



Fact Sheet

Magnet Schools

Magnet Schools Bring Innovation and Efficiency to the System

- ✓ WCPSS has 32 magnet schools (19 elementary, 8 middle, 5 high school), offering a variety of programs. <http://www.wcpss.net/magnet/pdfs/MagnetHistory.pdf>
- ✓ Magnet schools take students out of overcrowded classrooms, freeing up more space in base schools. Magnet schools allow the system to use all buildings more efficiently.
- ✓ Magnet schools help save the county money by filling many schools in older neighborhoods, schools that would otherwise be underutilized.
- ✓ WCPSS has won seven U.S. Department of Education Magnet Schools Assistance Program grants, amounting to more than \$36 million for teacher professional development and innovative program design benefiting all students.
- ✓ The school system failed to win a \$10.3 million magnet grant for 2010-2011, which would have supported programs at Millbrook High School and Brentwood and Smith elementary schools. This federal funding is directly tied to the goal of "reducing isolation of racial minorities."
- ✓ Many magnet schools draw suburban students to low-income urban neighborhoods with historically low levels of parent involvement. Magnet schools attract highly engaged parents whose involvement in the school community benefits all students.
- ✓ Unique, innovative magnet programs help attract and retain highly skilled teachers and staff to work in a diverse learning environment.
- ✓ Magnet schools attract and retain middle-class students. If the magnet system is eliminated or weakened, many middle-class families may abandon the public school system. (According to the school system's most recent annual report, 16.8 percent of eligible students in Wake County do not attend public schools.)
- ✓ The magnet system, with its emphasis on choice, is critical to the future of our system. Our nationally acclaimed magnet schools are the equivalent of learning labs, where students who may learn differently or have different needs can benefit from best practices and innovative themes.
- ✓ While 22 percent of WCPSS students attend year-round and magnet schools by choice, busing costs remain lower than those of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

revised November 1, 2010