



## Fact Sheet

### Washington, DC Public Schools

The new Superintendent of the Wake County Public Schools, Anthony Tata, spent 19 months as the Chief Operating Officer of the public schools in Washington, D.C, where he managed purchasing, food service, technology and other support areas. This Fact Sheet outlines some differences between the public schools of the District of Columbia and Wake County.

	DC	Wake County
Per Pupil Spending (2009)	\$17,638	\$7,821
Student Population (2009-10)	45,772	143,289
Student Population Composition	85% African-American 9% Latino 5% White	49.5% White 24.8 % African-American 14.6% Latino 6% Asian 4.5% Multi-Racial
Number of Schools (2009-10)	129	163

- ✓ Compensation for DC school teachers ranges from \$47,000 for one year of service to more than \$97,000 for 21 or more years of service; additional compensation opportunities include bonuses of \$10,000 to \$20,000, and premiums for working after school. Wake County teachers with a Bachelor’s Degree are paid between \$34,000 and \$61,000.
- ✓ Of the sixteen public high schools in DC, ten failed to meet Annual Yearly progress under No Child Left Behind.
- ✓ According to DC public school data, as the percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students rises in their high schools, student proficiency rates decrease.
- ✓ Truancy rates in DC have been rising, and attendance rates have been decreasing—students cannot learn if they do not attend school. Attendance fell from 91 percent in 2006-07 to 88 percent in 2008-09; and truancy was 16 percent in 06-07 and 20 percent in 08-09.
- ✓ Until this year, DC schools did not calculate student graduation rates according to the U.S. Department of Education cohort methods; therefore past graduation rates cannot be compared to Wake County rates.
- ✓ SAT scores for DC students have been declining in recent years: it was 1271 for Reading/Math/Writing in 2006-07 and 1196 in 2008-09. Data for 2009-2010 was not available for DC. In 2007-08, the average WCPSS SAT score was 1565; 1583 in 2008-09; and 1574 in 2009-10.

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- ✓ The Achievement Gap between African American and White students is pronounced in DC schools according to NAEP data: in 2009, for fourth grade reading, 11 percent of African-American children were proficient & above compared to 75 percent of White students—a gap of 64 percentage points. The gap is even wider for 4th grade mathematics—a gap of 72 points. The gaps, though unacceptable, are narrower in Wake County—EOG achievement gaps in Wake County were between 35 and 41 percent in 2008-09.
- ✓ The DC School system recently instituted a teacher evaluation tool, IMPACT, which relies heavily on standardized test scores. A [June 18, 2009 letter](#) on the DC school website illustrates an example of the consequences of relying too heavily on achievement test scores to evaluate teacher effectiveness. Copies of tests were provided to students prior to their standardized exams. Corrective actions were taken by DC school officials.

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These are just a few statistics that clearly indicate that there are stark differences between the two school systems and that the achievement challenges facing Wake County public schools are not as severe as those created in the District of Columbia public school system.

**Sources:** <http://www.nclb.osse.dc.gov/reportcards.asp>; <http://osse.dc.gov/>; State Report Cards for 2009-2010, 2008-09, 2007-08 <http://dcps.dc.gov/portal/site/DCPS/>; [www.wcpss.net](http://www.wcpss.net)

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