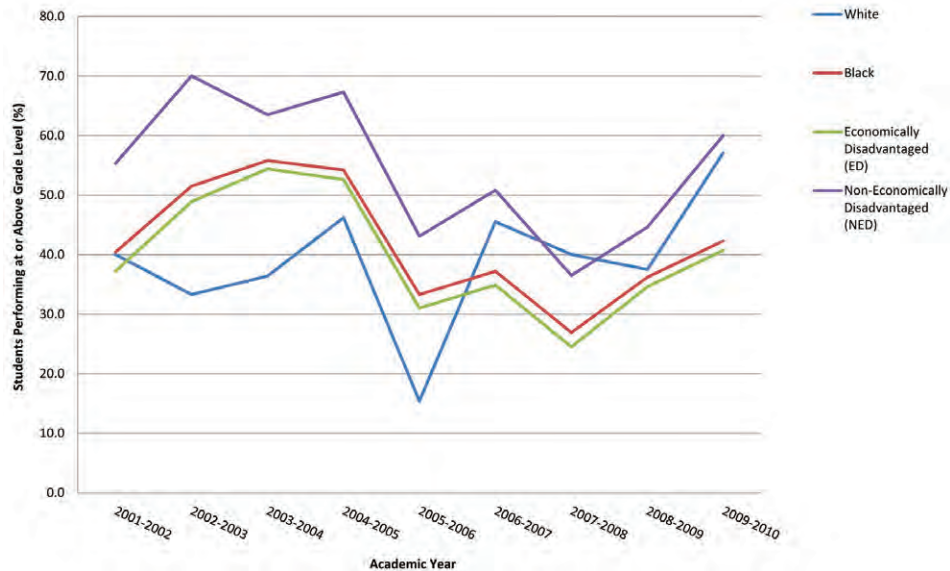


**Figure III.2** Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on Subject Area Exams\* by Race and Economic Status

\*English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics & Economics, and US History

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

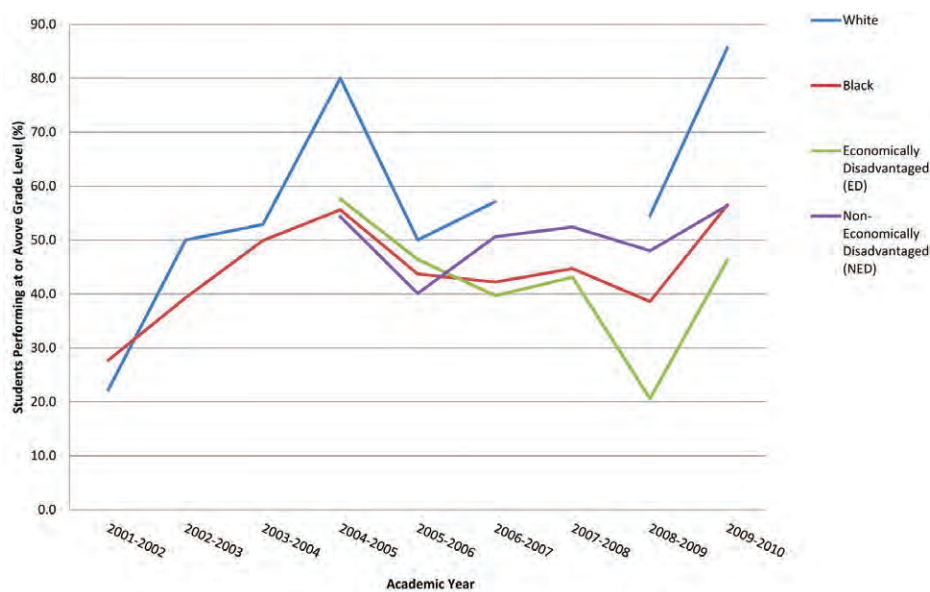
WCS had similarly poor results in 2009-'10, with 48.4 percent of WCS students scoring at or above grade level on reading EOGs and 67.2 percent scoring at or above grade level for mathematics.<sup>93</sup> Only 44.1 percent of all students in the district passed both the reading and math EOGs (57.1 percent of White students, 42.3 percent of Black students, and 50 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders).<sup>94</sup> Among ED students, 40.7 percent scored at or above grade level on their reading and math EOGs, while 60.0 percent of NED students scored at or above grade level on both tests.<sup>95</sup> Additionally, 50 percent of LEP students scored at or above grade level on their reading and math EOGs.



**Figure III.3** Weldon City Schools (WCS), Percent 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math by Race and Economic Status

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

Of the students who took EOCs in WCS in 2009-'10, 57.1 percent of all students, 85.7 percent of White students, and 56.5 percent of Black students passed.<sup>96</sup> For the district, 55.3 percent of ED students passed their EOCs, while 65.6 percent of NED students passed. During 2009-'10, there were fewer than five LEP students in WCS taking EOCs and as a result, their results are not available.<sup>97</sup> While all three districts in the county show a racial achievement gap, the disparity is greatest in WCS, a majority-Black district.



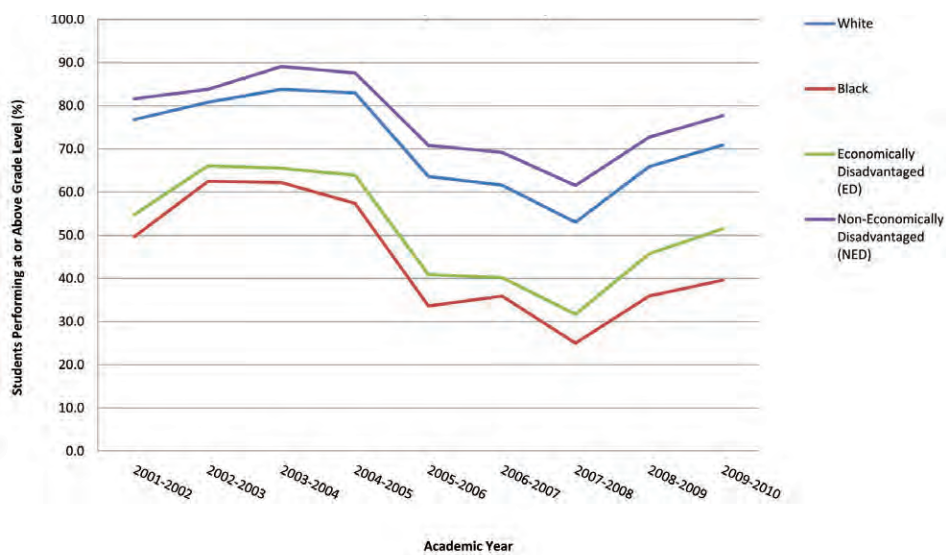
**Figure III.4** Weldon City Schools (WCS), Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on Subject Area Exams\* by Race and Economic Status

\*English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics & Economics, and US History

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>



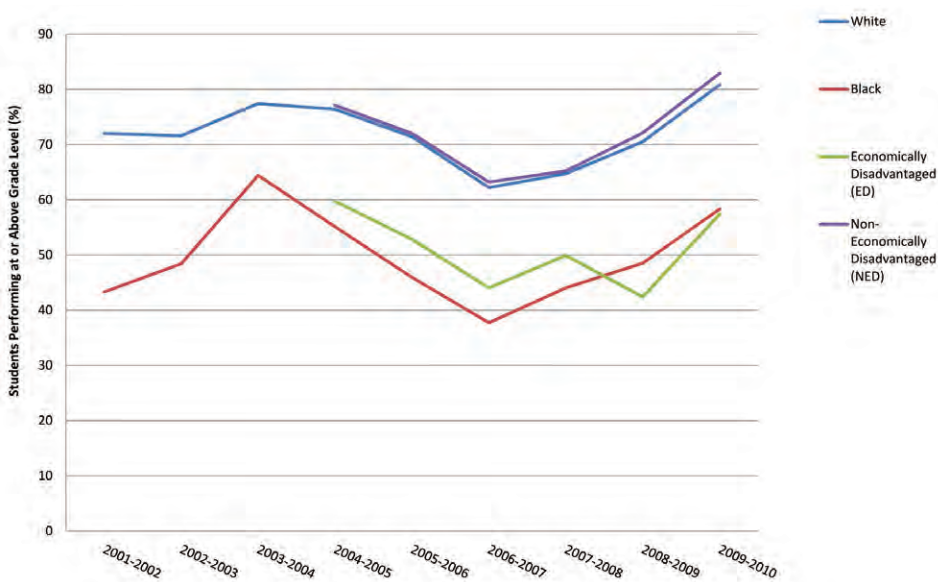
In RRGSD in 2009-'10, 67.8 percent of students scored at or above grade level on the EOGs for reading and 83.5 percent scored at or above grade level for mathematics.<sup>98</sup> A much higher percentage of students passed both tests in RRGSD than in the other districts in the county: 64.5 percent of RRGSD students passed both the reading and math EOGs (70.9 percent of White students, 39.6 percent of Black students, 52 percent of Hispanic students, 88 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander students, 70.4 percent of multi-racial students).<sup>99</sup> Of RRGSD's ED students, 51.5 percent scored at or above grade level on their reading and math EOGs; 77.7 percent of NED students scored at or above grade level on both tests.<sup>100</sup> Additionally, 46.2 percent of LEP students scored at or above grade level on their reading and math EOGs.



**Figure III.5** Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), Percent 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math by Race and Economic Status

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

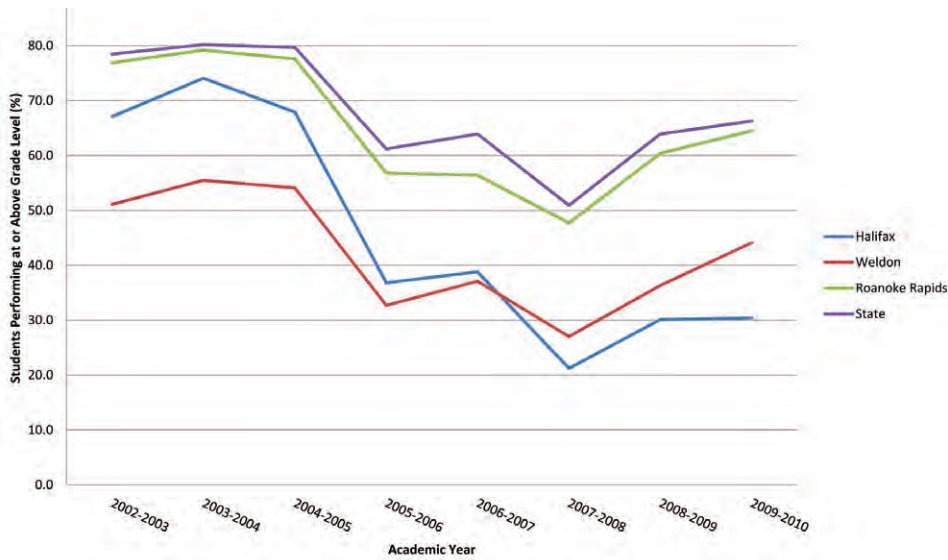
Of the students who took EOCs in RRGSD in 2009-'10, 75.8 percent of all students passed their EOCs (80.8 percent of White students, 58.3 percent of Black students, 70.6 percent of Hispanic students, 77.8 percent of American Indian students, 89.7 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander students, 81.8 percent of multi-racial students).<sup>101</sup> For the district, 64.2 percent of ED students, 84.8 percent of NED students, and 54.5 percent of LEP students passed their EOCs.<sup>102</sup>



**Figure III.6** Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on Subject Area Exams\* by Race and Economic Status

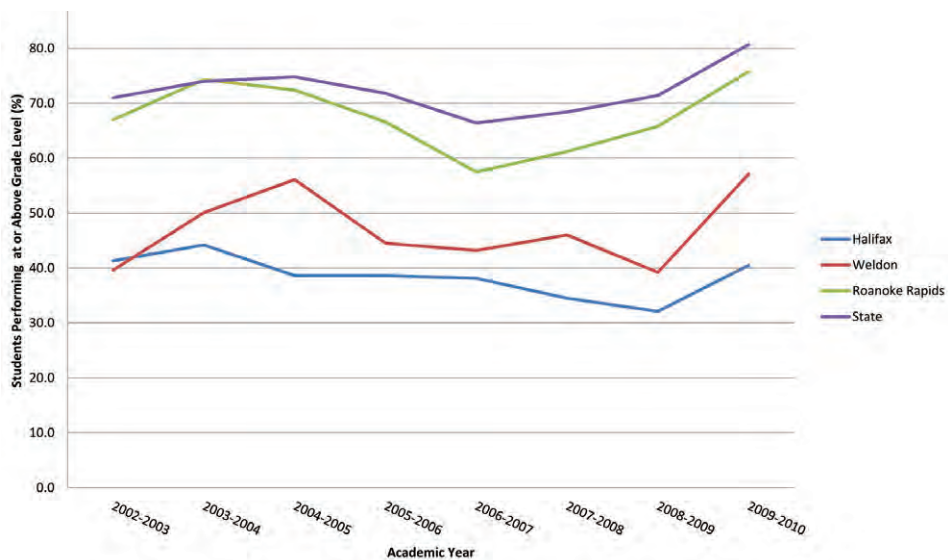
\*English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics & Economics, and US History

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>



**Figure III.7** Percent 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level in Reading and Math in HCPS, WCS and RRGSD

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>



**Figure III.8** Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on EOC Subject Area Exams in HCPS, WCS and RRGSD

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

The ABCs of Public Education is a statewide accountability program that sets growth and performance standards for each elementary, middle and high school in the state.<sup>103</sup> EOG and EOC test results and other selected components are used to measure a school's growth and performance.<sup>104</sup> Each year, schools in North Carolina may receive several designations based on their performance on the state's ABCs tests. Those designations are awarded on the basis of the percentage of students performing at grade level and on whether students have learned as much as they are expected to learn in one year.<sup>105</sup> Schools that meet the standards are eligible for awards and are recognized, depending on growth and the percentage of their students performing at or above grade level, as "Honor Schools of Excellence," "Schools of Excellence" or "Schools of Distinction." Schools that achieve expected growth with a lower percentage (60 percent) of students performing at or above grade level are deemed "Schools of Progress." If a school does meet their expected growth target, but had 60 percent of their students scoring at or above grade level, they receive no recognition. "Priority Schools" have less than 60 percent of their students scoring at or above grade level, regardless of meeting their growth standards, but are not "Low-Performing." Schools where growth and performance fall below specified levels are designated as "Low-Performing."

In 2009-'10, all of HCPS's schools are either Priority Schools or Low-Performing, meaning these schools have low proficiency as well as low growth. HCPS has more Low Performing schools than any other county in the state.<sup>106</sup> The three

traditional WCS schools are Priority Schools; the Early College program received no recognition. All of RRGSD's schools are Schools of Progress, which means they achieved at least expected growth and had at least 60 percent of their student's scoring at or above grade level.

School Name	Expected Growth	High Growth	Student Performance Composite*	ABC Status
Aurelian Springs Elementary	No	No	50.0%	Priority
Dawson Elementary	No	No	31.3%	Low Performing
Enfield Middle	Yes	No	41.8%	Priority
Everetts Elementary	No	No	50.0%	Priority
Hollister Elementary	Yes	No	54.0%	Priority
Inborden Elementary	No	No	25.8%	Low Performing
Northwest High	No	No	42.3%	Low Performing
Pittman Elementary	No	No	50.0%	Priority
Scotland Neck Primary	No	No	50.0%	Priority
Southeast Halifax High	Yes	No	38.6%	Priority
William R Davie Middle	No	No	38.5%	Low Performing

**Figure III.9** Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS) ABC Status by School, 2009-2010

\*Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level within School on EOG and EOC Tests

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

School Name	Expected Growth	High Growth	Student Performance Composite*	ABC Status
Roanoke Valley Early College	No	No	68.5%	No Recognition
Weldon Elementary	Yes	Yes	57.6%	Priority
Weldon Middle	Yes	No	52.5%	Priority
Weldon STEM High	Yes	No	57.7%	Priority

**Figure III.10** Weldon City Schools (WCS) ABC Status by School, 2009-2010

\*Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level within School on EOG and EOC Tests

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

School Name	Expected Growth	High Growth	Student Performance Composite*	ABC Status
Belmont Elementary	Yes	No	71.7	Progress
Chaloner Middle	Yes	Yes	78.4	Progress
Roanoke Rapids High	Yes	No	75.8	Progress
William L Manning Elementary	Yes	Yes	73	Progress

**Figure III.11** Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD) ABC Status by School, 2009-2010

\*Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level within School on EOG and EOC Tests

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

In addition to the state's ABCs Accountability program, schools and school districts in North Carolina are also assessed on whether they are making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). AYP establishes a series of performance targets that states, school districts and specific subgroups within schools must achieve each year. AYP is an all-or-nothing standard – if a school meets nine out of 10 targets for student growth, that school still does not make AYP. Therefore, it is quite possible that a school will have favorable status under the state accountability standards, but still not make AYP. Although criticized for being so heavily driven by test scores, the AYP measure is useful in identifying achievement gaps within schools and districts, and monitoring progress of students within vulnerable subgroups (such as Black and Hispanic students, economically disadvantaged students, Limited English Proficient students). NCLB spells out an array of consequences for schools that repeatedly fail to meet AYP. If a school fails to achieve AYP for two consecutive years in the same subject area it will be classified as in "Improvement Status" by the state. Initially, a school that does not make AYP for two consecutive years must, if possible, offer students the opportunity to transfer to another, higher-performing school within the

district. After a third year, schools must offer supplemental services (such as tutoring) for students. Schools that do not show adequate progress after five years may be forced to implement corrective action such as replacing school personnel or extending the school year.

In 2009-'10, only one HCPS school, Enfield Middle, made AYP. No schools in RRGSD made AYP, while three of the four schools in WCS made AYP. In comparison to the results under the state ABC program, the AYP results possibly indicate that, although WCS is still low performing, the district is successfully closing achievement gaps, even if by a small amount. HCPS and RRGSD, however, are still lagging in closing achievement gaps, regardless of overall student proficiency and growth. The NCLB transfer option is largely moot in all three districts; because of the overall low performance and small size of each district, if a parent wants a child out of a failing school there is literally nowhere else for that child to go.

## DISCIPLINE

The vast majority of short-term suspensions (for 10 or fewer days) in HCPS occur among Black students, particularly among Black males. While Black males currently constitute the largest gender and ethnic group in the general student population at 43.9 percent,<sup>107</sup> they are still grossly overrepresented in the percentage of short-term suspensions; 66.1 percent of short-term suspensions in 2009-'10 were given to this subgroup.<sup>108</sup> Black females make up 42.5 percent of the student population<sup>109</sup> and 26.9 percent of short-term suspensions.<sup>110</sup> Other gender and ethnic groups account for only a minimal proportion of short-term suspensions, with male students in each ethnic group except for Hispanics (equal in both proportion of the student population and short-term suspensions) consistently faring significantly worse than female students.

A somewhat similar pattern exists among suspended students in WCS. Black male students represent only 47.3 percent of the general student population<sup>111</sup> but 62.2 percent of short-term suspensions.<sup>112</sup> Black female students are 46.7 percent of the student body<sup>113</sup> and account for 17.9 percent of short-term suspensions.<sup>114</sup>

Despite the substantial differences in the racial demographics of the RRGSD student population, discipline patterns among RRGSD students still indicate a racial disparity similar to that found in other districts in the county. While the population of Black males is small and they do not constitute the majority of short-term suspensions in RRGSD, they are still largely overrepresented. Black male students make up only 10.8 percent of the general population,<sup>115</sup> but account for 29.0 percent of short-term suspensions.<sup>116</sup> White male students are 35.6 percent of the student body<sup>117</sup> (the majority, slightly outnumbering White females), and account for 44.4 percent of short-term suspensions.<sup>118</sup> Black females account for 10.3 percent of suspensions,<sup>119</sup> which is close to their representation in the student population (11.2 percent).<sup>120</sup> In contrast, White female students are especially underrepresented in their portion of short-term suspensions, accounting for 34.8 percent of the student population,<sup>121</sup> but only 10.7 percent of short-term suspensions.<sup>122</sup>

With regard to the actual number of short-term suspensions, HCPS has the highest rate, at approximately 1.5 times the rate of WCS and almost twice the rate of RRGSD. Each district varies in patterns of suspension rates between elementary, middle, and high school. In HCPS, middle schools have the highest rate of short-term suspensions, at 83 per 100 students.<sup>123</sup> High schools follow with a rate of 66 short-term suspensions per 100 students, and elementary schools have the lowest rate of 9 per 100 students.<sup>124</sup> In WCS, short-term suspensions in high schools greatly outnumber the rates in elementary and middle schools, at 74 per 100 students.<sup>125</sup> In elementary schools, the rate is 14 per 100 students, and 10 per 100 students in middle schools.<sup>126</sup> Finally, in RRGSD, middle school suspensions slightly outnumber high school rates, with 41 and 40 short-term suspensions per 100 students, respectively.<sup>127</sup> Short-term suspensions occur in elementary schools at a rate of three per 100 students.<sup>128</sup>

“Reportable Acts” are incidents of crime and violence that the Safe Schools Act of 1993 requires school districts to report to the State Board of Education, which is in turn required to compile an annual report on violence in public schools. The statute identifies 10 acts as dangerous and violent, including homicide, assault resulting in serious bodily injury, assault involving the use of a weapon, rape, sexual assault, kidnapping, robbery, and taking indecent liberties with a minor. Other acts delineated by the State Board of Education include assault on school personnel, bomb threat, burning of a school building, possession of alcoholic beverage, possession of controlled substance in violation of law, possession of a firearm or powerful explosive, and possession of a weapon.

While it is not a perfect indicator, the Reportable Act rate in each district provides some idea of the frequency of more severe forms of misbehavior likely resulting in long-term suspension or expulsion. The Reportable Act rate in HCPS is highest at 16.43 per 1,000 students.<sup>129</sup> The Reportable Act rate in RRGSD is significantly less than that of HCPS at 8.26 per 1,000.<sup>130</sup> WCS's reportable act rate in 2009-'10 was 6.90 per 1,000 students.<sup>131</sup>

Disciplinary issues are primarily identified and reported by classroom teachers; therefore, teacher perceptions of discipline are reliable indicators of how schools manage student behavioral issues. In addition, issues related to student conduct and discipline can be substantial factors in school selection and employment decisions for teachers. Consequently, teacher perceptions of student conduct and discipline are critical not only with regard to the application of discipline policies in schools, but also in recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers.

The Teacher Working Conditions survey is an annual, online, anonymous questionnaire accessible to all public educators in North Carolina. Funded by the General Assembly, the survey is conducted under the leadership of the Governor's Office, State Board of Education and the N.C. Teacher Working Conditions Advisory Committee and administered by the N.C. Professional Teaching Standards Commission. The survey measures teacher and principal perceptions of student conduct, school discipline, general school environment and a variety of other topics that are used to shape local and state education policy. The State Board has emphasized the importance of this survey as a tool for student achievement, recognizing that teacher working conditions are the same as student learning conditions. If used properly, the survey results can be a powerful catalyst for school and district reform.

One hundred percent of teachers in all three districts in Halifax County completed the 2010 Teacher Working Conditions survey. As reflected in the other statistics in this section, there are vast differences between how teachers perceive what is happening in schools in the three districts in Halifax County. The following chart illustrates the different perceptions in student conduct and discipline in HCPS, WCS and RRGSD.

Survey Indicator	Halifax	Weldon	RRGSD
Students understand expectations for their conduct	64%	84%	88%
Students follow rules of conduct	32%	49%	81%
Policies and procedures about student conduct are clearly understood by faculty	80%	78%	86%
Administrators consistently enforce rules for student conduct	59%	75%	78%
Administrators support teachers' efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom	67%	86%	86%
Teachers consistently enforce rules for student conduct	71%	78%	83%
The faculty work in a school environment that is safe	70%	95%	90%

**Figure III.12** Percentage of Teachers that Agree or Strongly Agree with Selected Statements Regarding Student Conduct and Discipline in HCPS, WCS and RRGSD

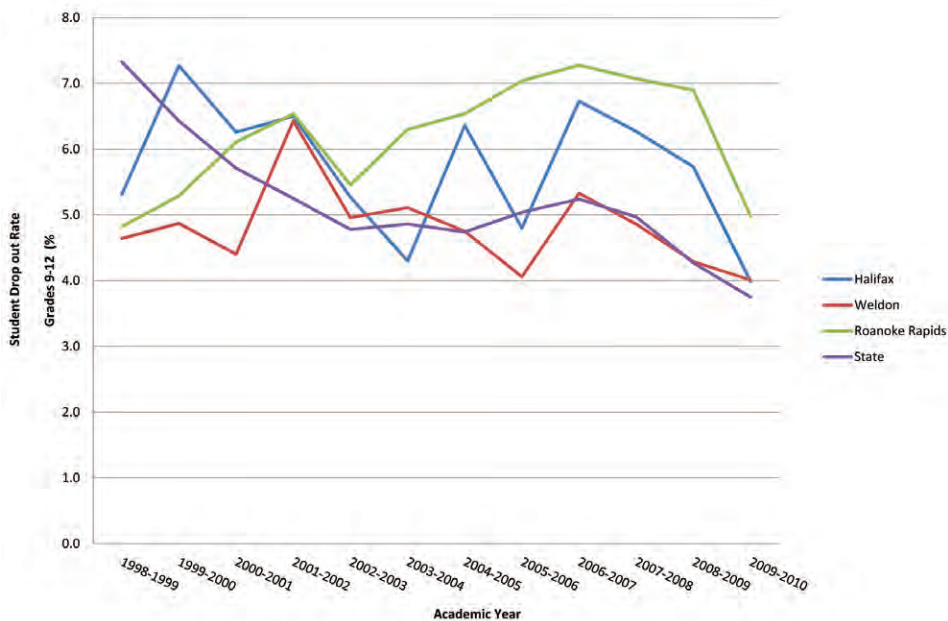
Source: 2010 Teacher Working Conditions Survey, <http://www.ncteachingconditions.org/reports/>

## OTHER SCHOOL QUALITY INDICATORS

In addition to providing a relative narrow analysis of educational quality, the intense focus on EOG and EOC results has significant classroom impact, often leading districts and teachers, particularly for low-performing schools, to narrowly tailor classroom teaching to test performance rather than more broadly applicable critical thinking or applied learning strategies. To provide a more comprehensive analysis of the three districts in Halifax County, other school quality indicators should also be considered, including dropout and graduation rates, SAT participation and scores, school funding, and curricular and extra-curricular offerings.

## DROPOUT RATES

North Carolina high schools had an average dropout rate of 3.75 percent in 2009-'10. The dropout rate in HCPS was 3.99 percent, or 52 students dropping out during that academic year.<sup>132</sup> This represents an improvement over the year before, when the rate was 5.73 percent, with over 80 students leaving school.<sup>133</sup> That same year, WCS had a dropout rate of 4.01 percent, which equals 13 students dropping out.<sup>134</sup> RRGSD had the highest dropout rate in 2009-'10 at 4.98 percent, with 45 students dropping out that year.<sup>135</sup>

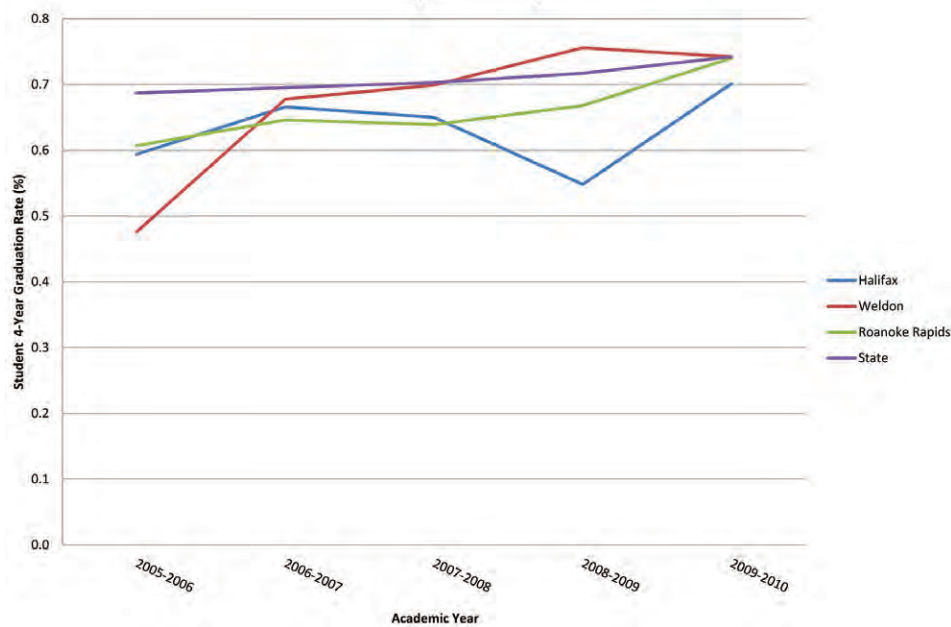


**Figure III.13** Dropout Rates in HCPS, WCS and RRGSD, 1998-2010

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, Annual Consolidated Report: Dropout Events and Rate <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/consolidated/2009-10/consolidated-report.pdf>

## GRADUATION RATES

Despite the wide disparities in test scores between HCPS, WCS and RRGSD (and the assessment of the relative quality of the three districts), there is remarkable similarity in graduation rates across the county. HCPS's graduation rate for 2009-'10 was 70.1 percent,<sup>136</sup> WCS's graduation rate was 74.2 percent,<sup>137</sup> and RRGSD's graduation rate was 74.0 percent.<sup>138</sup>



**Figure III.14 Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates in HCPS, WCS and RRGSD, 2005-2010**

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

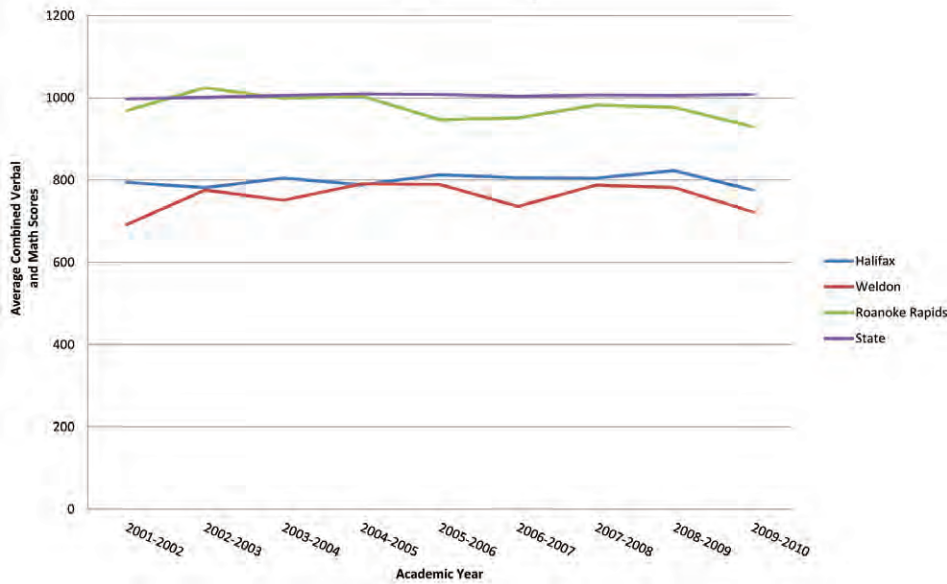
## CURRICULUM AND EXTRACURRICULAR OFFERINGS

In HCPS, only 1 percent of students are enrolled in specialized advanced academic courses, such as Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, while 13 percent of students are enrolled in career and technical courses provided by district high schools and local community colleges.<sup>139</sup> In WCS, there are no (0 percent) students enrolled in specialized advanced academic courses, while 16 percent of students are enrolled in career and technical courses provided by district high schools and local community colleges.<sup>140</sup> At Weldon Middle School, students can play baseball, basketball, football, softball, track, and volleyball. Additionally, Weldon Middle has special programs that include: Academically Intelligent and Gifted (AIG), Art & Drama Club, SADD Club, band, and chorus. Weldon High offers opportunities in Future Business Leaders of America, National Honor Society, JROTC, RAMMPS, and SADD Club.

In RRGSD, 4 percent of students are enrolled in specialized advanced academic courses, while 15 percent of students are enrolled in career and technical courses provided by district high schools and local community colleges.<sup>141</sup> At Roanoke Rapids High, students can choose from the following sports: cheerleading, cross country, football, soccer, tennis, volleyball, basketball, swimming, wrestling, baseball, golf, softball, and track. Extracurricular clubs include the American Field Service Club, Art Guild, Book Club, DECA- An Association of Marketing Students, French Honor Society, Heritage Club, Health Occupations Students of America, Key Club, Math Club, Monogram Club, National Honor Society, Pep Club, Quiz Bowl, Ro-Masquers, Spanish Club, Spanish Honor Society, Student Council, and Tri-M (Modern Music Masters) Honor Society. Roanoke Rapids High also offers band and chorus.

## SAT SCORES/PERCENTAGE TAKERS

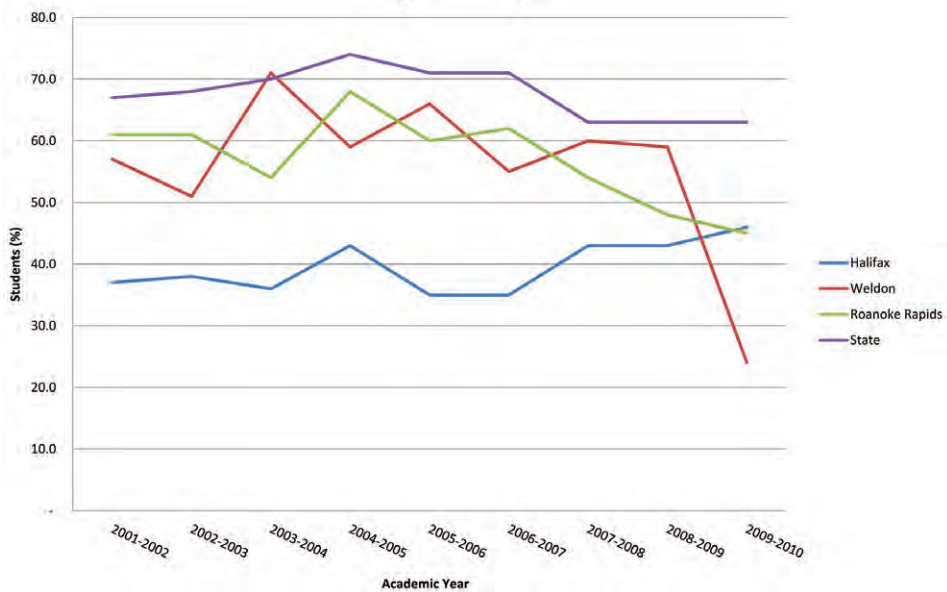
The SAT participation rate in HCPS in 2009-'10 was 46 percent, with 52 percent participation at Northwest High and 38 percent participation at Southeast Halifax High.<sup>142</sup> The district's average SAT score was 776.<sup>143</sup> In WCS, the SAT participation rate was a dismal 24 percent.<sup>144</sup> The district's average SAT score was 723.<sup>145</sup> RRGSD's SAT participation rate was comparable to HCPS, at 45 percent.<sup>146</sup> However, the average SAT score in RRGSD was 930, which is more than 150 points higher than HCPS's average score and more than 200 points higher than WCS's average score.<sup>147</sup>



**Figure III.15** Average Total SAT Scores in HCPS, WCS and RRGSD, School District, 2001-2010

\*Combined total scores on the SAT critical reading and SAT mathematics sections. Scores from the new writing portion of the SAT not included.

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>



**Figure III.16** SAT Participation Rates by School District, 2001-2010

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

## FUNDING/FINANCIAL INFORMATION/EXPENDITURES

North Carolina public schools receive funding from local, state and federal sources. The majority of public school funding comes from the state. Within the state funding allotment, the majority of state funds are allocated as guaranteed certified teacher positions, with the remainder as dollar allotments (used for teacher assistants, textbooks, classroom materials, central office administration, etc.) and categorical allotments (transportation; resources for AIG, EC or LEP students; low wealth and small county funding; etc.).<sup>148</sup> Local funds must be used for 100 percent of the district's facilities operations and maintenance. Therefore, as the square footage of school property increases, local budgets become more strained. Federal funding is the smallest part of a school district's budget. Most federal funding is used for personnel, with other categorical allocations for certain student resources.

State allocations are based on Average Daily Membership (ADM), the total number of school days within a given term – usually a school month or school year – that a student's name is on the current roll of a class, regardless of his/her being present or absent. ADM is calculated by dividing the sum of the "number of days in membership" for all students by the



number of school days in the term. To be included in ADM, a student must be present in school for at least half of the instructional day. The final ADM is the total days in membership for all students over the school year divided by the number of days school was in session. Average daily membership is a more accurate count of the number of students in school than enrollment. Per Pupil Expenditure is calculated annually by DPI as a guide for local school administrators, legislators and the general public. DPI includes all disbursements necessary for the daily operation of the public schools (excluding capital expenditure for building maintenance).

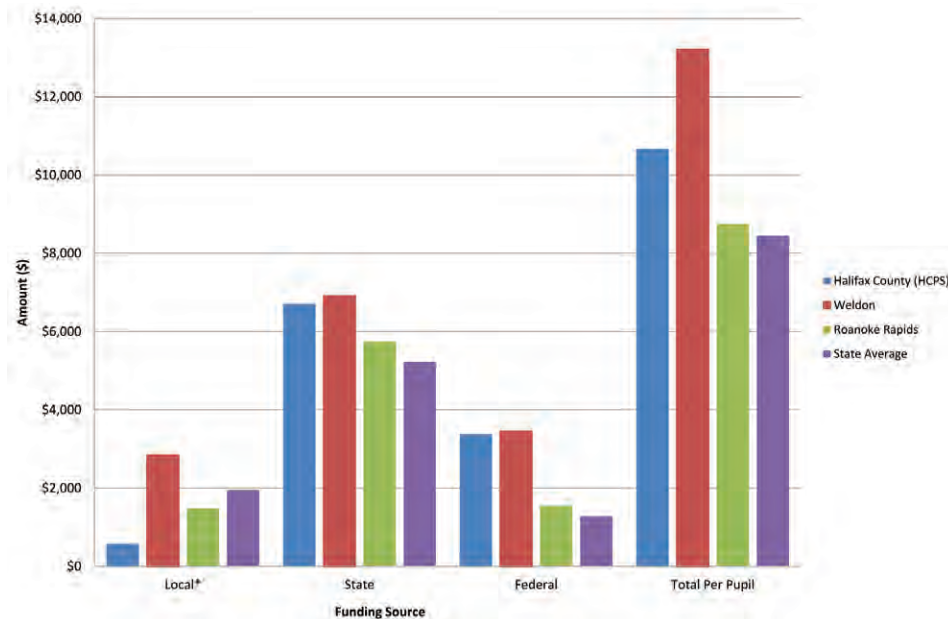
Title I is the largest single federal funding source for K-12 education, and one of the most important for all schools in Halifax County. About half of North Carolina’s traditional and charter public schools are Title I schools, and all 115 of the state’s school districts receive Title I funding. Title I grants provide supplemental funds to districts that have high concentrations of students from low-income families to help ensure that all students succeed academically. Schools with at least 40 percent of students from low-income families are designated as Title I schools, eligible to use Title I funds for programs that serve all children in the school. Because of the extreme countywide poverty in Halifax, each school in all three districts in Halifax County is a Title I school.

HCPS does not receive funding through a supplemental tax like RRGSD and WCS. WCS has a supplemental tax rate of 17 cents per \$100 of property valuation. When looking at the county appropriations and supplemental taxes by district, it is important to keep in mind how many schools and students each district is serving. WCS serves approximately 1,000 students in four schools while HCPS serves more than four times that many students and maintains three times as many schools. RRGSD has a supplemental tax rate of 21 cents per \$100 of property valuation. RRGSD receives the largest amount in county appropriations and supplemental taxes, but its four schools serve only 3,000 students.

	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD
Average Daily Membership (ADM)	3,943	1,015	2,849
ADM State Ranking	74	113	88
Total Per Pupil Expenditure (PPE)	\$10,663	\$13,214	\$8,760
PPE State Ranking	13	3	64

**Figure III.17** Final Average Daily Membership, Per Pupil Expenditure and State Rankings of HCPS, WCS and RRGSD, 2010

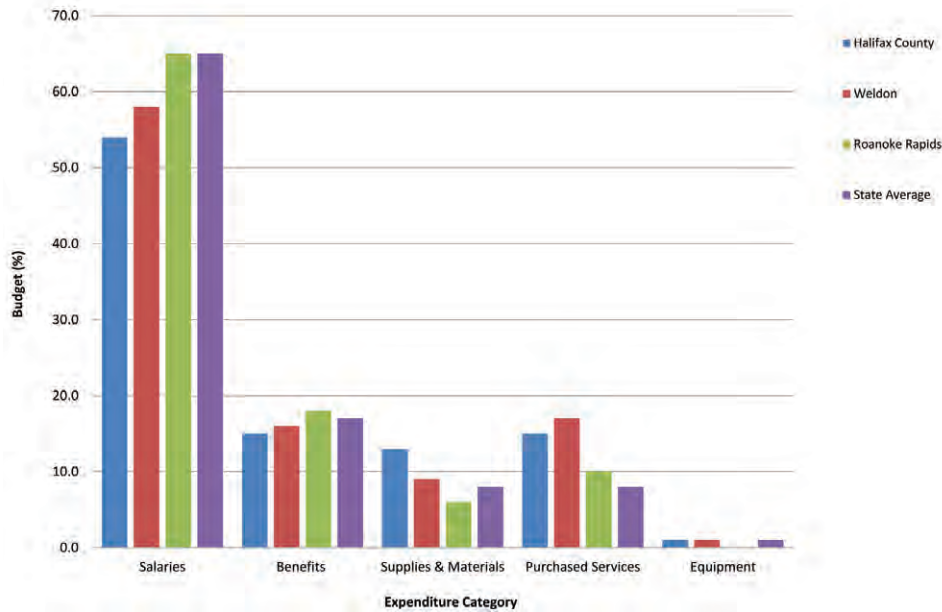
Source: N.C. Dep’t of Pub. Instruction, NC Public Schools Statistical Profile <http://apps.schools.nc.gov/pls/apex/f?p=1:1:1272622829090869::NO>



**Figure III.18** School District Per Pupil Funding by Funding Source, HCPS, WCS and RRGSD, 2009-2010

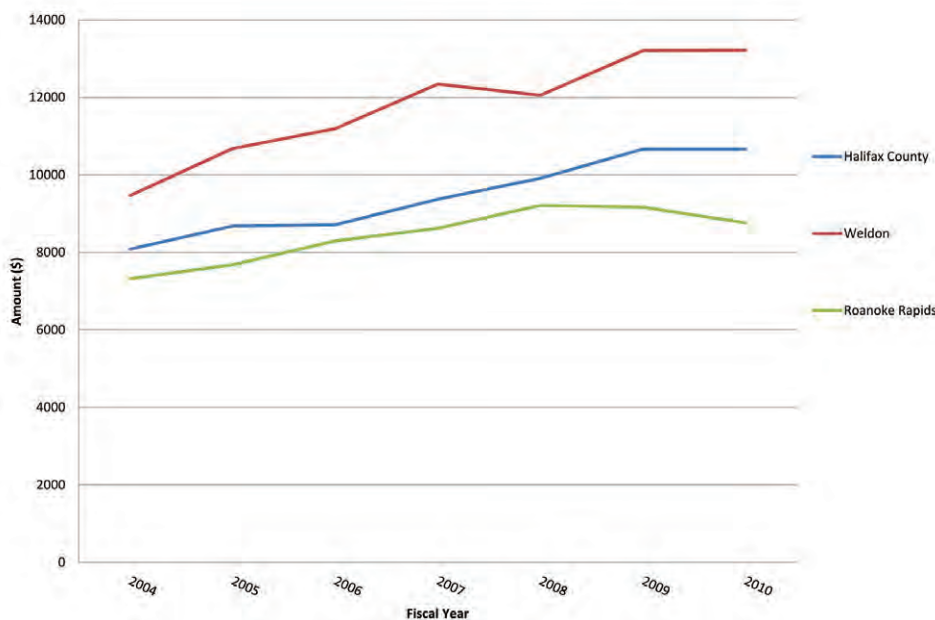
\*Includes county base allocation and supplemental tax funding for WCS and RRGSD

Source: N.C. Dep’t of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>



**Figure III.19** School District Expenditures by Category, All Funding Sources, HCPS, WCS and RRGSD, 2009-2010

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>



**Figure III.20** Average Per Pupil Expenditures HCPS, WCS and RRGSD, 2004-2010

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, NC Public Schools Statistical Profile <http://apps.schools.nc.gov/pls/apex/f?p=1:1:1272622829090869::NO>

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES

HCPS has 15 school buildings that have been in use during the last four years, more than half of which were built before 1961. Only five of HCPS's schools have undergone renovations since their initial construction. The newest schools in HCPS, Inborden Elementary and Enfield Middle, were built in 2007. Before their construction, HCPS had not had a new school built since 1999 and, before that, 1990. RRGSD renovated its high school in 2004, but the newest school built in the district is Belmont Elementary, built in 1997. RRGSD's other three schools were built in 1921, 1924 and 1953, but all have experienced multiple renovation projects since their initial construction. Construction and renovation information for WCS was requested but not provided.

The 2010 Teacher Working Conditions Survey provides some additional insight regarding resources and the general physical school environment in each district. To varying degrees, teachers in both WCS and HCPS give lower scores than

their colleagues in RRGSD and the state on all measures regarding satisfaction with the physical space of their schools. In HCPS, 76 percent of teachers reported that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “The physical environment of classrooms in this school supports teaching and learning,” compared with 73 percent in WCS, 88 percent in RRGSD and 88 percent statewide.<sup>149</sup> The percentage of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “The school environment is clean and well maintained” was 70 percent in HCPS, 79 percent in WCS, 82 percent in RRGSD and 85 percent statewide.<sup>150</sup> The percentage of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Teachers have adequate space to work productively” was 85 percent in HCPS, 84 percent in WCS, 88 percent in RRGSD and 87 percent statewide.<sup>151</sup>

Responses regarding disparities in access to instructional and technological resources are more drastic regionally and statewide. The percentage of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Teachers have sufficient access to appropriate instructional materials” was 54 percent in HCPS, 63 percent in WCS, 88 percent in RRGSD and 82 percent statewide.<sup>152</sup> The percentage of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Teachers have access to reliable communication technology, including phone, faxes, and email” was 71 percent in HCPS, 67 percent in WCS, 99 percent in RRGSD, and 89 percent statewide.<sup>153</sup> The percentage of teachers who reported that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “The reliability and speed of internet connections in this school are sufficient to support instructional practices” was 68 percent in HCPS, 44 percent in WCS, 96 percent in RRGSD, and 81 percent statewide.<sup>154</sup>

## TRANSPORTATION

During 2007-'08, HCPS operated 119 buses to transport 4,341 students<sup>155</sup> 1,044,577 miles to and from school.<sup>156</sup> The annual cost was \$2,240,646, which amounts to \$18,828.96 per bus,<sup>157</sup> \$516.16 per pupil and \$2.15 per mile.<sup>158</sup> Despite being the largest district in the county geographically, HCPS's transportation cost per mile is cheaper than both WCS's and RRGSD's.<sup>159</sup> HCPS comes in well under the state averages for transportation spending, which that same year was \$36,578.44 per bus, \$661.61 per pupil, and \$2.88 per mile.<sup>160</sup> WCS had 15 buses and transported 839 students in 2007-'08.<sup>161</sup> WCS's buses travelled 137,547 miles,<sup>162</sup> at a total annual cost of \$368,713, or \$24,580.87 per bus,<sup>163</sup> \$439.47 per pupil, and \$2.68 per mile.<sup>164</sup> WCS's transportation cost per pupil is the lowest in county.<sup>165</sup> RRGSD's 12 buses transported 863 students<sup>166</sup> over 66,970 miles.<sup>167</sup> The district's annual transportation cost was \$552,280, a rate of \$46,023.35 per bus,<sup>168</sup> \$639.95 per pupil, and \$8.25 per mile. RRGSD had the highest cost per mile for student transportation in the state of North Carolina.<sup>169</sup>

## FACULTY AND STAFF

There are significant differences among the three school districts in Halifax County in teacher turnover, teacher quality (as measured by various indicators), and teacher-reported working conditions. Given the primacy of high-quality teachers in ensuring effective educational outcomes, these differences have serious implications for student performance in each district.<sup>170</sup>

Even focusing solely on teacher experience reveals the impact that just one teacher-quality factor can have on overall ability to affect student performance. Teachers in their first year of teaching and, to a somewhat lesser extent, in their second year, tend to perform significantly worse in the classroom.<sup>171</sup> Controlling for other teacher characteristics, a greater amount of teaching experience correlates with increased student achievement in both math and reading. Teachers' higher scores on state licensure tests, controlling for other teacher characteristics, also generates higher student math scores.<sup>172</sup> This research notes that “novice teachers were overrepresented in districts with higher proportions of minority students,” even when researchers controlled for other district characteristics such as total enrollment and the percent of students eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch.<sup>173</sup>

Teaching experience varies dramatically between HCPS, WCS and RRGSD. Within HCPS, 25 percent of elementary school teachers and 31 percent of WCS elementary teachers had 0-3 years of teaching experience, compared to only 6 percent of RRGSD elementary teachers. The disparities are even greater among middle school teachers with 0-3 years of experience: 21 percent in HCPS, 38 percent in WCS, and 14 percent in RRGSD. In high schools, the percentage of teachers with 0-3 years of teaching experience is 28 percent in HCPS, 42 percent in the WCS, but only 14 percent in RRGSD.<sup>174</sup>

The inequities in teacher quality do not account for the only teacher-related disparities between the three districts. Among the range of other factors considered, teacher turnover varies greatly, particularly in elementary and middle school.

Among elementary schools, the teacher turnover rate is 34 percent in HCPS, compared to 25 percent in WCS and just 7 percent in RRGSD. Among middle schools, the teacher turnover rate is 27 percent in HCPS, 19 percent in WCS and 20 percent in RRGSD. At the high school level, the teacher turnover rate is 34 percent in HCPS and 13 percent in RRGSD.<sup>175</sup> This information is not available for WCS for 2009-'10.

	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD	State Average
<b>Teacher Turnover Rate in Elementary Schools</b>	34%	25%	7%	11%
<b>Teacher Turnover Rate in Middle Schools</b>	27%	19%	20%	12%
<b>Teacher Turnover Rate in High Schools</b>	34%	N/A	13%	13%

**Figure III.21 Teacher Turnover Rates, HCPS, WCS and RRGSD, 2009-2010**

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

While the data shows the drastic differences in the districts' ability to attract and retain qualified and experienced teachers, more information is needed to illuminate the likely bases for this variation. One difference between HCPS, WCS and RRGSD is teacher salary supplements. Local districts have the authority to levy local school taxes to provide additional district funding, including teacher salary supplements.<sup>176</sup> In 2009-'10, WCS paid 90 teacher salary supplements, and RRGSD awarded 209 supplements. The average supplement in WCS was \$373. The average supplement in RRGSD was \$1,795.<sup>177</sup> Halifax County paid no teacher salary supplements (although there are some special staff position and administrative supplements, including for athletic coaches).

	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD
<b>Number of Recorded Principal Supplements</b>	0	4	3
<b>Average Principal Supplement</b>	\$0	\$1,808	\$8,985
<b>Number of Recorded Assistant Principal Supplements</b>	0	2	4
<b>Average Assistant Principal Supplement</b>	\$0	\$587	\$3,245
<b>Number of Recorded Band Director Supplements</b>	4	1	2
<b>Average Band Director Supplement</b>	\$1,250	\$1,200	\$2,165
<b>Number of Recorded High School Coach Supplements</b>	29	15	40
<b>Average H.S. Coach Supplement</b>	\$1,972	\$3,133	\$2,171
<b>Number of Recorded Asst./Assoc. Superintendent Supplements</b>	2	1	2
<b>Average Asst./Assoc. Superintendent Supplement</b>	\$2,000	\$785	\$5,000
<b>Amount of Superintendent Supplement</b>	\$10,000	\$2,228	\$15,500

**Figure III.22 School Personnel Salary Supplements, HCPS, WCS and RRGSD, 2009-2010**

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/finance/salary/supplements/2009-10supplements.pdf>

The 2010 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey provides some additional insights into why certain districts have more trouble attracting and retaining high quality teachers. Within RRGSD, 90 percent of teachers reported that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Overall, my school is a good place to work and learn,” compared with only 75 percent in WCS and 67 percent in HCPS (the state average is 85 percent). Similar disparities were reported across each survey category, including interferences with and amounts of instructional time, facilities and resources, community involvement, teacher and school leadership, and managing student conduct.<sup>178</sup> Parental involvement, as reported by teachers, also differs significantly between districts. In HCPS, 43 percent of teachers reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that parents were influential decision makers in their schools, compared with 44 percent in WCS, and 70 percent in RRGSD.<sup>179</sup> Additionally, 42 percent of HCPS teachers reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that parents or guardians support teachers, contributing to their success with students, compared with 58 percent in WCS, and 69 percent in RRGSD.<sup>180</sup>

## IV. The Ongoing Impact of Race and Class in the Struggle for Educational Quality in Halifax County

*“The contention that the school districts herein involved are not segregated as a matter of law is untenable. The short and quick answer to the argument that they were created for purposes other than racial separation . . . is that it patently overlooks the then-existing state law requiring segregation of public schools.”*

– HANEY V. COUNTY BD. OF EDUC. (1969)

As the data from the three districts show, non-White children in Halifax suffer a substantial disadvantage as compared to their White peers in access to quality teachers, curricula and supportive learning environments. This pattern is not surprising, given the abundance of research establishing that high-minority/high-poverty schools are much less likely to have these essential educational components. Educational reformers in Halifax County must therefore understand that real progress toward effectively addressing student achievement cannot be made without first examining both the student-level and school-level impacts of racial and socioeconomic isolation.

Despite the progress made by school integration efforts from 1965 through the early 1990s, race and class are still determinative factors in school achievement in this country.<sup>181</sup> The impact of these factors has become even starker as public schools become engulfed in a trend toward resegregation spurred on by the demand for charter and “neighborhood” schools.<sup>182</sup> Nationally, schools today are as segregated as they were in the late ’60s, before the use of busing to achieve integration. A 2003 study from the Civil Rights Project at UCLA showed that only about 10 percent of White children in America go to schools where the majority of the students are non-White.<sup>183</sup> Less than 1 percent go to schools that are over 90 percent minority. Meanwhile, 77 percent of Latino students and 73 percent of African American students attend schools that are majority non-White, and 38 percent of each group attends schools that are 90 percent or more non-White.

Students in intensely segregated (90-100 percent) non-White schools are more than four times as likely to be in predominantly poor schools than their peers who attend schools with less than 10 percent non-White students (84 percent compared to 18 percent).<sup>184</sup> In 2005, nearly half of all Black and Hispanic students were enrolled in intensely concentrated poverty schools (> 75 percent FRL), compared with 5 percent of White students.<sup>185</sup> The experience in North Carolina schools is similar, and North Carolina public schools are also becoming increasingly segregated. In 1996, 7.3 percent of North Carolina’s schools were more than 80 percent non-White. By 2006, that figure more than doubled to 15.4 percent.

The relationship between racial segregation, poverty concentration and reduced student and school performance is clear. North Carolina’s 44 lowest performing high schools, the primary focus of the ongoing *Leandro v. State* litigation, are segregated schools: 40 of the 44 are racially isolated predominantly non-White schools, most by very high percentages. The highest performing schools are also racially isolated: 43 of the 44 highest performing schools are predominantly White schools by very high percentages. As African Americans and other racial minorities are increasingly segregated into high poverty schools, North Carolina will continue to lose ground in closing gaps and raising achievement, despite costly efforts at school reform.

HCPS is the only school system under court order in *Leandro* threatened with state receivership if student achievement is not significantly improved by 2012. However, that court order fails to consider the broader context affecting HCPS’s success. As discussed more fully later in this report, poor and minority students – like all students – must have access to good teachers and administrators, a climate of high academic aspirations, an environment of respect and tolerance for all people, and parental and public support for their schools in order to achieve. But research shows that racial and socioeconomic segregation is a known barrier to securing these prerequisites to a quality education. Schools serving primarily poor, non-White students tend to have larger class sizes, fewer high-quality, experienced teachers, and fewer and lower-quality course offerings.<sup>186</sup> Minority isolation in schools and neighborhoods are also significant predictors of low graduation rates.<sup>187</sup>

While quantifiable factors like class sizes, teacher quality, curricula and graduation rates may be easier to measure in determining what is necessary for student and school achievement, other less quantifiable but equally influential factors can attach to segregated schools to inhibit student success. In *Brown v. Board of Education* (“*Brown I*”), the Court tackled the question of whether racially segregated public schools could ever be “equal,” even if facilities, faculties, curricula and other “tangible factors” were objectively the same for Black and White children.<sup>188</sup> The Court analyzed the “effect of segregation itself on public education,” and concluded that segregation “deprive[s] [Black] children of equal educational opportunities” and therefore, by itself, violates the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause.<sup>189</sup> In coming to this conclusion, the Court found several key facts:

- Providing public education is “perhaps the most important function of state and local governments,” because of its “importance in a democratic society” in forming the “very foundation of good citizenship”, “awakening the child to cultural values, ... preparing him for later professional training, and ... helping him to adjust normally to his environment.”
- “It is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity ... is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.”
- Black children are harmed by segregation in public schools because “the policy of separating the races is usually interpreted as denoting the inferiority of [Blacks]. A sense of inferiority affects the motivation of a child to learn.”<sup>190</sup>

Research since the *Brown* Court’s examination of the harms segregation inflicts on Black children supports a reciprocal finding of harm to White children caused by segregation. If the principal goal of public school education is, as the *Brown* Court found, to awaken the child to cultural values, prepare her for later professional training, and otherwise enable her to adjust normally to society, then today more than ever before public schools must offer White children real opportunities to form friendships, compete and learn with and from non-Whites. White children who have grown up and gone to school only with other White children are burdened with immeasurable but nonetheless crippling limitations in their ability to thrive in and contribute positively to a racially diverse society.

In 1956, Dr. Benjamin Mays, president of Morehouse College, noted the following about the moral significance of segregation:

Any country that restricts the full development of any segment of society retards its own growth and development. ... The chief sin of segregation is the distortion of human personality. It damages the soul of both the segregated and the segregator. It gives the segregated a feeling of inherent inferiority which is not based on facts, and it gives the segregator a feeling of superiority which is not based on facts. It is difficult to know who is damaged more – the segregated or the segregator.<sup>191</sup>

Although Dr. Mays was speaking shortly after the *Brown* decision when so many school districts were fighting against desegregation, his words still ring true today. Students in segregated schools risk having a distorted perception of their place in the world. For instance, White students may assume that if their school has higher standardized test scores and more course offerings, then the predominant group attending the school is better and smarter than the students attending the predominantly Black school. The White students’ belief in their superiority and the Black students’ belief in their inferiority based on cursory statistics such as test scores and course offerings may carry over beyond the schooling environment and into the living and working environment.

Research supports an alternative belief system, grounded in studies that have found that integrated schools offer academic and psychological benefits to all students, such as increased cross-racial relationships, reduced prejudices and decreased stereotyping.<sup>192</sup> Regression analyses have also shown that the more time Black and White students spend together in elementary schools, the higher their standardized test scores are in middle and high school, and the higher their track placements are in secondary school.<sup>193</sup>

Educational researchers have also opined that while test score outcomes and college graduation rates are important, it is just as crucial for public schools to equip students with the necessary tools to function in an increasingly racially and ethnically diverse society.<sup>194</sup> In other words, it is just as important to focus on attitudinal outcomes of students as it is to concentrate on the traditional cognitive outcomes of test scores and educational attainment.<sup>195</sup>

As shown by the interviews collected from Halifax families as well as historical documentation spanning the past 60 years, the race-based stigma of inferiority addressed by the Court in *Brown I* has long attached itself to the two Black districts, HCPS and Weldon City. Roanoke Rapids residents have rejected the idea of merging with HCPS on the grounds that doing so

would “lower the standards” in the Roanoke Rapids schools, or would “damage” the city’s system.<sup>196</sup> Meanwhile, Halifax County and Weldon City district residents are keenly aware of their exclusion from the “better” school district, but seem resigned to the idea that White power interests would never allow a merger to happen.<sup>197</sup> Together, the effects of this stigma and the disparity in opportunity available to Halifax’s Black children perpetuate the same problems of racism that originally caused the disparity. By continuing to maintain this system, Halifax County and the state are complicit in maintaining rather than eliminating the vestiges of what should be a by-gone era of racial oppression.

## THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL HARMS OF A DUAL SYSTEM

*“We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.”*

– *BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION* (1954)

If the Court’s above-cited core findings in *Brown I* still hold true today, then Halifax County cannot meaningfully address the educational disparities that exist within its borders without taking the first step of dissolving the district boundaries that have served since their inception to entitle Whites and oppress Blacks in the community. Indeed, the Supreme Court’s language and analysis in the cases after *Brown I* indicate that, if Halifax County’s tripartite system had been raised in a court in 1968, merger would likely have been the legal remedy. Instead, the case that did find its way to the Supreme Court was the *Scotland Neck* case, discussed above. In rejecting the state legislation that would create a separate school district in Scotland Neck as unconstitutional because in effect it would create a “White refuge” and undermine desegregation efforts in the county, the Court said the following:

In *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, 402 U.S. 1, we said that district judges or school authorities “should make every effort to achieve the greatest possible degree of actual desegregation,” and that in formulating a plan to remedy state-enforced school segregation there should be “a presumption against schools that are substantially disproportionate in their racial composition.”[...] And we have said today in *Wright v. Council of City of Emporia* ... that “desegregation is not achieved by splitting a single school system operating ‘white schools’ and ‘Negro schools’ into two new systems, each operating unitary schools within its borders, where one of the two new systems, is, in fact, ‘white’ and the other is, in fact, ‘Negro’.”<sup>198</sup>

Although the *Scotland Neck* case involved creation of a majority-White school district within an already-existing majority-Black district and did not directly address the existence of the essentially all-white Roanoke Rapids school district, the Court’s analysis remains instructive. The idea that compliance with the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause may involve dissolving district lines drawn by segregationists long before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was not a new idea in 1969. In *Brown II*, decided in 1955, the Supreme Court made clear that eliminating the vestiges of racism “may require solution of varied local school problems,” among which it listed, “revision of school districts and attendance areas.”<sup>199</sup> It was clear to the Court that school district lines and attendance areas had frequently been used to separate White and Black schoolchildren, and thus elimination of such barriers was an appropriate equitable remedy.<sup>200</sup>

This broad view of appropriate remedy was invoked by the Supreme Court in 1971 in *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, when the Court found that if school officials failed to uphold their affirmative duty to eliminate race discrimination “root and branch,” the courts could step in.<sup>201</sup> “Once a right and a violation have been shown,” the Court said, “the scope of a district court’s equitable powers to remedy past wrongs is broad, for breadth and flexibility are inherent in equitable remedies. ... The task is to correct, by a balancing of the individual and collective interests, the condition that offends the Constitution.”<sup>202</sup>

To prove a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause, one must show intentional governmental denial of equal opportunity. The Supreme Court’s analysis in the *Scotland Neck* case points to the state and county’s agency in maintaining segregated school districts in Halifax County. The Court’s “White refuge” finding informs a more in-depth



analysis of the forces that brought the tripartite system into being and continue it today. Such an analysis would trace the origins of the segregated districts to discriminatory intent, and thus lead to a finding that maintaining the tripartite educational system in Halifax County violates the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause. In sum, desegregation of Halifax County’s schools was never really achieved because both the state and the county permitted the continued existence of the White enclave in Roanoke Rapids.

## UNITARY SYSTEM: ELIMINATING RACIAL DISCRIMINATION “ROOT AND BRANCH”

The notion of “unitariness” has not been defined in detail by the courts; however, the Supreme Court’s 1968 decision in *Green v. County School Board* pronounced that a unitary system is one that has manifested *Brown II*’s mandate to eliminate the vestiges of racial discrimination “root and branch.” *Green* set forth six factors to scrutinize for the vestiges of racial discrimination in order to determine unitary status: faculty, staff, transportation, extracurricular activities, facilities and student assignment. The Court discussed most fully the last factor, as it was addressing whether a “freedom-of-choice” plan constituted adequate compliance with *Brown II*’s requirement that school boards “achieve a system of determining admission to the public schools on a nonracial basis.” The Court found, given that, no White children had requested to attend the former Black school, which was still attended by 85 percent of the county’s Black children, that the plan had failed to “fashion steps which promise realistically to convert promptly to a system without a ‘White’ school and a ‘Negro’ school, but just schools.”<sup>203</sup>

Cases since *Green* have addressed these factors and added other “discretionary factors” that courts may consider in determining unitary status, like “good faith” compliance with a desegregation order, student achievement and education quality. In 1999, North Carolina’s Western District Court found that the racial demographics of each school’s student, faculty and staff population should reflect district-wide demographics within a 15 percent margin. In 2002, North Carolina’s Eastern District Court rejected Franklin County school board’s petition for unitary status because, among other things, White principals and staff were assigned primarily to “White” schools and Black principals and staff to “Black” schools. That court also denied unitary status in the area of education quality on the grounds that gifted and talented programs were over 90 percent White, all Advanced Placement classes were over 80 percent White, and over 70 percent of the educable mentally disabled children were Black.

## ORIGINS OF THE TRIPARTITE SYSTEM

As discussed above in the historical section of this report, Blacks living in the county – and even some who lived within Roanoke Rapids’ municipal boundaries – were barred from both the economic and educational opportunities that Roanoke Rapids’ White residents enjoyed. This is the reality to which the court referred when it said “[i]f segregation in public schools could be justified simply because of pre-*Brown* geographic structuring of school districts, the equal protection clause would have little meaning.”<sup>204</sup> The creation of racialized school districts in Halifax was not a random geographic phenomenon; it was a direct result of racial oppression.<sup>205</sup>

The fact that the intentional creation of a White enclave of opportunity in Roanoke Rapids also had a substantial segregative effect on Halifax County and Weldon City school districts is legally significant when assessing whether a court could order an inter-district remedy such as merger.<sup>206</sup> The pre-eminent inter-district case is *Milliken v. Bradley*. In that case, the Court struck down a district court order that consolidated 53 suburban Detroit school districts with the Detroit school system to remedy racial discrimination in Detroit’s dual school system. The district court was motivated by its conclusion that the only way to achieve a desirable racial balance within Detroit was to merge Detroit with Whiter school districts. In overturning that decision, the Supreme Court said that an inter-district remedy was only appropriate where

there has been a constitutional violation within one district that produces a significant segregative effect in another district. Specifically, it must be shown that racially discriminatory acts of the state or local school districts, or of a single school district, have been a substantial cause of interdistrict segregation.<sup>207</sup>

In *Goldsboro City Bd of Ed v. Wayne County Bd of Ed*, the City Board of Education filed a Fourteenth Amendment equal protection claim against the Wayne County (N.C.) Board of Education, alleging that the county school board’s refusal to merge the majority-Black city and majority-White county school systems resulted in the maintenance of a racially

discriminatory structure of public education in both the city and county. It seems that the missing proof in this case was the original violation of the equal protection clause, i.e., a showing that intentional race discrimination originally caused the segregated districts. The mere existence of racially isolated schools does not satisfy the proof burden.<sup>209</sup>

The Wayne County case is different from the situation in Halifax insofar as the court found that the majority-white Wayne County and the majority-Black Goldsboro City had each maintained unitary school systems since the early 1970s. No court has ever declared any of the three districts in Halifax County unitary. Indeed, Halifax County Schools is still under a desegregation order, which means that that school board still has an affirmative duty to eliminate the vestiges of racial discrimination within its system.

Another distinguishing factor between the two cases is that, unlike in Halifax County, where Roanoke Rapids has always been almost all-White and the rest of the county almost all-Black, the racial demographics in Goldsboro's schools changed dramatically over the years since desegregation.<sup>210</sup> Conversely, the demographics of the three school districts in Halifax County look pretty much as they did in 1965. So it is not clear how the traditional judicial review of each individual district for "unitariness" could yield meaningful results. The question becomes, how will Halifax County Public Schools, by itself, eliminate its racial isolation and the accompanying disparities in resources, given that the source of that isolation and deprivation is the very existence of the separate Roanoke Rapids district?

## SEPARATE DISTRICTS AS AN ONGOING VIOLATION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE CONSTITUTION

*"While focusing on money could alleviate problems of financial disparities, it could not address the reality of racial isolation."*

– WESLEY HORTON, NAMED PLAINTIFF IN *HORTON V. MESKILL*, REFLECTING ON THE STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE FUNDING EQUITY AND RACIAL INTEGRATION IN CONNECTICUT PUBLIC SCHOOLS THROUGH A STATE FUNDING LAWSUIT (2002)<sup>211</sup>

The existence of three separate school districts in Halifax County is contributing to the ongoing violation in HCPS – and in WCS and RRGSD, as well – of every child's right under the North Carolina Constitution to receive a sound, basic education. Article I, Section 15 of the state constitution reads: "The people have the right to the privilege of an education, and it is the duty of the State to guard and maintain that right."<sup>212</sup> Similarly, Article IX, Section 2 reads: "The General Assembly shall provide by taxation and otherwise for a general and uniform system of free public schools, which shall be maintained at least nine months in every year, and wherein equal opportunities shall be provided for all students."<sup>213</sup> The North Carolina Supreme Court has twice interpreted these provisions as guaranteeing every child in North Carolina the right of equal access to a sound basic education; however, HCPS has struggled to maintain the resources, teachers and administration to ensure this right. Furthermore, the extreme racial segregation among the three school districts in Halifax County has a negative impact on allocation of resources and undermines the quality of education offered countywide. North Carolina's school finance litigation model presents an opportunity to implement innovative political, legal and economic strategies that promote vertical equity in school districts throughout the state.<sup>214</sup> Furthermore, combating the adverse impact of segregation on the quality of education that minority students receive goes to the core of the court rulings interpreting the constitutional right to a sound basic education. But North Carolina courts have yet to consider whether the remedies available under the state constitution may directly address the racial isolation of schools in Halifax County.

## THE STATE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO A "SOUND, BASIC EDUCATION"

In 1994, parents, students and school boards from several low-wealth counties, including Halifax County, filed a lawsuit against the State Board of Education alleging its failure to provide adequate public education funding. *Leandro v. State*

(*Leandro I*) became a landmark school finance case, in part because it focused both on funding equity and adequacy.<sup>215</sup> The original plaintiffs challenged the constitutionality of the state's educational funding formula, alleging that low-wealth counties had access to fewer fiscal resources than high-wealth counties. Several wealthy, urban school districts later joined the suit, asserting that even in their districts, the state funding formula did not provide sufficient funds to address the needs of at-risk students. In 1997, the North Carolina Supreme Court rejected the argument that the state's education funding formula was unconstitutional, but found that the state constitution guarantees every child an equal opportunity to receive a sound, basic education in every public school in the state. The court then remanded the case to Wake County Superior Court for further evidentiary proceedings and a final determination of whether students in the school districts at issue were actually receiving a sound, basic education. Following four rulings from the superior court, and seven years after its original *Leandro* ruling, the state supreme court expanded and clarified its earlier ruling and the parameters of a sound basic education in *Hoke County Bd. of Educ. v. State (Leandro II)*; hereinafter, *Leandro I and Leandro II* referred to generally as *Leandro*).<sup>216</sup> Following the decision, implementation and oversight of the ruling was returned to Wake County Superior Court, which retains jurisdiction over the case today.

In *Leandro I*, the court identified the output measures of a sound, basic education, requiring that schools develop in each student (1) the ability to read, write and speak English and a sufficient knowledge of math and science to enable the student to function in a complex and rapidly changing society; (2) knowledge of geography, history and basic economic and political systems to enable the student to make informed choices about government at the local, state and national levels; (3) academic and vocational skills that enable a student to succeed in college/higher education or vocational training; and (4) academic and vocational skills that will enable a student to compete on an equal basis with others in formal education or the contemporary workforce.<sup>217</sup> A child who is receiving a *Leandro*-compliant education should score a Level III or IV on End-of-Grade or End-of-Course exams, and a school that is providing a *Leandro*-compliant education should have at least 60 percent of its students consistently testing at or above grade level.<sup>218</sup>

As a prerequisite, the supreme court in *Leandro II* ruled that each public school must provide certain necessary educational elements: (1) a competent, certified, well-trained teacher in every classroom, who is using effective educational methods that provide differentiated, individualized instruction, assessment and remediation to the students in the classroom; (2) a well-trained, competent principal as the educational leader of the school, and who has the leadership skills and ability to hire and retain high quality teachers; and (3) the resources necessary to support the educational needs of all children.<sup>219</sup> The court's definition of resources primarily focuses on the funding needs for high poverty rural and urban schools to meet the needs of "at-risk" students, and the resulting legislative response established a variety of funding strategies to provide additional funding to struggling schools. A 2004 superior court ruling defined a student as "at-risk" if he or she had a background including any of these nine factors: (1) poor health, beginning as early as prenatal and continuing through childhood; (2) poverty; (3) family break-up and instability; (4) low parental education; (5) inadequate or unstable housing; (6) racial or ethnic minority status; (7) lack of English language proficiency; (8) criminal activity in the school or neighborhood; or (9) parent unemployment or underemployment.<sup>220</sup>

Although the General Assembly had established specialized funding for low-wealth and small school districts in 1991, the *Leandro* decisions forced the General Assembly to increase the amounts available to low-wealth and small counties and to create the Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Fund (DSSF), specifically designed to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged students.<sup>221</sup> Originally instituted in 2004 to benefit 16 school districts (including HCPS) marred by high poverty and low student achievement that resulted in high teacher turnover, the legislature increased funding and expanded the program to all North Carolina school districts in 2006. The DSSF resources, combined with the low-wealth and small county funding, have provided schools with large categorical funding allocations to secure resources to benefit educationally vulnerable students, such as instructional coaches, ESL instructors, additional teaching staff to shrink class sizes, dropout prevention counselors and curriculum revisions and adaptations. This supplemental, targeted funding to increase equity among at-risk and disadvantaged students was a key purpose of the *Leandro* litigation, and remains the primary remedy implemented by the state.

## LEANDRO VIOLATIONS IN HALIFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HCPS's struggle to provide its children with a constitutionally compliant education has devolved into a nearly two decade ordeal in the state's courts. The *Leandro* inquiry and remedies in HCPS have primarily concentrated on issues of teacher quality, student test scores, and a general increase in educational resources (funding, human capital, technology, etc.) directed toward at-risk and disadvantaged students. The state's current involvement in HCPS focuses on improving the quality of instruction and educational leadership, in the hopes that narrower concentration on these elements will have more significant impact on the legacy of very low student test scores and academic achievement in HCPS.

Halifax County Public Schools was one of the original plaintiffs in *Leandro I* in 1994 and among the first recipients (along with Weldon City Schools) of DSSF funding during the 2004-2005 school year. The superior court began a targeted inquiry into HCPS in 2005 by identifying the district's two high schools as among the lowest performing in the state.<sup>222</sup> In response to the court's High School Report (which also included Weldon High School), the DPI developed a general "turnaround" plan that focused on teacher and administrator professional development and implemented it in several districts throughout the state with persistently low performing high schools.<sup>223</sup> The struggling performance of HCPS's high schools, however, was eventually linked to a lack of quality instruction in the elementary and middle schools and the resulting poor foundation and preparation for students entering high school. In 2006, HCPS's middle schools were added to the list of low performing schools statewide in need of "turnaround."<sup>224</sup>

Despite the increased funding and teacher support, test scores continued to decline between 2006 and 2009 among all grade levels in HCPS. In March 2009, the HCPS Board of Education, senior district administrative staff, the SBE and DPI were summoned into Wake County Superior Court to answer for the poor history of academic performance in the system.<sup>225</sup> Expressing a general concern over the low academic performance of schools in rural northeastern North Carolina, the court indicted HCPS in particular for committing "academic genocide," demanded that the "complete breakdown in academics" be stopped, and that state and local leaders "shift the focus to children and away from the adults" in HCPS.<sup>226</sup>

On April 29, 2009, the court approved a consent order between the HCPS Board of Education, the SBE and DPI outlining an intervention plan for teachers, administrators and board members to ensure all students in HCPS have the opportunity to access a *Leandro*-compliant "sound, basic education."<sup>227</sup> DPI was charged with the development, implementation and oversight of a three-year turnaround plan to begin in the fall of 2009.

The intervention plan for HCPS primarily addresses the three *Leandro* prerequisites by increasing support and training for teachers, school and district administrators and the school board.<sup>228</sup> The plan provides classroom teachers with two weeks of intensive training at the beginning of each school year, professional development throughout the school year, and access to 12 full-time master educators/instructional coaches (four each for the elementary, middle and high school levels). Instructional coaches conduct regular teacher observations and assist teachers in implementing a rigorous curriculum, differentiated instruction, teaching "teams," and increased technology in schools and classrooms. Principals and assistant principals receive three weeks of intensive training at the beginning of each school year, as well as professional development opportunities throughout the year. District administrators also have access to instructional leadership and administration coaches provided by DPI. Intensive training and leadership coaching is provided to the school board and central office staff as well, in the hopes of clarifying expectations for their role in monitoring and evaluating teacher and principal performance district-wide. The court required that HCPS bear responsibility for funding the turnaround, and the district is using state and federal grant funding to shoulder much of the burden of paying for professional development for teachers and principals.

Today, HCPS bears the distinction of being the only school district in the state under court order to correct *Leandro* violations and improve student academic performance. This year marks the halfway point of the HCPS turnaround plan, and individual schools have made modest gains in educational outcomes: in 2009-'10, seven of 11 schools experienced an increase in the number of students testing at or above grade level, and five schools now boast over 50 percent proficiency.<sup>229</sup> Only 3 of 11 schools made expected growth under the state's ABC standards, however.<sup>230</sup> Overall district achievement also remains low: only 40.5 percent of all HCPS students tested at or above grade level last year (a slight increase from 37.2 percent in 2008-'09). The stakes remain high for HCPS – if the district does not display significant improvement by 2012, it will be placed under state receivership.<sup>231</sup>

It is doubtful that HCPS can achieve meaningful academic improvement through an intervention strategy so narrowly focused on teacher training and resources, or without considering the educational outcomes in WCS and RRGSD. Most significantly, it will be impossible to make genuine progress toward providing a sound basic education to all children in Halifax County without addressing the constitutional impacts and implications of maintaining a tripartite school system.

## **LEANDRO AND APPROPRIATE REMEDIES TO ADDRESS RACIAL ISOLATION IN HALIFAX COUNTY**

The transformation plan for HCPS – designed by DPI and approved by the court – is minimally customized to address the glaring academic needs of the district. The plan fails to address external factors within the *Leandro* mandate and the court’s expertise that impact the success of the district’s schools. The history and legacy of the separation of the county’s three school districts, combined with the court’s stinging assessment and continuing oversight of HCPS, has created a stigma of failure for the district’s students and teachers, exacerbated already low morale, and reinforced a culture of low expectations.<sup>232</sup>

The existence of three separate school districts in Halifax County is a significant impediment to providing a constitutionally compliant education to the students currently enrolled in all three school districts in Halifax County. The DPI intervention plan’s focus on improving teachers and teaching ignores the most substantial impediments to the progress of true educational reform in Halifax County – the existence of separate school districts in Weldon City and Roanoke Rapids, and the resultant racial isolation in all schools in Halifax County. This racial separation and isolation directly impacts access to resources and academic achievement. While improving instructional technique in HCPS is important, this does little to target the school and community culture throughout Halifax County, critical factors in the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers. Rural school districts are plagued with less qualified and lower quality teachers, generally a result of the low morale, limited incentives, economic underdevelopment and generational cycles of poverty that make rural areas a frustrating and unattractive teaching environment. Schools in Halifax County are no exception to this reality, and the problems within them cannot be solved by instructional coaches and common assessments alone.<sup>233</sup> The challenges facing the community and the schools are inextricably linked. The declining population and stagnant economy of Halifax County play a large role in the difficulties that teachers and students face in HCPS, and the current economic and educational realities in HCPS are a direct result of the legacy of racially motivated separation of the county’s schools.

The vast differences in achievement and demographics between and among HCPS, WCS and RRGSD – three districts within county lines that could be merged into one school district with less than 10,000 students – is a result of the unique history and ongoing phenomenon of racial separation. When this unique racial history results in a violation of each child’s right to receive a sound, basic education, it is well within the court’s authority to mandate a remedy. The success of any “transformation” plan in HCPS is limited until true transformation occurs among the district’s boundaries and within its student demographics.

The state’s involvement in HCPS is an objective acknowledgment that students do not have access to the academic resources that translate into a sound basic education. Prior to the first year of the DPI intervention, consistently fewer than half of the district’s students passed both reading and math EOG tests, and even after the first year, only 47.5 percent passed both exams. This pattern is even more troubling within subgroups. Even in a district as extremely racially isolated and high poverty as Halifax County, the performance of low income and minority students is abysmal. Although it is an improvement over previous years, only 28.9 percent of Black students and 28.6 percent of economically disadvantaged students passed both reading and math EOGs in 2009-’10. Outcomes on EOC exams are similarly troubling, dropout rates have consistently been above the state average, and SAT participation rates and scores are below state average. These outcomes – all critical benchmarks in the *Leandro* analysis – show that HCPS is failing to fulfill its constitutional education obligations.<sup>234</sup>

However, as the statistical portion of this report demonstrates, WCS and RRGSD both have troubling issues that indicate possible *Leandro* violations. Even with academic and curricular innovations, such as the Early College Program and STEM High School, WCS’s academic achievement parallels, and in many cases is worse than, HCPS’. Less than 50 percent of WCS students score at grade level on EOG exams, and both EOG and EOC performance over time in WCS are significantly lower than the state average. During 2008-’09, the school year immediately prior to the DPI intervention in HCPS, less than 40

percent of students in WCS passed both reading and math EOG exams. Like in HCPS, the dropout rate in WCS is higher than state average, the SAT participation rate is below state average and the average SAT score is lower than both the state and HCPS averages. WCS also has a higher percentage of inexperienced teachers than HCPS, and its middle and high school has a much higher teacher turnover rate than HCPS – 29 percent at the middle school level and 33 percent at the high school level.

Although RRGSD is generally the highest-performing school district within Halifax County, there are still aspects of the district's educational outcomes that call into question whether all students there have access to a sound basic education. The racial achievement gap in RRGSD is particularly troubling. Although EOG and EOC performance in RRGSD is better than the other districts in the county, students in RRGSD consistently score below state average. Within subgroups, Black student performance in RRGSD is well below both the district and state average and the Black-White achievement gap is significant. Black students in RRGSD are passing EOG and EOC tests at significantly lower rates than their White counterparts. For example, in 2009-'10, only 39.6 percent of Black students passed EOG exams, compared to 70.9 percent of their White counterparts. These trends raise the question whether Black and White students in RRGSD are being provided equal access to educational resources, and whether the district's Black students are being denied access to a constitutionally compliant education.

Several other indicators raise questions about the quality of education provided to all students in Halifax County. The state and educational advocates have acknowledged that dropout rates are a significant indicator of educational dysfunction in a district since the beginning of the *Leandro* inquiry. For the last decade, dropout rates in RRGSD have been higher than rates in HCPS and WCS, and the graduation rate in RRGSD is consistently below state average. SAT participation rates and scores in RRGSD are higher than WCS and HCPS, but, again, consistently below the state average. However, the state's intense focus remains on HCPS; neither the courts nor DPI have done any type of inquiry into *Leandro* compliance in the WCS or RRGSD systems. And even more troubling than the lack of attention to the low test scores, graduation rates, and high school dropout rates and poor teacher quality measures in WCS and RRGSD, is the state's unwillingness to investigate how the existence of two additional school systems within Halifax County affects the resources and culture of HCPS. There has been no questioning of the inefficiency of maintaining three small, rural school districts during a lean budget era in one of the poorest counties in the state, nor how this separation impacts the quality of education offered in each district and the distribution of resources among the three districts (countywide capital funding, human resource allocation, etc.). Despite the years of *Leandro* litigation and the related state and local scrutiny of education in HCPS, no one has ever seriously examined whether all three districts could offer a higher quality of education if all schools in Halifax County were reviewed in totality, rather than through the arbitrary lens of racially gerrymandered district boundaries.<sup>235</sup>

This type of examination is clearly within the mandate of the court and DPI under *Leandro*. While the most immediate measure of a sound, basic education may be a school district's test scores, the long-term outcome of a *Leandro*-compliant education is students who graduate from North Carolina high schools ready to fully engage in the global economy. "Education that does not serve the purpose of preparing students to participate and compete in the society in which they live and work is devoid of substance and is constitutionally inadequate," the *Leandro* court wrote.<sup>236</sup> This definition anticipates that schools will provide students with a challenging, rigorous curriculum to develop in them the analytical skills necessary to be competitive in higher education and the workforce, as well as the practical skills to function as an independent adult and as an informed civic actor on the local, state and federal levels. This is a *statewide* standard; a high school graduate from a small, rural school district is expected to have been provided with the opportunity to develop the same capabilities and skills as graduates from the state's urban, affluent areas. Even within the higher performing RRGSD, indicators such as SAT performance and dropout rates raise questions as to how prepared the district's high school graduates will be to compete in higher education or vocational training with students from across the state.

The substandard academic performance in HCPS and WCS conjure even more serious doubts about the ability of their graduates to compete on a statewide level. Finally, the achievement gap in all three districts threatens to leave an entire generation of Black students even less prepared than their White counterparts to meaningfully "participate and compete" in their community. Given these realities, if the state is sincere in its determination to ensure every student in North Carolina has

an equal opportunity to access a sound basic education, DPI and the courts must examine how the existence of the three districts in Halifax County is impacting the resources available to the county's schools, particularly those in HCPS, and the quality of the education in all three districts.

The most egregious *Leandro* violation is not merely the existence of three districts in the county, however, but the persistent maintenance of three racially isolated districts. Three school districts within one county is itself a rarity in North Carolina, but the extreme racial isolation of the three districts in Halifax County distinguishes this situation from the handful of other counties that still maintain separate city and county districts.<sup>237</sup> In addition to the equal protection violation of maintaining segregated school districts, this segregation undermines the fundamental standards of educational quality the state constitution protects. Thus far, the courts and DPI have avoided the issue of creating a unified Halifax County district, despite the evidence that the existence of the three districts is a significant impediment to providing a constitutionally compliant education to the students currently enrolled in HCPS, and to those in WCS and RRGSD as well. The history of the three districts describes decades of struggle to maintain the separate, segregated schools within the county, resulting in an unfair stigma being attached to the lower performing Black schools within the county that has only worsened since the DPI intervention.

Even more significant than the historical context and related stigma is the state's complicity with county actors in denying all children within Halifax County access to diverse schools. The extent of inter-district school segregation seen in Halifax County between the three school districts implicates both state and local actors in the maintenance of the district lines. If local school districts deliver education in a manner that undermines the quality of education that poor and minority students receive, these practices can result in a failure to provide students with an adequate education. In particular, "at-risk" students have special needs, and the state must provide the proper resources to meet those needs. However, the educational needs of "at-risk" students cannot be met only with teacher-quality reforms. The court's failure to inquire into how school segregation impacts educational quality and access to a sound, basic education – particularly in an area such as Halifax County, where students are not receiving a sound basic education, but school diversity is readily attainable – illustrates the current failure of *Leandro* to repair Halifax County schools. Students in HCPS, WCS and RRGSD are lagging academically because they are being deprived of an opportunity to learn in a racially and socioeconomically diverse environment. The best way to improve achievement of all students, especially "at-risk" students, is to improve teacher quality alongside reforms to community culture and school composition. Furthermore, the cost of delivering a sound basic education in schools with concentrated poverty and racial isolation far exceeds that of a sound basic education in diverse schools. In times of economic crisis, local school districts and states have insufficient resources to fund a sound basic education in high poverty schools.

Decades of research, spanning from the 1966 Coleman Report to the present, indicate that both teacher quality *and* classroom composition have significant impact on the academic success of an individual student.<sup>238</sup> Diverse schools promote higher academic achievement for all students, largely by being able to attract and retain experienced, certified, high quality teachers. The presence of high quality teachers creates a culture of success that enables all students to succeed. Furthermore, socioeconomically diverse schools tend to have a higher level of parent involvement, and all children enjoy the benefits and additional resources in schools with active PTAs and higher levels of parental presence and contribution. Because diverse schools are able to inherently sustain higher achievement, they are more economical and efficient, as struggling students are able to benefit from more targeted resources such as supplemental curriculums, smaller class size, more qualified teachers and other tutorial aids.

Most importantly, educating students in a diverse environment prepares students to work with individuals from other cultures and backgrounds, which are necessary skills to succeed in a global economy – and a key tenet of *Leandro*. The North Carolina Supreme Court has emphasized that the overarching significance of a sound, basic education is to prepare students for post-high school success, either in higher education or the workforce. Key to that preparation is the development of academic and technical skills, as well as the ability to relate to others from different backgrounds. Recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions in *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* emphasize the importance of diversity at all educational levels.<sup>239</sup> In *Grutter*, several of the nation's leading businesses and the U.S. military filed amicus briefs attesting to their hiring preferences for students who have learned in diverse backgrounds, and lauding the

contributions these students can make to the workforce. A brief signed by 65 leading American businesses (including several with a significant North Carolina presence: 3M, Lucent Technologies, Merck, Pepsi Co., Ernst and Young, and Dow Chemical Company), said:

In the experience of *amici*, individuals who have been educated in a diverse setting are more likely to succeed, because they can make valuable contributions to the workforce in several important and concrete ways. First, a diverse group of individuals educated in a cross-cultural environment has the ability to facilitate unique and creative approaches to problem-solving arising from the integration of different perspectives. ... (1) individuals who have been educated in a diverse setting are likely to contribute to a positive work environment by decreasing incidents of discrimination and stereotyping. Overall, an educational environment that ensures participation by diverse people, viewpoints and ideas will help produce the most talented workforce.<sup>240</sup>

All Halifax County students have the potential to learn in racially diverse schools under a unified school system that consolidates the three existing school districts. By avoiding this reality, the state is directly hindering the educational and employment opportunities of all Halifax County students and depriving them of access to a sound basic education under the law.

It is possible that the state's refusal to cast a critical eye on the existence of three school districts in Halifax County is a limitation of the *Leandro* ruling as a school finance adequacy suit. Nonetheless, racial segregation goes to the core of *Leandro's* mandate of a sound basic education, as racial and socioeconomic isolation creates resource allocation and cultural barriers to the ability of students to obtain a sound basic education. Although the origins of school finance litigation envisioned these cases as one way to achieve the goals of desegregation (i.e. equalizing resources helps all children, particularly children of color), most of these lawsuits look narrowly at resource allocation (such as supplemental funding, quality teachers and administrators, etc.) to ensure adequate educational outcomes. North Carolina's landmark school finance case is seen as unique compared to most states, in that it considers equity and the necessary resources to raise student achievement among individual at-risk students in rural and urban districts statewide, rather than having a limited focus on underfunded rural or urban districts. This general focus on at-risk students statewide, without a more narrow concentration exclusively on race, has even been applauded as a wise strategic move to avoid the fierce opposition to racial integration that many school finance lawsuits have encountered in other states.<sup>241</sup> This focus was understandable at the outset of the *Leandro* litigation because, on average, the plaintiff school districts in *Leandro* were significantly less racially hyper-segregated than school districts subject to similar litigation in other states. For example, in New Jersey's *Abbott v. Burke* litigation, the districts targeted were approximately 86 percent minority in 2004; the *Leandro* districts were 51.3 percent minority in 1997, at the outset of that case. However, HCPS schools are now 96 percent non-White (88 percent Black, 2 percent Hispanic, and 6 percent American Indian). This hypersegregation within the only school district in the state under a *Leandro* order to improve student achievement is an indication that the time has come for a *Leandro III* challenge to develop specific remedies for at-risk students in districts that are racially identifiable, as well as low wealth.

The narrow interpretation of the *Leandro* mandate has limited the decision's potential impact in helping overcome educational disparities in North Carolina, particularly in areas such as Halifax County. It is questionable whether the remedies provided under *Leandro* are sufficient to ensure equity of outcomes statewide without taking into account racial and socioeconomic isolation. The state has looked myopically at tangibles such as money and human resources in a narrow interpretation of equity. A surface level focus on resource allocation does not address the deeper cause of inequitable outcomes: the significant linkages between racial and socioeconomic segregation and the ability to provide a sound, basic education to all students.

*Leandro* has failed to address school district equity in Halifax County. Racial and socioeconomic isolation are the key stumbling blocks to providing educational equity, yet these factors are not externalities to *Leandro* or to the legal system. It is clearly within the comprehensive mandate of *Leandro* and the powers of the state to produce an equitable system of education in Halifax County. To do so requires a clear vision of what a sound basic education looks like for all students in the county, and the boldness to embrace appropriate legal remedies to realize that vision.



## V. Creating Education Reform Throughout Halifax County

*“Maintaining small separate school districts in rural areas should not be a shield for nepotism, cronyism, political patronage and racial segregation.”*

– MARTY STRANGE, RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY TRUST<sup>242</sup>

The merger of the separate Halifax County, Weldon City and Roanoke Rapids public school systems into a unified Halifax County school district is an appropriate legal remedy to address the ongoing state and federal constitutional violations in Halifax County. A unified school district will create a positive environment for racial reconciliation in a county distinguished by nearly a century of racial separation. Furthermore, a unified school district will allow for more efficient resource allocation among the county’s schools and a unique opportunity for innovative education reform throughout the county. By eliminating the current tripartite educational system, there is an opportunity to end the racial segregation that is having a negative impact not only on the academic growth of all children in Halifax County, but on the economic viability of the surrounding community as well.

### DISTRICT MERGER AS A SCHOOL DESEGREGATION STRATEGY

The dissolution of school district boundaries and merger of racially isolated school districts have been important desegregation tools since the 1960s. Following the realization that residential segregation was a key hindrance to desegregation, urban and rural school districts around the country began exploring how arbitrary district lines prevented school integration. Although federal court decisions such as *Milliken v. Bradley* have limited the potential for desegregating schools within and across district boundaries, there are numerous voluntary options that can be implemented to promote integration among separate school districts.<sup>245</sup> Furthermore, as noted above in Section IV, court ordered inter-district remedies are appropriate if intentional governmental race discrimination (i.e., location of schools, student assignment, disparate programs, changing or formation of district) in one of the targeted school districts had a substantial interdistrict segregative effect.

Particularly in North Carolina, consolidation of school districts was a key strategy in achieving meaningful school desegregation in communities with persistent patterns of residential segregation. From the late 1960s to the mid-1990s, the majority of North Carolina’s city school districts merged with county districts to form single, combined county school systems. These mergers not only consolidated resources, but created a diverse pool of students to populate schools, generally within a geographic area that did not require students to travel burdensome distances to attend desegregated schools. All over the South, and in many of North Carolina’s largest rural and urban areas – including Wake, Mecklenburg, Nash, Durham, Forsyth, Wayne, and Guilford Counties – segregated city school districts voluntarily dissolved and merged into unified county school districts to promote district-wide integration. Although many of these districts were subject to desegregation litigation prior to consolidation, the merger of racially isolated districts within the same county was voluntary, and on the whole resulted in improved quality and efficiency for the whole system.<sup>244</sup>

The creation of meaningful school diversity is currently an unattainable goal for the three school districts in Halifax County. The extremely high concentration of minority students in HCPS and WCS, combined with the high concentration of White students in RRGSD, make it impossible for any of the separate districts to draw from an integrated pool of students to create diverse schools. Merging the districts, however, will result in a diverse student population that can be assigned to schools in an efficient way to promote district-wide diversity.

### UNIFICATION PROCESS

Under North Carolina law, four options exist for the voluntary unification of city and county school districts.<sup>245</sup> First, local boards of education within the same county (two or more city districts, or city and county districts) wishing to consolidate may submit a plan of consolidation and merger to the board of county commissioners, and if approved, then to the State Board of

Education. Second, the board of county commissioners may submit a plan of consolidation and merger to the State Board of Education. Third, if a city school administrative unit decides to dissolve, it may notify the State Board of Education, which will form a plan of consolidation and merger for the dissolved city district to merge with the county school system. Lastly, the General Assembly can merge school administrative units.

**Option 1: Merger Initiated by Local Boards of Education.** If school districts within the same county wish to consolidate, the school boards of these districts develop a written plan setting forth the conditions of the merger.<sup>246</sup> Community members must have an opportunity to comment on this plan in a public hearing. It is the choice of local school boards to determine if the plan should be approved by a referendum of the voters in the affected area. Although not required, if a referendum vote is included in the merger plan, voter approval is required before the plan becomes effective. The plan must include key information about the timeline and terms for merging, including at least the name of the merged school administrative unit; the effective date of merger; the establishment and maintenance of a consolidated board of education; any information regarding whether there will be a continuation of any supplemental tax for the newly consolidated district (if one was previously in effect for any of the districts involved in the merger); acknowledgement of the required public hearing; and a statement as to whether the merger was contingent on voter approval.<sup>247</sup> Once the written plan has been prepared and reviewed by the public, the plan must be submitted to the local board of county commissioners for concurrence and approval. A final plan is then submitted to the State Board of Education. If the State Board of Education approves the final plan, the plan cannot then be amended except by an act of the General Assembly.

**Option 2: Merger Initiated by Board of County Commissioners.** Under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-68.1, the board of county commissioners may propose a merger plan for two or more school districts located within the same county. This plan does not have to be approved by the local boards of education. However, the plan still must provide significant detail about the merged school district, and must be discussed at a public hearing. The board of commissioners plan must include a proposal to equalize funding between the merged districts, and the merged county district must adopt any funding supplements provided by the city district. Once a board of commissioners approves a merger plan, it must submit it to the State Board of Education for final approval. However, even if the State Board of Education does not approve the plan, the General Assembly may supersede the State Board and move forward with approving the consolidation and merger plan by local act.

**Option 3: Local Board May Dissolve, and State Board Will Merge.** Under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-68.2, a city board of education may force a consolidation by dissolving itself, leaving the State Board of Education to adopt a plan to consolidate the dissolved city district with the existing county district. If a city district informs the State Board of Education that it wants to dissolve, the State Board will adopt a plan of consolidation and merger, consistent with the requirements for content and public hearing described above. The city and county boards of education do not participate in the preparation or approval of a merger plan developed under this subsection, and the plan may not be made contingent on approval by voters in the affected areas.

**Option 4: Merger by Action of General Assembly.** The state legislature has the authority to approve merger plans proposed by localities, approve changes to merger plans, and create funding incentives to facilitate merger. Although Article II, Section 24 of the North Carolina State Constitution prohibits establishing or changing school district lines via local, private or special legislation of the General Assembly, the legislature may enact general laws addressing this issue and may enable the consolidation and operation of specific county and city school districts pursuant to the previously described options for district merger.<sup>248</sup> This action does not, by itself, undertake to establish or change the lines of an individual school district, but rather provides the basis for action by local units under the general law.<sup>249</sup> Legislation proposed in several recent sessions of the General Assembly would have limited state funding to only one school administrative unit per county; however, such legislation has not been enacted.<sup>250</sup> The proposed legislation would not have directly required the 15 currently existing city administrative units to consolidate with their respective county units, but no county would have received more than one base allotment of state funding, effectively reducing the state funding available for multiple districts in a county.<sup>251</sup>

The merger options currently prescribed under state law anticipate voluntary action by some combination of state and local actors. However, it is possible that a court could demand district merger as relief under a federal or state constitutional claim. The processes for voluntary merger are preferable, as they allow for community input and consensus, detailed planning

and local control over the unification process – necessary steps to facilitating a district unification that creates a positive framework for countywide comprehensive educational reform.

## MERGER AS A BASIS FOR EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Embracing innovative strategies to improve rural education is critical for North Carolina, and Halifax County has the opportunity to become a leader in this effort. In 2009, North Carolina had the nation's largest rural school enrollment with nearly 677,000 students living and learning in rural school districts, accounting for nearly 50 percent of the state's total school age population.<sup>252</sup> In addition, North Carolina has the second-highest number of students in concentrated-poverty rural school districts. Over three-fourths of those students are minorities, and almost half do not graduate from high school.<sup>253</sup> The student population of HCPS, predominantly Black and economically disadvantaged, reflects this statewide trend, making Halifax County an ideal area for an improvement and turnaround model specifically tailored to address the needs and concerns of rural school districts.

District merger is an obvious educational strategy that should be tried in Halifax County. A unified Halifax County school system would be an average-sized school district in North Carolina, with a likely enrollment of fewer than 10,000 students.<sup>254</sup> With steadily declining birthrates and population in the county, it is likely that student enrollment will continue to decline in all three districts. A merged Halifax County district would allow the county to most effectively and holistically develop and implement reform strategies targeted to the countywide need to improve student outcomes, and to address issues of declining student enrollment, scarce resources and racial isolation. District unification may lead to greater equality of opportunity, especially in North Carolina where a significant portion of school funding is provided locally, through increasing the tax base available for funding. The elimination of the artificial school district boundaries can allow for more efficient student assignment, the better utilization of schools affected by declining enrollment, as well as greater district diversity.

Declining enrollment has resulted in many Halifax schools operating below capacity. During 2009-'10, HCPS operated at 58 percent of its capacity based on current building capacity figures. Four of the nine individually listed Halifax County schools,<sup>255</sup> including one of HCPS's two middle schools, operated at less than 50 percent capacity during the last academic year. Between 2007 and 2009, HCPS closed two middle schools and two elementary schools that had been operating at or below 40 percent capacity.<sup>256</sup> Despite the economic argument to justify these closings, they were highly controversial in the community and resulted in even more student shuffling, long bus rides, and parent frustration. Conversely, all RRGSD schools operate at or above 90 percent, and both WCS and RRGSD have approached the county for funding to build new schools. This level of inefficiency within a county with a small population could be remedied by a student assignment process that utilizes all of the existing school structures within the county within one unified school district.

A unified Halifax County district could help accomplish many of the educational goals of the DPI intervention. A unified district would likely be able to attract and retain high quality teachers, the most important education input in the *Leandro* adequacy model. The three districts currently display significant differences in teacher turnover, teacher quality (as measured by various indicators), and teacher-reported working conditions. A unified Halifax County district has the potential to more evenly distribute the high quality teachers already in the county and to attract more strong teachers to the area. With the elimination of the arbitrary district boundaries and the related racial separation and stigma, teaching in Halifax County would become a more attractive option as schools become racially diverse and more likely to embrace educational innovation. Furthermore, the elimination of the tripartite system in Halifax County has the potential to increase educational quality in a manner that stimulates more economic development and growth in the area.<sup>257</sup>

A unified district could also experiment with more efficient school siting and attendance zones to maximize both community involvement and meaningful integration. Given the size of a unified district, the county could still maintain small community-based schools, with school locations selected and attendance zones strategically drawn to reduce racial and poverty concentrations. Nearly two decades of research acknowledges that education dollars used in small rural schools produce better outcomes in terms of overall teacher and student morale, student achievement, curriculum and positive attitudes towards learning.<sup>258</sup> Students learn more, make rapid progress, are more satisfied and less likely to drop out, and are more likely to participate in extracurricular activities in smaller schools. Small schools also have lower rates of crime and

violence, and higher rates of parental involvement and community support than larger, centralized schools in rural communities. Teachers, students and parents also have greater satisfaction with the quality of their school relationship in smaller rural schools.<sup>259</sup>

In addition to benefiting from small schools, rural students benefit from schools within communities, rather than in centralized, isolated open country. Rural communities that have strong, small schools have higher home values, lower rates of poverty, more entrepreneurs and more professionals. When districts locate schools within rural communities, this sends the message to families that the district administration recognizes and respects family work and community patterns, and seeks to avoid fragmentation of family life. Smaller, community-based schools in rural communities also maximize community involvement in school governance and encourage community participation in school activities.<sup>260</sup>

Maintaining small, community-based schools is an important educational tool in most rural areas, regardless of the geographic size or population density of the school district itself. School diversity is an equally important, research-based strategy to improve school and individual student performance. In a unified Halifax County district, local and state education leaders have the opportunity to explore strategies to create small, community-based, racially diverse schools as a critical foundation for education reform. Countywide community involvement and support during the merger process will provide opportunities to develop appropriate resource allocation and student assignment and transportation plans that avoid long bus rides. Centralized schools in high population areas will also generate strong community ties and enhance public involvement in schools.

## **FACILITATING MERGER IN HALIFAX COUNTY**

Regardless of how district unification is pursued, the process within the schools and communities in Halifax County will run most smoothly if it is supported by a multi-racial grassroots coalition of residents, elected officials, education advocates and reformers. In addition to the statutory requirements for public hearings under the voluntary merger processes, additional outreach, public education and consensus building strategies are critical to address questions about the process and overcome any resistance to creating a unified school district.

A local feasibility study is needed to thoroughly review the potential resource allocation, student assignment and transportation models in a unified Halifax County school district. As one of the last areas in the state to adopt a unified county system, Halifax County can learn from the merger experiences of other rural districts, including Nash, Lenoir, Wayne and Pitt counties. While the reorganization of three school districts can present upheaval for students, families and district staff, there are numerous interim steps to begin to share district resources and introduce the idea of the three separate districts functioning as one. Inter-district student assignment transfer programs can promote integration and provide students with a wider variety of academic options than currently exist. Inter-district magnet programs similarly promote school diversity while also offering enhanced curriculum opportunities. The rigorous nature of magnet programs can increase the range and quality of educational opportunities in the area, and would promote integration by attracting students from all three districts.

These inter-district interim remedies are not a substitute for the systemic reform that can only be accomplished through creating a unified school district. Research indicates that true integration in schools and positive education reform cannot be accomplished unless the following factors are included: 1) personal interaction among all students; 2) student involvement in cooperative action to achieve mutual goals, 3) social norms favoring cross-ethnic contact; and 4) equal-status contact among all students.<sup>261</sup> School consolidation in Halifax County will improve educational resource allocation and efficiency, and enhance student impacts and outcomes, primarily by addressing old racial tensions and providing opportunities for true integration and cultural responsiveness within the district's schools. A unified system will provide Halifax County the opportunity to become a statewide leader in addressing the particular challenges facing rural schools, as well as the more general problems of tracking, the school-to-prison pipeline, and the racial achievement gap, through the creation of a welcoming environment that is conducive to success for all students. Only in a unified school district will Halifax County students have these opportunities, and ultimately the opportunity to access a constitutionally compliant education.

## VI. Conclusion

This report initially arose out of an attempt to understand the intuitive sense of many residents of Halifax County that something “just wasn’t right” about having three separate and unequal school districts in their community. Center staff spent more than a year meeting with community members, local activists, education policy experts and elected officials to identify the range of challenges and impacts facing students and schools across the county. The research encompassed area history, extensive data on the schools and school districts (e.g. achievement, resources, teacher quality), and the impact – or lack thereof – of both past and ongoing civil rights education litigation. This sweeping information, distilled through our analysis of related civil rights and education law, demonstrates that, while there are several issues to be addressed, the most significant impediment to education reform in Halifax County is the persistent racial segregation of three separate and unequal public school systems.

By endorsing and maintaining this segregated system, Halifax County and the state are complicit in exacerbating the substantive harms of what should be a by-gone era of racial oppression. As shown by interviews collected from Halifax families, historical documentation and other data, the stigma of racial inferiority continues to plague students, parents, teachers and administrators in HCPS and WCS. Halifax County and Weldon City district residents speak plainly about being excluded from the “better” school district, and seem resigned to the fact that there is nothing that can be done about it, as White power interests would never allow a merger to happen.<sup>262</sup> Roanoke Rapids residents have rejected the idea of merger, arguing that such action would “lower the standards” in the Roanoke Rapids schools and “damage” the city’s system.<sup>263</sup>

The racial demographics of the current divided and divisive district structure is a modern version of the issues at the core of the *Scotland Neck* case, which pointed directly to the state and the county’s liability in maintaining segregated school districts in Halifax County. The Court’s “White refuge” holding is as relevant today as it was in 1972, and leads to an inescapable conclusion that Halifax County’s schools remain segregated and unequal because both the state and the county have permitted the Roanoke district to remain a racially exclusive White enclave. Progress, growth and positive change cannot be made, either in the schools or in the county as a whole, without remedying this fundamental injustice.

Creating a unified Halifax County public school district would be a significant first step toward protecting the constitutional rights of all children in Halifax County and creating an environment where student achievement could flourish. A unified Halifax County school system would still be small enough to allow the county to effectively implement reform strategies to improve student outcomes and address issues of declining student enrollment, limited resources and racial isolation. The elimination of the gerrymandered district boundaries would encourage better utilization of schools, increase access to educational and community resources, and promote greater racial diversity. A unified district would also be better able to attract and retain high-quality teachers, one of the most critical elements for improving student performance.

Most importantly, district unification could help produce genuine education reform by addressing racial tensions and providing opportunities for meaningful integration and cultural responsiveness within the county’s schools. A unified system would provide Halifax County the opportunity to become a statewide leader not only in the continuing relevance of school integration, but also in addressing the range of particular challenges facing rural schools – problems often ignored by policymakers’ focus on urban/suburban districts. Finally, the elimination of the tripartite system has the potential to improve educational quality in a manner that stimulates more economic development and growth in the area.

One of the primary goals of this report is to initiate informed conversations about the state of education in Halifax County, the reasons for maintaining three separate districts, and school segregation and its impact on the quality of education for all students and on the community’s economic viability. We encourage everyone with a stake in the success of education in Halifax County schools and the future of Halifax County to become part of these conversations, and to work together with county commissioners and school district leaders to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for unification. Finally, this case study can provide a frame of reference for an issue that has escaped national attention: rural school segregation and the lasting impacts of Jim Crow.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> *Data and Reports, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction*, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/resources/data/> under “FREE & REDUCED MEALS APPLICATION DATA,” download the document for 2009-2010 (last visited April 25, 2011). Used data in this document to calculate each group’s total. Rounded to nearest whole number.
- <sup>2</sup> Buncombe, Randolph, Orange, Sampson, Columbus, Iredell, and Cabarrus County have two school districts; Catawba, Surry, Davidson and Halifax County have three districts.
- <sup>3</sup> ROANOKE RAPIDS: THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS 1897-1997 160 (Robert B. Robinson, III, ed., City of Roanoke Rapids, 1997).
- <sup>4</sup> 31 PHS Pub. Health Rep. 615 (1916). The cotton and paper mills in the town were the income source for Roanoke Rapids’ residents, which consisted of 4,100 mill workers and “high class businessmen” in March 1916—all but 25 of whom were white, according to this source.
- <sup>5</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>6</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>7</sup> ACT OF MARCH 2, 1903, ch. 324, § 12, 1903 N.C. PUBLIC LAWS 529; ACT OF MARCH 7, 1919, ch. 120, § 12, 1919 N.C. PRIVATE LAWS 162.
- <sup>8</sup> Robinson, *supra* note 3, at 170.
- <sup>9</sup> See MIMI CONWAY, RISE GONNA RISE: A PORTRAIT OF SOUTHERN TEXTILE WORKERS 111-3 (Anchor Press/Doubleday 1979). See also Lesley Bartlett, Marla Frederick, Thaddeus Gulbrandsen, and Enrique Murillo, *The Marketization of Education: Public Schools for Private Ends*, 33 ANTHROPOLOGY & EDUC. Q. 1 (2002).
- <sup>10</sup> Bartlett et al., *supra* note 9, at 171.
- <sup>11</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>12</sup> *Id.* at 170-1.
- <sup>13</sup> See Roanoke Rapids Greater School District Board of Education, Minutes (Mar. 1, 1965 – June 21, 1966).
- <sup>14</sup> See March 18, 1966 letter from Roanoke Rapids Board of Education to Halifax Superintendent Henry Overman, and February 21, 1966 Minutes from Special Joint Meeting of Halifax County BOE with Roanoke Rapids.
- <sup>15</sup> Marcellus C. Barksdale, *The Indigenous Civil Rights Movement and Cultural Change in North Carolina: Weldon, Chapel Hill and Monroe 1946-1965* 96 (1997) (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University) (on file with author).
- <sup>16</sup> Formerly ARTICLE 18, CHAPTER 136, PUBLIC LAWS 1923, now N.C. GEN. STAT. §§ 115-74 - 115-78. See *United States v. Halifax Cnty. Bd. of Educ.*, 314 F. Supp. 65, 66 (E.D.N.C. 1970).
- <sup>17</sup> DIVISION OF NEGRO EDUCATION, STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, STUDY OF NEGRO SCHOOLS IN HALIFAX COUNTY (Aug. 31, 1949).
- <sup>18</sup> See *Rosenwald Schools Initiative*, NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION, <http://www.preservation-nation.org/travel-and-sites/sites/southern-region/rosenwald-schools/> (last visited April 26, 2011).
- <sup>19</sup> STUDY OF NEGRO SCHOOLS IN HALIFAX COUNTY, *supra* note 17.
- <sup>20</sup> The Eastman Community School was located near Enfield. The five room school included upstairs lodgings for additional teachers from Hampton and Tuskegee Institute. The school was an enormous improvement over the one-room shack that had served Black children in the community, and it remained an educational beacon for southern Halifax’s Black community for many decades. Both the Eastman and the Rosenwald Schools demonstrated that the tangible quality of education for Black children in Halifax County often depended upon the existence of a private benefactor. See Scott Washington, *Audacity of Hope: George Eastman and the Eastman Community School* (Oct. 2009).
- <sup>21</sup> STUDY OF NEGRO SCHOOLS IN HALIFAX COUNTY, *supra* note 17.
- <sup>22</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>23</sup> See NC State Dept of Public Instruction, High School Annual Reports for Bunche and Weldon (May 1960).
- <sup>24</sup> Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Aug., 1, 1963).
- <sup>25</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>26</sup> See “Plan for Desegregation of Schools in Halifax County School Administrative Unit in Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964,” Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Apr. 12, 1965).
- <sup>27</sup> Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Aug. 5, 1963); Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Sept. 8, 1964).
- <sup>28</sup> Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (June 24, 1965).
- <sup>29</sup> See ROANOKE RAPIDS GREATER SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD, PLAN OF DESEGREGATION AS AMENDED (Mar. 4, 1965).
- <sup>30</sup> Roanoke Rapids Greater School District Board of Education, Minutes (Mar. 29, 1966).
- <sup>31</sup> See *id.*
- <sup>32</sup> See ROANOKE RAPIDS GREATER SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION, AMENDED PLAN OF COMPLIANCE (June 24, 1965).
- <sup>33</sup> See Roanoke Rapids Greater School District Board of Education, Minutes (Jan. 11, 1966 – Mar. 16, 1966); Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Roanoke Rapids Greater School District Board, Special Joint Meeting Minutes (Feb. 21, 1966).
- <sup>34</sup> See Roanoke Rapids Greater School District Board of Education, Minutes (Mar. 29, 1966). Black Roanoke Rapids parents with children at Chaloner protested this arrangement because there was no transportation provided to city schools. See Roanoke Rapids Greater School District Board, Letter to Parents (June 21, 1966).
- <sup>35</sup> See Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Apr. 6, 1970).
- <sup>36</sup> See Roanoke Rapids Greater School District Board of Education, Minutes (May 1, 1965); Roanoke Rapids Greater School District Board, Minutes (Oct. 1, 1965); Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Apr. 6, 1970).
- <sup>37</sup> See Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Apr. 6, 1970).
- <sup>38</sup> Bartlett et al, *supra* note 9.
- <sup>39</sup> See Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Apr. 12, 1965).
- <sup>40</sup> See North Carolina State Board of Education, Minutes (May 6, 1965). Although we have requested and searched for a copy of the actual resolution, it has not been provided at this time.
- <sup>41</sup> See Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (May 3, 1965).
- <sup>42</sup> *United States v. Halifax Cnty. Bd. of Educ.*, 314 F. Supp. 65, 67 (E.D.N.C. 1970).
- <sup>43</sup> See Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (May 24, 1965).
- <sup>44</sup> See Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Apr. 12, 1965).
- <sup>45</sup> See Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Apr. 26, 1965).
- <sup>46</sup> See Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Aug. 18, 1965).
- <sup>47</sup> See Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (July 20, 1965); HALIFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION, REVISED PLAN OF COMPLIANCE (Aug. 16, 1965).
- <sup>48</sup> Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Aug. 5, 1968); Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Aug. 9, 1968).
- <sup>49</sup> *Green v. County Board of Education*, 391 U.S. 430 (1968).
- <sup>50</sup> Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Aug. 5, 1968).
- <sup>51</sup> Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (July 1, 1968).
- <sup>52</sup> During this time, there were 10,655 students in the county of whom 8,300 were Black, and 18 segregated schools: 4 white, 14 Black. See *United States v. Halifax Cnty. Bd. of Educ.*, 314 F. Supp. at 67.
- <sup>53</sup> See *id.* at 68.
- <sup>54</sup> Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Feb. 8, 1969).
- <sup>55</sup> Halifax County Public Schools Board of Education, Minutes (Mar. 1, 1969).
- <sup>56</sup> See *id.*
- <sup>57</sup> *School Bill for Halifax 1 Step Away*, THE RALEIGH NEWS & OBSERVER, Feb. 28, 1969, at 1.
- <sup>58</sup> Judy Bolch, *Scotland Neck School Bill Clears House Committee*, THE RALEIGH NEWS & OBSERVER.
- <sup>59</sup> *United States v. Halifax Cnty. Bd. of Educ.*, 314 F. Suppl. 65 (E.D.N.C. 1970).
- <sup>60</sup> *Id.* at 67. A parallel legislative effort to establish another majority-white school district within the county, the Littleton-Lake Gaston unit, was also rejected by the federal district court. The Littleton-Lake Gaston unit would have had only around 600 students, 46% of them Black. Seventy-nine of the White students would have transferred into the unit from the surrounding majority-Black county unit, and 110 Black

students would have transferred out. "Separate Unit Laws Invalid," THE RALEIGH NEWS & OBSERVER, May 27, 1970, at 1.

<sup>61</sup> United States v. Scotland Neck City Bd. Of Educ., 407 U.S. 484 (1972).

<sup>62</sup> United States v Halifax Cnty. Bd. of Educ., 314 F. Supp. at 72.

<sup>63</sup> United States v. Scotland Neck Bd. of Educ., 442 F.2d 575, 583 (4th Cir. 1971).

<sup>64</sup> United States v Halifax Cnty Bd. of Educ., 407 U.S. at 488-489 (quoting from North Carolina Bd. of Educ. v. Swann, 402 U.S. 43, 45 (1970)).

<sup>65</sup> United States v Halifax Cnty Bd. of Educ., 407 U.S. at 490.

<sup>66</sup> *Id.* at 490 (citing *Monroe v. Bd. of Commrs*, 391 U.S. 450, 459 (1968)).

<sup>67</sup> Bartlett et al., *supra* note 9.

<sup>68</sup> RICHARD ROTHSTEIN, CLASS AND SCHOOLS: USING SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM TO CLOSE THE BLACK-WHITE ACHIEVEMENT GAP 129 (2004).

<sup>69</sup> *Student Counts, Education Statistics Access System*, [http://beyond2020.dpi.state.nc.us/wds80\\_1/ReportFolders/reportFolders.aspx?sCS\\_referer=&sCS\\_ChosenLang=en](http://beyond2020.dpi.state.nc.us/wds80_1/ReportFolders/reportFolders.aspx?sCS_referer=&sCS_ChosenLang=en) "Student Counts" then "Final ADM history by LEAs, 1979-1980 on" (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>70</sup> Halifax County's two high schools enrolled 1,278 students. The district's two middle schools served approximately 808 students and the elementary schools enrolled 1,725 students. The primary school served 132 students. Eastman and Brawley Middle Schools were closed before the 2009-2010 school year. *Data and Reports- Student Accounting, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction*, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/accounting/data/> (last visited April 26, 2011). Final ADM for 2009-'10, based on Principal's Monthly Reports.

<sup>71</sup> *Student Counts, supra*, note 69.

<sup>72</sup> Weldon High School enrolled 290 students; Weldon middle school served 247 students; Weldon Elementary enrolled 414 students; and the Roanoke Valley Early College had 64 students. *Data and Reports, supra*, note 70.

<sup>73</sup> *Student Counts, supra*, note 69.

<sup>74</sup> The district's one middle school served 578 students in 2009-2010. During the same school year, the two elementary schools in Roanoke Rapids City Schools enrolled 1,424 students, and the high school enrolled 847 students. See *Data and Reports, supra*, note 70.

<sup>75</sup> *NC Report Card for Halifax County District, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction website*, [http://www.ncschoolreportcard.org/src/distDetails.jsp?Page=13&pLEACode=420&pYear=2009-2010&pDataType=1\\_](http://www.ncschoolreportcard.org/src/distDetails.jsp?Page=13&pLEACode=420&pYear=2009-2010&pDataType=1_) (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>76</sup> *Id.*

<sup>77</sup> *Id.*

<sup>78</sup> *Data and Reports, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction*, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/resources/data/> under "FREE & REDUCED MEALS APPLICATION DATA," download the document for 2009-2010 (last visited April 25, 2011). Used data in this document to calculate each group's total. Rounded to nearest whole number.

<sup>79</sup> *Id.*

<sup>80</sup> *Id.*

<sup>81</sup> *Id.*

<sup>82</sup> *Id.*

<sup>83</sup> There are zero FRL reported for the Roanoke Valley Early School, which is grades 7 and 8.

<sup>84</sup> *Id.*

<sup>85</sup> *Id.*

<sup>86</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction*, <http://www.ncschoolreportcard.org/src/distDetails.jsp?pLEACode=420&pYear=2009-2010&pDataType=1> (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>87</sup> *Id.*

<sup>88</sup> *Id.*

<sup>89</sup> *Id.* These numbers report only the percentage of students in each group who scored at or above grade level on BOTH the reading and math tests. If a student took only one of the two tests or if he/she passed only one of the two tests, his/her score is not included here.

<sup>90</sup> *Id.*; 24.2 percent of LEP students scored at or above grade level on both tests.

<sup>91</sup> *Id.*; End-of-Course test results are not shown by individual subject area here. Instead, the results for all subject area tests are combined within each student group and the percentage of passing scores is shown.

<sup>92</sup> *Id.*

<sup>93</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction*, <http://www.ncschoolreportcard.org/src/distDetails.jsp?pLEACode=422&pYear=2009-2010&pDataType=1> (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>94</sup> *Id.* Hispanic, American Indian, and Multi-Racial are "N/A" for this district.

<sup>95</sup> *Id.*

<sup>96</sup> *Id.* Hispanic, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Multi-Racial, and Limited English Proficient are "N/A" for this district.

<sup>97</sup> *Id.*

<sup>98</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction*, <http://www.ncschoolreportcard.org/src/distDetails.jsp?pYear=2009-2010&pLEACode=421> (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>99</sup> *Id.*; American Indian group is "N/A" for this district.

<sup>100</sup> *Id.*

<sup>101</sup> *Id.*

<sup>102</sup> *Id.*

<sup>103</sup> In 2009-'10, 2,491 public schools in North Carolina were assigned an ABCs status.

<sup>104</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction*, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/reporting/abc/2009-10/execsumm.pdf> (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>105</sup> *Id.*

<sup>106</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction*, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/accountability/reporting/abc/2009-10/abcaypreport10.pdf> (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>107</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction*, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/accounting/data/> (under "GRADE, RACE, SEX," download the document for 2010-2011) (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>108</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction*, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/>

[consolidated/2009-10/consolidated-report.pdf](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/consolidated/2009-10/consolidated-report.pdf) (under "CONSOLIDATED DATA REPORTS," download document for 2009-10)(last visited April 25, 2011). Percentage calculated based on figures in document, rounded to one decimal.

<sup>109</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 107.

<sup>110</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 108.

<sup>111</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 107.

<sup>112</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 108.

<sup>113</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 107.

<sup>114</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 108.

<sup>115</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 107.

<sup>116</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 108.

<sup>117</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 107.

<sup>118</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 108.

<sup>119</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 108.

<sup>120</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 107.

<sup>121</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 107.

<sup>122</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 108.

<sup>123</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 86.

<sup>124</sup> *Id.*

<sup>125</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 93.

<sup>126</sup> *Id.*

<sup>127</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 98.

<sup>128</sup> *Id.*

<sup>129</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 108.

<sup>130</sup> *Id.*

<sup>131</sup> *Id.*

<sup>132</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction*, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/consolidated/2009-10/consolidated-report.pdf> (under "CONSOLIDATED DATA REPORTS," download document for 2009-2010 ) (last visited April 26, 2011).

<sup>133</sup> *Id.*

<sup>134</sup> *Id.*

<sup>135</sup> *Id.*

<sup>136</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 86. Hispanic, White, Asian/Pacific Islander, Multiracial and LEP students "N/A" for this cohort data.

<sup>137</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 93. Considering a four-year cohort in Weldon City schools, the graduation rate was 74.2 percent for all students, 74.7 percent for Black students, 75.7 percent for economically disadvantaged students, and 80.0 percent for students with disabilities. American Indian, Hispanic, White, Asian/Pacific Islander, Multiracial and LEP students "N/A" for this cohort data.

<sup>138</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 98. Considering a four-year cohort in Roanoke Rapids City schools, the graduation rate was 74.0 percent for all students, 77.8 percent for Black students, 73.7 percent for White students, 61.8 percent for economically disadvantaged students, and 50.0 percent for students with disabilities. American Indian, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Multiracial and LEP students "N/A" for this cohort data.

<sup>139</sup> *N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, supra* note 86. In North Carolina in 2009-2010, on average, 5 percent of students enrolled in specialized advanced academic

courses and 15 percent of students enrolled in career and technical courses provided by district high schools and local community colleges.

<sup>140</sup> N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, *supra* note 93.

<sup>141</sup> N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, *supra* note 98.

<sup>142</sup> N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, *supra* note 86.

<sup>143</sup> *Id.*

<sup>144</sup> N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, *supra* note 93.

<sup>145</sup> *Id.*

<sup>146</sup> N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, *supra* note 98.

<sup>147</sup> *Id.*

<sup>148</sup> Federal allocations have increased since 2009 due to the input of stimulus funds (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, or ARRA). Nearly \$100 billion of ARRA funds are dedicated to education. The U.S. Department of Education (USED) distributed ARRA funds to states to save and create jobs while advancing reforms and improvements that will create long-lasting results for K-12 students. ARRA provides funding to North Carolina schools through existing federal formula and competitive grant programs including Title I, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance program. Funds must be used consistent with statutory and regulatory requirements per each formula grant with some exceptions. See N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, [www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/arra/](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/arra/) (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>149</sup> 2010 Teacher Working Conditions Survey, <http://ncteachingconditions.org/> (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>150</sup> *Id.*

<sup>151</sup> *Id.*

<sup>152</sup> *Id.*

<sup>153</sup> *Id.*

<sup>154</sup> *Id.*

<sup>155</sup> Table 31, "Student Transportation on Public Buses, 2007-08." State Board of Education & Dep't of Pub. Instruction, North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile for 2009, 67 <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/resources/data/statisticalprofile/2009profile.pdf> (last visited April 25, 2011).

<sup>156</sup> *Id.*

<sup>157</sup> *Id.*

<sup>158</sup> *Id.*

<sup>159</sup> *Id.*

<sup>160</sup> *Id.*

<sup>161</sup> *Id.*

<sup>162</sup> *Id.*

<sup>163</sup> *Id.*

<sup>164</sup> *Id.*

<sup>165</sup> *Id.*

<sup>166</sup> *Id.*

<sup>167</sup> *Id.*

<sup>168</sup> *Id.*

<sup>169</sup> *Id.*

<sup>170</sup> G.L. Sunderman & Jimmy Kim, The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, Teacher Quality: Equalizing Educational Opportunities and Outcomes 12 (2005). Research confirms that it is typical for teacher

quality to vary across both schools and districts, and that some schools and districts are better able to attract and retain higher quality teachers than others. Students in high-minority, high-poverty schools are more likely to have teachers who are inexperienced, not certified, or have no educational background in the subject they teach. Even when impoverished schools are able to recruit some more qualified and experienced teachers, these teachers generally tend to move from more impoverished to more affluent schools as they gain standing in the school system. The use and impact of salary and incentive pay is limited both by school districts' budgetary constraints and perceived and actual challenging working conditions in particular schools. Consequently, while it is clear that high teacher quality is critical in raising student achievement, there is little agreement on the best method of attracting and retaining those teachers in the schools that have the greatest need for them. The impact that teacher quality can have on student performance is astounding. A study by education researcher Erik Hanushek reveals that a high-quality teacher can produce an entire year's worth of additional learning in students when compared with a low-quality teacher, and that "high quality teachers can offset a substantial portion of disadvantage related to family economic and social circumstances." Federal law makes some attempt to address this issue, but not without difficulty. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 demonstrates an increased focus on teacher quality. It currently requires all states to issue report cards describing whether teachers have met state licensing and certification criteria and possess subject matter expertise in the field of teaching. Before this statute was enacted, there was great variability in state collection of teacher quality data. In addition, "[e]ach state and district receiving Title I funds must develop a plan to 'ensure that all teachers teaching core academic subjects...are highly qualified not later than the end of the 2005-06 school year' (NCLB, 2002, § 6319 (a)(2))." A highly qualified teacher is defined by the statute §7802(23) as a teacher who has a bachelor's degree, who has obtained a full state certification, and has demonstrated subject matter competency in core academic subjects. School districts must also use at least 5 percent of their Title I funds for professional development activities in order to help teachers become highly qualified. This use of resources for professional development, however, can do little to address the structural factors that cause disparate teacher quality among schools and districts. Moreover, the law offers no incentives to teach in more challenging environments. In fact, research instead suggests that the school-based accountability system put into effect by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 further complicates the task of recruiting high quality teachers to work in low-performing schools. Because accountability is at the school rather than the classroom level, even the highest quality teachers at low-performing schools are subject to possible sanctions that could harm them or their careers if they remain at those schools.

<sup>171</sup> ERIC A. HANUSHEK AND STEVEN G. RIVKIN, HANDBOOK OF THE ECONOMICS OF EDUCATION, 11 (2006).

<sup>172</sup> *Id.* at 18.

<sup>173</sup> *Id.* at 7.

<sup>174</sup> N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, *supra* notes 86, 93, and 98.

<sup>175</sup> *Id.*

<sup>176</sup> N.C. GEN. STAT. § 153A-149 (2010).

<sup>177</sup> N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/finance/salary/supplements/2009-10supplements.pdf> (last visited April 26, 2011).

<sup>178</sup> 2010 Teacher Working Conditions Survey, *supra* note 149.

<sup>179</sup> *Id.*

<sup>180</sup> *Id.*

<sup>181</sup> JOHN A. POWELL, A NEW THEORY OF INTEGRATED EDUCATION: TRUE INTEGRATION, IN SCHOOL RESEGREGATION: MUST THE SOUTH TURN BACK? 286-287 (John Charles Boger & Gary Orfield eds., 2005).

<sup>182</sup> SEAN REARDEN & JOHN T. YUN, INTEGRATING NEIGHBORHOODS, SEGREGATING SCHOOLS: THE RETREAT FROM SCHOOL DESEGREGATION IN THE SOUTH, 1990-2000 IN SCHOOL RESEGREGATION: MUST THE SOUTH TURN BACK? *supra*, note 181, at 53-55.

<sup>183</sup> ERICA FRANKENBURG, CHANGMEI LEE & GARY ORFIELD, THE CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECT, A MULTIRACIAL SOCIETY WITH SEGREGATED SCHOOLS: ARE WE LOSING THE DREAM? 27-29 (2003).

<sup>184</sup> GARY ORFIELD & CHANGMEI LEE, THE CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECT, HISTORIC REVERSALS, ACCELERATING RESEGREGATION, AND THE NEED FOR NEW INTEGRATION STRATEGIES 21 (2007).

<sup>185</sup> *Id.*

<sup>186</sup> Linda Darling-Hammond, *From "Separate but Equal" to "No Child Left Behind": The Collision of New Standards and Old Inequalities*, IN MANY CHILDREN LEFT BEHIND: HOW THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT IS DAMAGING OUR CHILDREN AND OUR SCHOOLS (Deborah Meier & George Wood eds., 2004).

<sup>187</sup> GARY ORFIELD, ERICA FRANKENBURG & LILIANA M. GARCES, *Statement of American Social Scientists of Research on School Desegregation to the U.S. Supreme Court in 'Parents v. Seattle School District' and 'Meredith v. Jefferson County'*, 40 Urban Review 96 (2008); CHRISTOPHER B. SWANSON, THE URBAN INSTITUTE, WHO GRADUATES? WHO DOESN'T? A STATISTICAL PORTRAIT OF PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, CLASS OF 2001 (2004); CHRISTOPHER B. SWANSON, THE URBAN INSTITUTE, WHO GRADUATES IN THE SOUTH? (2005).

<sup>188</sup> *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). The Court created the "separate but equal" doctrine over a century ago in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 567 (1896).

<sup>189</sup> *Brown*, 347 U.S. at 493.

<sup>190</sup> *Id.* at 492-494. The Court cited the following research in support of this finding: K. B. Clark, *Effect of Prejudice and Discrimination on Personality Development* (Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth, 1950); Witmer & Kotinsky, *PERSONALITY IN THE MAKING* (1952), c. VI; Deutscher & Chein, *The Psychological Effects of Enforced Segregation: A Survey of Social Science Opinion*, 26 J. Psychol. 259 (1948); Chein, *What are the Psychological Effects of Segregation Under Conditions of Equal Facilities?*, 3 Int. J. Opinion and Attitude Res. 229 (1949); Brameld, *Educational Costs in Discrimination and National Welfare* 44-48 (MacIver ed., 1949); FRAZIER, *THE NEGRO IN THE UNITED STATES* 674-681 (1949).

<sup>191</sup> Benjamin E. Mays, *The Moral Aspects of Segregation Decisions*, 29 Journal of Educational Sociology



361 (1956).

<sup>192</sup> LINDA CHAVEZ & ERICA FRANKENBERG, *THE CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECT, INTEGRATION DEFENDED: BERKELEY'S UNIFIED STRATEGY TO MAINTAIN SCHOOL DIVERSITY* (2009).

<sup>193</sup> James Coleman, United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (1966); Roslyn A. Mickelson, *The Incomplete Desegregation of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Its Consequences*, in *SCHOOL RESEGREGATION: MUST THE SOUTH TURN BACK?*, *supra* note 181, at 87.

<sup>194</sup> Michael Kurlaender & John T. Yun, *Fifty Years after Brown: New Evidence of the Impact of School Racial Composition on Student Outcomes*, 6 *International Journal of Educational Policy, Research, & Practice* 51 (2005).

<sup>195</sup> Jomills H. Braddock, *The Perpetuation of Segregation Across Levels of Education: A Behavioral Assessment of the Contact-Hypothesis*, 53 *Sociology of Education* 178 (1980). Two theories often discussed regarding school desegregation are perpetuation theory and contact-hypothesis theory. Perpetuation theory proposes that only when students are exposed to continual desegregated experiences, such as those that exist in schools, will they lead more integrated lives. JOMILLS H. BRADDOCK & JAMES MCPARTLAND, *CENTER FOR SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOLS, MORE EVIDENCE ON SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSES THAT PERPETUATE MINORITY SEGREGATION: THE RELATIONSHIP OF SCHOOL DESEGREGATION AND EMPLOYMENT SEGREGATION* (1983). Under the contact-hypothesis theory, "exposure to interracial contact under certain specified conditions produces generally positive changes in intergroup attitudes and interaction patterns." The "specified conditions" are that each group: 1) possess equal status; 2) share common goals; 3) interact operatively, and 4) have environmental support.

<sup>196</sup> Bartlett et al., *supra* note 9.

<sup>197</sup> *Id.* The county's Black residents might also fear the loss of Black political control that a merger would likely bring—not an irrational fear, given the mistakes made during integration when Black schools were shut down and Black teachers' and administrators' positions eliminated.

<sup>198</sup> *United States v. Scotland Neck*, 407 U.S. 484, 490 (1972).

<sup>199</sup> *Brown v. Bd of Educ.*, 349 U.S. at 300-301.

<sup>200</sup> See cases cited by *Haney v. Cnty Bd. of Educ.*, 410 F.2d 920, 924 (8th Cir. 1969).

<sup>201</sup> *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Bd of Ed*, 402 U.S. 1, 17 (1971).

<sup>202</sup> *Swann*, 402 U.S. at 16.

<sup>203</sup> *Green v. Bd. Of Educ.*, *supra* note 49, at 441.

<sup>204</sup> *Haney v. Cnty Bd. of Educ.*, 410 F.2d at 924.

<sup>205</sup> Nor is it a defense to an equal protection claim to show that the district lines were not created for explicit segregative purposes. See *id.* at 923 ("The contention that the school districts herein involved are not segregated as a matter of law is untenable. The short and quick answer to the argument that they were created for purposes other than racial separation by the Act of 1948 is that it patently overlooks the then-existing state law requiring segregation of public schools.")

<sup>206</sup> See *Goldsboro City Sch. Bd. v. Wayne County*

*Sch. Bd.*, 745 F.2d 324 (4th Cir. 1984) (holding that to get an interdistrict remedy (merger/consolidation), must show intentional race discrimination by the government (i.e., location of schools, student assignment, disparate programs, changing district lines) in one of the districts which had substantial interdistrict segregative effect).

<sup>207</sup> *Milliken v. Bradley*, 418 U.S. 717, 745 (1974).

<sup>208</sup> *Goldsboro City Sch. Bd.*, *supra* note 206.

<sup>209</sup> The Fourth Circuit held that although there was "evidence in the record that the County Board's refusal to merge was motivated by discriminatory intent... there is also evidence in the record that its members were motivated by other factors." *Goldsboro City Sch. Bd.*, 745 F.2d at 327.

<sup>210</sup> For the school year 1965-1966, the Goldsboro City schools had an enrollment of just over 9,000 students of whom 46.3 percent were black. By 1981-1982 the enrollment had dropped to 5,000 students of whom 77.7 percent were black. For the 1965-1966 school year, the Wayne County schools had an enrollment of 13,832 students of whom 33.5 percent were black. By 1981-1982, the enrollment had dropped to 13,089 students of whom 31.3 percent were black. See *id.*

<sup>211</sup> *Horton v. Meskill (Horton I)*, 376 A.2d 359 (Conn. 1977). Interview with Wesley Horton, Partner, Horton, Shields & Knox (Dec. 10, 2002); cited in Lauren Wetzler, *Buying Equality: How School Finance Reform and Desegregation Came to Compete in Connecticut*, 22 *Yale L. & Pol'y Rev.* 481, 488 (2004).

<sup>212</sup> N.C. Const. art. I, §15.

<sup>213</sup> N.C. Const. art. IX, §2.

<sup>214</sup> The concept of vertical equity refers to providing additional funding and resources for districts that have a higher concentration of at-risk or special needs students.

<sup>215</sup> *Leandro v. State (Leandro)*, 448 S.E.2d 249 (N.C. 1997). Forty-six states have been subject to school finance lawsuits, either asserting an equity or adequacy claim, or both. The Supreme Court decision in *San Antonio v. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 1 (1973) marked the end of school finance lawsuits at a federal level. However, with education provisions clearly written into most state constitutions, advocates turned their attention to affirming the state level right to an education and attacking state funding formulas. Equity suits dominated the 1980s, while adequacy suits characterized the 1990s.

<sup>216</sup> *Hoke Cnty Bd. of Educ. v. State (Leandro II)*, 599 S.E.2d 365 (N.C. 2004).

<sup>217</sup> *Leandro*, *supra* note 215, at 255.

<sup>218</sup> *Hoke*, *supra* note 216, at 382-87.

<sup>219</sup> *Id.* at 389.

<sup>220</sup> *Hoke Cnty Bd. of Educ. v. State*, 95 CVS 1158 (Wake Cnty. Super. 2000).

<sup>221</sup> The definition of a disadvantaged student varies slightly from that of an "at-risk" student. Resources for "at-risk" students can come from a variety of state and federal sources. Disadvantaged student funding at the state level is calculated based on the percentage of students living in a single parent family; the percentage of population ages 5-17 living below the poverty line; and the percentage of students who have at least one parent with less than a high school diploma.

<sup>222</sup> *Hoke County Bd. of Educ. v. State*, REPORT FROM THE COURT: THE HIGH SCHOOL PROBLEM (2005).

<sup>223</sup> N.C. *Middle and High School Turnaround Model*, N.C. Dept of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/schooltransformation/turnaround/> (last visited April 26, 2011).

<sup>224</sup> *Id.* As shown in above Section III, Halifax County schools are generally staffed with inexperienced teachers (0-3 years) and have a high teacher turnover, particularly in elementary and middle schools.

<sup>225</sup> Notice of Hearing, *Hoke County Bd. of Educ. v. State*, 95 CVS 1158 (N.C. Super. Ct. Mar. 16, 2009).

<sup>226</sup> *Id.*

<sup>227</sup> Consent Order, *Hoke County Bd. of Educ. v. State*, 95 CVS 1158 (N.C. Super. Ct. Apr. 29, 2009).

<sup>228</sup> *Id.*

<sup>229</sup> Della Rose, *Halifax County Sees Gains in ABC Results*, *The Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald*, August 10, 2010, available at <http://www.rrdailyherald.com/articles/2010/08/10/community/education/doc4c5de-a36b45c0045071402.txt>.

<sup>230</sup> *Id.*

<sup>231</sup> Consent Order, *supra*, note 227.

<sup>232</sup> "The pressure has been a lot more this year than last year...The kids feel it. The teachers are under the gun a lot right now." Aaron Guest, history teacher at Northwest High School in Halifax County Public Schools. Lynn Bonner, *Halifax Schools' Results Mixed After State Intervention*, *News & Observer*, June 6, 2010.

<sup>233</sup> Page McCullough & Jerry Johnson, *Quality Teachers: Issues, Challenges, and Solutions for North Carolina's Most Overlooked Rural Communities* (2007), <http://www.ruraledu.org/articles.php?id=1946> (last visited September 8, 2010). See also Marty Strange and Robin Lambert, *Searching for Hamlet: To Be or Not to Be for Rural Education*, RURAL POLICY MATTERS (July 2009), <http://www.ruraledu.org/articles.php?id=2257> (last visited October 25, 2010) ("Even though teaching quality is doubtless the most important in-school factor affecting student achievement, it pales in comparison with the dead weight of poverty, inadequate health care, housing and food instability, and other out-of-school factors students bring with them to school each morning.")

<sup>234</sup> See March 16, 2009 Notice of Hearing, *supra* note 225.

<sup>235</sup> At a December 17, 2010 hearing in Wake County Superior Court, Dr. Pat Ashley, Executive Director, NC DPI District and School Transformation Team, responded that she did not know the demographics of the Weldon City Schools and Roanoke Rapids Graded Schools district, when asked about the demographics of school districts immediately surrounding Halifax County Public Schools.

<sup>236</sup> *Leandro* at 254.

<sup>237</sup> North Carolina has 115 school districts within its 100 counties. There are currently 15 city schools in 11 counties. The fifteen city units still in existence are: Asheboro City (Randolph County); Asheville City (Buncombe County); Chapel Hill-Carrboro City (Orange County); Clinton City (Sampson County); Elkin City and Mount Airy City (Surry County); Hickory City and Newton-Conover City (Catawba County); Kannapolis City (Cabarrus County); Lexington City and

Thomasville City (Davidson County); Mooresville City (Iredell County); Whiteville City (Columbus County); and Roanoke Rapids City and Weldon City (Halifax County). The racial isolation in Halifax County and its three school districts is a rarity within this group.

<sup>238</sup> Coleman, *supra* note 193; SUSANNA LOEB & MICHELLE REININGER, THE EDUCATION POLICY CENTER AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY, PUBLIC POLICY AND TEACHER LABOR MARKETS: WHAT WE KNOW AND WHY IT MATTERS (2004); STEPHEN J. CARROLL ET AL., THE DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS AMONG CALIFORNIA'S SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS, RAND CORPORATION (2000); CHRISTOPHER JENCKS & MEREDITH PHILLIPS, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, THE BLACK-WHITE TEST SCORE GAP: WHY IT PERSISTS AND WHAT CAN BE DONE (2008), [http://www.brookings.edu/articles/1998/spring\\_education\\_jencks.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/articles/1998/spring_education_jencks.aspx) ("Predominantly white schools seem to attract more skilled teachers than black schools...") (last visited April 26, 2011); Russell W. Rumberger & Gregory J. Palardy, *Does Resegregation Matter?: The Impact of Social Composition on Academic Achievement in Southern High Schools* in SCHOOL RESEGREGATION: MUST THE SOUTH TURN BACK? 87 (John Charles Boger & Gary Orfield eds., 2005).

<sup>239</sup> *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 306 (2003); *Parents Involved in Cmty Sch. v. Seattle School Dist. No. 1*, 551 U.S. 701 (2007).

<sup>240</sup> Brief for 65 Leading American Businesses as Amici Curiae Supporting Respondents, *Grutter v. Bollinger*, *supra* note 239 (No. 02-241).

<sup>241</sup> Tico A. Almeida, *Refocusing School Finance Litigation on At-Risk Children: Leandro v. State of North Carolina*, 22 Yale L. & Pol'y Rev. 525, 549-51 (2004). "Unlike litigants in other states, the *Leandro* plaintiffs did not bring a federal claim of racially disparate impact under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or seek the co-counsel of civil rights organizations that traditionally advocate for people of color." Because of these initial limitations, the promise of *Leandro* to benefit children of color was doubtful. In fact, the only portion of the *Leandro* rulings that would directly impact and benefit children of color, mandatory pre-K education, was eventually overturned.

<sup>242</sup> These standards are adapted from a presentation entitled "Taking Schools Away: The School Consolidation Crusade", by Marty Strange, Policy Director, Rural School and Community Trust, given at the Rural Education Working Group meeting in Hendersonville, NC on April 21, 2009. Presentation available online at [http://www.ruraledu.org/user\\_uploads/file/REWG2009/REWG09\\_Consolidation.pdf](http://www.ruraledu.org/user_uploads/file/REWG2009/REWG09_Consolidation.pdf) (last visited April 26, 2011).

<sup>243</sup> *Milliken v. Bradley*, *supra* note 207, held that desegregation remedies such as busing could expand beyond district lines only where there was actual evidence that multiple districts were complicit in maintaining a segregation policy. For a discussion of the role each district has played in maintaining school segregation in Halifax County, see Section II of this report.

<sup>244</sup> For example, since the merger of the Raleigh City and Wake County Schools in 1976, Wake County Public School System has been a state and national leader, developing and implementing progressive education policies that benefit all children. Despite efforts to desegregate each separate school district, local educational leaders realized that true integration

and meaningful educational progress could only be accomplished under a unified school district. Local leaders spent the next several years developing a unification plan, and in 1976 Wake County Commissioners and the Wake County Legislative Delegation proposed to the North Carolina General Assembly a plan to merge the school districts and formed a unified Wake County Public School System. Since then, the educational innovations that have resulted from district merger in Wake County have led to the creation of high quality diverse schools, recruitment of world-class teachers and administrators, exponential growth within the district, and economic development that has benefited the entire county. Today, Wake County is the largest and one of the highest performing school districts in the state. The size and structural challenges facing a potential merger in Halifax County pale in comparison to those that Wake County encountered 35 years ago.

<sup>245</sup> N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-67, et. seq.

<sup>246</sup> N.C. GEN. STAT. § 115C-67.

<sup>247</sup> *Id.*

<sup>248</sup> N.C. CONST. ART. 2, § 24.

<sup>249</sup> See *Fletcher v. Collins*, 218 N.C. 1, 9 (1940); *Hinson v. Board of Comm'rs*, 218 N.C. 13, 9 (1940).

<sup>250</sup> Senator Tony Rand (Dem) introduced Senate Bill 120 in the 2007-2008 Session and Senate Bill 265 in the 2009-2010 Session, proposing state funding for only one school system per county.

<sup>251</sup> S. 120, 2007-2008 Leg. (NC 2007); S. 265, 2009-2010 Leg. (NC 2009).

<sup>252</sup> Jerry Johnson, *Why Rural Matters 2009: State and Regional Challenges and Opportunities*, THE RURAL SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY TRUST (Nov. 2009).

<sup>253</sup> *Id.*

<sup>254</sup> N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction, <http://apps.schools.nc.gov/pls/apex/ff?p=1:1:1272622829090869::NO>, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/accounting/data/> (last visited April 26, 2011).

<sup>255</sup> Enfield Middle and Inborden Elementary individual capacities cannot be determined based on the information we were provided that presented Enfield and Inborden as a combined capacity.

<sup>256</sup> McIver Elementary 2008-09 enroll 118, capacity 360, 32.78 percent; Bakers Elementary 2007-08 enroll 125, capacity 312, 40.06 percent; Brawley Middle 2008-09 enroll 199, capacity 504, 39.48 percent; Eastman Middle 2008-09 enroll 221, capacity 528, 41.86 percent.

<sup>257</sup> As noted in Section III above, the Teacher Working Conditions Survey results show vastly different perceptions of school conditions among the three districts. While RRGSD teacher perceptions of working conditions are roughly on par with state average, the 2010 survey does show that RRGSD teachers would like more meaningful professional development time. Teachers in WCS and HCSD are clearly feeling tensions and pressures both within the schoolhouse walls and in the community. Among HCSD teachers, 44 percent feel that there is not an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within their school, compared to 27 percent statewide. A majority feel that parents are not influential in schools and that the community is unsupportive. Twelve percent plan to continue teaching next year, but want to leave the school system, compared to a 5 percent state average, and 33% feel that their

school is not a good place to work. In WCS, 25 percent feel that their school is not a good place to work and 32 percent believe the community is unsupportive of the schools. A majority also feel that parents are not influential decision makers within the school. Teachers in the two majority-minority segregated districts have the strongest feelings of frustration and community tensions; since teacher working conditions translate into student learning conditions, it is understandable that these districts are also among the lowest performing, further demonstrating the need to reform the culture and atmosphere in which the multiple districts function before any focus on teacher quality and professional development can be effective.

<sup>258</sup> See William Fox, *Reviewing Economies of Size in Education*, 6 Journal of Educational Finance 273 (1981); John Goodlad, *A PLACE CALLED SCHOOL* (1984); R. Hawkins, *A Strategy for Revitalizing Public Education*, in CHALLENGE TO AMERICAN SCHOOLS (J. Bunzel, ed., 1990); David Monk, *Educational Costs and Small Rural Schools*, 16 J. Educ. Fin. 213 (1990); MARGARET PLECKI, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SIZE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (1991); Richard Turner, Gregory Camilli, Richard Kroc & John Hoover, *Policy Strategies, Teacher Salary Incentive and Student Achievement: An explanatory model*, 15 Educ. Res. 5 (1986). All cited in DEBORAH VERSTEGEN, *Funding Rural, Small Schools: Strategies at the Statehouse*, ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON RURAL EDUCATION AND SMALL SCHOOLS CHARLESTON WV.

<sup>259</sup> LORNA JIMERSON, THE RURAL SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY TRUST, *The Hobbit Effect: Why Small Works in Public Schools* (2006).

<sup>260</sup> *School Size: Research Based Conclusions*, THE RURAL SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY TRUST, (2003) <http://www.ruraledu.org/articles.php?id=2038> (last visited April 26, 2011).

<sup>261</sup> GORDON ALLPORT, THE NATURE OF PREJUDICE 537 (Addison-Wesley 1954).

<sup>262</sup> Bartlett et al., *supra* note 9.

<sup>263</sup> *Id.* The county's African American residents might also fear the loss of Black political control that a merger might bring—not an irrational fear, given the mistakes made during integration when Black schools were shut down and Black teachers' and administrators' positions eliminated.

# APPENDIX

## ADDITIONAL CHARTS, TABLES, AND MAPS

### Population and School Enrollment

#### Appendix 1

##### Halifax County Minority Population as a Percentage of Entire Population, 1960-2010

Year	Halifax County	Town of Enfield	Town of Halifax	Town of Scotland Neck	Town of Hobgood	Town of Littleton	City of Roanoke Rapids	Town of Weldon	South Rosemary / Belmont	South Weldon
1960	55.10%	50.80%	N/A	32.60%	N/A	36.30%	11.40%	49.60%	33.50%	N/A
1970	49.90%	56.80%	17.30%	37.10%	37.90%	39.40%	11.70%	39.80%	44.40%	64.80%
1980	60.10%	77.50%	16.20%	51.80%	59.50%	54.90%	19.40%	40.90%	43.00%	74.00%
1990	53.30%	73.90%	32.40%	57.50%	46.00%	40.10%	18.60%	56.90%	44.70%	81.00%
2000	57.70%	80.60%	36.60%	70.50%	52.70%	45.70%	28.40%	64.10%	51.00%	86.70%
2010	60.60%	88.30%	33.30%	69.90%	54.00%	51.90%	37.50%	74.70%	58.60%	86.00%

Sources: 1960-1980: US Census, Minnesota Population Center. National Historical Geographic Information System: Pre-release Version 0.1. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota 2004.  
<http://www.nhgis.org>  
 1990-2010: US census: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

#### Appendix 2

##### Final Average Daily Membership (ADM)

##### Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS), and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 1980-2010 [Table]

Average Daily Membership (ADM) reflects the total number of school days within a given term - usually a school month or school year - that a student's name is on the current roll of a class, regardless of his/her being present or absent, is the "number of days in membership" for that student. The sum of the

	Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS)	Weldon City Schools (WCS)	Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD)
1980	7,703	1,629	2,800
1981	7,489	1,590	2,710
1982	7,321	1,547	2,634
1983	7,114	1,460	2,588
1984	7,001	1,348	2,591
1985	6,786	1,285	2,619
1986	6,595	1,283	2,615
1987	6,599	1,323	2,691
1988	6,618	1,311	2,768
1989	6,493	1,249	2,825
1990	6,489	1,204	2,894
1991	6,441	1,180	2,891
1992	6,312	1,189	2,863
1993	6,199	1,226	2,950
1994	6,204	1,192	3,051
1995	6,177	1,216	3,066
1996	6,183	1,219	3,104
1997	6,244	1,157	3,122
1998	6,240	1,118	3,138
1999	6,084	1,134	3,114
2000	6,083	1,156	3,026
2001	5,896	1,139	3,027
2002	5,742	1,098	3,044
2003	5,549	1,084	3,008
2004	5,339	1,065	2,965
2005	5,053	1,038	2,948
2006	4,949	1,014	2,950
2007	4,736	1,009	2,925
2008	4,472	1,011	2,910
2009	4,265	981	2,915
2010	3,943	1,015	2,849

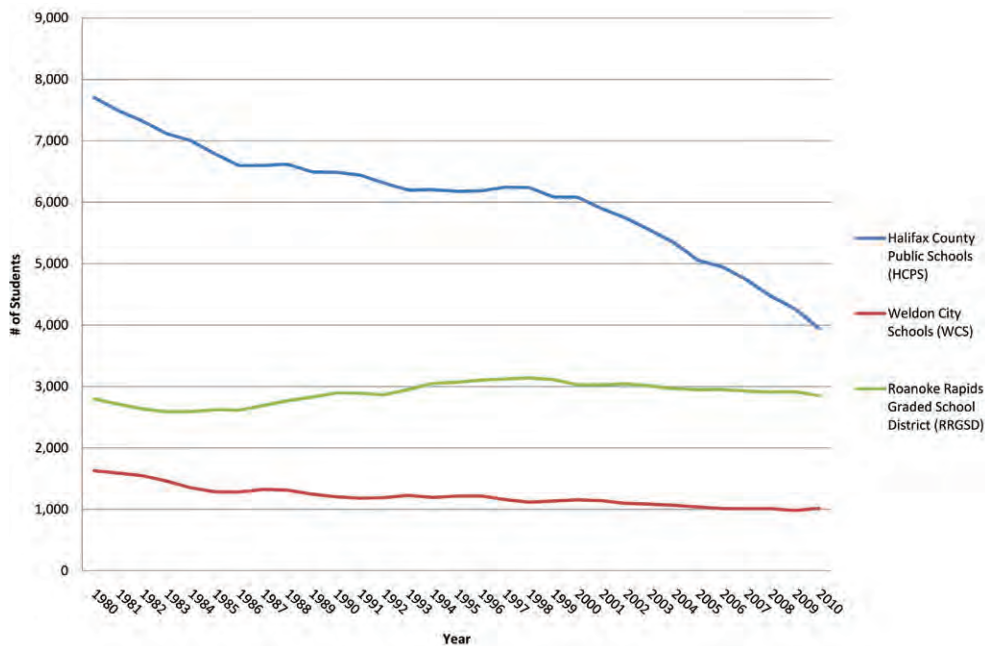
of days in membership" for that student. The sum of the "number of days in membership" for all students divided by the number of school days in the term yields ADM. The final average daily membership is the total days in membership for all students over the school year divided by the number of days school was in session. Average daily membership is a more accurate count of the number of students in school than enrollment.

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction  
<http://apps.schools.nc.gov/pls/apex/f?p=1:1:1272622829090869::NOhttp://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/accounting/data/>

## Appendix 3

### Final Average Daily Membership (ADM)

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City School (WCS), and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 1980-2010 [Graph]



Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction  
<http://apps.schools.nc.gov/pls/apex/f?p=1:1:1272622829090869::NO>,  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/accounting/data/>

## Appendix 4

### Enrollment by Race\*

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS), and Roanoke Rapids Grade School District (RRGSD), 2009-2010

District	School	Total Enrollment	White	%	Black	%	American Indian	%	Asian	%	Hispanic	%
HCPS	SCOTLAND NECK PRIMARY	134	6	4.48%	127	94.78%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.75%
HCPS	AURELIAN SPRINGS ELEMENTARY	416	39	9.38%	356	85.58%	12	2.88%	1	0.24%	8	1.92%
HCPS	DAWSON ELEMENTARY	188	3	1.60%	166	88.30%	0	0.00%	2	1.06%	17	9.04%
HCPS	PITTMAN ELEMENTARY	156	1	0.64%	149	95.51%	2	1.28%	3	1.92%	1	0.64%
HCPS	EVERETS ELEMENTARY	369	49	13.28%	310	84.01%	2	0.54%	3	0.81%	5	1.36%
HCPS	HOLLISTER ELEMENTARY	220	1	0.45%	91	41.36%	126	57.27%	0	0.00%	2	0.91%
HCPS	INBORDEN ELEMENTARY	370	7	1.89%	360	97.30%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	0.81%
HCPS	WILLIAM R DAVIE MIDDLE	433	30	6.93%	375	86.61%	19	4.39%	0	0.00%	9	2.08%
HCPS	ENFIELD MIDDLE	377	4	1.06%	366	97.08%	1	0.27%	1	0.27%	5	1.33%
HCPS	NORTHWEST HIGH	762	20	2.62%	670	87.93%	68	8.92%	0	0.00%	4	0.52%
HCPS	SOUTHEAST HALIFAX HIGH	558	8	1.43%	536	96.06%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	14	2.51%
WCS	WELDON ELEMENTARY	410	7	1.71%	394	96.10%	2	0.49%	3	0.73%	4	0.98%
WCS	WELDON MIDDLE	251	8	3.19%	237	94.42%	0	0.00%	3	1.20%	3	1.20%
WCS	WELDON STEM HIGH	292	7	2.40%	284	97.26%	1	0.34%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
WCS	ROANOKE VALLEY ECHS	65	11	16.92%	48	73.85%	3	4.62%	3	4.62%	0	0.00%
RRGSD	WILLIAM L MANNING ELEMENTARY	672	463	68.90%	163	24.26%	3	0.45%	17	2.53%	26	3.87%
RRGSD	BELMONT ELEMENTARY	758	501	66.09%	226	29.82%	3	0.40%	10	1.32%	18	2.37%
RRGSD	CHALONER MIDDLE	574	446	77.70%	102	17.77%	2	0.35%	15	2.61%	9	1.57%
RRGSD	ROANOKE RAPIDS HIGH	866	643	74.25%	191	22.06%	4	0.46%	13	1.27%	17	1.96%

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/accounting/data/>

\*Collected from each school at the end of the first school month.

## Appendix 5

### Free and Reduced Lunch

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2009-2010

District	School	School Final Average Daily Membership (ADM)	Students Qualifying for Free/Reduced Lunch (%)
HCPS	Scotland Neck Primary	132	100.00%
HCPS	Aurelian Springs Elementary	418	100.00%
HCPS	Dawson Elementary	191	100.00%
HCPS	Pittman Elementary	160	98.13%
HCPS	Everetts Elementary	359	94.15%
HCPS	Hollister Elementary	221	85.97%
HCPS	Inborden Elementary	376	100.00%
HCPS	William R Davie Middle	436	86.93%
HCPS	Enfield Middle	372	90.86%
HCPS	Northwest High	737	70.83%
HCPS	Southeast Halifax High	541	85.95%
<b>Total</b>		<b>3,943</b>	<b>90.39%</b>
WCS	Weldon Elementary	414	100.00%
WCS	Weldon Middle	247	92.71%
WCS	Weldon STEM High School	290	100.00%
WCS	Roanoke Valley Early College	64	0.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,015</b>	<b>94.88%</b>
RRGSD	Belmont Elementary	757	70.81%
RRGSD	William L Manning Elementary	667	45.73%
RRGSD	Chaloner Middle	578	48.10%
RRGSD	Roanoke Rapids High	847	41.09%
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,849</b>	<b>51.49%</b>

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/resources/data/>

## Graduation and Dropout Rates

### Appendix 6

#### High School Dropout Rates

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 1998-2010

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/consolidated/2009-10/consolidated-report.pdf>

YEAR	HCPS	HCPS # Dropouts	WCS	WCS # Dropouts	RRGSD	RRGSD # Dropouts	State	State # Dropouts
1998-1999	5.31%	98	4.64%	15	4.82%	42	7.33%	24,452
1999-2000	7.27%	133	4.87%	15	5.29%	47	6.43%	23,597
2000-2001	6.26%	110	4.40%	13	6.11%	57	5.71%	21,368
2001-2002	6.50%	115	6.43%	20	6.54%	61	5.25%	20,202
2002-2003	5.27%	91	4.96%	16	5.46%	50	4.78%	18,964
2003-2004	4.30%	71	5.11%	17	6.30%	59	4.86%	20,035
2004-2005	6.36%	106	4.75%	16	6.54%	62	4.74%	21,116
2005-2006	4.80%	78	4.06%	14	7.04%	68	5.04%	22,180
2006-2007	6.73%	109	5.33%	19	7.28%	71	5.24%	23,550
2007-2008	6.27%	97	4.86%	17	7.07%	67	4.97%	22,434
2008-2009	5.73%	83	4.29%	14	6.90%	64	4.27%	19,184
2009-2010	3.99%	52	4.01%	13	4.98%	45	3.75%	16,804

## Appendix 7

### Graduation Rates (Using 4 Year Cohort Measure)

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2005-2010

YEAR	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD	State
2005-2006	59.4%	47.6%	60.7%	68.7%
2006-2007	66.6%	67.8%	64.6%	69.5%
2007-2008	65.0%	69.9%	63.9%	70.3%
2008-2009	54.8%	75.6%	66.8%	71.7%
2009-2010	70.1%	74.2%	74.0%	74.2%

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction,  
NC School Report Cards  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

## Student Testing and Performance

### SAT PERFORMANCE

## Appendix 8

### Total SAT Average Scores\* of High School Seniors

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2001-2010

Year	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD	State
2001-2002	795	692	969	998
2002-2003	782	776	1025	1001
2003-2004	805	751	999	1006
2004-2005	789	791	1005	1010
2005-2006	813	790	947	1008
2006-2007	806	736	951	1004
2007-2008	805	788	983	1007
2008-2009	823	782	977	1006
2009-2010	776	723	930	1008

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction,  
NC School Report Cards  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

\*Combined total scores on the SAT critical reading and SAT mathematics sections. Scores from the new writing portion of the SAT are not included in these percentages.

## Appendix 9

### SAT Participation Rates of High School Seniors

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2001-2010

Year	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD	State
2001-2002	37.0%	57.0%	61.0%	67.0%
2002-2003	38.0%	51.0%	61.0%	68.0%
2003-2004	36.0%	71.0%	54.0%	70.0%
2004-2005	43.0%	59.0%	68.0%	74.0%
2005-2006	35.0%	66.0%	60.0%	71.0%
2006-2007	35.0%	55.0%	62.0%	71.0%
2007-2008	43.0%	60.0%	54.0%	63.0%
2008-2009	43.0%	59.0%	48.0%	63.0%
2009-2010	46.0%	24.0%	45.0%	63.0%

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction,  
NC School Report Cards  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

## END-OF GRADE TEST PERFORMANCE

### Appendix 10

#### End-of-Grade (EOG) Test Performance

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2002-2010 [TABLE]  
Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level

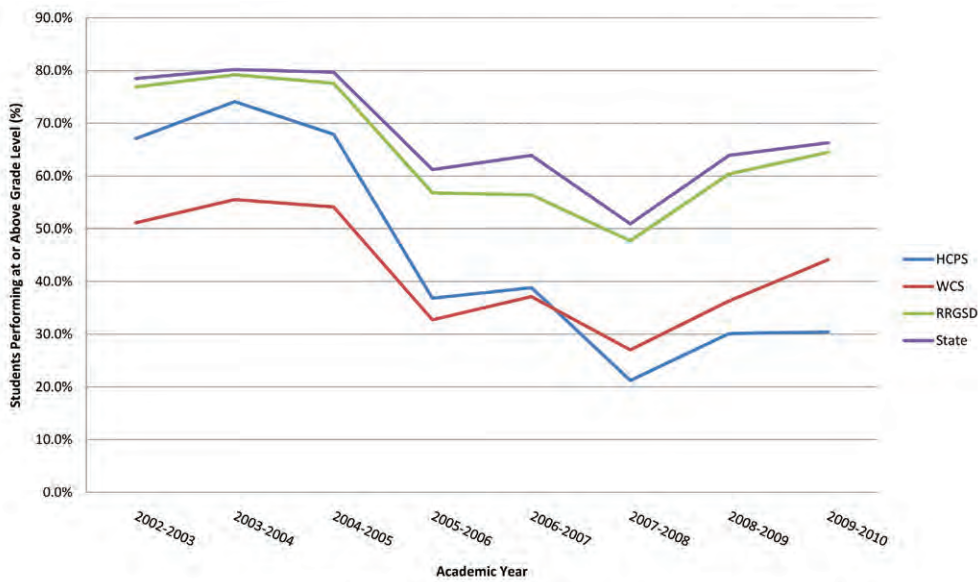
Year	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD	State
2002-2003	67.1%	51.1%	76.9%	78.5%
2003-2004	74.1%	55.5%	79.2%	80.2%
2004-2005	67.9%	54.1%	77.6%	79.7%
2005-2006	36.8%	32.7%	56.8%	61.2%
2006-2007	38.8%	37.1%	56.4%	63.9%
2007-2008	21.2%	27.0%	47.7%	50.9%
2008-2009	30.1%	36.3%	60.4%	63.9%
2009-2010	30.4%	44.1%	64.5%	66.3%

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/vol2/rsds2002/index.html>

## Appendix 11

### End-of-Grade (EOG) Test Performance

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2002-2010  
Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level [GRAPH]



Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/vol2/rsds2002/index.html>

## Appendix 12

### Economically Disadvantaged Student End-of-Grade (EOG) Test Performance

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2001-2010  
Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Economically Disadvantaged Performing at or Above Grade Level [TABLE]

Year	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD	State
2001-2002	62.1%	37.2%	54.8%	59.3%
2002-2003	64.3%	48.9%	66.1%	65.6%
2003-2004	72.9%	54.4%	65.5%	68.6%
2004-2005	65.0%	52.6%	63.9%	68.3%
2005-2006	33.8%	31.0%	40.9%	45.1%
2006-2007	35.7%	34.9%	40.2%	48.5%
2007-2008	18.7%	24.5%	31.7%	33.3%
2008-2009	26.9%	34.6%	45.7%	48.3%
2009-2010	28.6%	40.7%	51.5%	52.1%

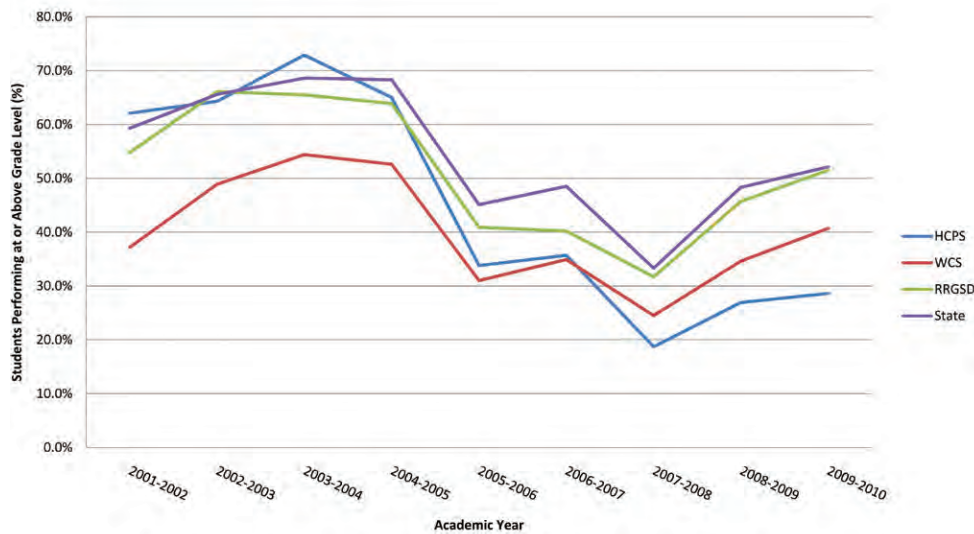
Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction,  
NC School Report Cards  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>



## Appendix 13

### Economically Disadvantaged Student End-of-Grade (EOG) Test Performance

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2001-2010  
Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Economically Disadvantaged Performing at or Above Grade Level [GRAPH]



Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

## Appendix 14

### End-of-Grade (EOG) Reading Test Performance

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded Schools District (RRGSD)  
Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level [TABLE]

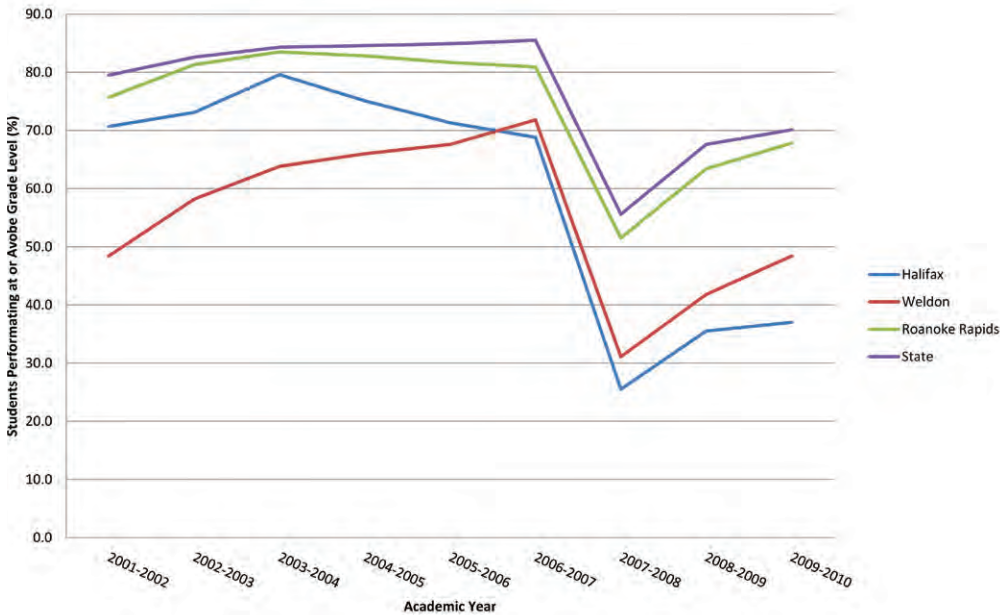
Year	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD	State
2001-2002	70.7%	48.4%	75.7%	79.5%
2002-2003	73.1%	58.2%	81.3%	82.6%
2003-2004	79.6%	63.8%	83.5%	84.3%
2004-2005	75.1%	66.0%	82.8%	84.6%
2005-2006	71.3%	67.6%	81.7%	84.9%
2006-2007	68.8%	71.8%	80.9%	85.5%
2007-2008	25.5%	31.1%	51.5%	55.6%
2008-2009	35.5%	41.8%	63.4%	67.6%
2009-2010	37.0%	48.4%	67.8%	70.1%

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction,  
NC School Report Cards  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

## Appendix 15

### End-of-Grade (EOG) Reading Test Performance

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD)  
Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level [GRAPH]



Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction,  
NC School Report Cards  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

## Appendix 16

### End-of-Grade (EOG) Math Test Performance

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD)  
Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level [TABLE]

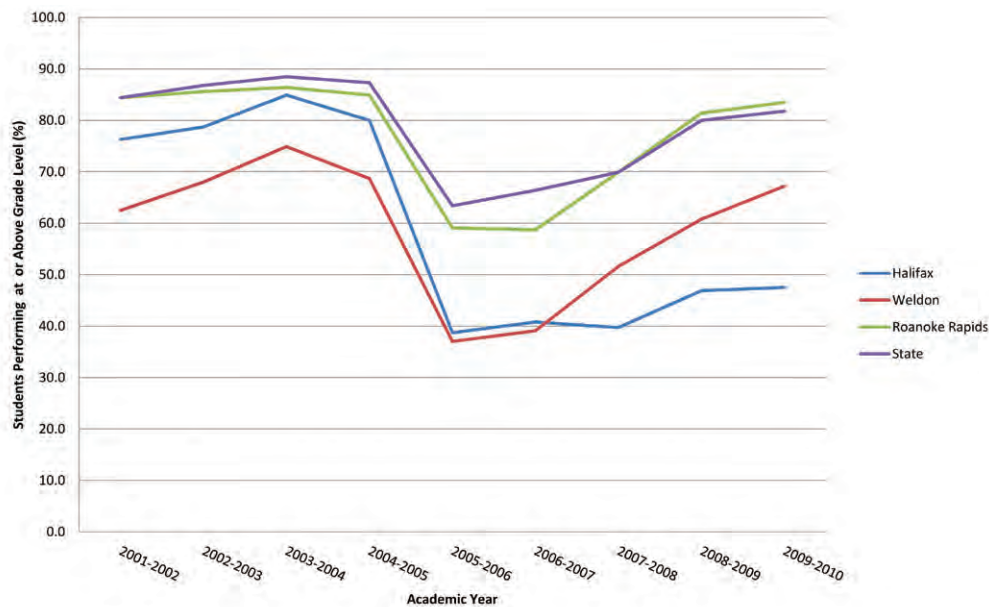
Year	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD	State
2001-2002	76.3%	62.5%	84.4%	84.4%
2002-2003	78.7%	68.0%	85.6%	86.8%
2003-2004	84.9%	74.9%	86.4%	88.5%
2004-2005	80.0%	68.7%	84.9%	87.3%
2005-2006	38.7%	37.0%	59.1%	63.4%
2006-2007	40.8%	39.1%	58.7%	66.4%
2007-2008	39.7%	51.6%	69.9%	69.9%
2008-2009	46.9%	60.8%	81.4%	80.0%
2009-2010	47.5%	67.2%	83.5%	81.8%

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction,  
NC School Report Cards  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

## Appendix 17

### End-of-Grade (EOG) Math Test Performance

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD)  
Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level [GRAPH]



Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction, NC School Report Cards <http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

## Appendix 18

### Halifax County Public Schools (HPCS) End-of-Grade (EOG) Test Performance by Race & Economic Status, 2001-2010

Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level

Year	White	Black	Economically Disadvantaged	Non-Economically Disadvantaged
2001-2002	69.9%	62.7%	62.1%	72.5%
2002-2003	71.7%	66.2%	64.3%	84.3%
2003-2004	80.0%	73.3%	72.9%	82.3%
2004-2005	73.5%	67.1%	65.0%	85.5%
2005-2006	45.9%	35.5%	33.8%	50.5%
2006-2007	44.8%	37.6%	35.7%	51.8%
2007-2008	30.2%	19.5%	18.7%	33.1%
2008-2009	41.8%	28.7%	26.9%	47.1%
2009-2010	44.4%	28.9%	28.6%	43.1%

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction, NC School Report Cards <http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

## Appendix 19

### Weldon City Schools (WCS) End-of-Grade (EOG) Test Performance by Race & Economic Status, 2001-2010

Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level

Year	White	Black	Economically Disadvantaged	Non-Economically Disadvantaged
2001-2002	40.0%	40.4%	37.2%	55.3%
2002-2003	33.3%	51.5%	48.9%	70.0%
2003-2004	36.4%	55.8%	54.4%	63.5%
2004-2005	46.2%	54.2%	52.6%	67.3%
2005-2006	15.4%	33.3%	31.0%	43.1%
2006-2007	45.5%	37.2%	34.9%	50.8%
2007-2008	40.0%	26.9%	24.5%	36.5%
2008-2009	37.5%	36.2%	34.6%	44.6%
2009-2010	57.1%	42.3%	40.7%	60.0%

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction,  
NC School Report Cards  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

## Appendix 20

### Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD) End-of-Grade (EOG) Test Performance by Race & Economic Status, 2001-2010

Percent of 3rd-8th Grade Students Performing at or Above Grade Level

Year	White	Black	Economically Disadvantaged	Non-Economically Disadvantaged
2001-2002	76.8%	49.7%	54.8%	81.6%
2002-2003	80.8%	62.5%	66.1%	83.8%
2003-2004	83.8%	62.2%	65.5%	89.1%
2004-2005	83.0%	57.4%	63.9%	87.6%
2005-2006	63.6%	33.6%	40.9%	70.8%
2006-2007	61.6%	35.9%	40.2%	69.2%
2007-2008	53.0%	25.0%	31.7%	61.5%
2008-2009	65.9%	35.9%	45.7%	72.7%
2009-2010	70.9%	39.6%	51.5%	77.7%

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction,  
NC School Report Cards  
<http://www.ncschoolreportcards.com/src/>

# End-of-Course (EOC) Performance

## Appendix 21

### End-of-Course (EOC) Test Performance

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2002-2010  
Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on Subject Area Exams\*

Year	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD	State
2002-2003	41.3%	39.6%	67.0%	71.0%
2003-2004	44.2%	50.1%	74.3%	74.0%
2004-2005	38.6%	56.1%	72.4%	74.8%
2005-2006	38.6%	44.5%	66.6%	71.8%
2006-2007	38.1%	43.2%	57.7%	66.4%
2007-2008	34.5%	46.0%	61.2%	68.4%
2008-2009	32.1%	39.2%	65.8%	71.4%
2009-2010	40.5%	57.1%	75.8%	80.7%

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction,  
<http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

\* English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics & Economics, and US History

## Appendix 22

### End-of-Course (EOC) Test Performance by District and Race

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD) 2001-2010  
Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on Subject Area Exams\*

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction,  
<http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

\* English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics & Economics, and US History

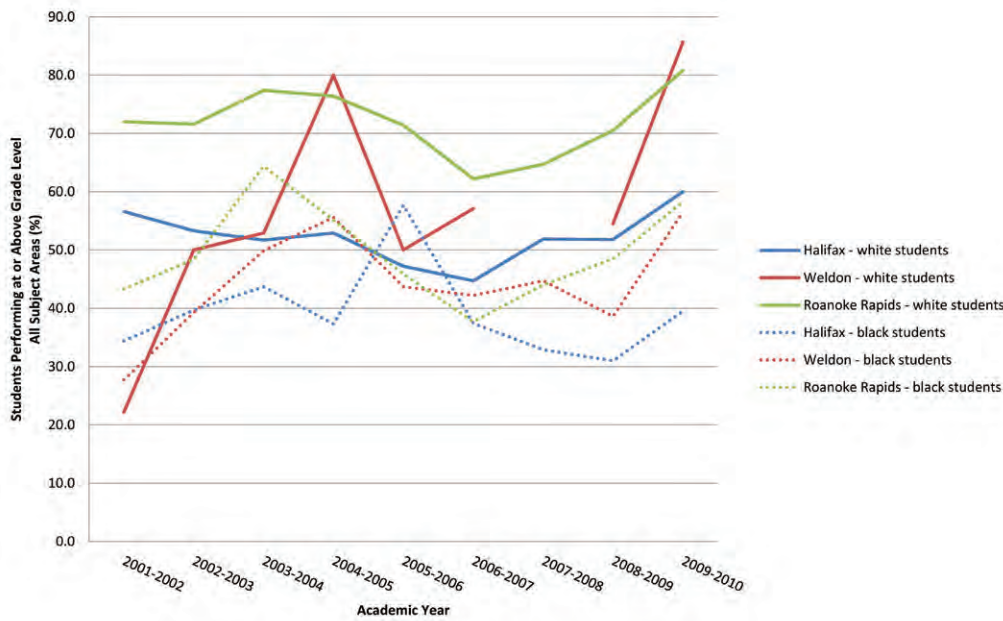
Year	HCPS		WCS		RRGSD	
	White Students	Black Students	White Students	Black Students	White Students	Black Students
2001-2002	56.6%	34.4%	22.2%	27.7%	72.0%	43.3%
2002-2003	53.3%	39.7%	50.0%	39.3%	71.6%	48.4%
2003-2004	51.7%	43.7%	52.9%	49.9%	77.4%	64.4%
2004-2005	52.9%	37.3%	80.0%	55.6%	76.4%	55.1%
2005-2006	47.2%	57.7%	50.0%	43.7%	71.4%	45.9%
2006-2007	44.7%	37.4%	57.1%	42.2%	62.2%	37.7%
2007-2008	51.9%	32.9%	N/A	44.7%	64.7%	44.0%
2008-2009	51.8%	31.0%	54.5%	38.6%	70.5%	48.5%
2009-2010	60.0%	39.5%	85.7%	56.5%	80.8%	58.3%

## Appendix 23

### End-of-Course (EOC) Test Performance by District and Race

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2001-2010

Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on Subject Area Exams\*



Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

\* English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics & Economics, and US History

## Appendix 24

### Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), End-of-Course (EOC) Test Performance by Race & Economic Status, 2001-2010

Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on Subject Area Exams\*

Year	White	Black	Economically Disadvantaged	Non-Economically Disadvantaged
2001-2002	56.6%	34.4%	N/A*	N/A
2002-2003	53.3%	39.7%	N/A	N/A
2003-2004	51.7%	43.7%	N/A	N/A
2004-2005	52.9%	37.3%	32.2%	42.0%
2005-2006	47.2%	57.7%	37.5%	40.7%
2006-2007	44.7%	37.4%	35.4%	43.1%
2007-2008	51.9%	32.9%	32.7%	38.6%
2008-2009	51.8%	31.0%	29.8%	38.2%
2009-2010	60.0%	39.5%	39.0%	46.0%

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

\* English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics & Economics, and US History

## Appendix 25

### Weldon City Schools (WCS) End-of-Course (EOC) Test Performance by Race & Economic Status, 2001-2010

Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on Subject Area Exams\*

Year	White	Black	Economically Disadvantaged	Non-Economically Disadvantaged
2001-2002	22.2%	27.7%	N/A*	N/A
2002-2003	50.0%	39.3%	N/A	N/A
2003-2004	52.9%	49.9%	N/A	N/A
2004-2005	80.0%	55.6%	57.6%	54.3%
2005-2006	50.0%	43.7%	46.4%	40.1%
2006-2007	57.1%	42.2%	39.7%	50.6%
2007-2008	N/A	44.7%	43.1%	52.4%
2008-2009	54.5%	38.6%	20.6%	48.0%
2009-2010	85.7%	56.5%	46.3%	56.4%

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

\* English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics & Economics, and US History

## Appendix 26

### Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD) End-of-Course (EOC) Test Performance by Race & Economic Status, 2001-2010 Percent Students Performing at or Above Grade Level on Subject Area Exams\*

Year	White	Black	Economically Disadvantaged	Non-Economically Disadvantaged
2001-2002	72.0%	43.3%	N/A*	N/A
2002-2003	71.6%	48.4%	N/A	N/A
2003-2004	77.4%	64.4%	N/A	N/A
2004-2005	76.4%	55.1%	59.7%	77.1%
2005-2006	71.4%	45.9%	52.8%	72.0%
2006-2007	62.2%	37.7%	44.0%	63.2%
2007-2008	64.7%	44.0%	49.9%	65.2%
2008-2009	70.5%	48.5%	42.4%	72.1%
2009-2010	80.8%	58.3%	57.4%	82.9%

\*Not Available

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

\* English I, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry (dropped in 2009-'10), Physical Science, Physics (dropped in 2009-'10), Civics & Economics, and US History

## School Achievement

### Appendix 27

#### Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) By School

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2009-2010

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/ayprelts>

District	School	AYP	#Targets Met/ # Total Targets	% Targets Met
HCPS	Scotland Neck Primary	No	1/2	50.0%
HCPS	Aurelian Springs Elementary	No	10/13	76.9%
HCPS	Dawson Elementary	No	7/13	53.8%
HCPS	Pittman Elementary	No	10/13	76.9%
HCPS	Everetts Elementary	No	10/13	76.9%
HCPS	Hollister Elementary	No	16/17	94.1%
HCPS	Inborden Elementary	No	7/13	53.8%
HCPS	William R Davie Middle	No	9/17	52.9%
HCPS	Enfield Middle	Yes	13/13	100.0%
HCPS	Northwest High	No	10/13	76.9%
HCPS	Southeast Halifax High	No	7/13	53.8%
RRGSD	Belmont Elementary	No	19/21	90.5%
RRGSD	Chaloner Middle	No	20/21	95.2%
RRGSD	Roanoke Rapids High	No	11/15	73.3%
RRGSD	William L Manning Elementary	No	19/21	90.5%
WCS	Roanoke Valley Early College	Yes	9/9	100.0%
WCS	Weldon Elementary	Yes	13/13	100.0%
WCS	Weldon Middle	Yes	13/13	100.0%
WCS	Weldon Stem High School	No	10/13	76.9%

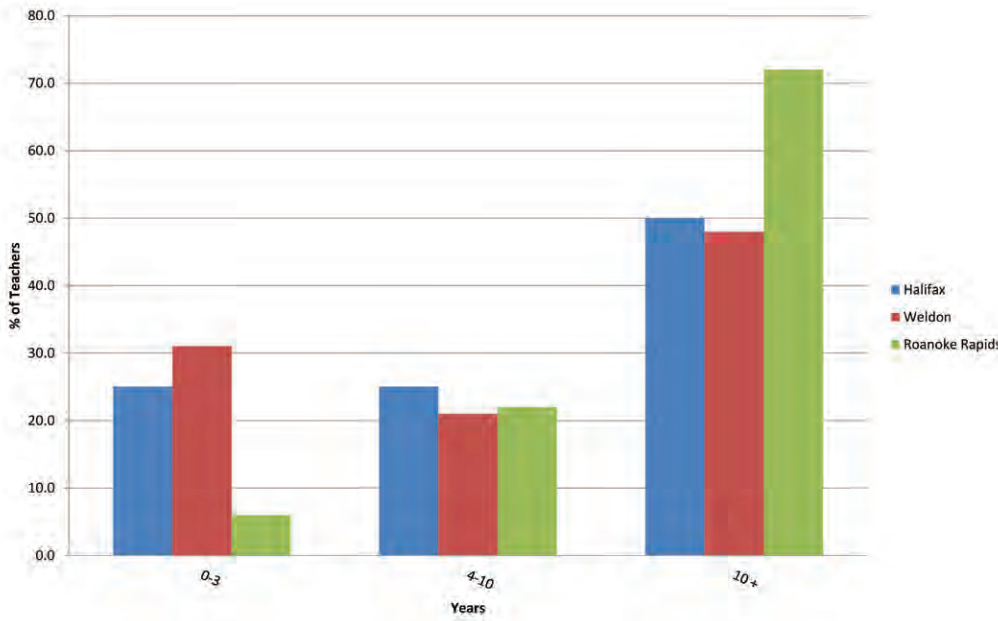
# Teacher Experience

## Appendix 28

### Elementary School Teachers' Years of Teaching Experience

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2009-2010

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncreportcards.org/src/>

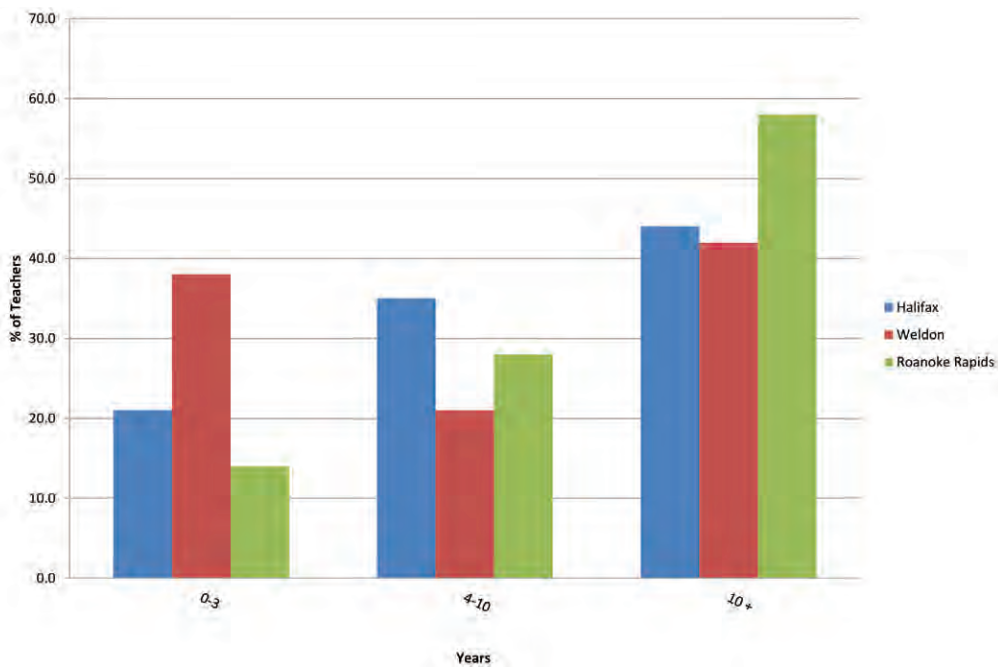


## Appendix 29

### Middle School Teachers' Years of Teaching Experience

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2009-2010

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction  
<http://www.ncreportcards.org/src/>

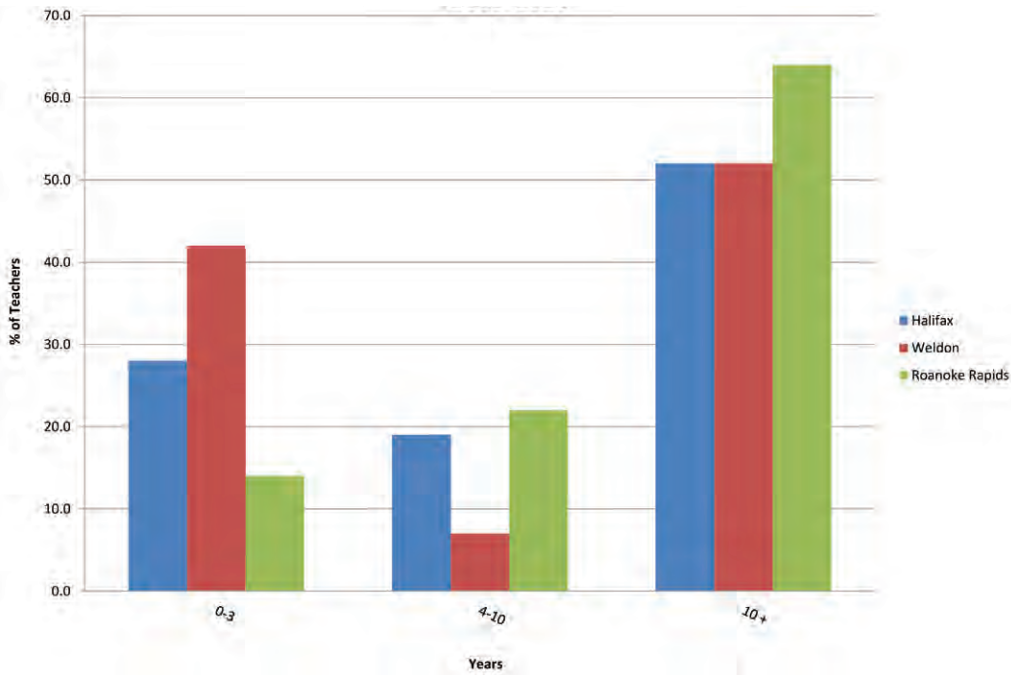




## Appendix 30

High School Teachers' Years of Teaching Experience, Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2009-2010

Source: N.C. Dep't of Pub. Instruction, <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>



## District and Student Funding

### Appendix 31

#### School District Per Pupil Funding by Funding Source

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2009-2010

\*Includes county base allocation and supplemental tax funding for RRGSD and WCS

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

School District	Local Funds*	State Funds	Federal Funds	Total Per Pupil Funding
HCPS	\$ 572.77	\$ 6,707.17	\$ 3,383.07	\$ 10,663.01
WCS	\$ 2,847.86	\$ 6,910.51	\$ 3,455.39	\$ 13,213.76
RRGSD	\$ 1,477.90	\$ 5,738.89	\$ 1,543.02	\$ 8,759.81
State Average	\$ 1,946.44	\$ 5,224.93	\$ 1,274.82	\$ 8,446.19

### Appendix 32

#### School District Expenditure Percentages by Category, All Funding Sources

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD)\*, 2009-2010

\*Chart is based on Department of Public Instruction Rounding.

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction <http://www.ncreportcards.org/src>

School District	Salaries	Benefits	Supplies & Materials	Purchased Services	Equipment
HCPS	54.0%	15.0%	13.0%	15.0%	1.0%
RRGSD	65.0%	18.0%	6.0%	10.0%	0.0%
WCS	58.0%	16.0%	9.0%	17.0%	1.0%
State Average	65.0%	17.0%	8.0%	8.0%	1.0%

## Appendix 33

### Average Per Pupil Expenditures

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2004-2010

Year	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD
2004	\$8,083	\$9,464	\$7,320
2005	\$8,677	\$10,676	\$7,680
2006	\$8,711	\$11,191	\$8,296
2007	\$9,369	\$12,343	\$8,622
2008	\$9,910	\$12,053	\$9,210
2009	\$10,667	\$13,204	\$9,165
2010	\$10,663	\$13,214	\$8,760

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction, NC Public Schools Statistical Profile  
<http://apps.schools.nc.gov/pls/apex/f?p=1:1:1272622829090869::NO>

## Appendix 34

### School District Appropriations and Expenditures, 2010 Fiscal Year

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD)

\*Data based on totals for FY 2010, not 2009-2010 academic year. Per pupil expenditure is calculated by using final average daily membership (ADM).

County Appropriations & Supplemental Taxes for Education FY 2010			
	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD
County Appropriations	\$2,647,688	\$1,883,528	\$3,682,310
Per Pupil Amount	\$671	\$1,856	\$1,292
Rank for County Appropriations/Supp. Taxes	110	24	72
Per Pupil Expenditure Ranking FY 2010 (Child Nutrition Included)			
	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD
State PPE	\$6,707.17	\$6,910.51	\$5,738.89
State PPE Rank	21	19	48
Federal PPE	\$3,383.07	\$3,455.39	\$1,543.03
Federal PPE Rank	2	1	46
Local PPE	\$572.77	\$2,847.86	\$1,477.90
Local PPE Rank	115	8	75
Total PPE	\$10,663.01	\$13,213.76	\$8,759.82
Total PPE Rank	13	3	64
Per Pupil Expenditure Ranking FY 2010 (Child Nutrition Excluded)			
	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD
State PPE	\$6,700.17	\$6,873.10	\$5,714.35
State PPE Rank	21	19	51
Federal PPE	\$2,363.65	\$2,948.67	\$1,258.60
Federal PPE Rank	2	1	37
Local PPE	\$930.62	\$2,655.37	\$1,319.75
Local PPE Rank	110	8	78
Total PPE	\$9,994.44	\$12,477.14	\$8,292.70
Total PPE Rank	14	3	63
Highlights of the NC Public School Budget, ARRA Allotted Local Education Agency (LEA) Funding Total FY 2010			
	HCPS	WCS	RRGSD
Federal State Stabilization	\$1,269,353	\$314,845	\$813,180
Title I American Recovery and Relief Act (ARRA) stimulus funds	\$1,996,025	\$533,316	\$499,667
IDEA ARRA Funding	\$1,070,419	\$327,839	\$635,188
Other ARRA Funding	\$70,981	\$14,035	\$44,252
Total ARRA Funding	\$4,406,778	\$1,190,035	\$1,992,287

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction, NC Public Schools Statistical Profile  
<http://apps.schools.nc.gov/pls/apex/f?p=1:1:1272622829090869::NO>

# Discipline

## Appendix 35

### Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS) Suspensions and Expulsions by Gender & Race, 2009-2010

\*Rounded to Nearest Percentage Point

Gender	Ethnicity	# Short-term Suspensions	% of Short Term Suspensions	# Long-term Suspensions	# Expulsions
Female	American Indian	7	0%	0	0
Female	Black	454	27%	< 5	0
Female	Hispanic	5	0%	0	0
Female	Multi	< 5	0%	0	0
Female	White	< 5	0%	0	0
Male	American Indian	27	2%	0	0
Male	Black	1,116	66%	< 5	0
Male	Hispanic	17	1%	0	0
Male	Multi	11	1%	0	0
Male	White	23	1%	0	0
Not Reported	Other/Not Reported	24	1%	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1689</b>	<b>100%</b>		

Source: N.D. Dep't Pub. Instruction, DPI 2009-'10 Consolidated Data Report <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/consolidated/2009-10/consolidated-report.jpg>

## Appendix 36

### Weldon City Schools (WCS) Suspensions and Expulsions by Gender and Race, 2009-2010

\*Rounded to Nearest Percentage Point

Gender	Ethnicity	# Short-term Suspension	% Short-term Suspensions	# Long-term Suspensions	# Expulsions
Female	Black	55	18%	< 5	0
Female	Hispanic	< 5	0%	0	0
Female	White	< 5	0%	0	0
Male	Black	191	62%	0	0
Male	White	< 5	0%	0	0
Not Reported	Other/Not Reported	58	19%	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>		

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction, DPI 2009-'10 Consolidated Data Report <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/consolidated/2009-10/consolidated-report.pdf>

## Appendix 37

### Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD) Suspensions and Expulsions by Gender and Race, 2009-2010

\*Rounded to Nearest Percentage Point

Gender	Ethnicity	# Short-term Suspension	% Short-term Suspensions	# Long-term Suspensions	# Expulsions
Female	Black	55	18%	< 5	0
Female	Hispanic	< 5	0%	0	0
Female	White	< 5	0%	0	0
Male	Black	191	62%	0	0
Male	White	< 5	0%	0	0
Not Reported	Other/Not Reported	58	19%	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>307</b>	<b>100%</b>		

Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction, DPI 2009-'10 Consolidated Data Report <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/consolidated/2009-10/consolidated-report.pdf>

## Appendix 38

### Average Daily Membership (Grades 9-12) and Reportable Acts

Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS), Weldon City Schools (WCS) and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District (RRGSD), 2009-2010

\*Criminal offenses committed in schools that require reporting to law enforcement pursuant to NC General Statute 115C-12(21)

District	Average Daily Membership, Grades 9-12	Reportable Acts*	Reportable Act Rate (per 1000 students)
HCPS	1,278	21	16.43
WCS	290	2	6.9
RRGSD	847	7	8.26

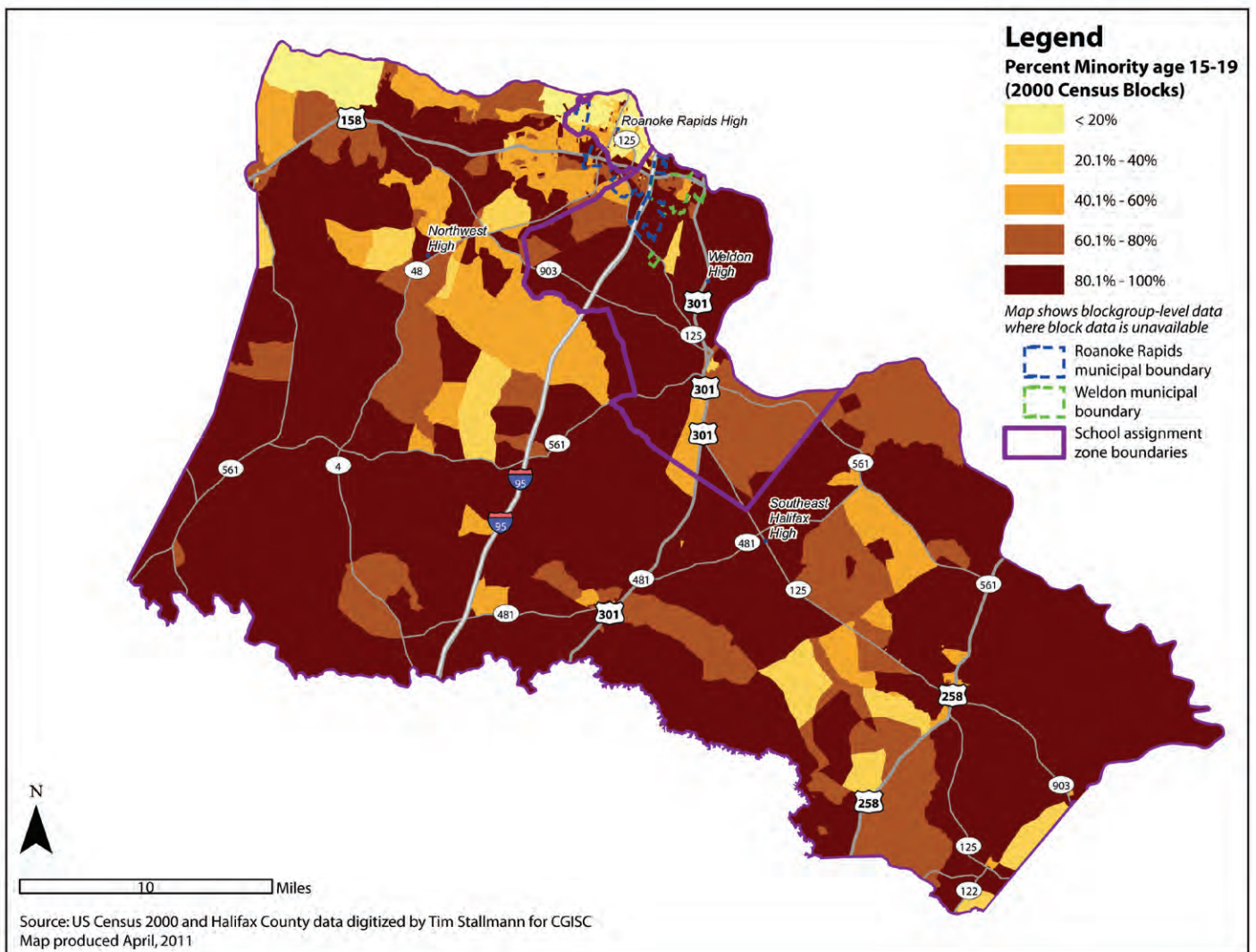
Source: N.C. Dep't Pub. Instruction, DPI 2009-'10 Consolidated Data Report <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/research/discipline/reports/consolidated/2009-10/consolidated-report.pdf>

## District and Municipal Boundaries

### Appendix 39 WCS and RRGSD School District Boundaries

As compared to Weldon City and Roanoke Rapids Municipal Boundaries.

Source: Halifax County Concentration of Minority Population, Ages 15-19 (2000 Census). Map created by Cedar Grove Institute for Sustainable Communities



# Facilities

## Appendix 40

### Enrollment Capacity for Halifax County Public School (HCPS)

\*District as of August 2010

\*Data not provided from Weldon City Schools and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District

School	Enrollment	Capacity (August 2010)	% Capacity
Scotland Neck Primary	132	336	39.29%
Aurelian Springs Elementary	418	576	72.57%
Dawson Elementary	191	384	49.74%
Everetts Elementary	359	456	78.73%
Hollister Elementary	221	336	65.77%
Pittman Elementary	160	384	41.67%
Enfield Middle & Inborden Elementary	748	1008	74.21%
William R Davie Middle	436	912	47.81%
Southeast Halifax High	541	936	57.80%
Northwest High	737	1320	55.83%

Source: Halifax County Schools Real Property Data Report August 2, 2010; submitted by HCPS in response to public records request from UNC Center for Civil Rights, October 11, 2010

## Appendix 41

### Halifax County Public Schools (HCPS)\*

School Construction Dates

\*Data not provided from Weldon City Schools and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District

District	School	Construction Dates
HCPS	SCOTLAND NECK PRIM	unknown
HCPS	AURELIAN SPRINGS EL	1990
HCPS	DAWSON ELEMENTARY	1938, 1957
HCPS	PITTMAN ELEMENTARY	1959
HCPS	EVERETTS ELEMENTARY	1958
HCPS	HOLLISTER ELEMENTARY	1960
HCPS	INBORDEN ELEMENTARY	2007
HCPS	WILLIAM R DAVIE MID	1999
HCPS	ENFIELD MIDDLE	2007
HCPS	NORTHWEST HIGH	1970, 1972, 1976, 1979, 1981, 1994, 1995
HCPS	SOUTHEAST HALIFAX HI	1980
RRGSD	WILLIAM L MANNING EL	1953, 1956, 1958, 1981
RRGSD	BELMONT ELEMENTARY	1997
RRGSD	CHALONER MIDDLE	1924, 1938, 1950, 1982
RRGSD	ROANOKE RAPIDS HIGH	1921, 1946, 1948, 1952, 2000, 2004
WCS	WELDON ELEMENTARY	unknown
WCS	WELDON MIDDLE	unknown
WCS	WELDON STEM HIGH	unknown
WCS	ROANOKE VALLEY ECHS	unknown

Source: Halifax County Schools Real Property Data Report August 2, 2010; submitted by HCPS in response to public records request from UNC Center for Civil Rights, October 11, 2010







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