



WCPSS Restart

Restart Overview

NCDPI Restart Continued Authorization (Cohorts 3, 4, and 5)

WCPSS Restart Applications for 2026-27

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Context and Intent

Context

WCPSS has been a pioneer in Restart school programming since its inception. The number of Restart Schools has increased over the years. Restart policies and processes have evolved over the last several years, and continue to be under development. Area Superintendents and Senior Administrators ensure compliance of Restart plans and flexibilities.

Intent

This presentation will:

- Provide an overview and background on Restart Schools in WCPSS
- Share information about the Cohorts 3, 4, and 5 Continued Authorization results
- Identify newly eligible Restart schools and next steps

Restart Overview

Restart in NC
Restart in WCPSS

Restart in North Carolina

The origins of today's Restart Model can be found in a 2010 law passed by the General Assembly titled *Reform of continually low-performing schools*

In March 2016, the State Board of Education approved a new policy specifically tied to the 2010 law designed to help recurring low-performing schools

SBE Goals for Restart Model

- Remove barriers that may be interfering with the educational process
- Utilize “charter-like” flexibilities to address school and student needs
- Model innovative instructional practices
- Leverage flexibilities to increase student achievement

Eligibility

Schools become eligible for Restart when they are identified as recurring low-performing. Schools are identified as recurring low-performing when they are identified as low-performing in two of the last three years.

Restart in WCPSS

In May 2016, the State Board approved a request from Wake County to operate 2 schools under the Restart Model

- Barwell Road Elementary
- Walnut Creek Elementary

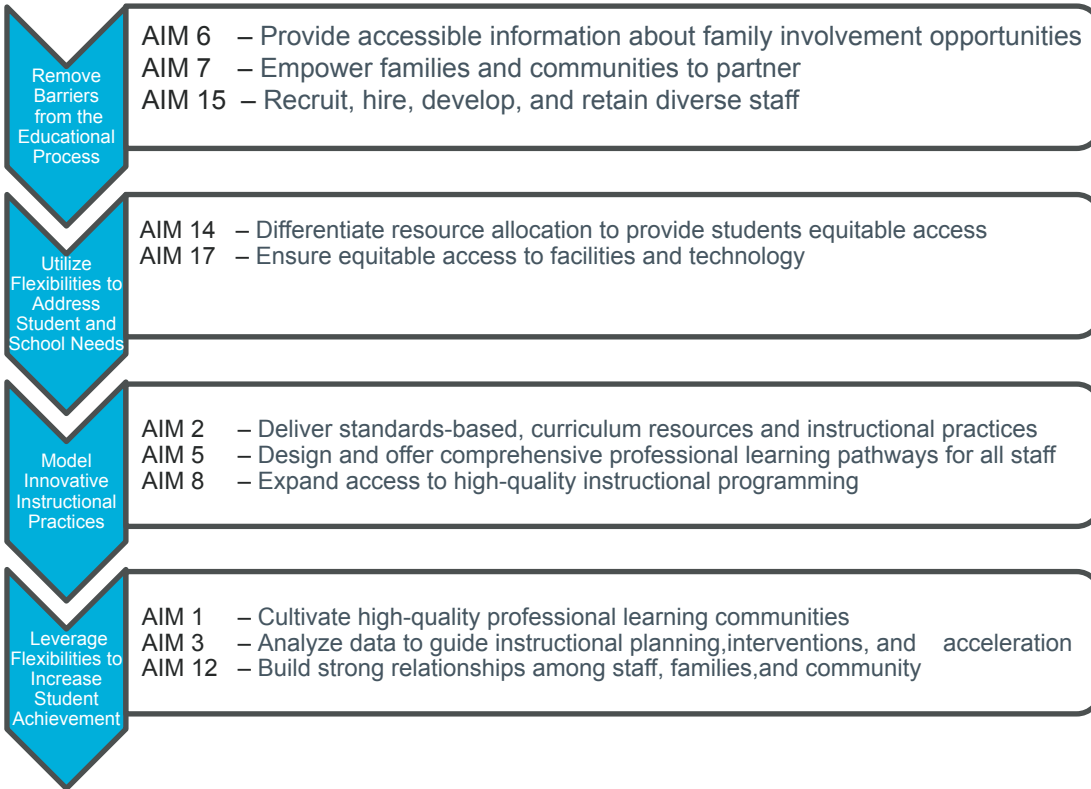
There are currently 203 schools in WCPSS.

- 40 schools are utilizing the Restart Model in 2025-26
- 2 new schools are eligible for Restart in 2026-27
 - 3 additional schools remain eligible from last year



The purpose of Restart schools in WCPSS is to increase student achievement by utilizing identified flexibilities for addressing resources, learning experiences and targeted needs.

Strategic Plan Alignment

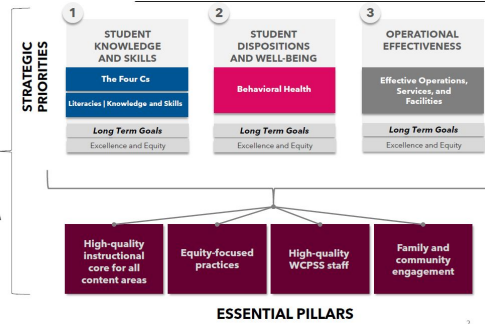


Vision: All Wake County Public School System students will be prepared to reach their full potential and lead productive lives in a complex and changing world.

Mission: Wake County Public School System will provide a relevant and engaging education and will graduate students who are collaborative, creative, effective communicators and critical thinkers.

Core Beliefs

- Meaningful learning every day
- Eliminate gaps
- Well-supported staff
- Improvement and Innovation
- Diverse school community
- Partnership
- Learning environments



Examples of School Flexibilities utilized in WCPSS

Budget

- Utilizing lapsed salaries to provide:
 - additional learning opportunities and support for students such as high dosage tutoring
 - funds to increase the use of coaching to provide job embedded, ongoing professional development for teachers
 - supplemental curriculum resources and assessment tools

Human Resources

- Convert positions, including teacher assistants, to address achievement and staffing needs
- Hire and place teachers outside of the required certification areas to meet the specific staffing needs of the school (primarily for elective positions)
- Provide additional compensation in addition to that of the state salary to recruit and retain high quality staff in high need areas (e.g., signing bonus, increase pay grade, etc.)

Restart in WCPSS

Flexibilities Utilized by Schools Exceeding Expectations

Reduced Annual Reporting Data from Restart Schools Across the State

Budget	Employment	Calendar	Class Size	Assessment	Curriculum	Evaluation	District
A. Hiring Additional Staff (MOST COMMON OVERALL)	A. Hiring Non-Certified Teachers or Staff Outside Licensure (Most common overall)	A. Adding Time to the School Day or Year (Most common)	A. Creating Combo Classes / Increasing Class Sizes (Most common)	A. Opting Out of the NC ELI Kindergarten Assessment (Most common by far)	A. Implementing Alternative or Supplemental Curricula	A. Modifying Teacher Evaluation Systems	A. Adapting Calendar & Walkthrough Tools
Repeated across dozens of entries:	Repeated consistently throughout the list:	Adding minutes to the student day Extending the school day for intervention or literacy blocks Adding additional half-days or early release days	Multi-grade combo classes Increasing class sizes above state minimums to ensure teacher coverage	Examples appear repeatedly: Opting out of NC ELI	Alternative math curriculum EL curriculum for K-5	Using Danielson Framework Increasing frequency of feedback for BT/Student-entry/support-needed teachers	Moving workdays Developing custom walkthrough tools (math & ELA)
Hiring teachers (ELL, STEM, classroom, ML, interventionists, TA's)	Hiring non-certified teachers to fill vacancies						
Hiring student support roles (counselors, behavior coaches, success coaches)	Hiring staff outside their licensure area		B. Lowering Class Size with Additional Staff	Eliminating NC ELI for more instructional/planning time Exempting Kindergarten from NCELI			
Hiring administrative or leadership support (assistant principals, deans of students, coaches)	Retaining non-certified staff in instructional roles		Also present: Hiring additional teachers to reduce class size Restructuring staffing for small-group instruction	B. Using Alternative Assessments or Tools			
B. Paying Stipends / Incentives	B. Filling Teacher Vacancies	Appears in nearly every calendar-related entry: PD days at start of year		B. Using Alternative Assessments or Tools			
Very common across the list: Stipends for tutoring	Also highly common: Fully staffing classrooms	Early release for PD PD focused on SEL, PBIS, EC supports, instructional practices	This flexibility is used mainly to ensure all students have a teacher.	Less common but present: Read to Achieve Alternate Assessment			
Stipends for PD participation	Reducing unfilled positions			Using Mastery Connect for common/benchmark assessments Increasing access to enrichment/AIG identification			
Stipends for growth results	Preventing use of substitutes						
Incentives for students (attendance, behavior, progress)							
C. Funding Professional Development	C. Hiring Specialized Support Staff						
Also heavily used: PD from external consultants PD resources (Lexia, ThinkUp, training programs) Paying for substitutes to enable PD/planning Funding multi-day or ongoing PD cycles	Moderately common: SEL specialists Digital learning/media specialists Interventionists						
D. Purchasing Instructional Materials							
Common across many entries: Curriculum resources Supplemental materials for small-group work SEL resources Tutoring materials Technology-supported programs							
E. Funding Additional Months of Employment							
Moderately common: Extending contracts (AP, coaches, instructional staff)							

Congratulations to the following schools for exceeding expectations for academic gain and contributing to this data!

- Barwell Road Elementary
- Beaverdam Elementary
- Forestville Road Elementary
- Green Elementary
- Lockhart Elementary
- Powell Elementary
- Wakelon Elementary



Restart Performance

40 Restart Schools (2024-25 data)

9 Restart schools exited low-performing status

Creech Road ES	Dillard Drive ES	Durant Road ES
Lake Myra ES	Millbrook ES	Timber Drive ES
Durant Road MS	East Millbrook MS	Knightdale HS

Low-performing - A school with a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth"

Recurring Low-performing - A school that has been identified as low performing in two of the last three years

2 Restart schools exited recurring low-performing status

Green ES Wakelon ES

3 previously eligible Restart schools exited recurring low-performing status

Brier Creek ES* Reedy Creek ES* Vandora Springs ES*

5 Restart schools remained out of recurring low-performing status

Beaverdam ES	Barwell Road ES	Lincoln Heights ES
Lockhart ES	Poe ES	

Restart Performance

Voices from the Schools



Timber Drive ES			
	22-23	23-24	24-25
GLP Composite	45	44	47
Growth Index	-2.19	-2.14	-0.46
SPG	D	D	C

Excited Low-Performing Status 24-25!

Brandon Warren - Principal
Timber Drive Elementary School

- 400 students
- Title I
- Restart
- TSL Project Leaders
- Executive Leadership Coach (ELC)



Millbrook ES			
	22-23	23-24	24-25
GLP Composite	37.9	42.6	42.5
Growth Index	-1.28	-0.81	1.48
SPG	D	D	C

Excited Low-Performing Status 24-25!

James Aldridge - Principal
Millbrook Magnet Elementary School

- 575 students
- Magnet - Environmental Connections
- Title I
- Restart
- Executive Leadership Coach (ELC)

NCDPI Restart Continued Authorization

WCPSS Cohorts 3, 4, and 5 Restart Schools

NCDPI Restart Continued Authorization

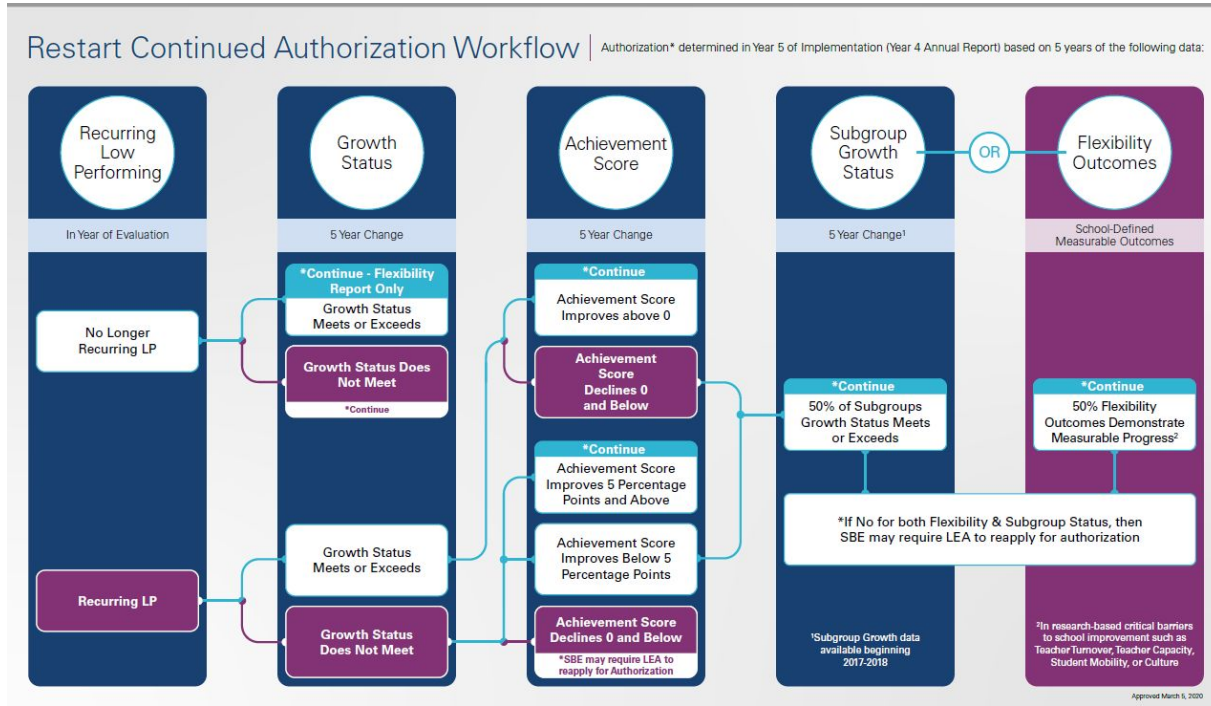
The purpose of the "Continued Authorization Review" is to determine if an LEA will continue to receive the authorization to operate the Restart Model for currently approved schools finishing a monitoring cycle. The review requires multiple steps over a two-year process.

- [Policy DSTR-040](#): Reform for Recurring Low-Performing Schools
Original Adopted Date: 05/05/2016 | Revised Date: 10/06/2022 | Last Revised Date: 10/02/2025*

Three possible outcomes by policy:

- Continued authorization
- Re-apply in order to continue
- Submit an application to exit

NCDPI Restart Continued Authorization Workflow



NCDPI Restart Continued Authorization

School	Area	Met	School	Area	Met
Aversboro ES	Southeastern	✓	River Bend MS	Northeastern	
Beaverdam ES	Eastern	✓	Rogers Lane ES	Eastern	✓
Creech Road ES	Southeastern	✓	Timber Drive ES	Southeastern	
Forestville ES	Eastern	✓	Wendell ES	Eastern	✓
Hodge Road ES	Eastern	✓	Zebulon ES	Eastern	✓
Powell ES	Northeastern	✓			

- 11 WCPSS Cohort 3, 4, and 5 Restart schools in this Continued Authorization cycle
- 9 schools met the Academic Gain needed for Continued Authorization

NCDPI Restart Continued Authorization

WCPSS Cohort 3, 4, and 5 Restart schools (**River Bend MS** and **Timber Drive ES**) did not meet the Academic Gain needed for Continued Authorization from NCDPI based on the revised policy.

As a result, WCPSS has two options to continue to operate the schools using the Restart Model.

- **Re-apply in order to continue**
- Submit an application to exit

Comprehensive support plans will be revised and updated for each of the schools

- Comprehensive and in-depth focus plan designed with Area Superintendents, Academics, and Executive Leadership Coaches
- [Opportunity Culture](#) / ATR structures in each school
- Academics support
- Additional training for principals
- More instructional focus within the district instructional framework

WCPSS Restart Applications 2026-27

Eligible Schools
Identified Schools

Restart in WCPSS

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There are currently 203 schools in WCPSS.

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- 2 new schools are eligible for Restart in 2026-27
 - 3 additional schools remain eligible from last year
- 9 Restart schools exited low-performing status (2024-25 data)
- 2 Restart schools exited recurring low-performing status (2024-25 data)
- 3 previously eligible Restart schools exited recurring low-performing status (2024-25 data)
- 5 Restart schools remained out of recurring low-performing status (2024-25 data)



WCPSS Restart Applications

Schools Eligible for Restart in 2026-27

School	Area	Area Superintendent
Knightdale Elementary	Eastern	Smith
Zebulon Middle	Eastern	Smith
Brentwood Elementary	Northeastern	Council
Wake Forest Middle	Northeastern	Council
Wildwood Forest Elementary	Northeastern	Council

- 2 new schools eligible for Restart
- 3 schools shaded in blue remain eligible for Restart in 2026-27
- 3 schools that were previously eligible are no longer low-performing
 - Brier Creek ES
 - Reedy Creek ES
 - Vandora Springs ES

Criteria for Identifying Schools to Move Forward

- Additional Support
- Leadership
- Data Trends (3 years)
- Growth (3 years)
- SPG (3 years)
- Community Impact
- Systems & Structures
- AS/Principal Input

Conclusion

Summary

- Restart Model is aligned with the WCPSS Strategic Plan
- 40 schools are utilizing the Restart Model in 2025-26
- Restart is making a positive impact with schools
- 9 of the 11 Cohort 3, 4, and 5 schools met the Academic Gain target
 - 2 Comprehensive Support Plans for schools that did not meet
- 5 schools total are eligible for Restart in 2026-27
 - 2 new schools are eligible that were not eligible last year
 - 4 schools were eligible last year (application not submitted)
 - 1 of the 4 is no longer low-performing based on support
 - Criteria has been utilized to determine application submission
 - Additional resources and support



Next Steps

- Continue the Restart model with the authorized 9 Cohort 3, 4, and 5 schools
- Re-apply for the 2 schools that did not meet the target
- Consider new applications, support and future exits

Questions

