Update on the Comprehensive Organizational Study

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Wake County Board of Education - Finance Committee
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Desired outcomes

Organizational Study

- Evaluation of staffing levels across Central Services departments
- Analysis of operational efficiency and service adequacy
- Recommendations to optimize organizational structure and workload distribution

Project Teams

Improve, LLC Project Team Members

- Nona Ullman, Project Director
- Keri Munkwitz, Project Manager
- Monica Sanchez, Consultant

Project Scope and Objectives

Key Question: *Are WCPSS Central Services operations staffed at levels to support both efficiency and adequacy?*

Project Approach and Methodology

Study Focus & Alignment

- **WCPSS Central Services:** Examined overall structure, staffing levels, and operational alignment.
- **Strategic Priorities:** Evaluated organizational resources relative to district goals and workload demands.
- **Core Analysis Areas:**
  - Organizational design & position allocation
  - Supervisory span of control
  - Comparative industry staffing standards

Methodology

- **Comprehensive Assessment:** Combined both qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Conducted in-depth leadership interviews and org chart reviews.
- **Data-Driven Approach:**
  - Analysis of workload indicators and vacancy data
  - Peer district benchmarking (publicly available)
  - Targeted FOIA requests to supplement findings

Methodology & Data Sources

Analytical Approach

A comprehensive methodology integrating qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate how staffing structures align with operational needs and district priorities.

Key Methodology Pillars

- **Organizational Design:** Structural analysis
- **Trend Evaluation:** Staffing & enrollment trajectory
- **Workload Indicators:** Caseloads & volume metrics
- **Peer Benchmarking:** Industry standard comparisons

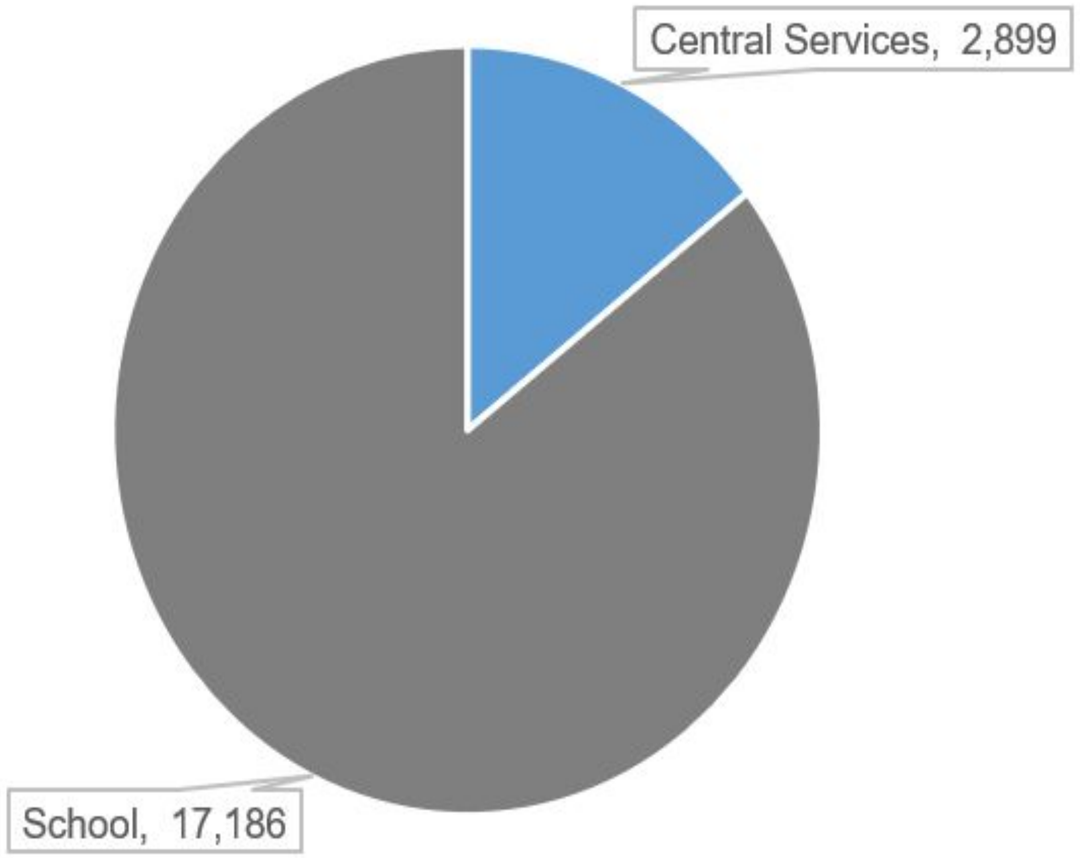
Primary Source: *Position data extracted directly from the WCPSS Oracle HR system.*

100+ Datasets & Documents

Rigorous review spanning the 2021-22 through 2025-26 school years:

- **Staffing Datasets:** Position and vacancy reports
- **Org Structures:** Reporting lines & functional charts
- **Job Descriptions:** Focus on Central Services roles
- **Contingent Labor:** Contractor usage & vacancy metrics
- **Workload Metrics:** Caseloads and response volumes
- **Trends:** Student enrollment & staffing allocations
- **Operations:** Departmental program documentation

Project Scope



Organizational Division	FTE 2026
Facilities and Operations	1,394
Academic Advancement	981
Administrative Services	226
Technology Services	133
Chief of Staff and Strategic Planning	116
Communications	32
Superintendent's Office	8
Board of Ed.	9
Total	2,899

Central Office Staff: Centrally - Reported Positions

Includes many staff who work primarily in schools:

- Special Education-related service providers
- Coordinating teachers (academic support/coaching)
- Instructional support technicians and digital learning coordinators
- Maintenance workers
- School bus drivers
- Custodial managers

Peer Benchmark Districts

While maintaining academic outcomes, WCPSS spends less per pupil and has the highest number of students per staff member, and second highest number of students per teacher.

Indicator	WCPSS	Charlotte-Mecklenburg	Dallas ISD	Fairfax County CPS	Gwinnett County PS	Montgomery County PS
Operating Budget *(in billions)*	$2.23	$2.03	$2.40	$3.75	$3.18	$3.20
Total Enrollment	161,115	140,801	141,000	183,000	182,000	160,223
Operating $/student	$13,841	$14,418	$17,021	$20,492	$17,473	$19,972
Students per all Staff	8.0	7.6	6.2	4.6	7.6	6.2
Students per Teacher	15.1	15.8	15.0	13.6	14.2	13.8

Note: WCPSS figures presented in this table may differ from other figures in this report, as all data shown here are drawn from a common 2024–25 data source (NCES CCD and publicly available district data) to ensure consistent, apples-to-apples comparisons across peer districts.

Sources: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD); Publicly available district reports and financial data.

Industry Benchmark Sources: Examples

Organizational Division	Industry Staffing Benchmark Standard Source
Facilities and Operations	Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA) SAE (Society of Automobile Engineers) International School Nutrition Association (SNA)
Academic Advancement	National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) American School Counselor Association (ASCA)
Administrative Services	Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)
Technology Services	North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) The Help Desk Institute (HDI)
Chief of Staff & Strategic Planning	Wallace Foundation Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) National Association of School Resource Officers' (NASRO)
Communications	National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA)

Benchmark Staffing Adequacy At-A-Glance

Adequate

Staffing within benchmark range.

Lean / Low

Staffing below benchmark with elevated but manageable risk.

Inadequate

Material gap with documented service, compliance, or sustainability consequences.

- Ratings reflect the full chapter analyses based on filled positions in the January 2026 Oracle extract.
- Detailed methodology, data sources, and caveats appear in each chapter.
- There were no areas noted as being ‘overstaffed’

Facilities and Operations Division - Findings

Department/ Function	Benchmark Indicator	Benchmark/ Standard	WCPSS Actual	Assessment
Transportation	Route miles per driver (yellow bus)	~70 miles/day; ≥1.0 drivers per route	114 miles/day (0.97 driver-to-route ratio)	**Inadequate**
Transportation	Buses per mechanic	27–34 buses per mechanic	18 buses/mechanic (18% mechanic vacancy; 11 contracted mechanics)	**Adequate**
Maintenance & Operations	Square feet per maintenance FTE	~100,000 sq ft/FTE (~289 FTE at standard)	~203,500 sq ft/FTE (142 FTE for ~28.9M sq ft)	**Inadequate**
Maintenance & Operations	M&O funding as % of Current Replacement Value	APPA standard: 3% of CRV ($158.3M)	2.4% of CRV ($126.3M)	**Inadequate**
Child Nutrition	Schools per Area Administrator	SNA guidance: ≤25 schools per area supervisor	17–22 schools	**Adequate**
Child Nutrition	Cafeteria manager-to-school ratio	SNA guidance: 1:1	1:1 to 1:2 (driven by meal volume)	**Adequate**
Facilities Design & Construction	Project manager workload	No universal ratio; PM benchmark ~150–200K SF per project portfolio; workload-to-staffing formula needed	$400M annual program; 20 concurrent projects; 28,880,978 square feet total	**Lean**
School Choice, Planning & Assignment	Schools per Student Assignment FTE	Peer practice: 10–15 schools per FTE	18.4 schools/FTE (+59% over 5 years)	**Inadequate**
School Choice, Planning & Assignment	Enterprise GIS staffing	Esri/URISA baseline: ≥1 systems admin + analyst capacity	4 FTE	**Adequate**

Academic Advancement Division - Findings

Department/ Function	Benchmark Indicator	Benchmark/ Standard	WCPSS Actual	Assessment
Student Support Services	Students per school psychologist	NASP: 1:500 (national median 1:1,127)	1:1,263	**Inadequate**
Student Support Services	Students per social worker	NASW/SSWAA: 1:250	1:1,234	**Inadequate**
Special Education Services	Schools per Coordinating Teacher	District/effective-practice target: 4–6 schools per CT	~5.6 schools/CT (higher where vacant)	**Adequate**
Special Education Services	SLP capacity	ASHA workload-based model; internal capacity strained	64 combined vacant/recommended positions; 28 contracted	**Inadequate**
Instructional Services	High-need schools per Title I coach	Large-district practice: 10–15 schools per coach	1:33 (3 coaches, 100+ schools)	**Inadequate**
Instructional Services	Schools per regional Coordinating Teacher	NIRN/IES: 3–6 schools; 2–3 for high-need schools	6.3 schools/CT	**Lean**
Digital Learning & Libraries	Schools per Digital Learning Coordinator	NCDPI: 1 ITF per school (~4% of standard)	1 DLC : 25 schools (8 school-facing DLCs of 10 total; 2 support central office curriculum)	**Inadequate**
Digital Learning & Libraries	Library media specialists per school	NCDPI: 1 full-time library media specialist per school	1:1 (but 3 supervisors supporting 225 librarians)	**Adequate**

Administrative Services Division - Findings

Department/ Function	Benchmark Indicator	Benchmark/ Standard	WCPSS Actual	Assessment
Financial Services	Finance FTE per $100M budget	Public-sector benchmark range	3.5 FTE/$100M	**Lean**
Human Resources	HR FTE per 100 employees	SHRM median 1.4–2.0; large K–12 districts 1.0–1.5+	0.51 per 100 employees	**Inadequate**

Technology Services Division - Findings

Department/ Function	Benchmark Indicator	Benchmark/ Standard	WCPSS Actual	Assessment
Customer Support (ISTs/CSAs)	Devices per IST/CSA	NCDPI statewide average 1:2,491 (≈118 needed; −60 gap)	1:5,079 (58 staff, 294,568 devices)	**Inadequate**
Customer Support (ISTs/CSAs)	Schools per IST	NCDPI recommendation: 1 IST per school	1:3.5 schools (1:4 with vacancies)	**Inadequate**

Chief of Staff and Strategic Planning Division - Findings

Department/ Function	Benchmark Indicator	Benchmark/ Standard	WCPSS Actual	Assessment
Area Superintendents	Principals per supervisor	Wallace/CGCS: 12–15; peers CMS 16.7, DISD 10.4, GCPS 14.2	22 average (portfolios to 26)	**Inadequate**
Office of Professional Learning	PLC program delivery capacity	Program-growth-aligned delivery staffing; max school-to-staff ratios not yet set	2 FTE supporting PLCs for 202 schools (~10,000 teachers)	**Lean**
Office of Security	SRO coverage	NASRO recommended staffing ratios	Below NASRO-recommended ratios; mixed state/local funding	**Lean**

Communications Division - Findings

Department/ Function	Benchmark Indicator	Benchmark/ Standard	WCPSS Actual	Assessment
Communications	Comm. FTE per 10,000 students	Large-district: 2–4 per 10,000 students	~0.75 per 10,000 (12 FTE / 160,510 students)	**Inadequate**

Central Services Staffing Level Summary

Summary: Overall, WCPSS is structurally under-resourced relative to peer systems because North Carolina devotes a smaller share of its economic capacity to K-12 and constrains local revenue, resulting in per-pupil spending far below comparable districts in Georgia, Virginia, and Maryland.

6

Adequate

Staffing Indicators

21

Inadequate

Staffing Indicators

5

Lean

Staffing Indicators

Closing/ Next Steps

- Continue to use the Finance Committee for further discussion and decision making on any next steps
- Determine if funding is available for increasing staffing levels

Questions?