

I fear your simulation of Free/Reduced Lunch distribution is based on circular logic, and so projections of FRL students in the future are artificially low.

Here's why:

From Appendix F, pages 83-86 in Wake County's Student Assignment Plan—
With the stated goal of forecasting the future distribution of FRL students in the future, 3 data points were used--

1. The 2010-11 FRL percentage of 32.4
2. The projection that over the next few years the WCPSS population will grow to nearly 200,000 students, and
3. In 2010-11, WCPSS had 36 schools (22% of all our schools) with more than 50% FRL

The next paragraph states that "Although the percentage of FRL students has actually been increasing by approximately 1% per year in recent years, holding the percentage constant to 2010-11 levels maintains an 'apples to apples' comparison for simulation purposes."

Using the 2010-11 distribution for FRL percentages across the schools, the study forecast to a 200-school scenario (about 9 years, based on a 4 school per year growth), **without considering the reality of the 1% annual increase in FRL students**, and then pronounces, at the bottom of page 85, "that the proportion of schools above 50% would be essentially the same."

Well, when you want to forecast something but omit the variable which would dramatically affect your outcome, in this case the compounding 1% annual growth in FRL students, you recreate your original numbers and, **in this case artificially DEFLATE your growing FRL numbers.**

Why is this important?

To project an unchanging number of high poverty schools in the face of rising poverty is naïve, deceptive, and irresponsible. Truthfully, as poverty rises, our FRL numbers will rise as well. We must make projections based on facts rather than convenience, so that we can make responsible and educated decisions. Using academic achievement as a true pillar of the plan, we must make decisions and commit ourselves to mitigate the impact of poverty on our schools and on our children.