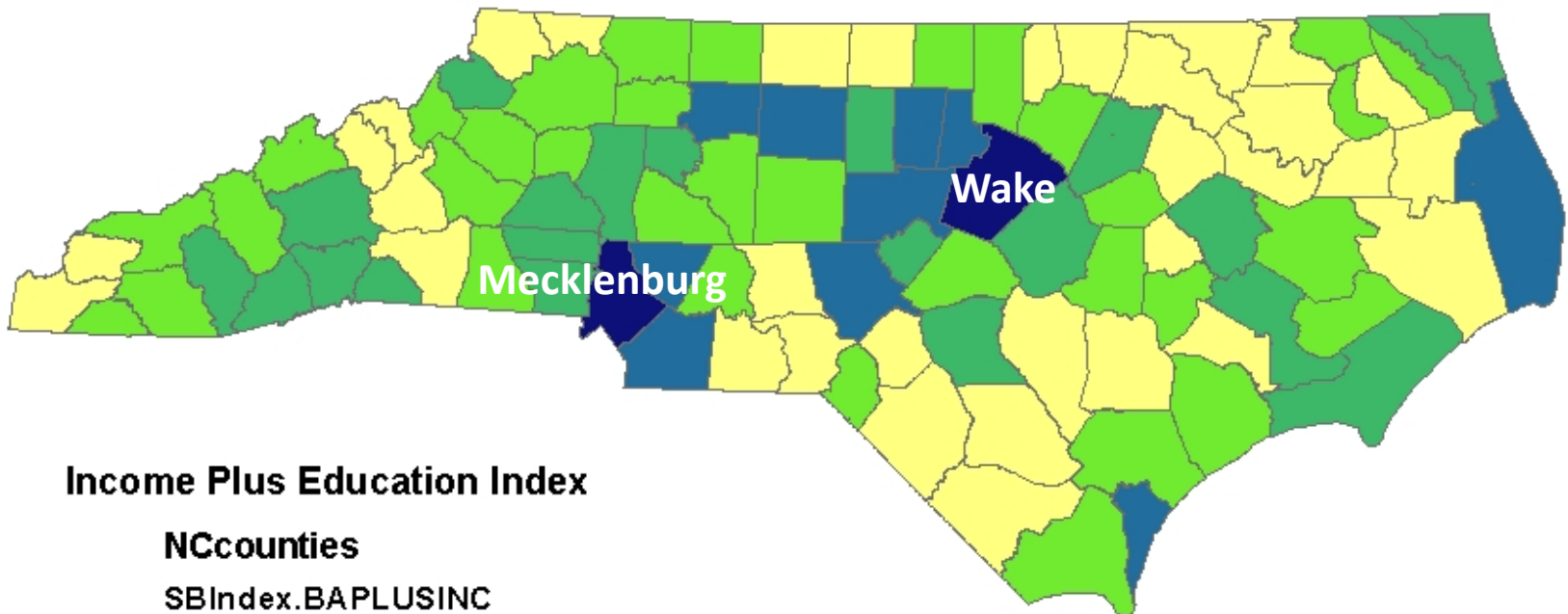


# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools The Experience and Lessons of Re-segregation

John Chesser

October 2010

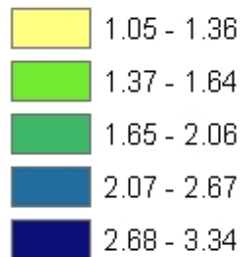
## 2000 NC Education and Income Index by County



### Income Plus Education Index

#### NCcounties

SBIndex.BAPLUSINC

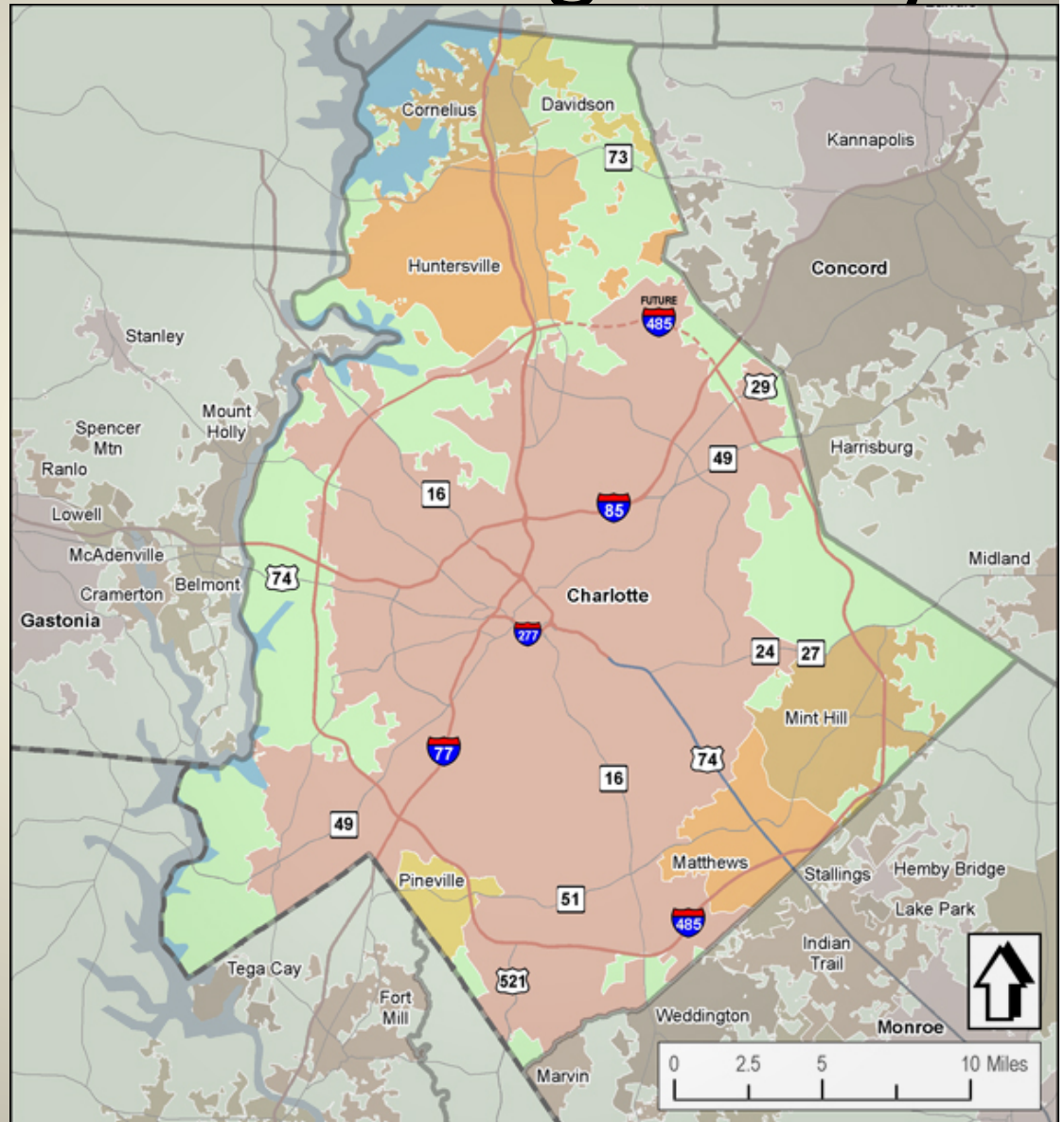


Note: Percent of 25+ Population w/Bachelors in 2000 plus  
Percent of NC Median HH income 1999

Source: US Censu 2000

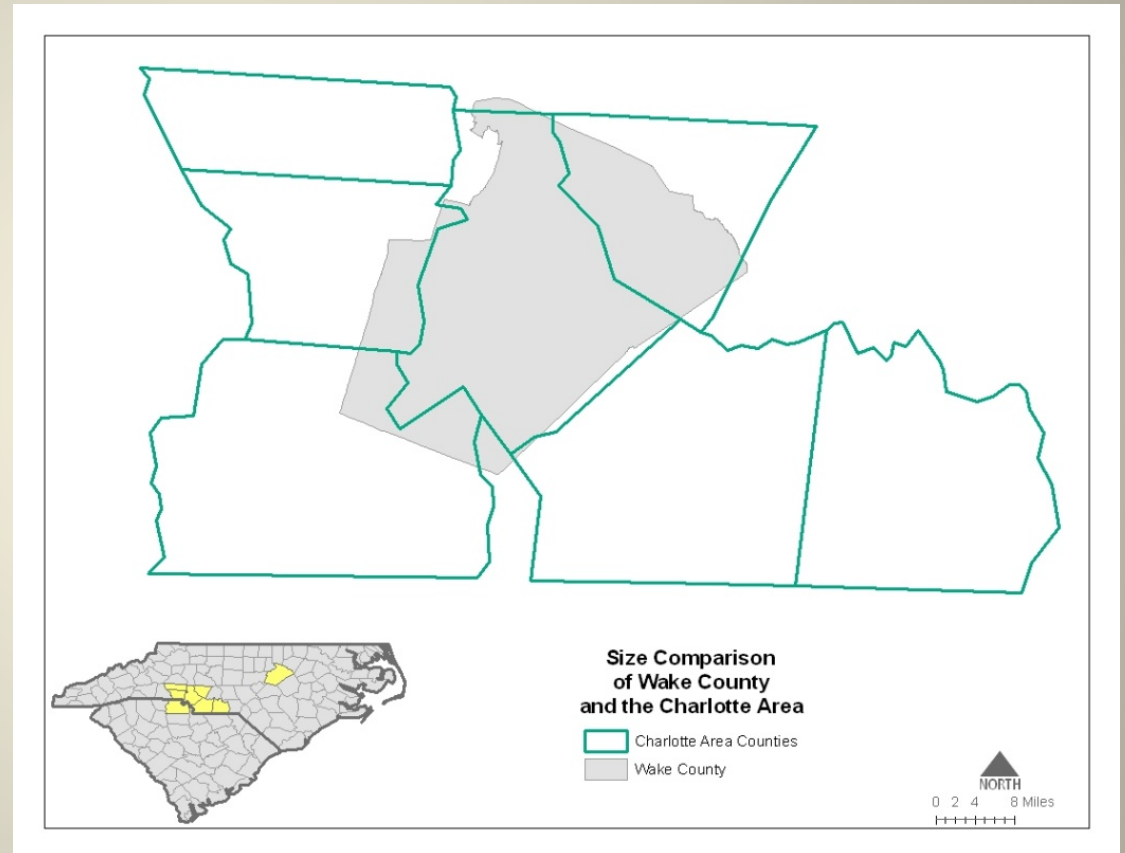
# Charlotte and Mecklenburg County

- Mecklenburg is the most urban county in NC
- Charlotte encompasses most of the county, with all remaining territory either incorporated or in the zoning jurisdiction of one of the towns



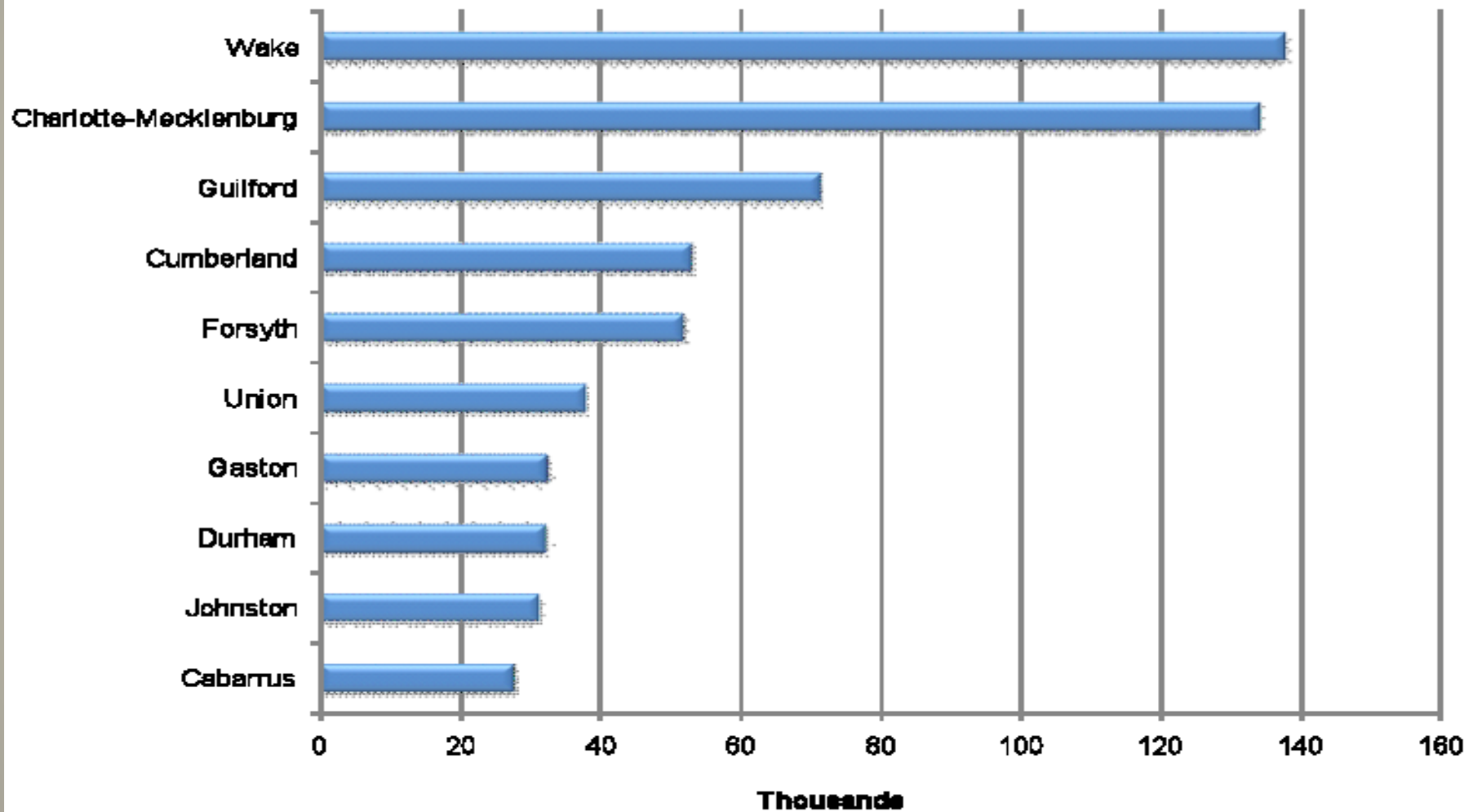
# Wake vs. Mecklenburg: Geography

- 2009 Census population estimate for Wake County is 897,214
- Wake is approximately 300 square miles larger than Mecklenburg
- Wake has the potential to be a MUCH larger school district than CMS



# Largest Districts in NC 2008-09

Total Enrollment in Thousands



Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction, 2008-09

# Charlotte and Desegregation

- Until the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Charlotte had been a medium sized, historically bi-racial, southern city
- It has been prominent nationally, in the evolution of busing for integration
  - 1971 Swann case upholds busing for integration
  - 1970s-1980s emerged as the national model for integrated public schools

# Charlotte and Desegregation

- Era of integration is an era of dramatic growth in Charlotte
  - Develops a progressive reputation
  - Has reputation as a “can-do” place striving for the best of everything
- 1999-2002: Court case/appeals that ended court-ordered busing for desegregation

# 2001: Post Desegregation

## The Family Choice Plan

- As busing for integration ended, what would the approach be to limit re-segregation?
- Strategy: system of magnet schools and traditional school attendance boundaries
- Idea: Magnet schools and the “choice” options (transportation zones with alternative school options) will give families programs to choose from and help prevent concentrations of minorities and poverty

# Expectations - Mixed

- Re-segregation was a fear of many...

but some expected:

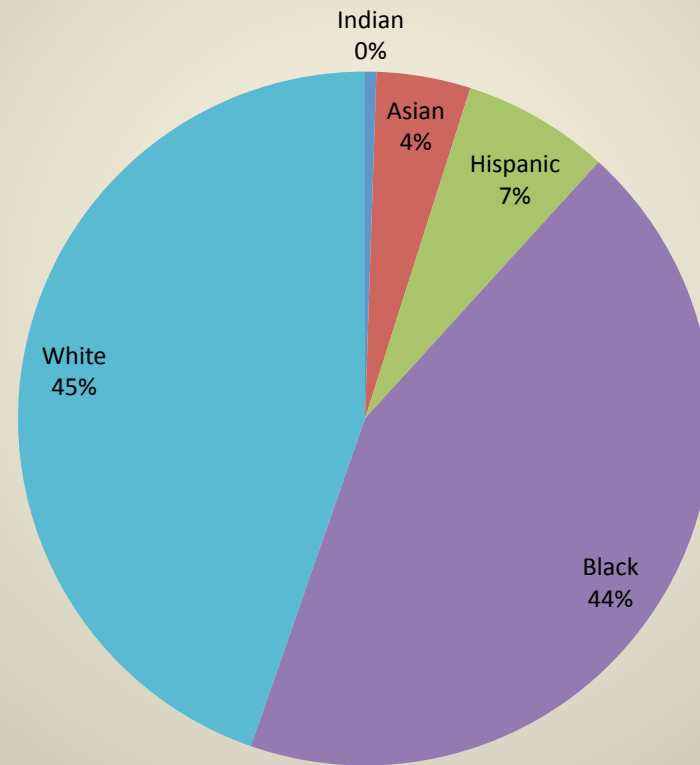
- General movement back from private schools due to the appeal of home/local school assignment
- Potential to strengthen some neighborhoods
- Plans were made for large influx of students...

June 15, 2002, Charlotte Observer:

“Charlotte - Mecklenburg 's new school choice plan and new superintendent promise to boost home values and ensure healthy appreciation in the years ahead, real estate professionals say.”

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Enrollment by Race 01-02

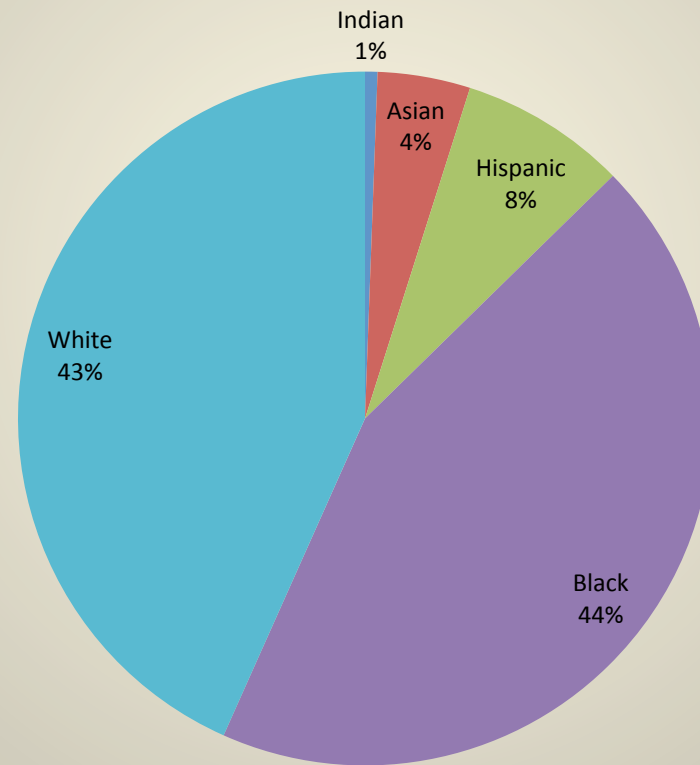
**CMS 2001-2002**



Source: NCDPI, Education Statistics Access System (ESAS).

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Enrollment by Race 02-03

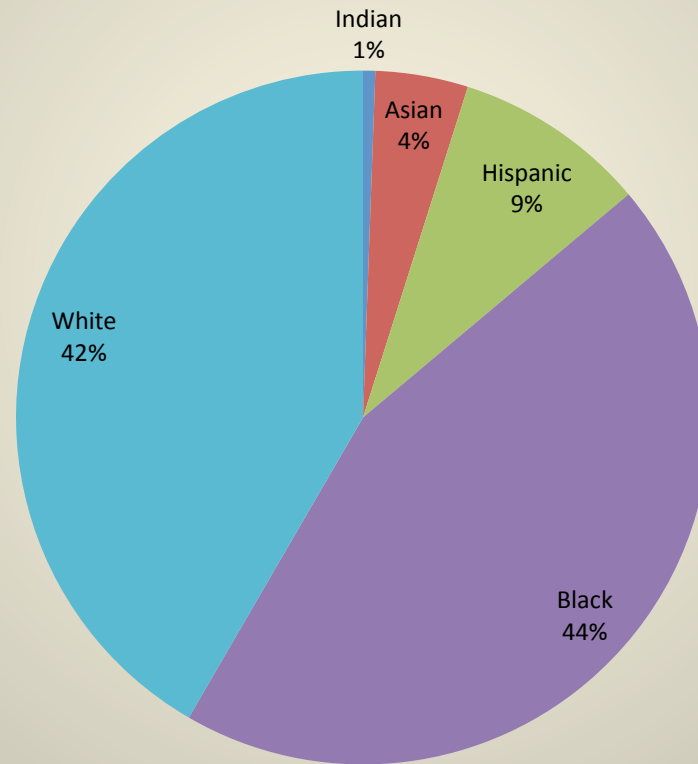
CMS 2002-2003



Source: NCDPI, Education Statistics Access System (ESAS).

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Enrollment by Race 03-04

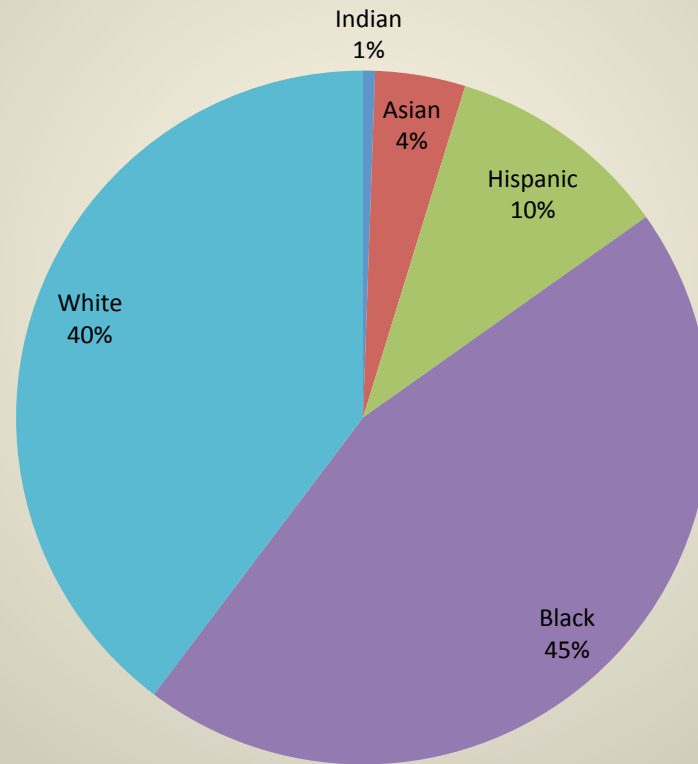
**CMS 2003-2004**



Source: NCDPI, Education Statistics Access System (ESAS).

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Enrollment by Race 04-05

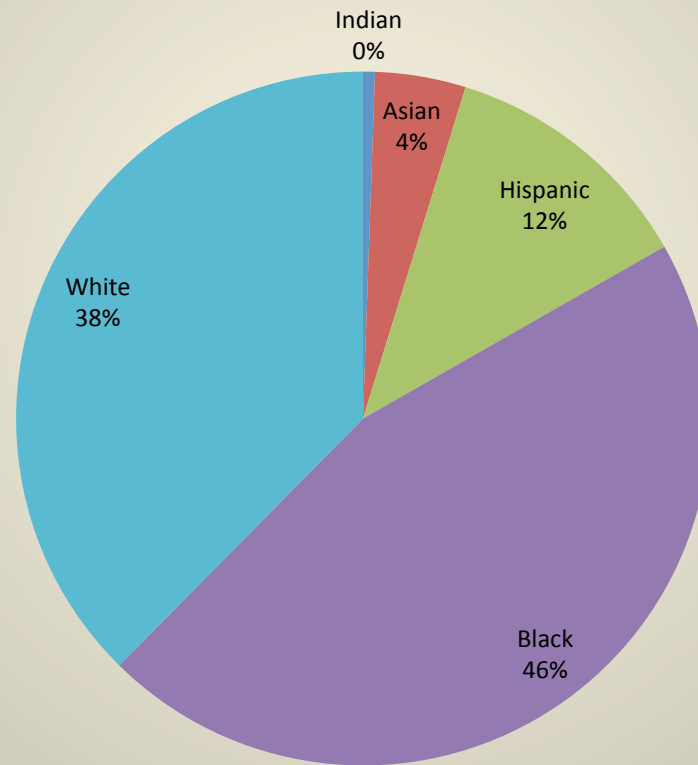
CMS 2004-2005



Source: NCDPI, Education Statistics Access System (ESAS).

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Enrollment by Race 05-06

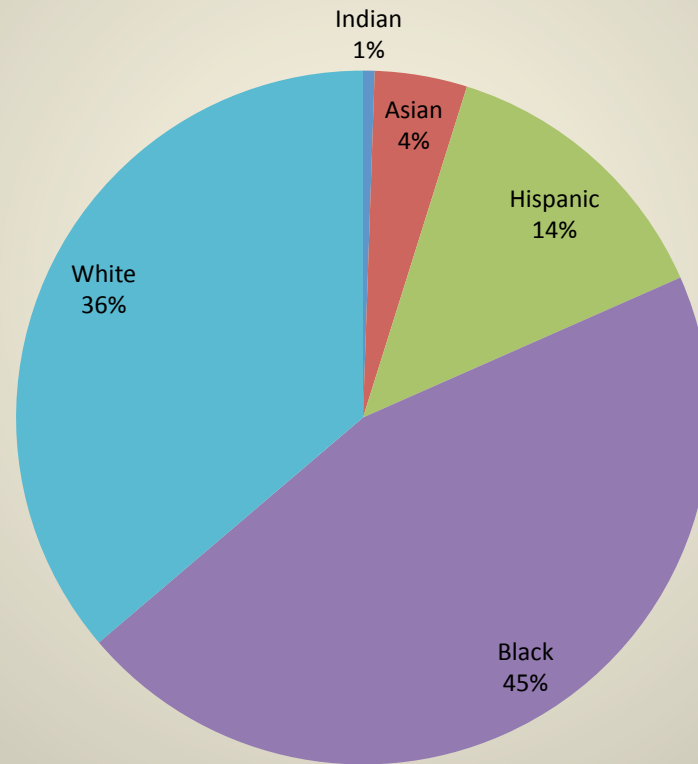
CMS 2005-2006



Source: NCDPI, Education Statistics Access System (ESAS).

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Enrollment by Race 06-07

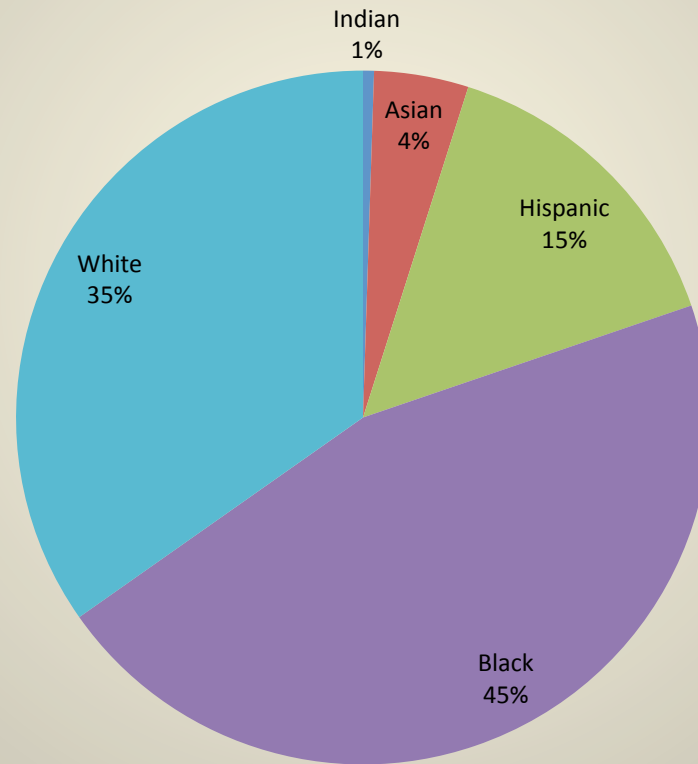
CMS 2006-2007



Source: NCDPI, Education Statistics Access System (ESAS).

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Enrollment by Race 07-08

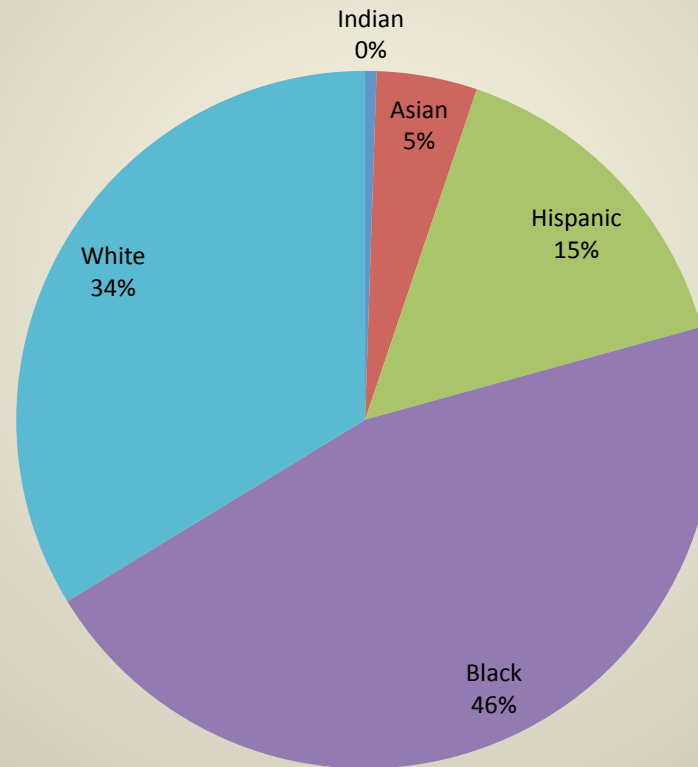
CMS 2007-2008



Source: NCDPI, Education Statistics Access System (ESAS).

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Enrollment by Race 08-09

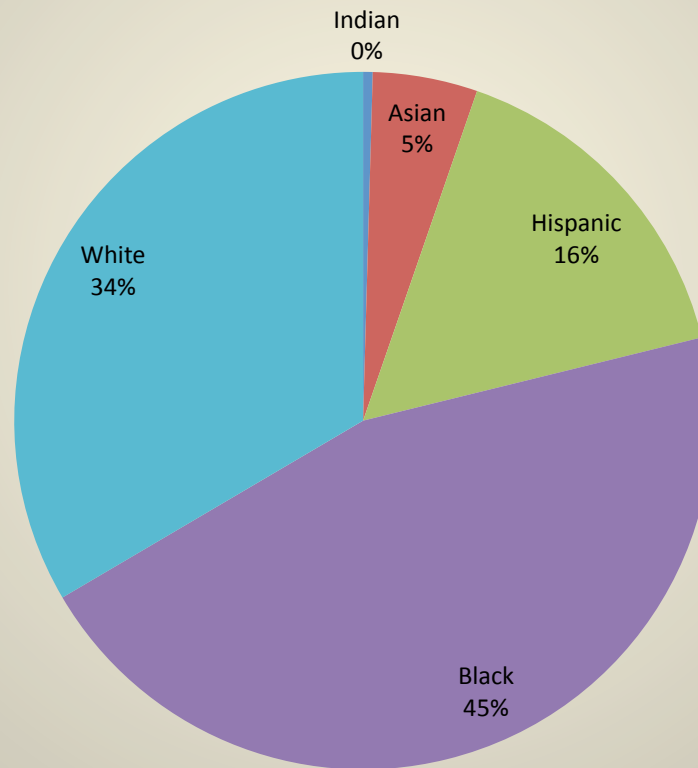
CMS 2008-2009



Source: NCDPI, Education Statistics Access System (ESAS).

# Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Enrollment by Race 09-10

CMS 2009-2010

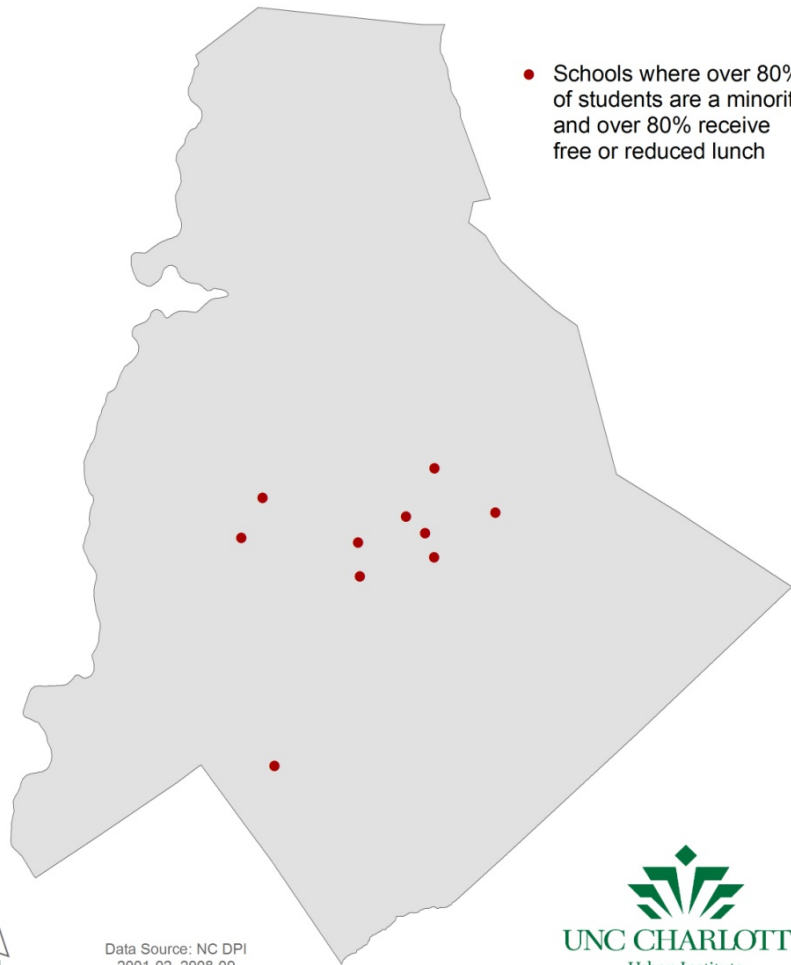


Source: NCDPI, Education Statistics Access System (ESAS).

# 80/80 Schools 2001 and 2008

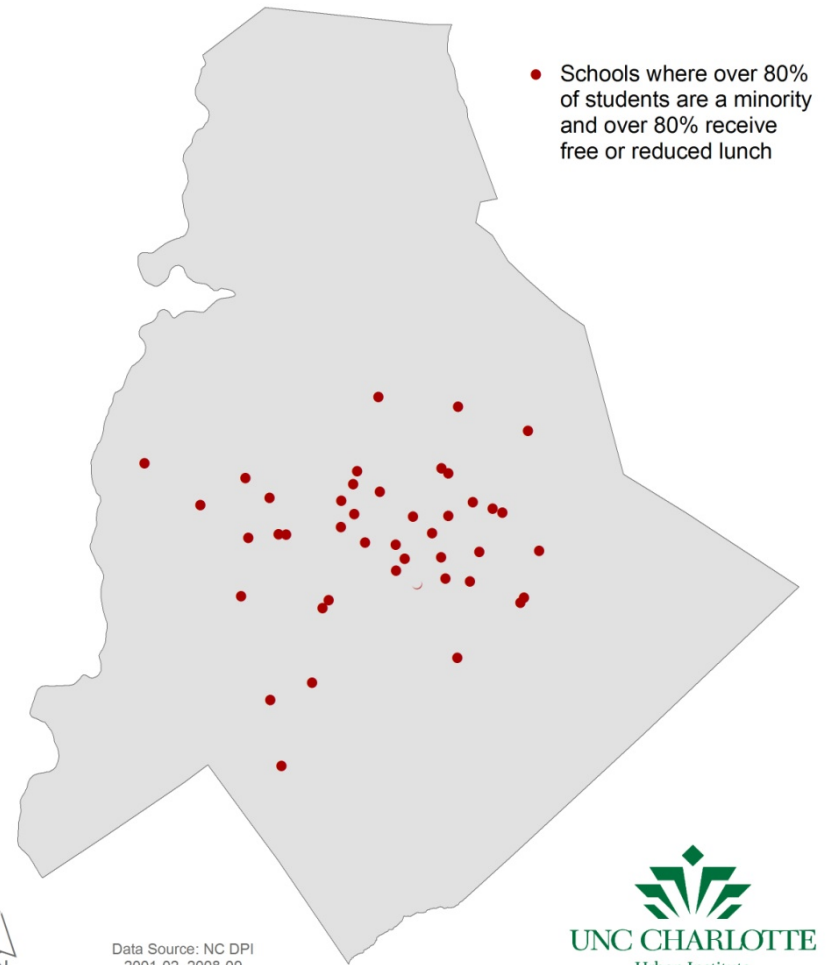
## Minority Representation and Free / Reduced Lunch in CMS Schools

2001-02 School Year

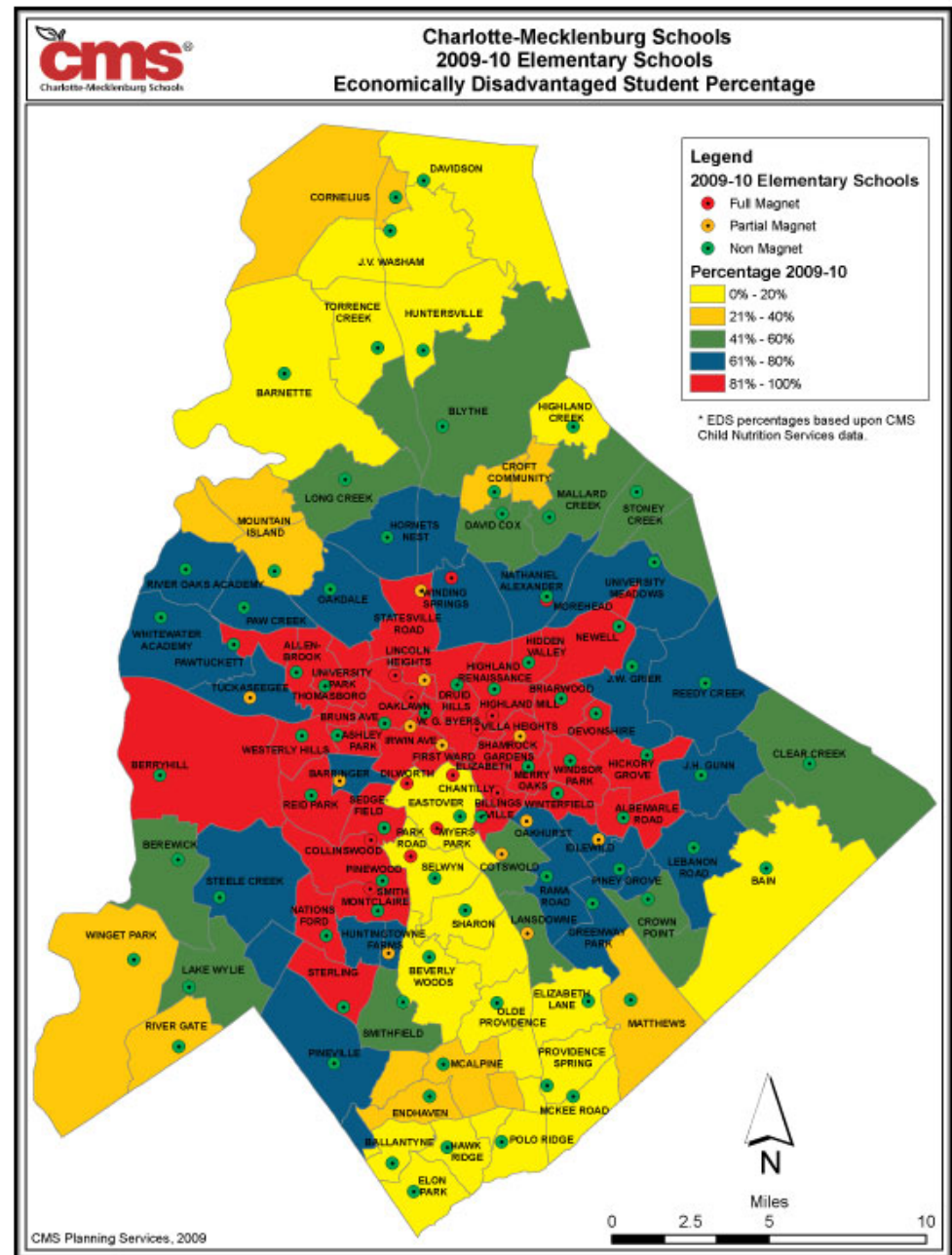


## Minority Representation and Free / Reduced Lunch in CMS Schools

2008-09 School Year



# Most Recent CMS Poverty by Elementary District



# Evolving Strategies

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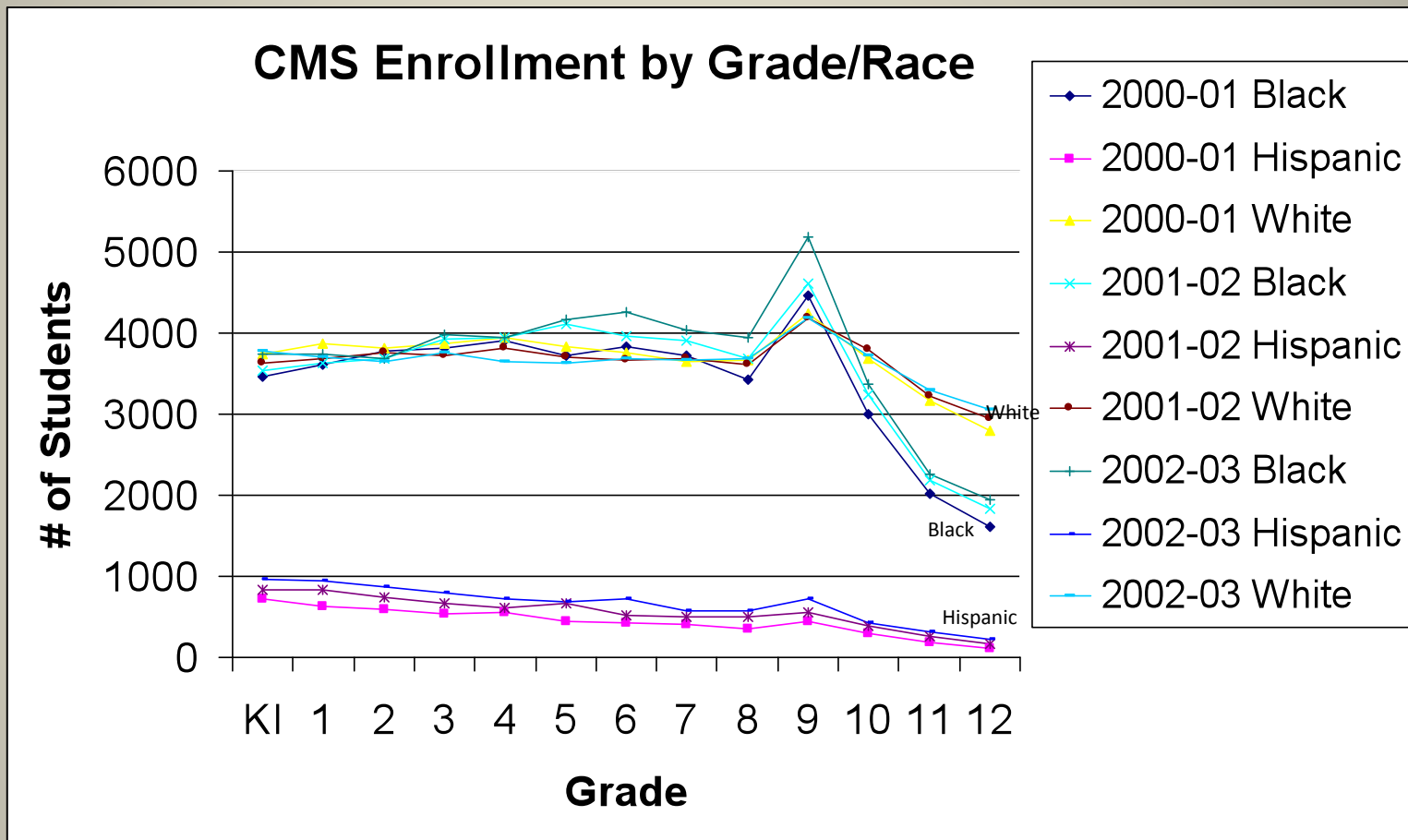
# Choice Realities in Charlotte

- Schools that would be popular options for families in high poverty areas were almost always so overcrowded with the families that lived in those schools' boundaries, that the schools were taken off choice option lists
- Families in lower income neighborhoods still took advantage of options open to them, hoping that one of the options would be better

# Judge

- 2005: Judge Howard Manning (Wake Superior Court) accuses CMS of “academic genocide”
- Heavily criticizes CMS for racial gaps considering the high expenditures per pupil

# Race by Grade, early 2000s



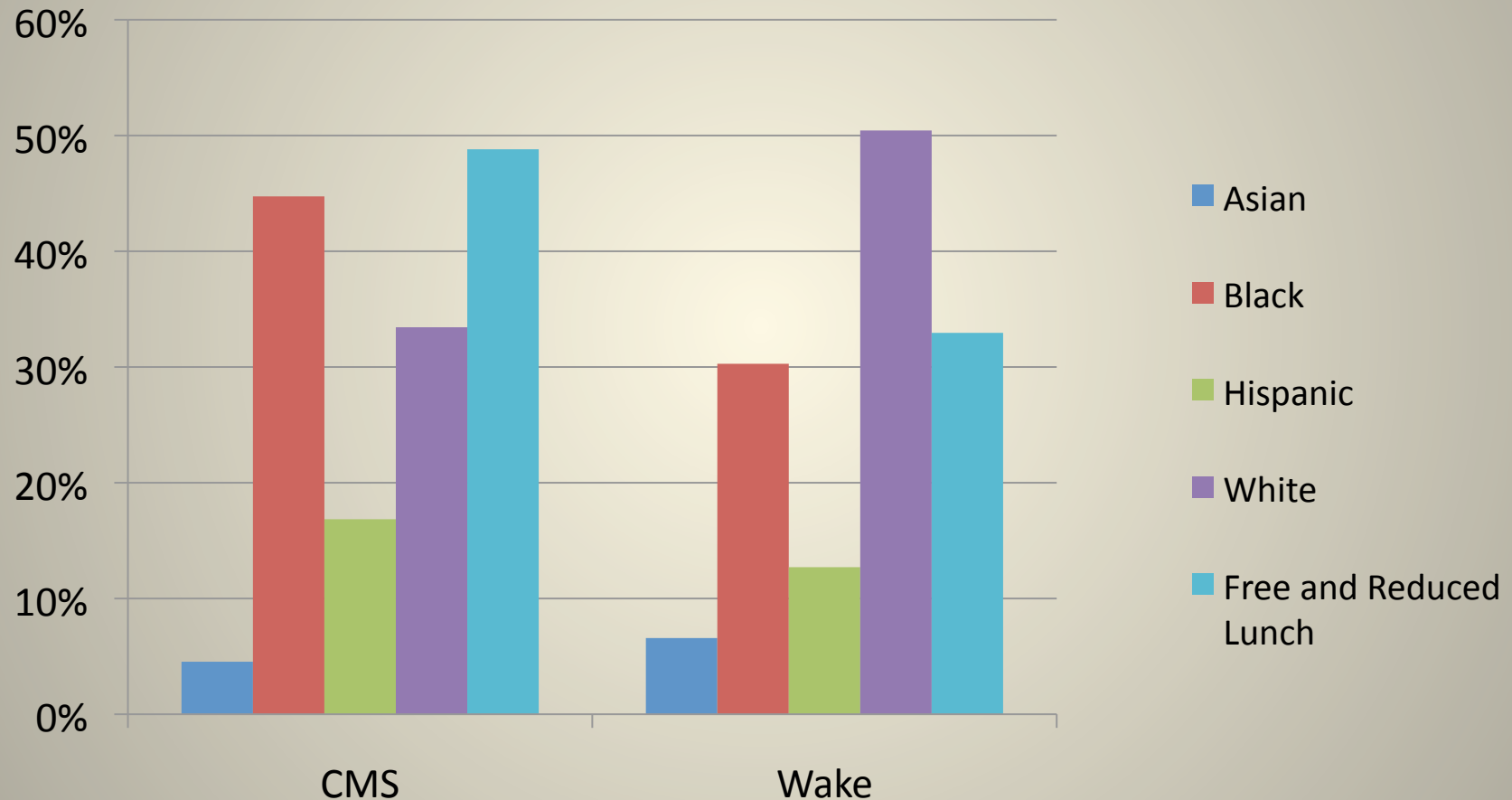
Source: National Center for Education Statistics

# 2007: Focus Schools

Resources and support for the **65 FOCUS** Schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg include:

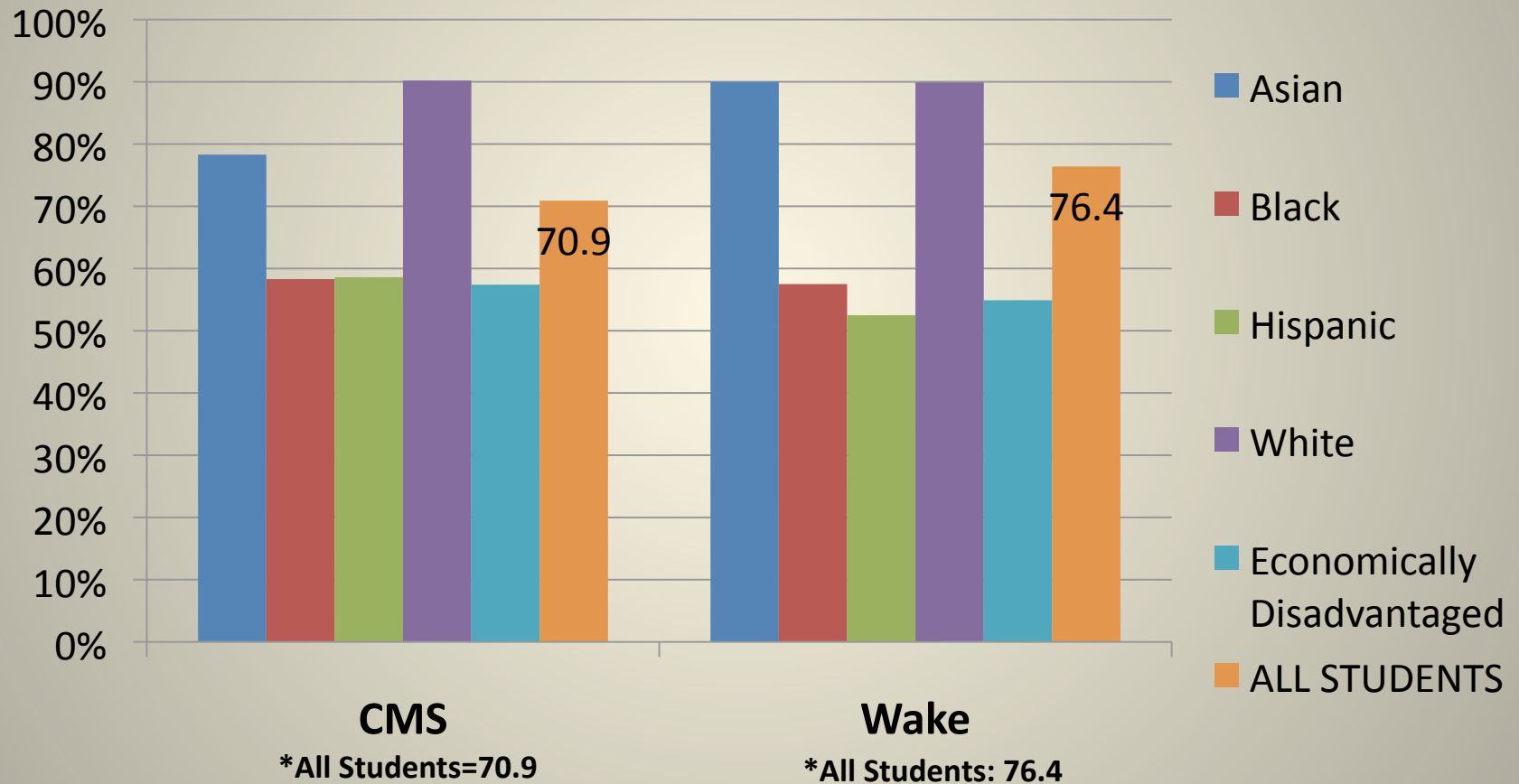
- Reduced student-teacher ratios
- Additional instructional supplies and materials
- Added incentives for teachers, which include:
  - A signing bonus for newly hired, permanent teachers who meet the eligibility requirements
  - Financial assistance for teachers enrolled in master's degree programs (Certain restrictions apply.)
  - A \$2,500 stipend for teachers who hold a master's degree and a \$1,500 stipend for teachers enrolled in a graduate level program

## Comparison of CMS and Wake Counties 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Racial Breakdown in 2009-2010 and Free and Reduced Lunch in 2008-2009



Note: Free and Reduced Lunch is a separate calculated percentage on the same population.

# Comparison of CMS and Wake County 4<sup>th</sup> Grade at or above Grade Level on Reading End of Grade in 2009-2010



# 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Scores

- CMS looks better than expected group by group, in some cases as good or better than Wake
  - This includes gaps between groups
  - Differences in overall CMS and Wake demographics mean district numbers do not reflect these facts

# New Realities

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# New Realities

- Magnet programs being cut back due to expense
- Plans to close 10 or more more schools next year, especially in areas that have used extra space to reduce class size
- Larger class sizes throughout the district due to budget cuts at the state and local levels
- Transportation expenses are being reduced with longer walks to stops, fewer options for non-home school transportation (i.e. shuttle stops for remaining magnets)

# 2009: Focus Schools

Resources and support for the **73 FOCUS** Schools in Charlotte Mecklenburg include:

- Reduced student-teacher ratios
- Additional instructional supplies and materials
- Co-curricular activities
- In 2001, the Board of Education adopted a series of policies, including Policy ADA: Equitable Educational Opportunities, to ensure that CMS provided equitable educational opportunities to all students. The Board of Education also established an Equity Committee to monitor the progress of CMS equity initiatives.

# Focus Schools

## 2007

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<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/cmsschools/Documents/Focus%20Schools.pdf>

<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/mediaroom/aboutus/Documents/FOCUS%20Schools.pdf>

# Things to Consider

- Funding for magnets, transportation options, smaller class sizes, new school construction, teacher and principal incentives for “focus schools” helped CMS make the transition to a “post integrated” reality
- Those funds are harder to come by now....  
What will the effect be in a district just beginning that transition now?

# Lessons

- Assignment plans for public schools can make an immediate difference in substantive ways
- And they have....
- If that is the basis of our strategy, however, when removed, the changes can just as easily be undone

# Wake and Mecklenburg

	<i>Wake</i>	<i>Meck</i>
Population	892,218	913,639
% Black	20.2%	29.3%
% White	68.4%	60.4%
% Hispanic (any race)	8.3%	10.2%
Median HH Income	\$64,527	\$56,766
% Families Below Poverty Level	5.5%	7.7%
% Individuals Below Poverty Level	8.3%	10.9%

*Source: US Census 2000, American Community Survey 2006-2008 3 year estimates.*

*Note: Uses US Census definition of Hispanic.*

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