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Subject: Public Education Reform:
Phase One - Assessing Progress

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PUBLIC EDUCATION REFORM: **Assessing Progress**

*A review of public education reform in Duval County from 1993 to 2003,
with a focus on identifying key issues requiring further action.*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Scope of the study

“Of all the basic problems facing the community, the greatest by far is to improve the level of education provided by the elementary and secondary schools administered by the Duval County Board ...”

This statement, from the Jacksonville Area Chamber of Commerce in 1962, could have been taken from the front page of *The Florida Times-Union* in 2003. Improving Duval County’s public education system has been a stated community priority for decades. The consolidation of Jacksonville/Duval County was triggered, in part, by the disaccreditation of its public high schools in 1964. Generations of community leaders have placed public education reform at the forefront of the community agenda.

Beginning in the early 1990s, a new set of public education reforms were designed to help Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) reach the community’s goal of excellence in public education. These reform efforts came from an outpouring of concern and support from the community, from business leaders, and from within the school system. New federal and state laws mandated the reforming and restructuring of public education. Accountability, testing, standards, and measurement anchored the changes, while the community became involved in questions of curriculum, tutoring, mentoring, professional development, and organizational efficiency.

This assessment looks back to an earlier JCCI study, *Public Education: The Cost of Quality*, released in 1993. It assesses public education reform from that point, and reviews the major studies of DCPS conducted since then, including the Audit of Educational Effectiveness performed by SchoolMatch in 1997, the New Century Commission on Education’s 1998 report, and the Council of Great City School’s 2002 Management Assessment Project. Among these four studies are 337 recommendations for improvement in Duval County Public Schools (See the appendix for more information). While this assessment does not (and could not) provide a detailed analysis of each recommendation, it does present the changes in public education prompted by those recommendations, as well as identifying work left undone. In addition, this study examines the effects of Florida’s Sunshine State Standards, the impact of Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test requirements, and the challenges of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 on Duval County Public Schools.

The assessment also examines the anticipated impacts of the class size amendment to the Florida Constitution, and how its requirements may impact public education reform efforts and the resources available to implement change.

This assessment represents Phase One of the study on public education reform. The aim of this study committee was to evaluate progress made in public education over the past ten years, review measurable results in educational outcomes, define community expectations for excellence in public education, and identify issues and specific concerns for further study in Phase Two. Throughout the study, committee members heard of good things happening in local public education. They heard from dynamic principals and teachers, dedicated school administrators, engaged School Board members, and a committed Superintendent. Business leaders, parents, and students came forward to tell of the early successes of reform efforts. But for every success and every step forward, the committee heard the same echoing refrain: We aren’t there yet.

In 2002, the Duval County Public Schools, in their final report on the New Century Commission Report, stated: *There is still a great deal of work to do to make the district a world class district, but improvements to date and the dedication of its people are harbingers of good things to come.* This report assesses these improvements, identifies challenges still facing the Duval County Public Schools, and issues a charge to the Phase Two committee to focus its work.

Progress of the Duval County Public Schools

Duval County Public Schools has taken many positive steps toward school reform in the past decade, often unnoticed by the local (and national) tendency to focus on the negative aspects of public education. Efforts to further improve public education must recognize both the progress that has been made as well as the problems that remain. Positive changes that have taken place and new initiatives in response to local studies and assessments include:

Accountability: The implementation of standards-based education and methods to gather data to support objective analysis of student achievement provides a gauge for holding students, teachers, administrators, and schools accountable for student achievement. (Whether the gauge is adequate or appropriate is still open to public debate.)

School-based management: Recognizing that high-quality school leadership is a key component to successful student outcomes, DCPS has given principals the authority and responsibility for managing school needs and operations. However, tight budgets, few discretionary funds, and many mandates for curriculum and instruction limit the resources available to implement desired changes.

Professional development: Considerable progress has been made to increase professional development opportunities for teachers and principals, including aggregating existing sources of training dollars and increasing the professional development budget, adding teacher coaches in some schools, and creating The Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership.

Student discipline: A district-wide discipline policy is in place, along with onsite school resources for student protection, including a working partnership with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.

Operations and management: While the 2002 Council of the Great City Schools report declared the management of DCPS to be outstanding in many respects, it also found key functional areas that needed improvement. In an effort to address deficiencies in management, DCPS has partnered with the Alliance for World Class Education. This recent partnership of business and community leaders has established a much-needed working relationship among the general business community, the Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the public school system.

Workforce preparation: By partnering with the Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce, DCPS is implementing Career Academies and Work Keys assessments to improve the employability skills of high school graduates.

These positive steps have established a necessary foundation for successful education reform. Continued efforts will increase opportunities for improvement in student achievement. Evaluating the outcomes of these efforts will require both time and an open, objective process for the community and the school system to assess effectiveness and work together to achieve excellence in public education.

Challenges facing the Duval County Public Schools

Significant challenges remain for Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) and the entire community to address. The internal and external perception of Jacksonville as a first-class city depends upon the perceived quality of the public education system, which affects both local pride and efforts to attract new business to Northeast Florida. Community perception of the quality of public education will not change without significant community commitment to the public schools and without clear signs of improved student achievement. Effective reform of the public schools likewise requires the engagement and assistance of the entire community. Efforts to improve public education must address all of the following areas:

Improving student achievement: Student achievement and the graduation rate are still unacceptably low. Public education reform must accelerate. The Jacksonville community cannot afford for DCPS to pursue gradual or incremental improvements and continue to leave behind one third or more of its students.

Communicating effectively: The negative perception of the school district held by many in the community persists despite the actual progress being made in the schools. The school district has not been able to effectively communicate its message of education reform and progress to the community. For its part, the community as a whole has been unwilling to let go of negative perceptions to observe the changes occurring within the school system.

Involving parents/guardians: While DCPS emphasizes the importance of involving parents in their children's education, schools have insufficient mechanisms to overcome significant barriers to parental involvement. These barriers include:

- those in the community who do not value learning;
- principals who lack the skills, resources, or commitment required to involve parents or guardians in the school;
- parents or guardians who do not feel that their involvement is welcome or valued, or do not know how to become involved;
- work schedules or employment policies which make parental involvement with the schools difficult; and
- parents or guardians who feel intimidated by school staff due to their level of education, past negative school experiences, or lack of English language skills.

Obtaining support from the government: Federal, state, and local government, including the Mayor, City Council, and School Board, all have roles to play in leading, improving and supporting an effective and efficient public education system. However, public officials and others in the community often confuse these roles, either through lack of information or to further a political cause. Improving the public school system depends in part on each public official capably and appropriately filling his or her role in supporting public education.

Recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers: High-quality teachers are critical to student success in the classroom. Attracting high-caliber teachers to DCPS is difficult because teaching is not perceived, respected, or rewarded as a desirable occupation. Instead of being able to select the best teachers from a pool of applicants that exceeds its needs, DCPS must struggle to recruit

teachers each year, a situation made more urgent with the passing of the class size amendment to the Florida constitution. With a limited supply of applicants and an increasing need for teachers, DCPS has not been able to attract the best possible teaching staff, nor has the system done what was needed to keep the high quality teachers who are hired into the system. Despite significant steps forward in expanding professional development opportunities for teachers, DCPS still does not provide sufficient time or rewards for teachers to participate in training or continuing education.

Enforcing student discipline: Despite the new Code of Student Conduct and increased efforts to address safety in the schools, student misbehavior continues to disrupt teaching and learning throughout the school district. Student discipline is not always administered consistently or effectively across the system. Parents are not held accountable sufficiently for student misbehavior. Student discipline remains a critical issue to parents, community perceptions of schools, and for retaining high quality teachers.

Measuring student v. school achievement: While greater emphasis has been placed on using objective measures to evaluate student achievement, these measures have been largely concentrated in a single test, the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test. This test, while providing useful information about student learning based on state standards, is insufficient to adequately evaluate the quality of teaching in the classroom or to assess the progress being made by individual schools. The community cannot and should not use the results of one test in isolation to judge the effectiveness of the school system or any individual school, and needs to have a broader set of information to adequately evaluate progress in individual schools.

Preparing graduates for college or the workforce: Even with state and local standards in the public schools, significant gaps remain between what students know or are able to do upon graduating from high school and the skills and knowledge they need to enter college prepared to learn, enter and remain in the workforce, and take their place in the community as responsible, informed citizens, capable of thinking independently and solving problems effectively.

Institutionalizing reform: Over the past decade, DCPS has experienced many different reform efforts. While some reforms were instituted district wide, many other initiatives began at individual schools. Some of these programs appear to have been highly successful and deserving of system-wide replication. However, DCPS lacks an effective process for evaluating school-based initiatives and institutionalizing success across the entire system.

Embracing change: Over the last decade, DCPS has been asked to implement many recommendations and mandates in order to improve public education. Like most large institutions, many within DCPS have resisted change, especially when calls for reform come from the community at large. DCPS needs to develop a culture that is open and accepting of change, new ideas, and citizen input, even when these may cause discomfort to the education system.

Charge to the Phase Two study committee

The primary challenge facing the public education system is the deplorable achievement gap between its lowest and highest achieving students. This achievement gap has been attributed often to low family income, racial prejudice, insufficient parental involvement, high mobility rates, lack of household literacy, lack of a love of learning, or family crises, all of which may contribute to student failure. The current emphasis on school grades dictated by FCAT scores does not address the needs of individual students who are not achieving, nor does this emphasis properly reward successful students within Duval County's public schools.

This study found that the often-discussed failures of the school system or so-called "failing schools" were, in fact, the failure of children in schools. The social and economic issues that interfere with a child's ability to learn represent the failure of a community, not the school system. At the same time, student achievement will not improve if schools wait for the community to provide them with only well-adjusted, middle-class children to teach.

The focus of Phase Two must be on the factors inside and outside the school system that affect student learning, because many of the factors that impact student achievement are beyond the responsibility or capacity of the school system as presently constituted to fix. While the school system must do more to address the educational needs of low-achieving students, the community must take a larger role in addressing their social needs.

Therefore, Phase Two should study the issue: How can the community and the Duval County Public Schools eliminate the gap in individual student achievement by ensuring all students achieve at the highest levels possible?

ASSESSMENT

This assessment represents the information received by the committee. The information in it was derived from published materials, from facts reported by resource people, and from a consensus of the committee's understanding of the opinions of resource people.

Introduction

Citizens throughout Duval County have long professed to expect excellence in public education, although this goal has seldom been explicitly or operationally defined. While the community does not share a broad consensus of what excellence in public education is or would look like, great community attention and effort have been focused on education reform, especially over the last ten years. Through several studies and years of community efforts, Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) has undergone significant scrutiny and reforms—but not without continued controversy.

Across the community, parents, government leaders, business executives, and educators alike spoke to the study committee about the need for excellence in public education. An excellent public education system is essential to create a high quality workforce, nurture a healthy and informed citizenry, and increase economic development. As one community and business leader said, “Public education is the only dark spot on an otherwise vibrant community picture. It is of deep concern because one of the keys to economic growth is a good public school system.”

With more than 127,000 students in 2002, DCPS is among the 20 largest school districts in the nation, serving the entire county (including the municipalities of Atlantic Beach, Baldwin, Jacksonville, Jacksonville Beach, and Neptune Beach.) It is the second largest employer in Jacksonville, with approximately 14,000 teachers, administrators, support personnel, and part-time personnel. The district includes 105 elementary schools, 25 middle schools, 17 high schools, two academies of technology, three exceptional student centers, five special schools, and seven charter schools, in addition to some schools operated by the Department of Juvenile Justice.

An increasing number of parents in Duval County are turning to alternative forms of education for their students. One in five students are now educated outside of the traditional public education classroom. Duval County has one of the highest percentages of students attending private schools in the state of Florida (17 percent in 2002, the highest among urban

counties), and a higher-than-average number of students who are homeschooled.

The complexity of educating students in DCPS is heightened by several factors:

- the size of the district, over 800 square miles, encompassing urban, suburban, and rural settings;
- a disproportionately high minority student population (52 percent in 2002), requiring taking into account cultural differences in the classroom;
- high poverty rates among students (46 percent received free or reduced-price lunch in 2002), many bringing with them socioeconomic needs that, if unmet, interfere with student learning;
- a sizable population of students with special needs (15 percent of students in 2002 were enrolled in exceptional education programs, not including gifted programs);
- wide language diversity, with 2,583 students in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs in 2003, speaking 87 languages and representing 118 countries; and
- low parental literacy rates (47 percent of adults in Duval County are estimated to be functionally illiterate, according to JCCI's 1999 *Improving Adult Literacy* study.)

These factors affect schools differently. Forty-four percent of Duval County's 164 schools qualify for Title funding (68 elementary schools, two middle schools, and two charter schools in 2001), which are defined as schools with 50 percent or more of their students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch programs.

Because the needs of its students often interfere with education, DCPS has assumed the task of providing social services to students in order to make educating those same students a realistic possibility. These services range from the Full Service Schools (six high schools combining neighborhood-based resource centers with student education to meet the health, social welfare, mental health and community service needs of students and families), to providing clothing and toothbrushes for students (as done at West Riverside Elementary). Some schools have expanded the school lunch programs to provide

STUDENT ENROLLMENT, 2001-02

	Duval County	Percentage of K-12 students	Florida	Percentage of K-12 students
Home education	2,828	1.8%	44,460	1.5%
Private schools	26,743	17.0%	354,541	12.2%
Public charter schools	1,434	0.9%	40,760	1.4%
Traditional public education	125,983	80.3%	2,459,021	84.8%
Total	156,988		2,898,782	

Source: Florida Department of Education. Due to rounding, percentages may not add to 100 percent.

students with breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Others partner with community organizations and volunteers to meet the basic needs of students who come from households in poverty.

Working to meet the diverse non-academic needs of its students increases the challenges to DCPS providing students with a quality education, as these efforts have the potential to divert attention and resources from academic pursuits. The fundamental purpose of public schools remains to provide all students with the education and skills necessary to become productive members of our community, regardless of the students' socioeconomic background.

To this end, DCPS has restructured its instruction and evaluation systems to educate all students based on the same standards and holds students accountable to the same level of expected achievement, as demonstrated through standardized testing and portfolio evaluation. This process is referred to as "standards-based education." The delivery system for standards-based education varies depending on the fiscal and human resources available at each school. Yet each student is accountable to the same standards, and each school is graded using the same criteria for student achievement.

Defining excellence

While no single community definition exists for excellence in public education, many people in the community express similar expectations for students to stay in school and graduate, prepared for higher education and the workforce. Community expectations for DCPS remain higher than the community perception of the school system, which remains low.

One way to define excellence in public education is by student outcomes: students who receive an excellent public education, when they graduate from high school, should be able to read, write, compute, and solve problems well enough to either attend institutions of higher education without remediation or to enter the workforce as effective employees. This definition, with some differences in interpretation, appears to be shared by much of the community.

Others add to the definition that the process of being educated and the tools used to provide education should also be of the highest quality. Students receiving an excellent education, according to resource speakers, should receive challenging instruction from high-quality teachers in innovative classrooms with appropriate technological resources and sufficient materials for learning.

These combined images of excellence in public education instruction and outcomes, shared by resource speakers representing education, business, and community interests, could stand as a community definition of excellence for the Duval County public education system.

While the preceding definitions of excellence focus on student achievement, others define an excellent public education by measuring individual schools or through public perception of

the entire system. The question of excellence in local public education is often discussed in terms of national rankings, state-assigned grades for school performance, or through public opinion polling.

Using national rankings to measure excellence, DCPS has some excellent schools. Three area high schools are nationally ranked:

- Stanton College Preparatory School, ranked second in academic schools nationally by Newsweek in 2003;
- Paxon School for Advanced Studies, ranked third on the same list; and
- Douglas Anderson School of the Arts, one of 64 National Leader Schools in 2001, Down Beat magazine's Best Performing Arts High School, and the Grammy Awards Foundation's best U.S. music program for three consecutive years.

The State of Florida grades schools according to a FCAT centered formula. Using these measures, DCPS has both excellent and struggling schools. In 2001-02, 42 of the 164 schools in Duval County (25.6 percent) were graded as "A" schools by the State of Florida, up from 21 in 2000-01. At the same time, 12 received a failing grade from the state, and 22 others received a D.

Public perception, however, is more negative. In a 2002 survey for JCCI by American Public Dialogue, only 33 percent of respondents rated the quality of education provided by the Duval County Public Schools as "good" or "excellent." In a 2003 poll by Mason-Dixon Polling and Research, Inc., 80 percent of Duval County registered voters considered public education a "very important" issue in the next City of Jacksonville elections, with an additional 14 percent considering it "somewhat important"—which made public education the highest priority issue found in the survey. These results are consistent with a 2001 survey commissioned by The Dalton Agency, in which improving public education was identified as the top priority issue facing the community.

While the community perception of DCPS remains different from community expectations for public education, both the community and DCPS share similar visions. The efforts to improve public education from both within and without DCPS focus on the effectiveness of the education system to prepare a student for a lifetime of success.

Vision of the Duval County Public Schools

Every student will graduate from Duval County Public Schools with the knowledge and the skills to be successful in post-secondary education/or the workforce.

Mission of the Duval County Public Schools

The Duval County Public School System is committed to providing high quality educational opportunities that will inspire all students to acquire and use the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a culturally diverse and technologically sophisticated world.

Source: Duval County Public Schools

Measuring achievement

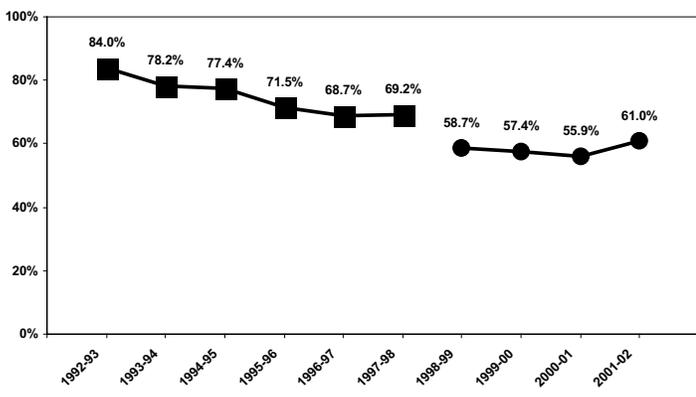
During the last ten years of education reform efforts, new tools were developed to measure student achievement, and older measures underwent significant changes. Measures of graduation rates, outcomes after graduation, and achievement while in school demonstrate limited progress from 1993 to 2003 and significant need for improvement.

The results of public education reform efforts and the success of the school system can be evaluated through measuring student achievement. Several measures of student achievement are available to assess progress, many of them new or redefined over the last decade. These include student high school graduation rates and preparedness to enter into higher education or the workforce. In addition to these student outcomes, which may lag years behind educational reform efforts, ongoing measures of achievement while students are still in school provide measures of the results of education reform over the past ten years.

Students graduate from high school

The most common measure of student success is the public high school graduation rate. The method of calculating the graduation rate was changed by the state beginning with the 1998-99 school year, meaning that rates cannot be compared to prior years. However, trend lines from 1993 to 1997 and from 1998 to 2001 were consistently negative. In 2002, the four-year graduation rate in Duval County was 61.0 percent, an increase over the previous three years and a reversal of the downward trend. The statewide graduation rate was 67.9 percent in 2002.

Duval County public high school graduation rate, 1992-93 through 2001-02

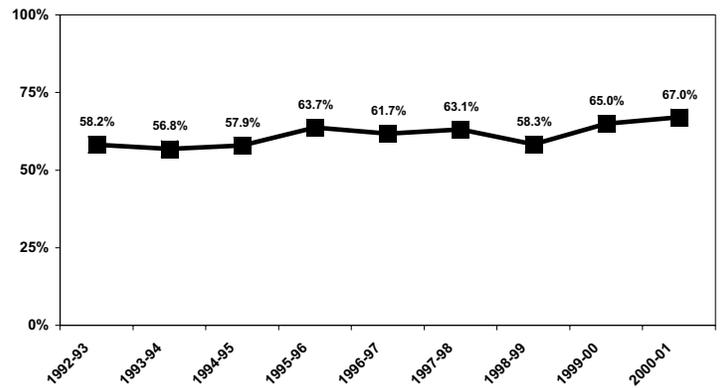


Source: Florida Department of Education. Before 1998, the graduation rate was measured by comparing graduating seniors to the total number of students entering ninth grade four years earlier. In 1998, the State of Florida began measuring the number of students who graduate high school within four years, as tracked by student ID numbers. An additional four to five percent of students take five years to graduate from high school, and are not included in the official graduation rate.

Graduates are prepared for higher education

The Florida Department of Education tracks the percentage of high-school graduates who report their employment and educational status six months after graduation. (The Department hears from approximately 80 percent of graduates.) In 2001, 67 percent of reporting DCPS graduates continued their education in Florida public or private colleges and universities. About three percent of graduates go on to colleges or universities in other states, according to DCPS, in line with statewide estimates. Across Florida, 70.2 percent of public high-school graduates continued their education at Florida colleges and universities in 2001.

Duval County graduates continuing their education

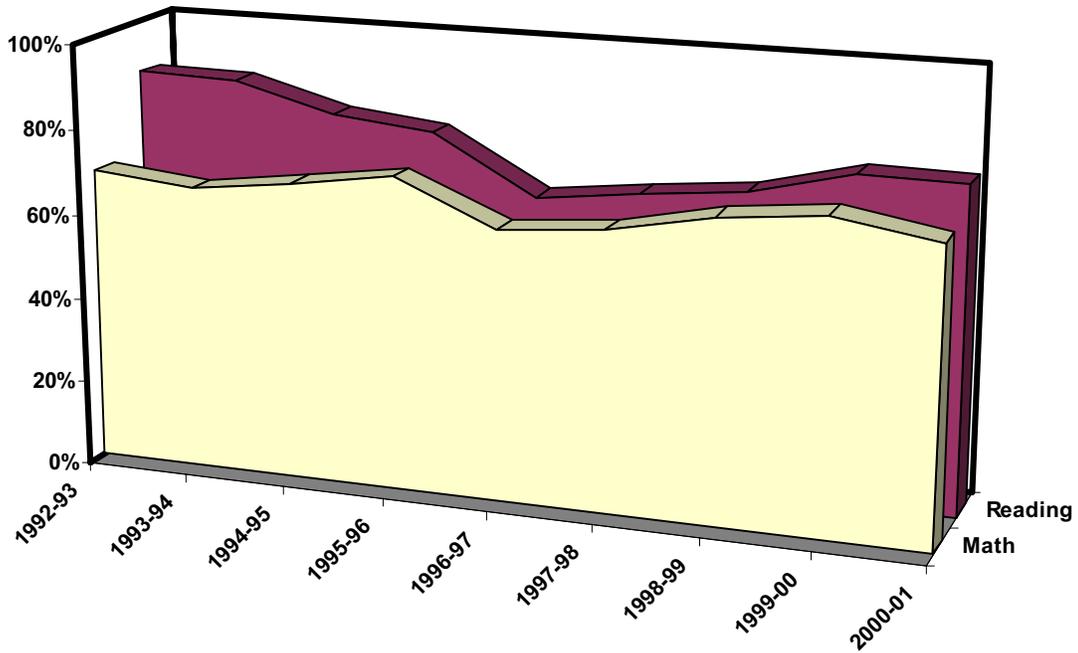


Source: Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program

A measure of the effectiveness of public education is the percentage of high school graduates who do not require remedial courses to continue their education. In 2001, 76.5 percent of all Duval County graduates who attended Florida public colleges and universities passed college placement tests in reading, and 69.3 percent passed math exams. These numbers declined from 1993 to 1997, and have been rising since then. Duval County graduates performed better in 2001 than the statewide averages of 74.4 percent for reading and 67.4 percent for math. Those who did not pass these placement tests were required to take remedial courses to continue their education.

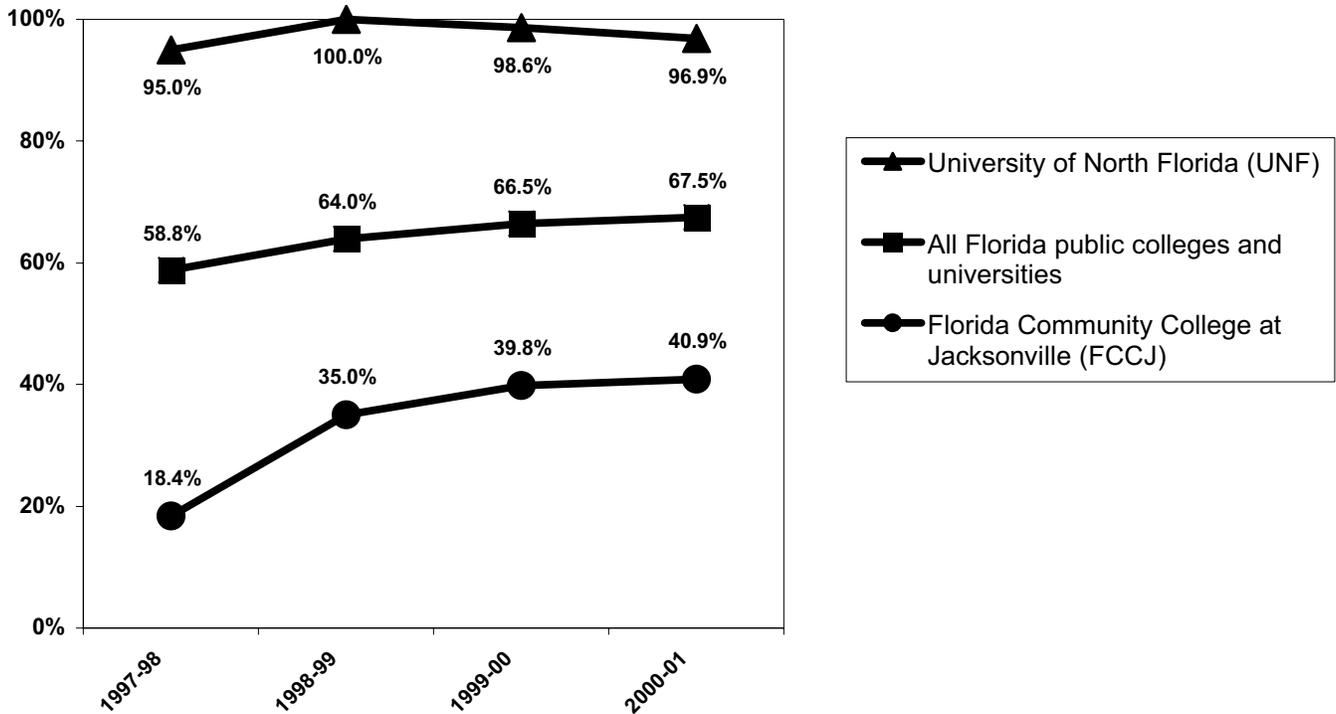
When college preparedness data are broken down by institution of higher learning, disparate patterns emerge. Those Duval County graduates attending the University of North Florida (UNF), which make up less than one-fourth of college-bound graduates, have consistently been prepared for college. However, over half of all DCPS graduates who attend college go to Florida Community College at Jacksonville (FCCJ), which, as an open admissions college, accepts all students with high school diplomas or the equivalent. These students have consistently required remediation in basic math or reading to continue their studies. While this situation is improving, nearly 60 percent of incoming FCCJ students from DCPS still required remediation in 2001.

Duval County graduates prepared for college courses in reading and math



Source: Florida Department of Education. This chart measures Duval County Public Schools graduates entering Florida public colleges and universities who pass college placement tests in reading and mathematics and thereby do not require remedial courses.

Combined college readiness results for Duval County graduates, by institution



Source: Florida Department of Education. This chart displays the results of incoming college students who were graduates of the Duval County Public schools who passed both the reading and math college placement tests and did not require remediation.

Other measures of college readiness have remained consistent or shown slight declines. Two major tests, the American College Test (ACT) and the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), are used nationally to assess student readiness for college. The average ACT scores for DCPS students remained below state and national averages, and in particular declined between

1998 and 2002. Average SAT scores also lagged behind state and national averages, and the trend line again showed a gradual decline in recent years. The percentage of high school seniors taking each test has not changed significantly in recent years, with one-third taking the ACT and almost half taking the SAT.

Duval County high school seniors taking the ACT

Year	American College Test (ACT) - Number Tested	American College Test (ACT) - Percent of 12th Graders Tested
2001-02	1,838	32.5%
2000-01	1,701	33.1%
1999-00	1,716	33.3%
1998-99	1,557	30.3%
1997-98	1,630	30.7%
1996-97	1,669	32.3%

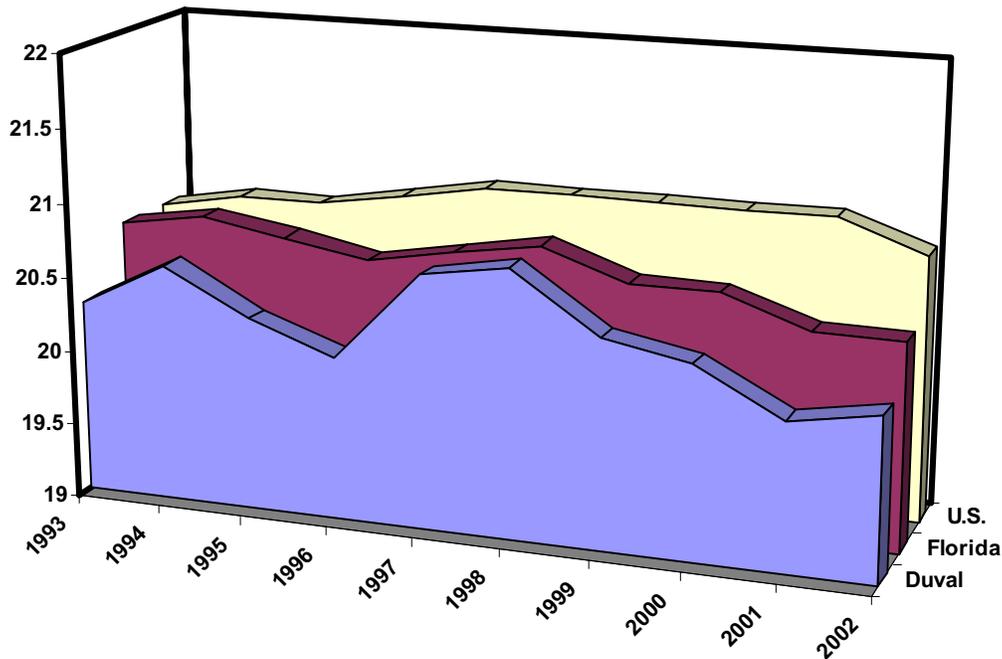
Source: Florida Department of Education

Duval County high school seniors taking the SAT

Year	Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) - Number Tested	Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) - Percent of 12th Graders Tested
2001-02	2,681	47.4%
2000-01	2,532	49.3%
1999-00	2,506	48.7%
1998-99	2,359	45.8%
1997-98	2,337	44.0%
1996-97	2,445	47.3%

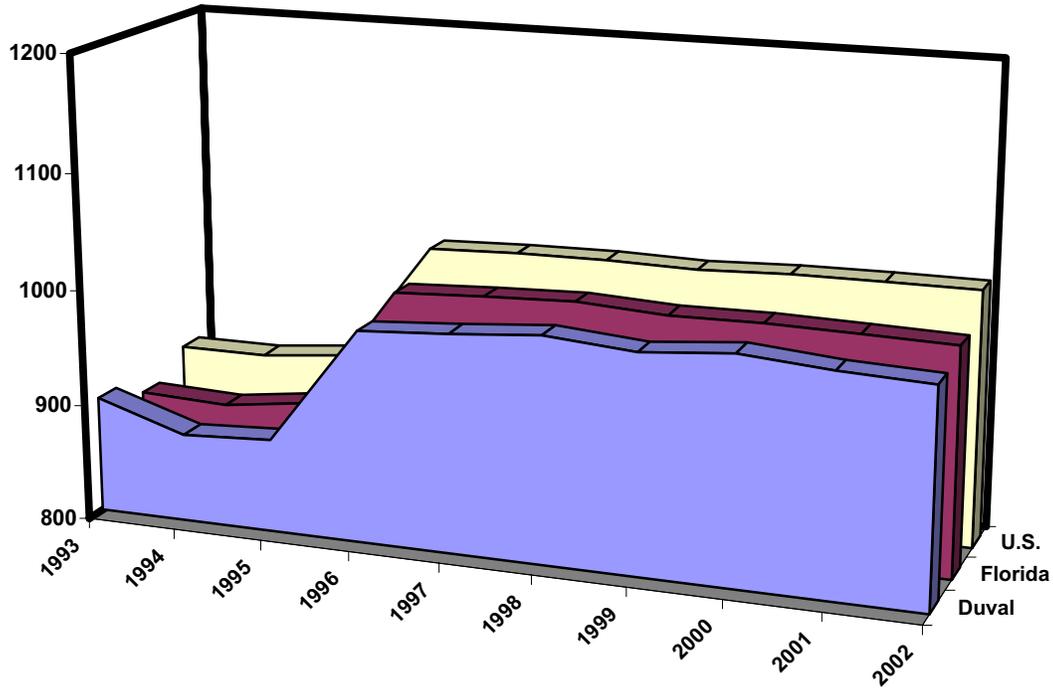
Source: Florida Department of Education

American College Test (ACT) composite scores for Duval County Public Schools, 1993-2002



Source: Duval County Public Schools

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) combined scores for Duval County Public Schools, 1993-2002



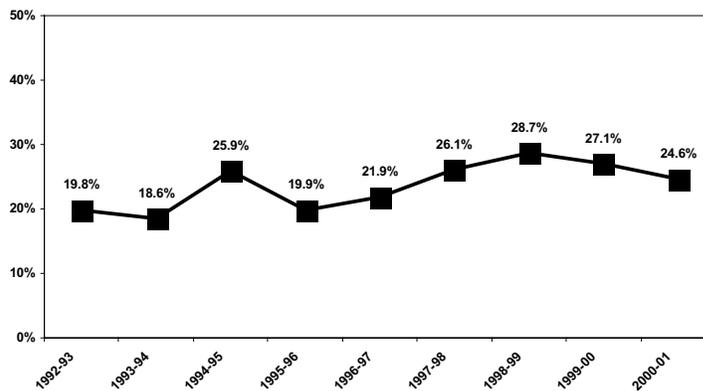
Source: Duval County Public Schools. In 1996 the SAT scoring process was changed, re-centering the scores from 400 to 500. The result was a 103-point increase in the national average that year, which was reflected in Duval County scores as well.

Graduates are prepared for the workforce

Not all high school graduates continue their education. Some choose to enter the workforce. Another measure of success in public education is how well it prepares students to obtain well-paid employment.

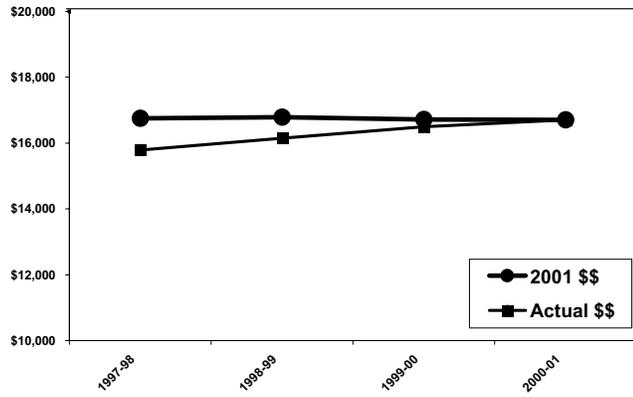
In 2001, nearly one-fourth of all high school graduates obtained full-time employment. The number of graduates working full time has declined slightly since 1999, but remains higher than 1994. The average annualized salary for these graduates was \$16,700 in 2001, which (after adjusting for inflation) represents a steady four-year decline.

DCPS high school graduates employed full time six months after graduation



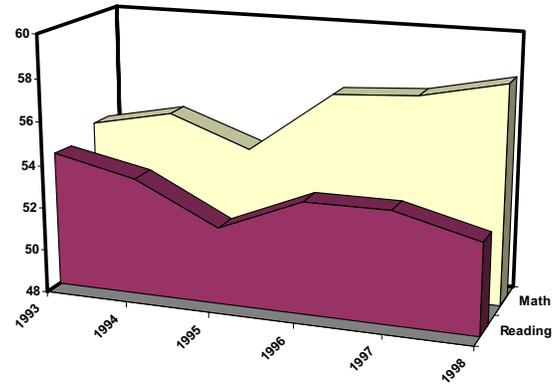
Source: Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program

Average annualized salary of full-time DCPS high school graduates, adjusted for inflation



Source: Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program. Data not available prior to 1997.

Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), 4th Grade Duval County Public Schools



Source: Florida Department of Education

Students learn and progress while in school

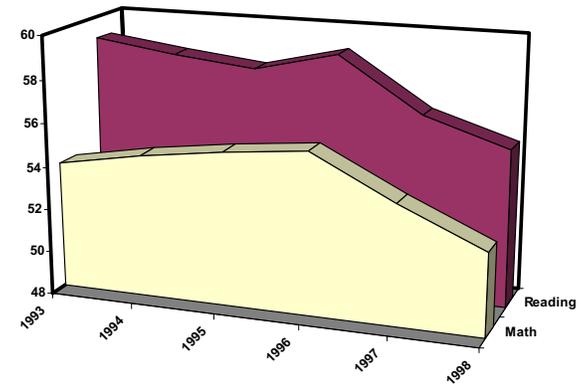
Education reform efforts take time, resource speakers repeated often. Efforts to improve pre-Kindergarten readiness, for example, will not translate into improved high school graduation rates or college placement tests for at least 12 years. Measuring the progress of education reform requires a broader set of tools to examine student achievement throughout the public education system.

DCPS students are routinely evaluated through standardized testing. At the beginning of the time period covered by this assessment, students were evaluated using the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). Passing the High School Competency Test (HSCT) was added as a requirement for high school graduation in 1997. Beginning in 1996, the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT) replaced previous standardized tests and became the primary means to evaluate student achievement (among other uses for the test.) Passing the 10th-grade FCAT became a high school graduation requirement in 2003. Likewise in 2003, third grade students are required to pass the FCAT in order to be promoted to the fourth grade.

Between 1993 and 1998, Duval County CTBS scores showed some improvement in math scores on the elementary level, with an overall decline in reading scores. Middle-school scores for both math and reading declined.

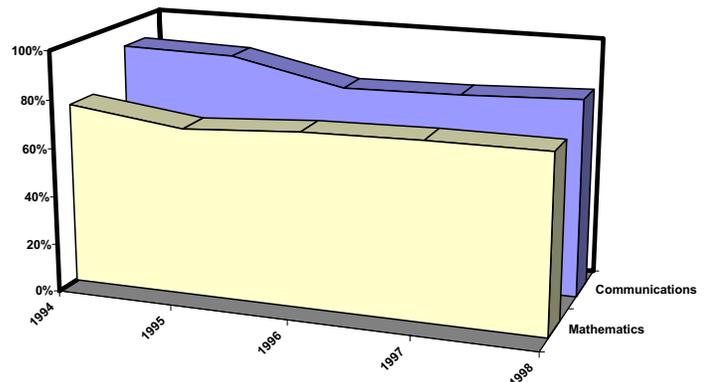
Between 1994 and 1998, HSCT scores in both communications and mathematics remained consistent, demonstrating neither major improvement nor significant decline. In 1998, 82 percent of DCPS students passed the communications section, and 73 passed the mathematics portion, compared to state averages of 81 percent for communications and 77 percent for math.

Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), 8th Grade Duval County Public Schools



Source: Florida Department of Education

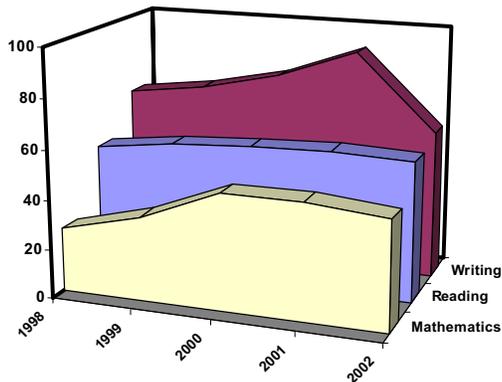
High School Competency Test (HSCT), percent of DCPS students passing, 1994-1998



Source: Florida Department of Education

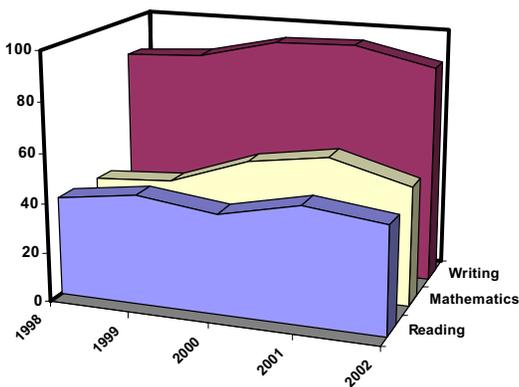
The FCAT covers the remaining time period of this assessment. Passing the test requires achieving at level three (out of five levels.) Between 1998 and 2002, reading and math scores improved at the elementary level, with fluctuations on the writing portion of the assessment. Middle-school math scores saw overall improvement, while reading and writing remained relatively consistent. The largest gains were in high school math scores, with some improvement in reading and writing.

FCAT scores, Level 3 (passing) or above, 4th grade Duval County Public Schools



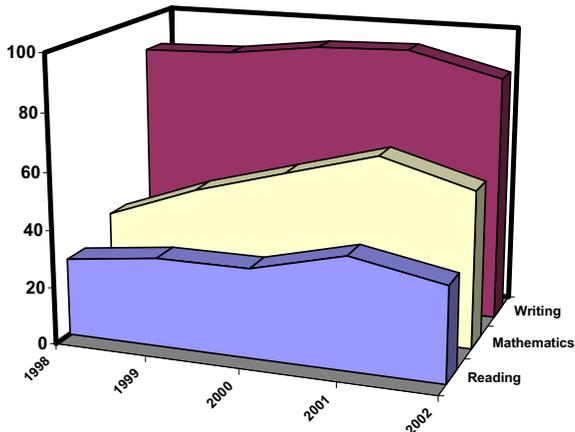
Source: Florida Department of Education

FCAT scores, Level 3 (passing) or above, 8th grade Duval County Public Schools



Source: Florida Department of Education

FCAT scores, Level 3 (passing) or above, 10th grade Duval County Public Schools



Source: Florida Department of Education

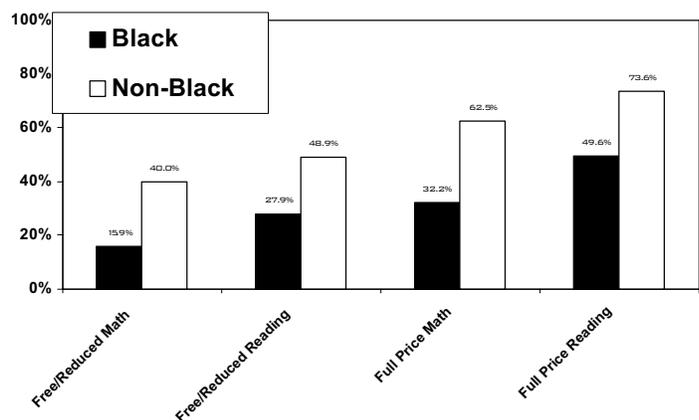
However, these measures continue to be a cause for concern. Only 33 percent of 10th-grade students passed the reading portion of the FCAT, while 55 percent passed the math section. At the time of this assessment in 2003, 1,959 Duval County seniors (33 percent) were waiting to discover if they had passed the reading section of the FCAT on their sixth try. Another 1,147 seniors (19 percent) were waiting for the results on the math section, which includes some of the same students who had not passed the reading test. These students will not receive a high school diploma if they do not pass the test.

As this assessment was going to press 387 seniors had not passed the reading portion of the FCAT and 304 had not passed the math portion. Again, These numbers overlap because some students may have failed both portions of the test. Those eligible for graduation but who have not passed the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test can attend a summer program, after which they will be given another chance to pass the FCAT. Students ineligible for graduation will be put on a fast-track program to earn a General Equivalency Diploma (GED).

Racial disparities in student achievement

The 2002 JCCI *Beyond the Talk: Improving Race Relations* study found significant disparities in educational outcomes by race. These disparities, in graduation rates, dropout rates, and test scores are made worse by disparities in income. However, even when household income is factored in, these differences remain. The study found that “black students, on average, underperform other students within the same income categories.” These findings have not changed from *The Florida Times-Union’s* 1997 analysis of student test scores by race and income that found that “even when family income is taken into consideration, race remains a powerful predictor of success in Jacksonville schools.”

FCAT scores, Level 3 (passing) or above, by participation in free or reduced-price lunch programs and by race, Duval County Public Schools, 2001



Source: Duval County Public Schools

Reform efforts

Duval County has devoted considerable attention to public education since 1993. Four major local studies, new federal and state education mandates, and several local education reform initiatives have had significant impacts on the public school system.

In 1991, JCCI's *Targets 2000* project identified improving public education as the top priority for community action in Duval County. That sense of urgency spawned the 1993 JCCI study, *Public Education: The Cost of Quality*. The continued concern for public education resulted in the 1997 SchoolMatch report, commissioned by The Florida Times-Union; the 1998 New Century Commission on Education, sponsored by the Duval County School Board; and the 2002 Council of Great City Schools report, supported by the Alliance for World Class Education in partnership with Duval County Public Schools.

During the time that these studies were being conducted, the State of Florida developed its Sunshine State Standards, introduced the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test, and increased high school graduation requirements. In addition, the federal government passed the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act. In 2002, voters added a class size amendment to the Florida constitution.

Community leaders and DCPS have responded to these studies and mandates with several significant reform efforts. Community efforts include the creation of the Alliance for World Class Education and the opening of the Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership. School initiatives include introducing the America's Choice School Design in some schools and developing New Performance Standards for the entire school district.

Local studies of Duval County Public Schools

- **1993 JCCI Public Education: The Cost of Quality**
Public Education: The Cost of Quality was a citizen-led study that asked the questions: *What is high-quality education? How can it be measured? and What does it cost?* In the process of answering those questions, the study committee examined then-current efforts to improve public education, developed a definition of "quality education," identified outcome-oriented measures of quality in public education, and explored the relationship between education quality and education cost.

Timeline of Significant Education Reform

1993	JCCI releases <i>Public Education: The Cost of Quality Study</i>
1996	Florida enacts Sunshine State Standards Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) created
1997	SchoolMatch Report on Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) State of Florida strengthened graduation requirements
1998	New Century Commission Report of Education completed
1999	Alliance for World Class Education formed New Performance Standards put in place for DCPS
2001	Congress passes No Child Left Behind Act
2002	Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership opens Council of Great City Schools Report released Voters pass class size amendment to the Florida constitution
2003	Passing FCAT becomes graduation requirement Passing the third-grade FCAT becomes a requirement for promotion to the fourth grade

- **1997 SchoolMatch Report**
SchoolMatch, an educational consultant based in Westerville, Ohio, was hired by *The Florida Times-Union* to assess Duval County's public schools. SchoolMatch conducted an "Audit of Educational Effectiveness for the Duval County Public School District," comparing DCPS with other large, urban school districts, analyzing student achievement, and surveying the community for its perceptions of educational quality. Its report focused on performance measurements, comparing the Duval County public school population against similar populations nationwide. In addition, the report examined differences in student outcomes within Duval County based on race and family income.
- **1998 New Century Commission Report on Education**
While SchoolMatch was completing its assessment, the Duval County School Board established the New Century Commission on Education as a broad-based, community wide effort to set new directions for the school district and recommend new initiatives and structures. The School Board and the Mayor of Jacksonville appointed the commission members. Over a period of ten months the Commission met as a group, sought community input through a dialogue process, established five working committees to explore various aspects of school district operations, and sponsored a community-wide Education Summit.
- **2002 Council of the Great City Schools Report**
The Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), a coalition of the nation's largest urban public school systems, was hired by the Duval County Public Schools and the Alliance for World Class Education to review and evaluate the district's non-instructional divisions and to suggest ways to improve them further. CGCS, in turn, assembled a series of Strategic Support Teams composed of volunteer, senior-level school managers from across the country. These teams came to Jacksonville to assess the district's management structure and its operational divisions—*Human Resources, Management Information/Business Systems and Technical Support, and Administration and Business Services.*

Federal and state education mandates

- **1996 Sunshine State Standards**
In 1996, the Florida Department of Education instituted standards for public education, identifying expectations for what students should know at given stages of their school career. The Sunshine State Standards cover the skills and competencies Florida students should master in seven subject areas: mathematics, language arts, social studies, science, the arts, health and physical education, and foreign languages. Standards have been established at four, combined-grade levels (Pre-K to 2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12), so that students can be monitored academically as they progress through the school system. While the standards identify what students should know, they do not spell out how students should be taught. Each school district must determine the appropriate curricula for its students to master the content of the Sunshine State Standards.
- **1996 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)**
Students in Florida have been taking standardized tests for years, including Florida Writes, the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, Minimum Level Skills Test, High School Competency Test, and others. In 1996, the Florida Department of Education designated the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) as the evaluation tool to measure how well students are learning the skills and competencies outlined in the Sunshine State Standards. Initially, the FCAT only covered reading, math and writing. Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, the FCAT included science as well.

In addition to measuring individual student achievement, the FCAT is used to measure school achievement with a weighted formula that includes FCAT reading, writing and math scores. The formula rewards schools for high student achievement, but also rewards schools whose students make marked improvements. Teacher effectiveness is also measured by how well his or her students perform on the FCAT.
- **1997 State of Florida Changes Graduation Requirements**
In 1997, the Florida Legislature amended public high school graduation requirements. The number of required credits increased to 24, the required cumulative grade point average increased from 1.5 to 2.0, Algebra I was added as a required course, and grading scales were made more stringent (though this last requirement has been relaxed.) Students were also required to pass a standardized test in order to graduate. Until 2002, that test was the High School Competency Test (HSCT), administered in eleventh grade. Beginning in 2003, students must earn a passing score on the grade 10 Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) to graduate.
- **No Child Left Behind Act of 2001**
No Child Left Behind (NCLB) changes the federal government's role in kindergarten through 12th grade education by asking America's schools to describe and measure success in terms of student achievement. No additional federal dollars accompany this mandate. States that do not comply with NCLB or fail to meet the federal mandates risk the loss of existing federal funding for education. NCLB focuses on stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility and local control, an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work, and expanded options for parents (school choice). Florida has had statewide standards (Sunshine State Standards) in place since 1994 and testing since 1996 (FCAT).
- **2002 Class Size Reduction Amendment to Florida Constitution**
In 2002, Florida voters approved an amendment to the Florida Constitution to cap public school class sizes at 18

students through third grade, 22 students for fourth through eighth grade, and 25 students in high school by 2010. Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the class size amendment requires the Legislature to provide sufficient funds to reduce the average number of students in each classroom by at least two students per year until the maximum number of students is met as noted above. Duval County school officials estimate that it will cost \$137 million to hire 335 new teachers, provide associated staff, and add needed classroom space to implement the 2003-2004 requirements.

Local reform initiatives

- **1999 Alliance for World Class Education**

In 1999, Jacksonville's Duval Public Education Foundation was folded into the Alliance for World Class Education (AWCE), a non-profit public education support organization modeled after Seattle's Alliance for Education. The Alliance brings together a broad range of business and community leaders to leverage their resources to improve public education in Duval County. At the time of this assessment, the AWCE was focused on improving professional development, principal leadership, organizational effectiveness, and teacher recognition in DCPS.

- **1999 New Performance Standards**

The Duval County Public Schools adopted New Performance Standards in 1999, which work in tandem with the America's Choice School Design and are aligned with Florida's Sunshine State Standards. While the Sunshine State Standards identify the content students are expected to know, the New Performance Standards identify actions that students need to take in order demonstrate knowledge of the standards. One resource speaker gave the example of a teen testing for his or her driver's permit. Content standards, what students are expected to know, are the "rules of the road" for which the teen would take a written test. Performance standards are the application of one's knowledge. It is necessary to apply the "rules of the road" in order to actually drive the car during the driving portion of the test.

- **2002 Schultz Center For Teaching and Leadership**

The Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership is an independent, non-profit corporation established in 2002 to provide educators in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, and St. Johns Counties with professional development services for educators. The Center was established through private donations and State matching funds. The Center provides teachers and principals with classroom training and support; opportunities for collaborating, coaching, mentoring, and networking; technology assistance; leadership development training; and resources for research, continuing education, and development of instructional materials.

Curriculum, school design, and student instruction

Against the background of studies, government mandates, and reform initiatives, DCPS made significant changes in its instructional methods and curricula.

In 1997, the Interchurch Coalition for Action, Reconciliation and Empowerment (ICARE), a group of leaders from the faith community, proposed that the Direct Instruction phonics-based reading curriculum be expanded in the school system to address poor reading performance. In 1998, the School Board expanded Direct Instruction to 11 elementary schools with low reading scores.

America's Choice School Design (ACSD), a standards-based accountability system that determines how students are taught using internationally benchmarked standards, was introduced in 1999 to implement the New Performance Standards. In the 1999-2000 school year, ACSD began in ten elementary schools and four middle schools. In the 2000-2001 school year, DCPS expanded ACSD to an additional 38 elementary and seven middle schools. At the time of this assessment, 48 schools were using America's Choice. Key components of the design are ACSD coaches at each school, literacy coaches, parent/community outreach coordinators, and ongoing teacher training. The approach also includes displaying outstanding student work that meets expected standards to inspire other students with examples of high-quality work. Teachers also consult with each other to improve lesson planning and discuss portfolios of student work.

Other curriculum reform efforts have also brought about changes. The National Science Foundation funds the Jacksonville Urban Systemic Initiative, which is a standards-based science, mathematics, and technology reform effort. This initiative began with 20 schools in the 1998-99 school year and expanded to provide professional development opportunities, curriculum models, and 75 Teacher Leaders for all schools in the district in 2001-02.

Impacts of public education reform

As a result of local studies, federal and state mandates, and local reform initiatives, public education in Duval County has undergone significant changes. The impacts of education reform efforts have affected the entire body of education stakeholders. The expectations and outcomes for each entity have been transformed to some extent. Throughout the system, significant changes in education have occurred, but the impact of the last decade's education reform over has not ended and will be ongoing.

The past decade of public education reform has involved a wide cast of players, from elected officials and school administrators to students, parents, and others in the community. In

response to the previously-cited studies and recommendations, as well as mandates from the federal and state government, changes in the operations and delivery of public education have occurred, although most resource speakers agreed that the effort was still ongoing and more work remained to be done.

Resource speakers from within DCPS as well as those working for education reform outside the school system emphasized the length of time necessary to see the results of their efforts. A common metaphor employed was “turning the Queen Elizabeth in the St. Johns River,” as resource speakers described the ponderous, sometimes frustrating, effort to move something as large and sometimes resistant as the school system.

Reform efforts have addressed different concerns within the school system. The Duval County School Board, Superintendent, central administration, principals, and teachers each have distinct roles to play, and each have been impacted by education reform in different ways.

Duval County School Board

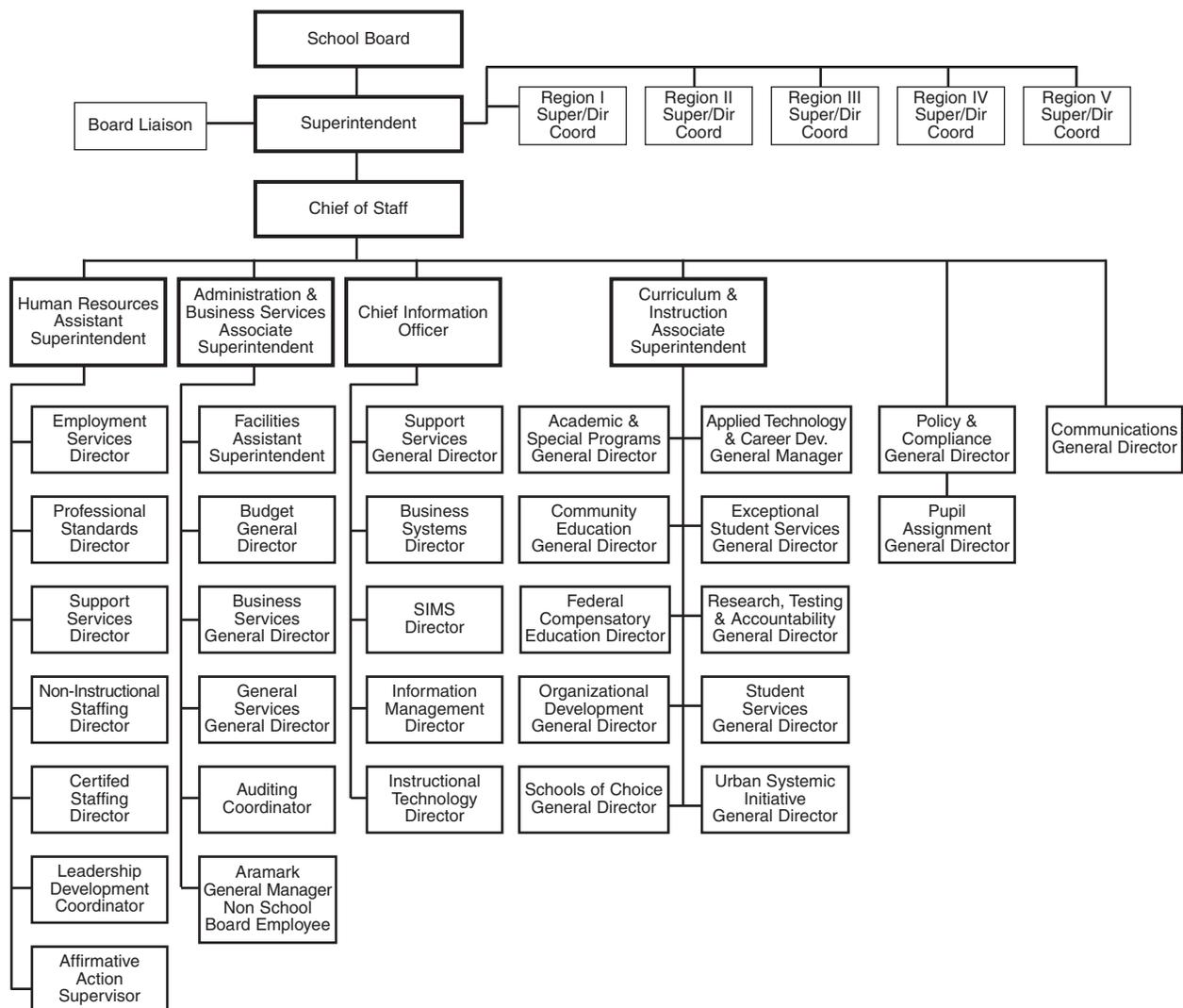
Roles and responsibilities

An elected seven-member school board governs the Duval County Public Schools and acts as its official policy-making body. School board members are not required to meet any specific qualifications above and beyond any other public official. They approach their duties from a variety of different backgrounds, educational experience, and expectations for public education. At the time of this study, one Board member remained from the 1996 election, three remained from 2000, and three new board members were elected.

Evaluations and recommendations

The 1993 *Public Education: The Cost of Quality* study faulted the School Board for lacking a clear vision for high-quality public education and for not identifying its priorities to achieve such a vision.

Organizational Chart of Duval County Public Schools, 2002



Source: Council of the Great City Schools report

The SchoolMatch report rated School Board leadership as “below average.” It called for the Superintendent and the School Board to work more effectively together to implement policies to improve public education. The report also identified specific actions that the Duval County Public Schools should take to improve public perception of the education system, which it attributed to the poor relationship between the superintendent and School Board.

The New Century Commission highlighted the roles of the School Board and Superintendent in working together for a better school system. It specifically entrusted the School Board with building better community relations, improving public understanding of the reform efforts underway, and increasing community support and partnerships to assist the school system in implementing its vision for excellent public education.

By 2002, the Council of Great City Schools report identified the School Board-Superintendent relationship as “improved” and reported that “the district has excellent leadership at the School Board and Superintendent levels.”

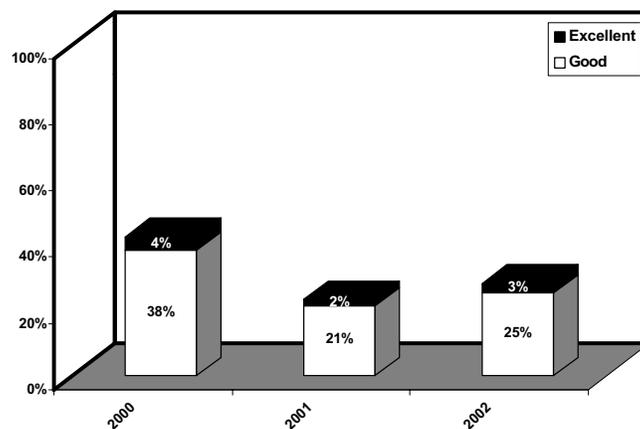
Assessing progress

- **Leadership and vision:** Through the efforts of the New Century Commission, DCPS developed a new mission and vision for the system. By the 2002 Council of Great City Schools report, lack of leadership had ceased to be a concern.
- **Working relationship with superintendent:** In 1998, with the New Century Commission recommendations in hand and a desire for significant improvement in public education, the School Board hired John Fryer as Superintendent. Conflicts between the School Board and the Superintendent came to a head in 2001, when events surrounding the decision to competitively bid busing service as opposed to maintaining the existing bus contractors caused a rift in the relationship between the Superintendent and the School Board that was played out in the media for months. The resulting low public opinion convinced the School Board and Superintendent to develop a more productive working relationship.

The Board has taken advantage of training provided by the Florida School Boards Association to improve its relationship with the superintendent, which strengthened the ability of the Board and Superintendent to work more effectively and efficiently. The School Board and Superintendent have improved communication and conducted in-house workshops to ensure that all understand and are working together on reform efforts.

- **Public perception:** Public perception has lagged behind reform efforts. A 2002 survey conducted for JCCI by American Public Dialogue found that only three percent of Duval County residents perceived School Board elected leadership to be “excellent,” with another 25 percent rating them as “good.”

Survey Rating the Quality of the Duval County School Board



Source: JCCI Indicators for Progress

Superintendent

Roles and responsibilities

The superintendent of Duval County Public Schools is appointed by the School Board and is the Board’s sole employee. As the chief executive officer of the school district, the superintendent and his staff are responsible for implementing the policies set by the Board. A superintendent must be both a capable executive and an educational leader. Both roles have political dimensions, which calls for the ability to work with an array of conflicting interests and forces to move the school system forward.

Evaluations and recommendations

JCCI’s 1993 *Public Education: The Cost of Quality* study expected the superintendent to act in concert with the School Board, carrying out its policies and enforcing its mandates. It made no specific recommendations regarding the role of the superintendent, though it expressed concern about ineffective leadership within the school system.

The 1997 SchoolMatch Report indicated a general dissatisfaction with leadership in the schools on the part of parents, teachers and administrators. Conflicts between the board and superintendent, negative comments by school employees, negative media reports, and low student achievement reinforced negative perceptions in the community. SchoolMatch called for the superintendent and his administrative staff to be responsible for daily operations and set the direction of the school district through recommendations to the school board. The superintendent was also charged with being responsible for the employment, transfer, assignment, evaluation and recommendation for termination of all employees.

The 1998 New Century Commission recommendations required the superintendent to be heavily involved in identifying barriers to implementing the recommendations and specifying actions, resources, and timelines for the implementation effort. In particular, the Commission charged that the superintendent be held accountable for developing district-wide improvement plans.

In 2002, the Council of the Great City Schools Report specified that the leadership of Superintendent Fryer was critical to the success of DCPS. The Superintendent was specifically recognized for increasing the authority of the five Regional Superintendents, refocusing monthly principal meetings on instructional issues, and increasing the use of data in making decisions, particularly in instructional issues.

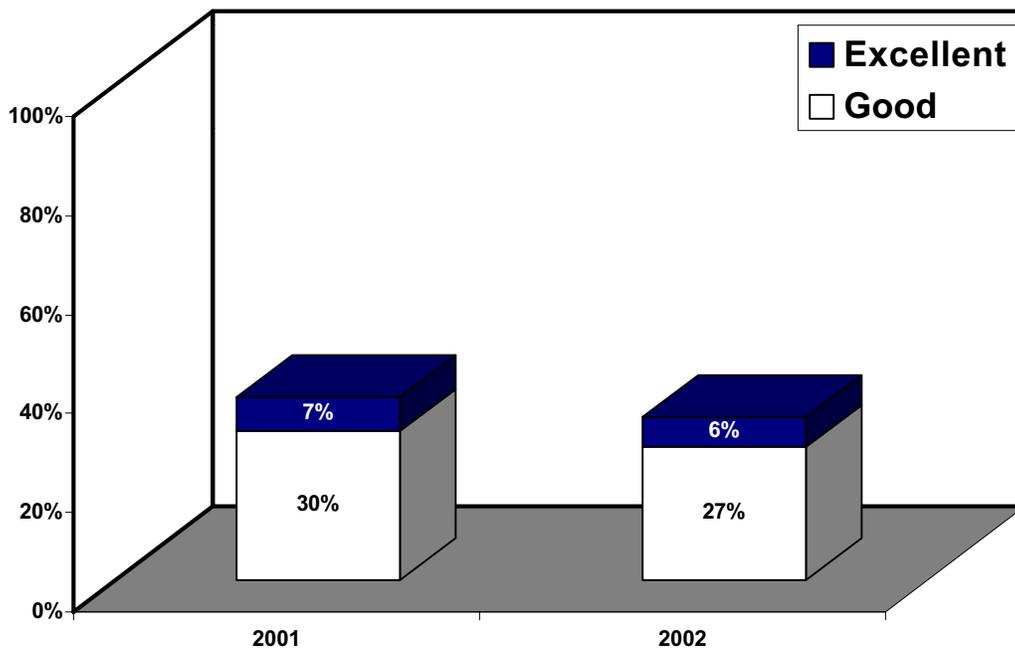
Assessing Progress

- Leadership and policy implementation:** When Superintendent Fryer was hired in 1998, he was charged with implementing the 155 recommendations of the New Century Commission. He led the effort to bring in America’s Choice School Design. This spawned controversy in the community when vocal advocates lobbied for adopting the Direct Instruction methodology in some schools to improve the reading skills of at-risk students.

Superintendent Fryer also focused the school system on his “High Five” priorities: Safe Schools, Academic Performance, Accountability, Learning Communities, and High Performance Management Teams. By 2002, the Superintendent and School Board had developed improved communication and a better working relationship. The Superintendent has also implemented a stronger data-driven approach to district improvement, a necessary part of both standards-based education and the state’s FCAT-centered evaluation system.

- Building community confidence:** While the Superintendent has continued these reform efforts, community confidence in the quality of education provided by DCPS remains low. In a 2002 survey by American Public Dialogue for JCCI, Duval County residents were asked: *In your opinion, is the quality of education provided by the Duval County Public Schools excellent, good, fair, or poor?* The combined total of 33 percent of respondents who approved of the quality of public education fell from the 37 percent favorable rating in the first year of this survey.

Survey rating the quality of education provided by DCPS



Source: JCCI Indicators for Progress

Superintendent’s “High Five” Priorities

Framework for Implementation of Standards in Duval County Public Schools

Purpose: To define standards-based expectations for all Duval County Public Schools

Target Audience: Principals and district support staff

<p>Target 1: Safe Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Implement a School Wide Discipline Plan 	<p>Target 3: Accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Use data to plan for improvement ◆ Analyze and document student work ◆ Implement formative assessment: Revision and re-teaching ◆ Conduct performance reviews ◆ Compile school portfolios
<p>Target 2: Academic Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Understand and use the New Performance Standards in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reading and Writing by Grade (K-3) b. Elementary (4-5) c. Middle School (6-8) d. High School (9-12) ◆ Connect student work to standards ◆ Create standards-based bulletin board ◆ Establish Model Literacy Classrooms <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Writing Workshops b. Reading Workshops c. Skills Block ◆ Establish Model Mathematics Classrooms <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Elementary - Investigations b. Middle School - Connected Math c. High School- Algebra I ◆ Establish Model Science Classrooms ◆ Utilize and Integrate Technology (Computer Learning Labs) ◆ Implement Safety Nets <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Intervention: Support tutoring/mentoring; Establish before school, after school, and/or Saturday school remediation b. Schedule double blocking and or flexible time (secondary) c. Implement performance-based course/GPA recovery (secondary) 	<p>Target 4: Learning Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conduct on and off site focused walks in grade structures and feeder patterns ◆ Create time for professional development during the school day ◆ Form study groups (grade level, content areas) ◆ Facilitate parent and community involvement and education <hr/> <p>Target 5: High Performance Management Teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Attend Standards-Based Leadership Training ◆ Select Distributed Leadership Teams ◆ Implement Book of the Month ◆ Provide materials and reallocate resources to support standards driven system (classroom libraries, leveled texts, math manipulative, etc.) ◆ Implement 25 Book Campaign

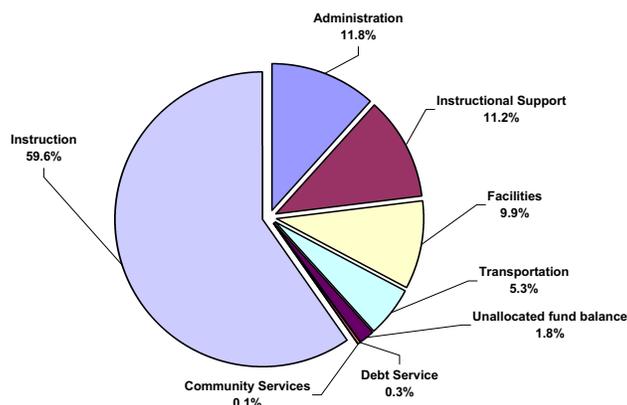
Source: Duval County Public Schools

School Administration

Roles and responsibilities

In 2002, Duval County Public Schools had a total budget of \$1.25 billion. Of that total, the operating budget was \$724 million. DCPS employed 14,065 people, of which approximately half (7,080) were teachers and half (6,985) were professional and non-instructional employees who provide support and operations services. Those functions include professional development, communications, facilities, compliance, research and assessment, human resources, and technology.

**Duval County Public School
Operating Budget, 2002-03**



Source: Duval County Public Schools

The size of Duval County, the number of DCPS employees, and the number and diversity of students creates administrative challenges for the school district. The effectiveness of the school district's administration and operations in meeting those challenges directly impacts students through the ability of the superintendent, principals, and teachers to focus on student achievement and through the resources available to meet classroom needs.

Evaluations and recommendations

JCCI's 1993 *Public Education: The Cost of Quality* study directed attention to the cost effectiveness of the central office staff. The citizens participating in this study were concerned about the cost of administering public education, with an emphasis on reallocating resources through cost savings when possible. The recommendations directed toward the central office focused on reducing cost by reducing administrative staff, measuring productivity and effectiveness of civil-service employees, outsourcing non-instructional functions to private firms where possible, and decreasing duplication of services.

The 1997 SchoolMatch report recognized the need to redefine the entire culture of the Duval County Public Schools, emphasizing student achievement throughout the organization, not just in the classroom. This approach required that decision-makers realize and act on how their decisions affect student

achievement. The report also called for increasing the percentage of the budget allocated to classroom instruction.

In 1998, the New Century Commission noted the need for central office administrators to be more responsive to the needs of schools. As a result, the Commission supported reorganizing the central office into five regions, with regional superintendents and support personnel located closer to the schools. This redesign was an effort to make a large district more manageable. However, the reorganization by itself did not ensure that central administrators would support decisions made at the school level. The New Century Commission specifically addressed how the central office could become more supportive of school-based decisions that directly affect students.

In 2002, the Council of the Great City Schools conducted a management assessment with the express purpose of reviewing and evaluating the non-instructional business divisions of DCPS and recommending improvement. Its recommendations to improve human resource functions were a direct response to the need for strategic planning to address possible teacher shortages and the lack of succession planning within the administrative ranks. Suggested improvements in business services and financial management have the potential to redirect millions of dollars into classroom instruction and resources. Additional management efficiencies were identified that would improve the functioning of technology and information services. An organizational redesign, flattening or streamlining the organizational structure, was also recommended.

Assessing Progress

- **Curriculum and instructional services:** Since 1998, the Superintendent has emphasized student achievement and instruction, defining the expectations of all DCPS principals and support staff in his "High Five" priorities. DCPS has also changed student curriculum to meet its New Performance Standards, basing its decisions on standards produced by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association, the National Research Council's National Science Education Standards, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science's Project 2061 Benchmarks for Literacy. Through the Schultz Center, DCPS now has individuals certified to train America's Choice teachers and coaches, developing the tools necessary to expand this teaching model throughout the system.
- **Recruiting and retaining teachers:** The 2002 Council of Great City Schools report identified a 16.1 percent annual turnover rate, and faulted the Human Resources division for not having an adequate teacher retention strategy to address this issue. Nationally, 14 percent of teachers leave the field after one year, 33 percent by the end of their third year, and 46 percent by the time they have completed five years. Resource speakers said that the

same holds true in Duval County, making teacher retention an intertwined issue with teacher recruitment. Efforts to improve the human resources function at DCPS in response to the Council of the Great City Schools report were just underway at the time of this study. The class size amendment necessitates 335 new teachers be hired to meet its requirements. This in addition to overall hiring needs, adds urgency to current efforts to adequately respond to this problem. The perception of the quality of the teaching environment in neighboring school districts also makes recruiting teachers for DCPS more difficult.

Local colleges and universities only provide about one-fourth of the new teachers Duval County requires annually, and enrollment in the Colleges of Education has been declining in recent years. Half of all new teachers must be recruited from outside Florida. DCPS has responded by increasing starting teacher salary to \$30,000, and average teacher salary has risen consistently over the last five years. However, finding new and qualified teachers remains a significant concern, especially as the state has reduced or eliminated several programs to encourage people to enter teaching.

Teacher retention is more difficult at challenged schools, where student needs and socioeconomic diversity require more effort from teachers. Currently, new hires are often placed at challenged schools, because experienced teachers have seniority and preference in filling open positions in better-performing schools.

Recent local innovative efforts to recruit and retain teachers in challenged schools may provide needed information to design long-term solutions. Two examples are:

- The Urban Teacher Residency Program in 2001 brought in 70 professionals from other careers and trained them to teach in the classroom. After taking classes at the University of North Florida and receiving experience in a summer school program, new teachers were assigned to challenged schools. However, the teacher recruitment cycle leaves insufficient time for training between being hired and receiving an assignment to a specific school. This program no longer exists in its original form.
- Creating Opportunities that Result in Excellence (CORE) was designed to provide financial incentives to teachers working in challenged schools. The program began in 2002 with 172 teachers and principals in five schools that had already been labeled as “F schools” by the state. This program is funded through private donations.
- **Cost-effective management:** Resource speakers identified the need for increased expertise among district personnel to meet the challenges DCPS faces. Currently, many educators rise through the teaching ranks to become principals, and from principals they rise to take administrative roles throughout the district. These resource

speakers echoed the findings of the Council of the Great City Schools, which contended that experts outside the field of education might be more suitable for specific non-instructional business functions within the school district. In 2003, DCPS hired a treasurer to manage its financial assets.

- **Capacity for change:** After the 1993 *Public Education: The Cost of Quality* study was released, community volunteers worked with DCPS to implement the study recommendations. By the time the volunteers submitted their Final Implementation Report to the JCCI Board of Directors in December 1996, their conclusion was that “working with the huge and amorphous bureaucracy of the Duval County Public Schools has been a wearing and frustrating experience.” While some progress had been made, the committee reported that they “do not feel comfortable with the partial nature of their implementation successes. Too many important educational quality issues remain unresolved, and too much resistance to change remains in the school system.”

The 1998 New Century Commission report focused on the ability of DCPS to “build capacity to support change” as one of six broad areas requiring improvement. The 2002 final report issued by DCPS in response to the New Century Commission recommendations lists several steps taken to increase its capacity to change, including the construction of the Schultz Center, a new professional development plan, and increased work with the Alliance for World Class Education and the Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce. However, resource speakers commented on the continued apparent resistance of the school system to receiving ideas or suggestions from the community as a whole, which were often described as “community interference” with the functioning of DCPS.

Principals

Roles and responsibilities

In Duval County, principals are the chief executive officers of their individual schools. They are in charge of and accountable for everything that happens on the school’s campus, including instructional programs, internal accounting, discipline, management, and operations. Principals represent their schools as they interact with the public. They manage budgets that rival some small to medium-sized businesses. Principals interview and recommend for hire the personnel for their schools, although they do not have the final say in selecting teachers. They are charged with implementing DCPS policies and reforms, and their attention and emphasis strongly affects the impact of reform efforts on student achievement. Principals who spoke to the study committee also viewed their role as extending beyond the school campus, working with students, teachers, parents, and the neighborhood to meet all of the needs that impact on a student’s performance in the classroom.

Evaluations and recommendations

The recommendations of JCCI's 1993 *Public Education: The Cost of Quality* study concentrated on giving principals more managerial training and increasing recognition for high-quality performance, using financial and other incentives. In addition, the study recommended that principals be provided more authority to oversee school budgets and hiring of school personnel. Principals should also be measured by how well students perform academically.

In 1997, SchoolMatch found that DCPS had given principals increased authority to manage the business of their schools. SchoolMatch surveyed both parents and teachers and found that that leadership within the schools was perceived negatively. In order to improve the public's perception, SchoolMatch suggested that the school district develop a program to make its successful leadership training more visible and to provide greater recognition and rewards for principals who have completed such training programs.

The 1998 New Century Commission addressed the need for principals to be given more management authority, held accountable for education outcomes, and selected with more rigor. According to the New Century Commission, the principal should be the chief executive officer of his or her school, responsible for what happens in the school, from operations to student achievement. The New Century Commission tasked principals with focusing on both education and running their school as if it were a business.

In addition, the New Century Commission recommended that principals be held accountable for the development and success of school improvement teams and school advisory councils, that all principals be held accountable for student achievement in their schools, and that the selection and evaluation criteria for principals be updated to reflect these accountabilities.

Assessing Progress

- **School-based leadership:** DCPS has implemented a school-based management policy, with principals independently responsible for various outcomes at their schools. Principals are often hampered by the budget process which allows little discretionary decision-making after fixed costs, such as salaries or custodial services, are met. The state's emphasis on grading individual schools provides an external evaluation of the principal's performance and holds him or her accountable for student achievement. Some resource speakers, both principals as well as business mentors working with principals, identified a significant need for more management training for principals. Both the University of North Florida (UNF) and Jacksonville University (JU) offer graduate degrees in educational leadership. The Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership also began offering professional development for principals in 2002.

The Alliance for World Class Education began Partnership to Advance School Success (PASS), a mentoring and leadership development program linking business CEOs with school principals to promote and enhance principal leadership. PASS is designed to assist principals in improving school management and leadership, resulting in increased student achievement. As of 2002, seven schools out of 159 have participated or are participating in the PASS program. PASS has established an office at the Schultz Center with the goal of increasing the number of participating businesses and schools.

- **Principal accountability and evaluation:** Principals are being held accountable for student achievement in their schools. In the 2002-03 school year, DCPS began using a new evaluation system for school administrators, Appraisal Plus. Student achievement and progress with the School Improvement Plan are included in the evaluation of principals and their professional development plans.

Teachers

Roles and responsibilities

Throughout this assessment, resource speakers expressed that the teacher's ability to direct, motivate and instruct children is the most important factor in the quality of their education. They provided examples of dynamic teachers overcoming inadequate school funding, lack of classroom resources, and the effects of poverty in reaching children and enabling their educational success. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that their students meet the Sunshine State Standards, the New Performance Standards, and the requirements of the FCAT.

Evaluations and recommendations

In 1993, JCCI's *Public Education: The Cost of Quality* study recommended that teachers receive more time, opportunities, and funding for professional development. The study also recommended that teachers be held accountable for their student's educational outcomes and rewarded accordingly through a pay-for-performance appraisal system. Likewise, those teachers who are unable to produce results in the classroom should be reprimanded or removed, using a simplified review process.

The 1997 SchoolMatch report identified specific concerns with the level of instruction students were receiving. Norm-referenced test scores revealed that both math and reading instruction at the elementary and middle school grades needed improvement. SchoolMatch determined that teacher training and professional development would help teachers improve their ability to instruct students. SchoolMatch also recommended that accountability for student achievement be incorporated into the teacher personnel evaluation program. This would allow teachers who perform well to be rewarded for their work and those who do not to receive corrective action.

The 1998 New Century Commission proposed that new teachers should be introduced gradually into the classroom, using internships and mentoring programs where appropriate. Once in the system, teachers need ongoing professional development to stay abreast of the best practices in order to be considered expert teachers. The New Century Commission also identified the need to increase teacher salaries, to provide classroom support and ongoing training, to reward teachers for a job well done and to hold teachers accountable for poor performance.

Assessing Progress

- Professional development:** DCPS has made progress in professional development for teachers. In the 2002-03 school year, DCPS budgeted \$20.6 million for professional development. The 2002 creation of the Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership expanded opportunities for training, including classroom management, teaching literacy, and specialized training for science and math teachers. Duval Teachers United, the local teachers' union, is also providing professional development and continuing education courses free to its dues paying members. The training is available for enhancing professional skills and continuing education credits needed by teachers to maintain their certification.

Many resource speakers indicated that inexperienced teachers being assigned to challenged schools is still an issue. In 2001, former School Board Chair Jimmie Johnson proposed that teacher transfers be limited in an effort to address this issue, but was unable to gain sufficient support for the idea. In addition, the University of North Florida's

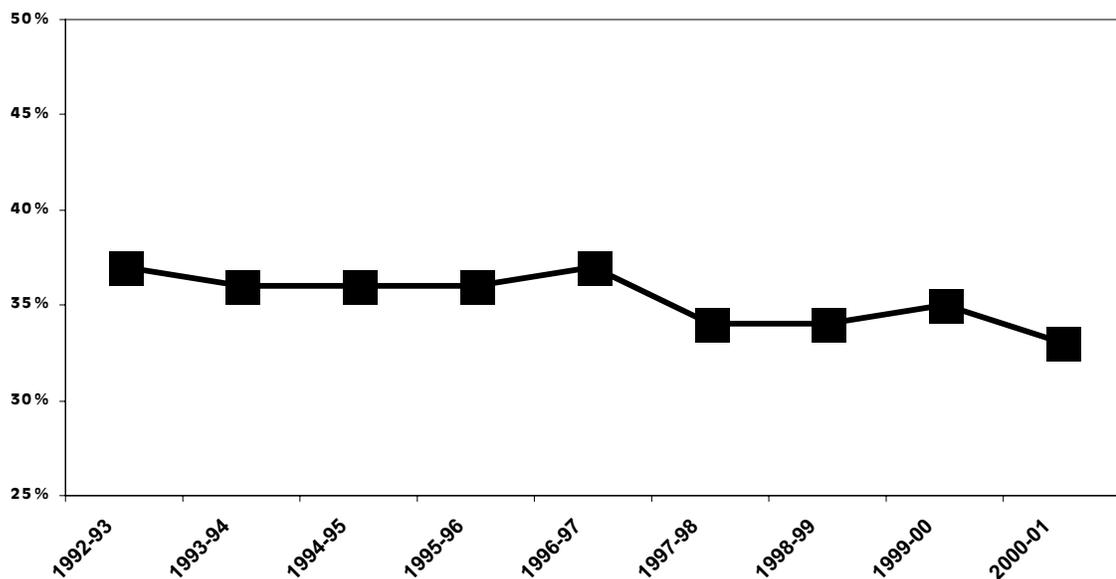
Urban Teacher Internship Program was created to provide beginning teachers with classroom experience in challenged schools.

- Highly qualified teachers:** The 2001 No Child Left Behind Act emphasized the importance of quality teaching by requiring that all public elementary and secondary classrooms have a highly qualified (fully certified) teacher by 2006. In Title I schools, nearly half of all DCPS schools, the deadline year is 2003. In Florida, a temporary certification requires a bachelor's degree in any field and passing a standardized test for subject knowledge.

Beyond certification, resource speakers spoke of the importance of high-quality teaching. Teachers who have continued their education to gain advanced knowledge in their field and additional skills may be one way to measure quality. In 2001, 33 percent of Duval County teachers held advanced degrees, representing a general decline since 1992 and remaining below the Florida average of 40 percent. DCPS has not offered tuition reimbursement for teachers wanting to pursue an advanced degree for the past 20 years.

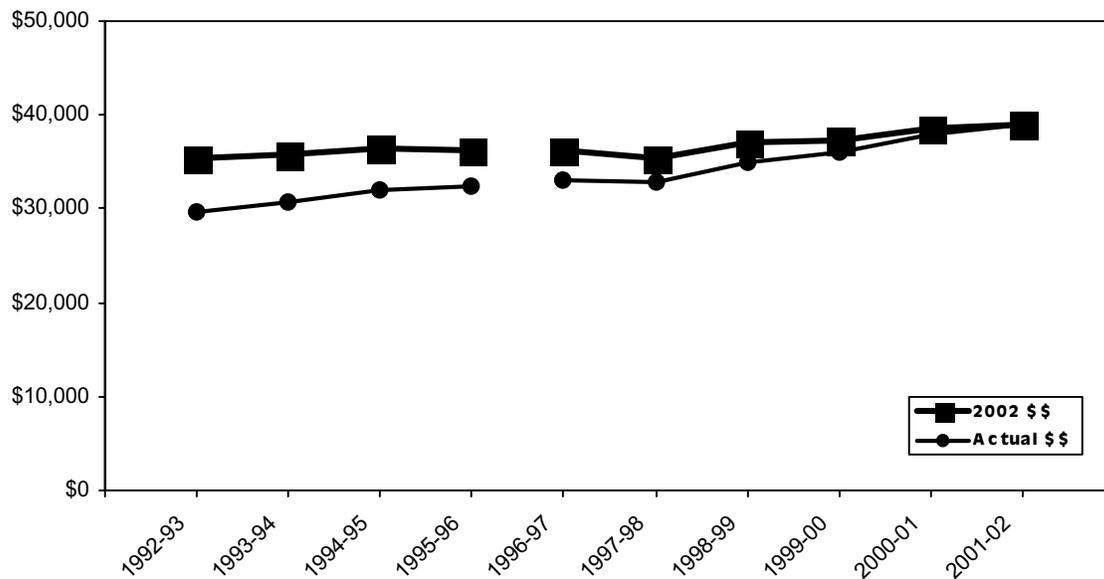
Teachers assigned to teach in areas they are not certified in are teaching "out of field", for example, an English teacher assigned to teach foreign languages. In 2002, 1,146 teachers, or 15.7 percent of all DCPS teachers, were teaching out of field. This represents a 32 percent increase from 2001. Most out-of-field teaching occurs when elementary-school or English teachers have students in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs, or when any teacher has students in exceptional education (ESE) programs for which the teacher is not certified. In

Percentage of DCPS teachers holding advanced degrees



Source: Duval County Public Schools

Average teacher salaries, Duval County Public Schools



Source: Florida Department of Education. Data from 1992-93 to 1995-96 provided by the Duval County Public Schools. The break in the graph indicates that the method of calculation varies slightly.

other cases, teachers for specific subjects are in short supply (Primarily in the fields of exceptional education, mathematics, and science.)

- Teacher salaries:** After earning a college degree, beginning teachers in Duval County received a starting salary of \$30,000 per year in 2002. Average teacher salaries were \$38,893 in 2002, which represents a \$3,528 real dollar increase from 1992. However, teacher salaries remain below other professions that require college degrees. Duval County teachers averaged 14.5 years of experience in 2002.
- Teaching, standards, and the FCAT:** The movement towards standards-based education and the increased accountability of teachers for student performance has met with some resistance within the teaching community. Some who have taught for many years resented being required to change their familiar teaching style. Others found the additional paperwork and time required a burden. Still others, having seen reform initiatives come and go over the years, opted to wait and see if the initiative would continue before committing themselves to the intensive training and changes demanded by standards-based teaching.

DCPS has placed “standards coaches” in the schools to assist with the training and transition. These coaches not only monitor the teacher’s classroom teaching style, they also encourage peer review of student work to ensure that all students are evaluated against the standards and are provided individualized plans for improving performance. Teachers who spoke to the committee spoke of their

concerns that the FCAT requires them to cover a breadth of information that precludes adding in-depth learning experiences for their students. The timing of the FCAT in March is also a problem, particularly when teaching a second semester course that begins in January.

Evaluations and recommendations

JCCI’s 1993 *Public Education: The Cost of Quality* study called for outcome-oriented evaluation of student achievement and improved instructional and student-discipline processes. The report also recommended increased attention to vocational education opportunities for students.

The 1997 SchoolMatch report found that school grades did not correlate with performance on norm-referenced tests, suggesting widespread grade inflation that resulted in poorly prepared students entering college. SchoolMatch recommended that all students should be required to meet the same high standards, and that standards-based assessments form the foundation of student evaluation.

The 1998 New Century Commission recommended that Duval County Public Schools demand better academic results and improved behavior from its students. If those conditions are not met then students, parents, teachers and administrators should be held accountable in their roles for not meeting expectations. The Commission recommended that all students must be required to meet the same high expectations regardless of the degree of family support or negative societal influences on their lives. Student discipline and student motivation were high priorities for improvement.

Students

Roles and responsibilities

According to the DCPS Code of Student Conduct the role of the student is:

Primary	Secondary
Be in school every day on time.	Attend all classes daily and are punctual.
Bring all the things needed for class.	Come to class with appropriate working materials.
Respect the rights of others.	Respect all individuals and property.
Talk kindly to and about others.	Refrain from profane or inflammatory statements.
Act in a safe way.	Conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner.
Be neat and clean.	Present a clean and neat appearance.
Do their own work.	Take responsibility for their own work.
Follow the rules.	Abide by the rules and regulations of the school and each classroom teacher.
	Seek changes in an orderly and recognized manner.

Source: Duval County Public Schools

Evaluations and recommendations

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Assessing Progress

- Student mobility:** When families move frequently throughout the school year, which may be due to economic pressures, students may attend many different schools over the course of the academic year. Student performance suffers, and the school does not have the opportunity to determine if its teaching methods have been effective. Furthermore, the teacher can be reviewed poorly when her class of newly turned-over students does not perform well.

DCPS piloted a program recommended by the New Century Commission to provide transportation so that

students could continue attending the same school even if their parents moved. This program was discontinued after one year due to lack of use.

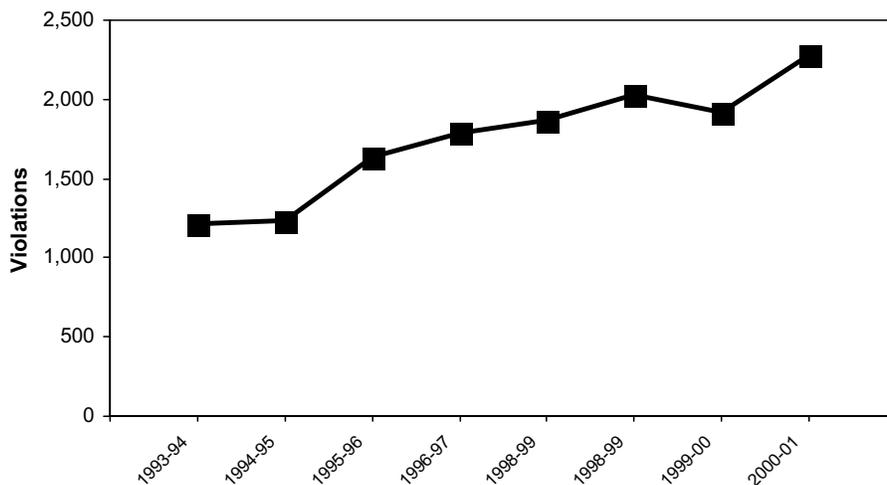
Mobility rate for Duval County public school students from 1996 to 2000

	High School	Middle School	Elementary School
1999-00	36.1%	39.5%	38.9%
1998-99	40.4%	44.6%	42.3%
1997-98	38.1%	40.3%	40.4%
1996-97	36.8%	39.5%	39.4%

Source: Florida Department of Education: Mobility is the rate (shown as a percentage) at which students move into or out of the school population during the school year. It is calculated by dividing the total number of new entries, reentries, and withdrawals during the 180-day school year by the total number of students who were enrolled at the start of the school year. This indicator was replaced by a new measure, the stability rate, beginning in 2000-01.

- Student discipline:** This topic covers a range of student misbehavior, from classroom disruptions to violent actions, each of which interferes with the learning process for all students. The time that a teacher spends on classroom management and student discipline takes away from instructional time. Class Three and Class Four violations of the Duval County Code of Student Conduct, which represent the most serious disruptions in the school and include violent acts, threats of violence, and possession or distribution of drugs or alcohol, have increased significantly from 1994 to 2001. In 2001, 2,284 of these violations were reported, which may represent increased misbehavior, improved reporting, or a combination of the two. DCPS has partnered with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office to place School Resource Officers in 51 schools, primarily middle and high schools, where student discipline is of particular concern.

Violations of the Code of Student Conduct, Class Three and Four



Source: Duval County Public Schools

- Safety Net programs:** Safety net programs are year-round, grade recovery efforts that assist students in their subject areas all year long. During the past decade, programs for students grew. In 2003, summer school programs were eliminated. Resources were redirected toward safety net programs in an effort to prepare students to meet the academic performance standards of the FCAT during the school year, as opposed to making up course work for a few short weeks during the summer. During the first and second quarters of the school year, schools, teachers and administrators develop strategies to meet the individual needs of students who exhibit signs of academic difficulty. These students receive extra help with class work and/or homework before school, after school, during the regular school day or through Saturday programs.
- Vocational education:** Until the late 1990's, students could decide upon two different tracks in high school: academic or vocational. For half of the day students electing a vocational education attended an area high school for basic education courses and were then bused to either the Northside, Westside or Southside Skills Centers for specific job training.

In 1997, the School Board approved \$11 million to build academic wings for the Academies of Technology, on the campuses of the former Northside and Westside skills centers. Those wings expanded the programs from part-time vocational programs to full-time magnet high schools. What were the Northside and Westside skills centers became A. Philip Randolph and Frank H. Peterson Academies of Technology, the vocational equivalents of the college preparatory programs at Stanton and Paxon high schools.

Both academies feature a full academic curriculum combined with career development programs that prepare students for direct employment and further college studies. Students graduate with a diploma and employable skills. Students also receive job placement assistance upon the completion of the curriculum. Both Randolph and Peterson are designated as Career Academies.

The comprehensive K-12 Workforce Education Plan of the Duval County Public School System recommends implementation of the Career Academy Model at all area high schools. Currently, Duval County has 5 career academies, which are small learning communities organized around a particular career or professional theme. Students take a rigorous academic curriculum and are expected to graduate with a "triple-crown diploma", which includes:

- the Academic Foundation Certificate, certifying the students' ability to do college-level work in English/Language Arts and mathematics without remediation;
- post-secondary credit, earned by taking career-related and/or academic coursework on the campus of a post secondary partner; and
- industry certification (or evidence that the student is working towards certification) from a regional/state/national industry coalition and/or apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship opportunities.

In addition to Randolph and Peterson the other Career Academies are Andrew Jackson, Englewood, and Wolfson High Schools.

One measurement of student preparation for the workforce is the Work Keys test, which measures student potential to perform well in the work environment (similar to how the SAT or ACT are designed to measure how well a student might perform at college.) The test, given to seniors, measures abilities in reading for information, applied mathematics, and locating information. Student scores are rated by levels, and compared to needs of employers, with higher levels demonstrating advanced skills. Scores below level three represent unemployable skills, and in this area DCPS students improved from 2001 to 2002, while some of the higher-level performance numbers slipped slightly.

Duval County Public Schools Work Keys Scores, Reading for Information

Work Keys Level	Duval Scores 2001-2002	Duval Scores 2000-2001	Duval Pilot School Scores 1999-2000	Needed by Employers
Level 7	2.9%	2%	3%	4%
Level 6	18.1%	14%	13%	14%
Level 5	33.7%	25%	27%	31%
Level 4	34.6%	36%	37%	30%
Level 3	6.3%	9%	10%	22%
Below Level 3	4.3%	13%	10%	0%

Source: Duval County Public Schools

Duval County Public Schools Work Keys Scores, Applied Mathematics

Work Keys Level	Duval Scores 2001-2002	Duval Scores 2000-2001	Duval Pilot School Scores 1999-2000	Needed by Employers
Level 7	2.4%	5%	2%	7%
Level 6	15.8%	16%	13%	16%
Level 5	32.7%	33%	27%	22%
Level 4	29.8%	27%	31%	26%
Level 3	14.5%	13%	20%	29%
Below Level 3	4.8%	5%	7%	0%

Source: Duval County Public Schools

Duval County Public Schools Work Keys Scores, Locating Information

Work Keys Level	Duval Scores 2001-2002	Duval Scores 2000-2001	Duval Pilot School Scores 1999-2000	Needed by Employers
Level 6	0.3%	1%	0%	12%
Level 5	10.5%	15%	8%	40%
Level 4	48.2%	46%	49%	35%
Level 3	26.5%	23%	28%	13%
Below Level 3	14.4%	16%	15%	0%

Source: Duval County Public Schools

Parents

Roles and responsibilities

The family has changed. The term “parent” no longer indicates that a child is being reared by his or her mother and/or a father. Students in Duval County Public Schools may live with their mother or father, a grandparent, older sibling or in a foster home. Regardless of how the family is defined, a primary determinant of a child’s success in school is the home environment. A child is much more likely to achieve academically if one or both of his or her parents has graduated from high school. Resource speakers emphasized that without a parent reading to or with a child, providing homework assistance, or working with the child’s teacher, the child is not likely to do well in school.

Evaluations and recommendations

JCCI’s 1993 *Public Education: The Cost of Quality* study identified parental involvement as important to student achievement. The study recommended that parents provide their children with a “high-quality, child development experience” and asked parents and other adults to become actively involved in education by volunteering in the schools.

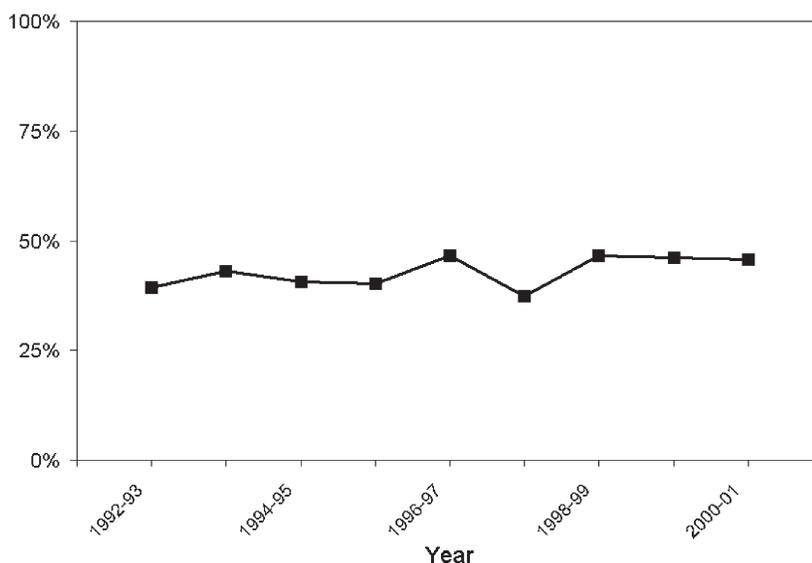
The 1997 SchoolMatch report recommended parental involvement as early as possible to improve the student’s chance of success in the early grades. SchoolMatch also surveyed parents, teachers and administrators, asking them to comment on the strength of parental involvement in the schools. Parents, more than any other group surveyed, agreed that they should volunteer more and become more active in the school’s decision-making process.

The 1998 New Century Commission recommended that parents be education partners with their children, other families, educators, and community members. The Commission went further on this issue than any other report examined in this assessment, by making it clear that all groups, including parents, should be held accountable for student achievement in Duval County’s public schools. While the Commission listed very specific accountability standards for principals, teachers, schools and the district overall, it did not (and could not) do the same for parents.

Assessing Progress

- **Socioeconomic factors:** Student success often depends on going home to a supportive environment with the tools and resources needed for academic success. These resources include books, paper, pencils, dictionaries, computers, and parents who can read and help with homework, all of which bolster a student’s chance of success. In addition, stable shelter, good nutrition, and adequate healthcare enhances a student’s ability to achieve in school. Based on participation in free or reduced-lunch programs, a proxy measure of student poverty since participation is based on family income, student need remains high.
- **Parental involvement:** Resource speakers stated that many parents are reluctant to participate in their child’s education because they have had poor experiences with the education system or because they are poorly educated. Project Reach began in 2001 as a School Board initiative to invite parents to get involved with the schools. Early evidence from the program indicates that parents are more likely to become involved in the schools if they are

Student participation in free or reduced-price lunch programs, Duval County Public Schools



Source: Florida Department of Education

invited to do so and if they are told how they can best help their children. Because family literacy and parent education strongly impact student achievement, local PTAs have begun offering workshops to teach parents how to help their children with reading, math and the FCAT.

Community

Roles and responsibilities

Resource speakers confirmed what the studies under review had found: the entire community has a role to play in creating an excellent public education system. Although many people are not directly involved in public education (either having no school-age children or any children enrolled in public schools) all of Duval County is affected by the success or failure of public education to develop well-educated, employable, and informed citizens. Even those who live in surrounding counties but work in Jacksonville have a stake in the success of DCPS because of its impact on the City's regional and national reputation as a place to do business.

Resource speakers were concerned that many people in Jacksonville do not value learning for learning's sake. They described this problem as the lack of a "culture of learning" and attributed poor parental and community involvement in public schools to an undervaluing of education. One resource speaker gave the example of a parent stating, "I'm a successful person and I did not go to college, so why would my children need to go to college?"

Evaluations and recommendations

JCCI's 1993 *Public Education: The Cost of Quality* study identifies public education as a community issue. Businesses, human services agencies, law enforcement, religious and civic groups are all tasked with becoming involved in the public school system. Each group is asked to approach education in slightly different ways. For instance, human services agencies could provide counseling, religious groups might provide more community-oriented educational programs, and businesses could assist the schools in enhancing the current workforce preparation component of education. The study also recognizes the needs for all citizens to volunteer in the classrooms and act as mentors.

One SchoolMatch team member commented that Duval County has "some really great opportunities for the public-private ventures that need to go on in schools. There's a great window of opportunity for the schools to work with the other players within the county to bring about improved academic achievement." The 1997 SchoolMatch report goes on to state that the community must be more actively engaged in early childhood education, especially reading literacy. The level of success attained in the early grades is a marker that can predict whether students will graduate from high school.

The 1998 New Century Commission states as a core principle that a "child's ability to succeed is greatly affected by his or her

individual environment outside of school." The Commission determined that community involvement is essential to the success of Duval County Public Schools. The changes needed to improve education in Duval County cannot be developed and maintained by the school district alone. The combined efforts of the entire community, including parents and families, business establishments, human service agencies, religious and church affiliations, and institutions of higher education, are necessary to improve educational opportunities.

Assessing Progress

- **Communities in Schools (CIS):** CIS serves over fifty schools and reaches over 4,700 students annually. Created as a result of the 1991 JCCI study on *Positive Development of Jacksonville's Children*, CIS has evolved from its original initiative of dropout prevention to the development of after-school, mentoring, and literacy programs. CIS works by identifying areas of need within Duval County's school system and bringing community resources directly into the schools to meet those needs.
- **Full Service Schools (FSS):** In 1990, DCPS began the Full Service Schools program, which uses school facilities to house community agencies that in turn provide education, medical, social, and other human services to children and their families. Each Full Service School is governed by a neighborhood Oversight Committee, consisting of parents, teachers, students, principals, other school officials and local citizens. Each Committee identifies the health and human service issues they believe need to be addressed in their respective schools. The vision of this initiative was to assist students in achieving school success by strengthening families and improving the quality of life in their neighborhoods. The six Full Service Schools are Andrew Jackson, Paxon, Ribault, Terry Parker, Englewood, and Fletcher High Schools.
- **School Advisory Council (SAC):** The SAC is a team of people representing various segments of the community—parents, teachers, students, administrators, support staff, business/industry people and other interested community members. The purpose of a SAC is to assist in the preparation and evaluation of the results of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and to assist the principal with the annual school budget. In 1993, the State of Florida mandated that each school must have a SAC composed of the principal and an "appropriately balanced" number of "stakeholders." SAC members must be representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic makeup of the community served by the school. The majority of SAC members (over 50 percent) must not be employed by the school on whose SAC they serve. SACs also receive discretionary funds to implement the SIP, which highlights problem areas in the school and identifies improvement strategies for implementation. In Duval County, resource speakers stated that most SACs function well, but that their effectiveness varies based on the principal as well as parent participation.

- **Social Services:** Many social services are provided in public schools. The Human Services Council reports annually its School Program Inventory, listing the programs funded by Human Services Council partners in each school. The complete list of over 800 programs can be found at www.hsc-jacksonville.org.
- **Volunteers:** While principals spoke of the many volunteers that participate in the schools, an exact number of volunteers or volunteer hours is not available. The Community Involvement Office in Duval County Public Schools is limited in coordinating programs because it is not directly involved with every effort. Many volunteer efforts are handled directly at the level of the individual school.

Local government

Roles and responsibilities

In Duval County, the charter of the consolidated City of Jacksonville/Duval County identifies the School Board as an independent elected authority. Neither the Mayor nor the City Council have jurisdiction over public education. Nevertheless, during 2002 and 2003, increased discussion of public education reform among elected officials and candidates for public office appears to represent a shift in roles and community expectations with the potential to significantly impact reform efforts.

Evaluations and recommendations

While additional community involvement has been a recurrent theme in many reform efforts and studies, only the New Century Commission Report, of the studies reviewed for this assessment, recommends specific action for city government in public education. NCC asked the City Council to pass two ordinances: one requiring parents to be held accountable for their student's behavior, by arresting parents who fail to work with the school on student misbehavior, and a second to making it unlawful for an employer to penalize employees needing time off from work to conference with teachers. At the time of this assessment, neither of these recommendations had been implemented.

Assessing Progress

In early 2002, Mayor John Delaney proposed a package of school reforms, including mayoral appointments to the School Board. The Mayor shelved his proposals due to opposition from Board members. In August 2002, the Jacksonville City Council created a Task Force on Education to address excellence in public education and examine efforts in other communities. This Task Force recommended creating a mayoral commission to monitor the Duval County School Board, exploring city-run charter schools, and requiring students to stay in school until age 18.

Others in the community have identified potential structural changes to ensure that public education becomes a local government priority, though none of these have been formally presented for community discussion. These include creating a new entity that forms a partnership between the City and DCPS, dividing DCPS into smaller school districts, expanding the School Board, appointing some or all of the school board members, extending the school year to allow for more teacher training, and creating a new, dedicated, non-ad valorem revenue source from the City. At the time of this assessment, none of these ideas had been formally presented for community discussion and action.

Duval County Public Schools do work with local government agencies in many areas, including joint-use agreements with the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Entertainment (which also provides some after school programs at school facilities.) Two of these partnerships have significant impact on student achievement:

- **Jacksonville Children's Commission:** Mayor Ed Austin and the Jacksonville City Council created The Jacksonville Children's Commission in 1994 to ensure every child in Jacksonville, from birth through age 18, would have the opportunities and support needed for success. The Commission's Early Learning programs offer resources for expectant mothers and children five years of age or younger. These programs focus on preparing young children to enter school ready to learn. The Youth Development programs offer support to children and youth aged five through 18, to help youth find success at school and prepare them for the workforce.

A volunteer board of nine citizens appointed by the Mayor governs the Commission. The Board has adopted a two-point approach to improve the condition of Jacksonville's children: first, to prevent problems before they occur, and second, to ensure accountability for the public dollars granted to programs.

- **Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO):** JSO is a presence in Duval County's schools. The School Resource Office Program consists of four sergeants and 51 police officers, assigned full time. Each officer is a trained expert in discipline and security issues.

JSO also offers a Summer Youth Intervention program, which identifies males and females between the ages of 12-17 who are at risk of becoming crime victims or committing criminal acts within the home, school, or community. The program aims to reduce the level of juvenile crime and violence through discipline, goal setting, and mentorship.

APPENDIX

1993 JCCI Public Education: The Cost of Quality

www.jcci.org

JCCI, a citizens group, performed a study of public education that examined the costs relative to the quality of education. The study found that DCPS lacked a clear vision of high-quality public education, clear measures of educational outcomes, and a process to improve quality. In addition, student-discipline efforts were ineffective, school management was inefficient, and principals and teachers were unprepared for the tasks they were being asked to accomplish. The study revealed that professional development for teachers was inadequate, as were technology resources, classroom space, and student counseling. Moreover, the study observed that the community needed to be more actively involved in improving the quality of public education.

The study defined quality education by the outcomes that could be measured immediately after graduation, such as attending college without remediation or entering the workforce qualified for entry-level work. The study also linked the cost of education to the quality of education, noting that reallocating resources would help to improve public education, but permanent change required both an increase in funding as well as an increase in funding accountability.

The study concluded with 17 recommendations to improve the quality of public education. The study found that DCPS should develop a vision for public education, in order to bring the community together to build a broad consensus for action and support. Other recommendations addressed training, resource allocation, and accountability based on measured educational outcomes. It was also recommended that citizens, businesses, and other community organizations become more engaged in public education reform.



1997 SchoolMatch Audit of Educational Effectiveness

<http://www.schoolmatch.com/audit/jacksonville/>

SchoolMatch, an educational consultant based in Westerville, Ohio, was hired by *The Florida Times-Union* to assess Duval County's public schools. *The Florida Times-Union* enlisted SchoolMatch to determine what, if anything, was wrong with the school district and recommend solutions for those problems. SchoolMatch compared DCPS with other large, urban school districts and rated the system average to above average in comparison to similar districts in the nation.

SchoolMatch found many positives in Duval County's public schools: students were prepared for college, teachers were absent less often than their peers around the country, and teachers, principals, schools were of high caliber. SchoolMatch also recognized that the district had problems. Schools were overcrowded and the system was considered too large to be efficient.

The report made 18 recommendations for change, calling for improvements in school leadership, governance, and organization. It included specific steps to address the problems of poor public perception, district size, school board responsibility, superintendent duties, and the central office's lack of support. The report also pointed out the need for teachers and principals to be held more accountable for student achievement. This report formed the basis of a series of articles in *The Florida Times-Union* and generated considerable public discussion about public education reform.

1998 New Century Commission Report on Education

<http://www.jacksonville.com/special/ncr/>

Duval County Public Schools final report to the community on implementing New Century Commission report recommendations

<http://www.educationcentral.org/dcps/initiatives.asp>

The Duval County School Board established the New Century Commission on Education as a community wide effort to set new directions for the school district and recommend new initiatives for change. Both the School Board and the Mayor of Jacksonville appointed commission members. After completing its data gathering and fact-finding, the Commission found many positive aspects of schooling in Duval County. Yet the Commission was still concerned about the overall quality of education in Duval County.

The Commission's report to the Duval County School Board grouped its 155 recommendations into the following categories: Student performance; Quality of student experiences; Personnel, management, and operations; Capacity to support change; Accountability; and Funding.

The recommendations called for standards-based instruction with measurable education outcomes forming the basis for students, teachers, schools, and the entire system to be held accountable. The need for an improved school-discipline system was also addressed in the recommendations. Streamlining processes within the school system and within schools was recommended to improve student motivation, attention, and accountability. Improvements in curriculum and instructional methods were outlined, along with expanded vocational opportunities for students not planning on college. Changes in school management and professional development were expected to provide "all students access to expert teaching." The report also called for increased community partnerships, including more parental involvement, citizen participation, alliances with community organizations, and business assistance.

In 2002, DCPS released its "final report" on the New Century Commission recommendations. They identified 54 of the recommendations as having been completed, 86 as being underway, and 15 as being too difficult or the responsibility of outside agencies. Five of those 15 not implemented were "judged to be worthy of shelving or bypassing."



2002 Council of the Great City Schools Report

<http://www.cgcs.org/pdfs/Jacksonville.pdf>

The Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS), a coalition of the nation's largest urban public school systems, was hired by the DCPS and the Alliance for World Class Education to review, evaluate and improve the district's non-instructional divisions.

The Council of the Great City Schools made 145 recommendations to DCPS. Some recommendations were directed toward the Superintendent; others were directed toward the managers responsible for the operational divisions. CGCS suggested that in order for the school district to continue to make progress within the schools, it would need to redesign some of its current business processes in order to increase efficiencies, which would save money that would be better spent in the classroom.

According to the CGCS, Duval County Public Schools is a good school district that is moving in the right direction toward becoming great. The report goes on to state that Duval County Public Schools is one of the best-run, urban school systems in the country.

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The JCCI study process relies on information supplied by knowledgeable resource people, in addition to published reference materials. We wish to thank the following for their contributions to this study.

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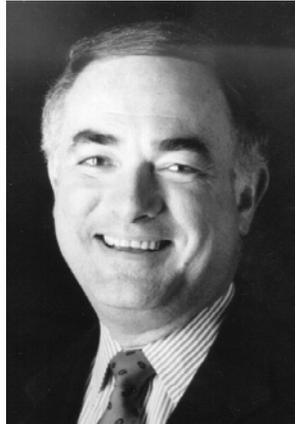
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Committee members met together 29 times from October through May. In addition, the management team met many times to provide guidance and direction for the study. The committee received information from 52 knowledgeable resource people and additional written materials researched by JCCI staff.



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Mission Statement

JCCI is a nonpartisan civic organization that engages diverse citizens in open dialogue, research, consensus building, and leadership development to improve the quality of life and build a better community in Northeast Florida and beyond.



**JCCI named a Solution for America by the
Pew Partnership for Civic Change.**



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