

E&R Report No. 06.08

September 2006

SAT SCORES: 2005-06

1. In 2005-2006, students in Wake County Public Schools (WCPSS) posted average SAT scores of 544 in mathematics, 522 in verbal, and 510 in writing. The combined score for verbal and mathematics was 1066, while the total score was 1576. The combined verbal and mathematics score was 9 points lower than the combined score for 2004-2005. Declines in average verbal/mathematics scores were also noted for North Carolina and for the nation as a whole. However, the 1066 score for WCPSS students continues a trend of improving scores observed over the last 17 years.
2. Over the 17-year period, the average SAT combined score (verbal and mathematics) for WCPSS students has moved from 999 to 1066. The average score for North Carolina has gone from 948 to 1008, while the average for the U.S. has gone from 1001 to 1021. Thus, students in Wake have added 67 points to their average score as compared with 60 and 20 points for the state and nation, respectively.
3. In 1990, WCPSS trailed the national average by 2 points. By 2006, WCPSS exceeded the national average by 45 points. Similarly, in 1990, WCPSS exceeded the state average by 51 points. In 2006, that lead had increased to 58 points.
4. For all three groups, the average mathematics score has improved faster than has the verbal score: WCPSS added 46 points in mathematics and 21 in verbal while NC has added 43 points in mathematics and 17 points in verbal. For the nation, the change has been 17 for mathematics and 3 for verbal.
5. The participation rate for WCPSS students has always exceeded rates for the state and the nation. However, the state has experienced a 16 percentage point change on this dimension, moving from 55% to 71%. The state is now within 6 percentage points of the WCPSS rate, which has risen from 73% in 1990 to 77% in 2006. Nationally, there have never been more than 49% of students participating in the SAT during the 17 year period under consideration.
6. All individual high schools in Wake County except three had combined score averages greater than the averages for the state. The range of averages within the district was 955 to 1173.

7. This year, the Educational Testing Service re-introduced the writing test. WCPSS students on average scored 13 points over the national average and 25 points over the state average on this test. Table 5 displays the scores for the math and verbal tests, as well as the combined score. Then, the writing scores for individual schools are provided along with the grand total average score, which combines the average verbal, mathematics, and writing scores.
8. In summary, it may be observed that students in WCPSS did not achieve the same average mathematics and verbal combined score on the SAT in 2005-2006 as was true the prior year. This was also true for the U.S. as a whole and for North Carolina. However, year-to-year comparison is not a useful method for gauging success, especially when longer-term trend data are available. Over the long term, WCPSS students have made steady progress in improving SAT scores. The increased participation rate in 2005-2006 is noteworthy as is the average writing score in WCPSS, which exceeded averages for the state and the nation.

Figure 1: 2006 SAT Scores for WCPSS, NC, and USA

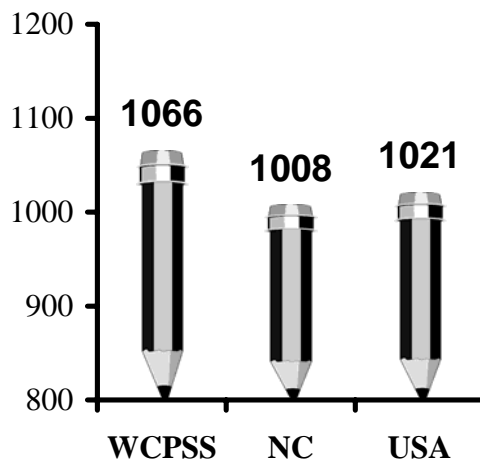


Table 1: WCPSS, NC, and USA Scores Over Time

Year	WCPSS				NC				USA			
	Total	Math	Verbal	Rate	Total	Math	Verbal	Rate	Total	Math	Verbal	Rate
1990	999	498	501	73	948	470	478	55	1001	501	500	40
1991	1007	508	499	75	952	474	478	57	999	500	499	42
1992	1025	516	509	74	961	479	482	57	1001	501	500	42
1993	1031	521	510	76	964	481	483	60	1003	503	500	43
1994	1030	520	510	75	964	482	482	60	1003	504	499	42
1995	1039	524	515	76	970	482	488	60	1010	506	504	41
1996	1042	525	517	73	976	486	490	59	1013	508	505	41
1997	1047	529	518	74	978	488	490	59	1016	511	505	42
1998	1052	531	521	76	982	492	490	62	1017	512	505	43
1999	1059	537	522	76	986	493	493	61	1016	511	505	43
2000	1061	539	522	79	988	496	492	64	1019	514	505	44
2001	1054	534	520	79	992	499	493	65	1020	514	506	45
2002	1067	543	524	79	998	505	493	67	1020	516	504	46
2003	1067	543	524	80	1001	506	495	68	1026	519	507	48
2004	1063	539	524	77	1006	507	499	70	1026	518	508	48
2005	1075	548	527	75	1010	511	499	74	1028	520	508	49
2006	1066	544	522	77	1008	513	495	71	1021	518	503	48

The participation rate is the percentage of graduating seniors who took the SAT I. See note below Table 3.

Figure 2: SAT Scores 1990-2006

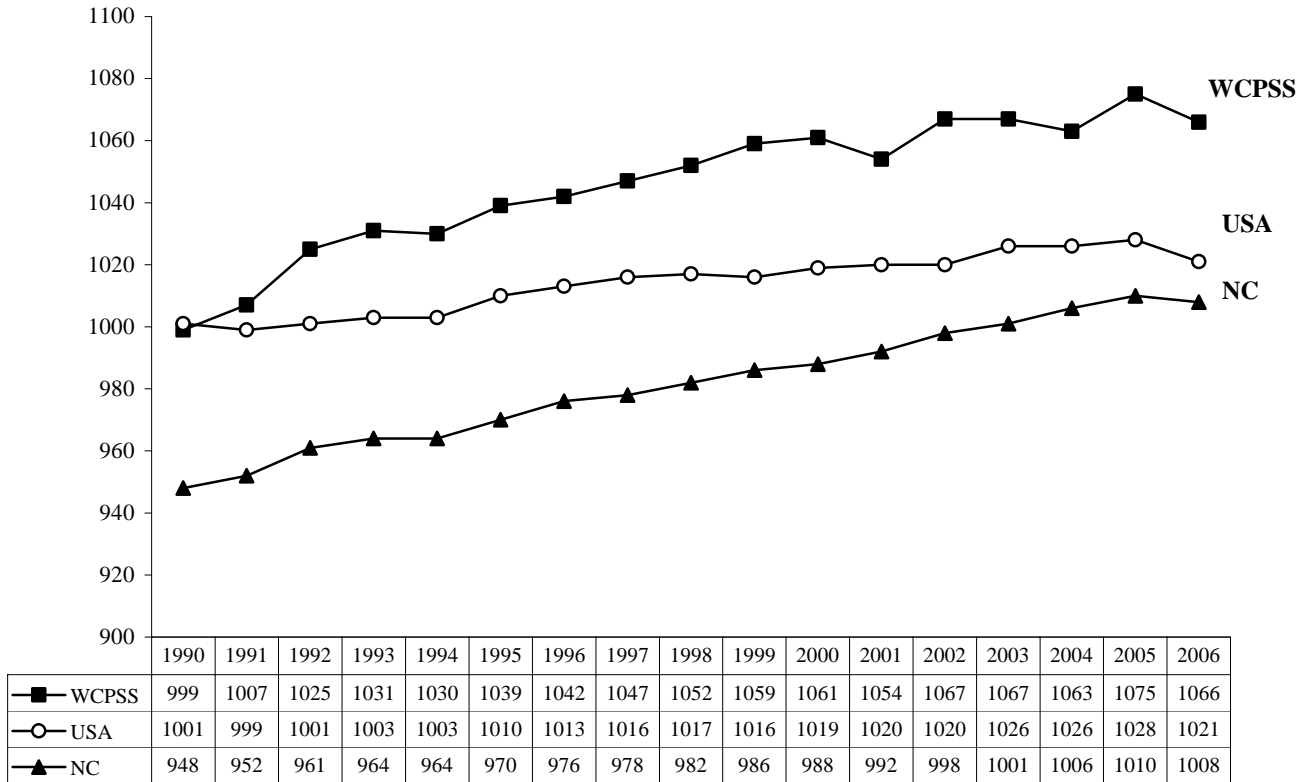


Figure 3: SAT Participation Rates 1990-2006

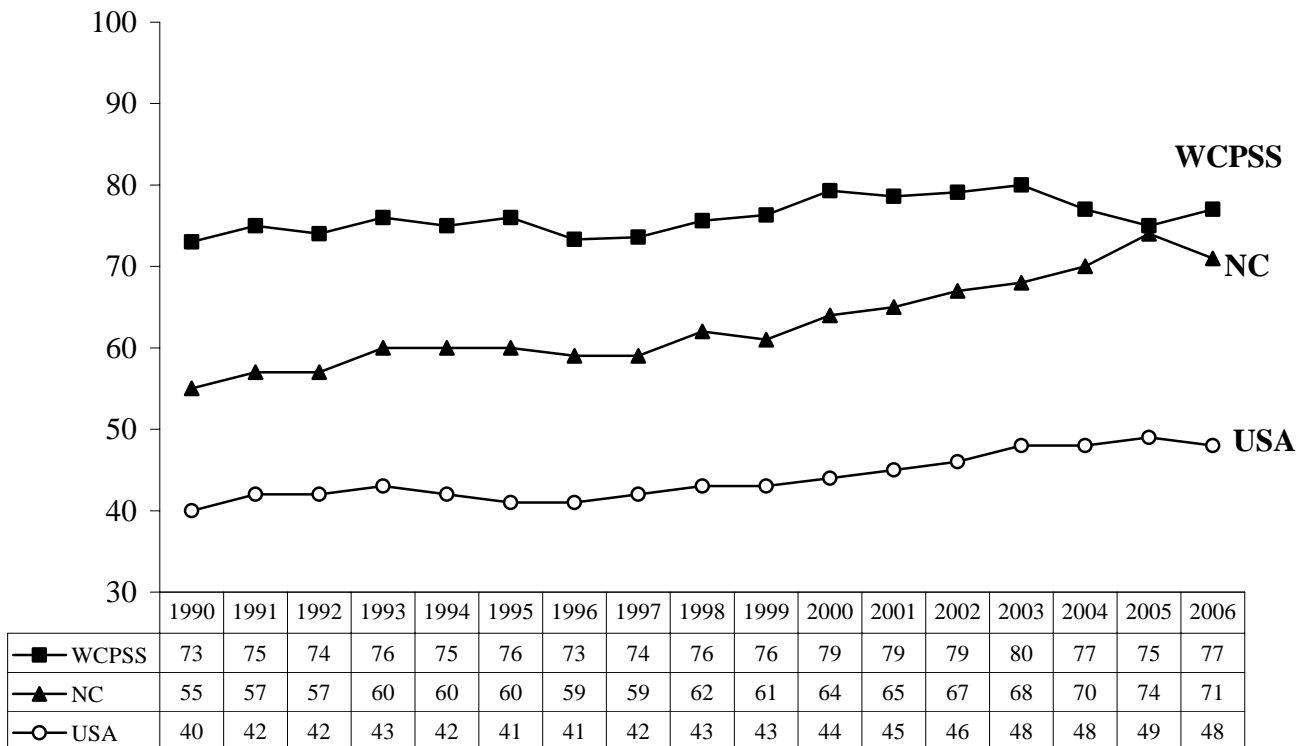


Table 2: Top NC District Scores

System	2006 M+V	Number of Test- Takers in 2006
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City	1189	719
Asheville City	1124	135
Watauga County	1100	218
Transylvania County	1092	122
Wake County	1066	5,237
Orange County	1053	243
Buncombe County	1052	848

Table 3: Comparison of Wake to Similar Large North Carolina Districts

LEA	2005				2006			
	Total	Math	Verbal	Part. Rate	Total	Math	Verbal	Part. Rate
Wake	1075	548	527	75.2	1066	544	522	77.0
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	1008	507	501	68.5	995	504	491	68.7
Cumberland	955	480	475	57.4	959	484	475	54.0
Durham	1005	506	499	74.8	987	500	487	70.5
Guilford	994	502	492	70.0	994	504	490	70.3
Winston-Salem/Forsyth	1015	512	503	66.7	1016	516	500	66.2

*When the actual number of graduates was not known, participation rates reported by NCDPI are used.

Note: SAT participation rates reported by the College Board are based upon estimates of counts of graduating seniors compiled through national surveys. While the College Board rates are probably accurate at the state and national level, they are not accurate at the district and individual school level. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) uses 8th month twelfth grade membership rather than actual numbers of graduates. Whenever the actual number of graduates is known, WCPSS uses that count to calculate participation rates, dividing the number of senior students who took the SAT by the size of the graduating class for the district and for each high school.

**Table 4: Wake County Public School System
Average SAT Scores and Participation Rates for Three Years for High Schools**

	2003-04				2004-05				2005-06			
	Part.	Math	Verbal	Total	Part.	Math	Verbal	Total	Part.	Math	Verbal	Total
USA	48%	518	508	1026	49%	520	508	1028	48%	518	503	1021
NC	70%	507	499	1006	74%	511	499	1010	71%	513	495	1008
Wake County	76.6%	539	524	1063	75.2%	548	527	1075	77.0%	544	522	1066
Apex	76.5%	560	530	1090	81.9%	561	532	1093	89.5%	564	543	1107
Athens	76.6%	557	532	1089	77.1%	566	532	1098	79.0%	562	520	1082
Broughton	90.3%	544	537	1081	91.4%	566	544	1110	88.8%	552	539	1091
Cary	74.0%	536	535	1071	74.6%	538	535	1073	77.9%	554	538	1092
East Wake	59.2%	488	472	960	48.6%	493	472	965	47.7%	489	472	961
Enloe	85.7%	580	573	1153	88.0%	590	588	1178	89.3%	594	579	1173
Fuquay	64.7%	516	506	1022	55.8%	533	508	1041	63.0%	539	509	1048
Garner	59.5%	491	481	972	54.3%	497	475	972	55.8%	485	470	955
Green Hope	89.9%	569	545	1114	95.1%	570	540	1110	89.4%	575	538	1113
Leesville	82.1%	566	543	1109	82.4%	564	538	1102	82.7%	564	534	1098
Middle Creek					63.2%	528	509	1037	72.3%	518	502	1020
Millbrook	75.3%	514	497	1011	75.1%	538	507	1045	85.9%	533	512	1045
Sanderson	79.4%	532	531	1063	67.0%	542	517	1059	69.8%	526	507	1033
SE Raleigh	89.4%	513	504	1017	85.5%	524	511	1035	77.8%	512	492	1004
Wakefield	84.1%	532	515	1047	78.9%	539	518	1057	81.2%	535	510	1045
Wake Forest	64.0%	517	506	1023	67.0%	515	503	1018	67.8%	516	496	1012

NOTE: Schools with 10 or fewer participants are not included in this table. The participation rate is the percentage of graduating seniors who took the SAT I.

Figure 4: WCPSS Average Total SAT Scores By High School Over Four Years

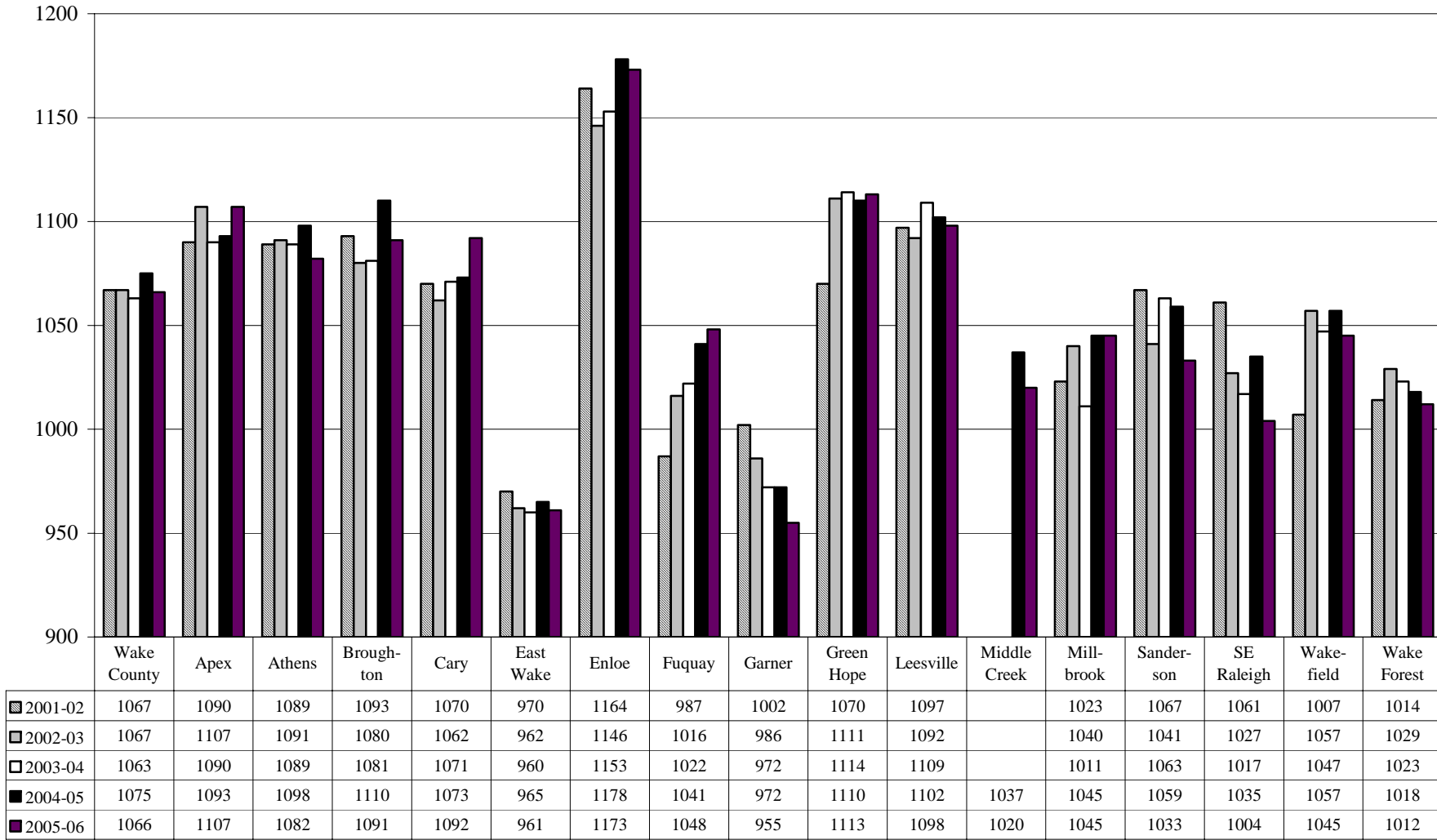


Table 5: 2005-06 Participation Rates, Math, Verbal, and Writing Scores

	2005-06					
	Part. Rate	Math	Verbal	M+V	Writing	M+V+W
USA	48%	518	503	1021	497	1518
NC	71%	513	495	1008	485	1493
Wake County	77.0%	544	522	1066	510	1576
Apex	89.5%	564	543	1107	527	1634
Athens	79.0%	562	520	1082	516	1598
Broughton	88.8%	552	539	1091	532	1623
Cary	77.9%	554	538	1092	517	1609
East Wake	47.7%	489	472	961	458	1419
Enloe	89.3%	594	579	1173	564	1737
Fuquay	63.0%	539	509	1048	492	1540
Garner	55.8%	485	470	955	448	1403
Green Hope	89.4%	575	538	1113	530	1643
Leesville	82.7%	564	534	1098	518	1616
Middle Creek	72.3%	518	502	1020	495	1515
Millbrook	85.9%	533	512	1045	502	1547
Sanderson	69.8%	526	507	1033	506	1539
SE Raleigh	77.8%	512	492	1004	486	1490
Wakefield	81.2%	535	510	1045	502	1547
Wake Forest	67.8%	516	496	1012	482	1494

NOTE: Schools with 10 or fewer participants are not included in this table. The participation rate is the percentage of graduating seniors who took the SAT I.