

**North Carolina Education News**  
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**School Crime and Violence Report**

The rate of acts of crime and violence reported per 1,000 students in North Carolina public schools decreased by 0.13 in 2006-07. The total number of acts of crime and violence increased by 0.5 percent, or 54 acts, from 2005-06, according to the Annual Report on School Crime and Violence.

During last school year, North Carolina schools reported 11,013 acts of crime and violence among the system's 1.4 million students. This total correlates to 7.77 acts per 1,000 students, a decrease from 2005-06 when that number was 7.90 acts per 1,000 students. Forty percent, or 1,004 schools, of all schools reported no acts of crime or violence and 72 percent, or 1,812 schools, of all schools reported five or fewer acts last year.

As has been consistently reported in previous years, the large majority of incidents reported were in categories considered non-violent: possession of a controlled substance in violation of law, possession of a weapon excluding firearms and powerful explosives, possession of an alcoholic beverage, and assault on school personnel not resulting in serious injury.

The North Carolina Positive Behavior Support Initiative is being used in 81 school systems as a way to address the learning environment to support high student performance and reduce behavioral problems and "Media Ready," a new media

literacy substance abuse prevention program supported by First Lady Mary Easley. A total of 200 middle school literacy coaches and safe and drug free school coordinators representing all 115 school districts are receiving training in January to implement the "Media Ready" program with students in the 2008-09 school year.

As in past reports, three categories of incidents are responsible for more than 80 percent (84.8 percent) of all reported offenses: possession of controlled substance in violation of law, possession of a weapon excluding firearms and powerful explosives, and possession of an alcoholic beverage. Five incident types decreased: possession of controlled substance in violation of law, bomb threat, assault resulting in serious injury, assault involving use of a weapon, and taking indecent liberties with a minor.

Offenses considered violent represent 4 percent of the total acts reported. Schools that report five or more of these acts per thousand students in two consecutive years and where "conditions that contributed to the commission of those offenses are likely to continue into another school year" are deemed Persistently Dangerous Schools. In 2006-07, no public schools were identified as Persistently Dangerous Schools.

The total number of occurrences for each reportable act is listed below. Categories marked with an asterisk experienced an increase in 2006-07.

Possession of a controlled substance in violation of law	4,339
Possession of a weapon excluding firearms and powerful explosives	3,925*
Possession of alcoholic beverage	1,081*
Assault on school personnel not resulting in serious injury	889*
Bomb threat	175
Possession of a firearm or powerful explosives	139*
Assault resulting in serious injury	122
Sexual assault not involving rape or sexual offense	97*
Assault involving use of a weapon	94
Sexual offense	78*
Robbery without a dangerous weapon	44*
Burning of school building	20
Robbery with a dangerous weapon	5*
Kidnapping	3*
Rape	2*
Death by other than natural causes	0
Taking indecent liberties with a minor	0

As in previous years, the number and frequency of acts is the lowest in elementary schools (grades pre-K-5) and highest at the high school level. Possession of a weapon excluding firearms and powerful explosives is the most reported act at the elementary and middle grade levels while possession of a controlled substance in violation of law is the most reported act at the high school level.

As with many types of crime reporting, it is difficult to gauge causes for annual increases or decreases. Changes in overall numbers and rates per 1,000 students can be the result of more thorough reporting and better enforcement of laws in addition to actual increases in the number of offenses committed on school grounds.

Today's report is based on information provided by all 115 local school districts and 93 charter schools. Under North Carolina law, schools are required to report 17 specific acts of crime and violence to law enforcement. In addition, the law requires that the State Board of Education monitor and report annually on incidents of crime and violence in public schools. This reporting requirement began in 1997-98 with 14 reportable acts, a list that was expanded in 2001-02 to its current 17 reportable acts.

- Table 6A. Total Number of Acts for Each LEA and Charter Schools 2006-07 (<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/newsroom/news/2007-08/20071205-01/2006-07table6a.pdf>)
- Table 6B. Total Number of Acts for Individual Schools in each LEA 2006-07 (<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/newsroom/news/2007-08/20071205-01/2006-07table6b.pdf>)
- 2006-2007 Annual Report on School Crime and Violence (<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/schoolimprovement/alternative/reports/schoolviolence/2006-07schoolviolence.pdf>)

## **North Carolina Continues National Board Certification Momentum**

Another 1,442 North Carolina public school teachers are celebrating achieving their highest professional credential – National Board Certification. This newest batch of credentialed teachers brings the state's total number of National Board Certified teachers to 12,770. The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) released its 2007 certification results this morning on "National Board Certification Day."

became National Board Certified, bringing the national total to nearly 64,000. North Carolina accounts for one-fifth of the nation's nationally certified teachers. Florida is the next closest state with 10,875 National Board Certified teachers followed by South Carolina (5,729), California (3,878), and Ohio (2,757).

In addition, four North Carolina public school districts placed in the Top 20 districts nationally for the total number of national board certified teachers: Wake County Public Schools is second with 1,259, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is fourth with 1,049, Guilford County Schools is 11th with 465, and Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools is 18th with 332.

National Board Certification was first offered in 1994, when eight North Carolina teachers achieved this professional credential. Since then, the number of North Carolina teachers receiving the certification continues to grow.

North Carolina supports teachers in their efforts to achieve National Board Certification by:

- paying up-front the \$2,500 assessment fee (As a condition, the teacher is obligated to teach in the state during the following year whether they achieve National Board Certification or not.)
- providing three paid release days from normal teacher responsibilities to help teachers develop their portfolios
- providing a 12 percent salary supplement to the teachers' regular salary upon receipt of National Board Certification (good for the 10-year life of the certification)
- awarding 15 continuing education units (CEUs) to the individual completing the National Board Certification process.

Also, the State Board of Education awards a North Carolina teaching license to out-of-state teachers who are employed in North Carolina and who possess National Board Certification.

National Board Certification is the highest credential in the teaching profession, and participation is voluntary. Teachers achieve certification through a rigorous performance-based assessment that typically takes one to three years to complete and measures what accomplished teachers and counselors should know and be able to do. As a part of the process, teachers build a portfolio that includes student work samples, assignments, videotapes and a thorough analysis of their classroom teaching. Certification is currently available to educators in 27 fields.

Additional information on National Board Certification is available online at

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/recruitment/nationalboardcertification/>

## **North Carolina Scores Low in School Food Policies**

Kentucky and Oregon top the nation in healthy school foods policies, but two-thirds of states have no or weak nutrition standards to limit junk-food and soda sales out of vending machines, school stores, and other venues outside of school meals, according to a school foods report card from the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI).

“Over the last ten years, states have been strengthening their school nutrition policies,” said Margo G. Wootan, director of nutrition policy at CSPI. “But overall, the changes, while positive, are fragmented, incremental, and not happening quickly enough to reach all children in a timely way.”

No states received an A grade, though two states (Kentucky and Oregon) received an A-; six states received a B+ (Nevada, Alabama, Arkansas, California, Washington and New Mexico); nine states earned a B or B-, including Texas and Arizona; six states and the District of Columbia received Cs; seven states got Ds; including NC (D+) VA (D) and Georgia (D-) and 20 states got Fs, including Massachusetts, Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Delaware.

Most improved honors go to Oregon, which upgraded from an F in last year’s report card to an A-, and Washington state, which moved from an F to a B+. Since CSPI’s last report card in 2006, Oregon passed a comprehensive school snack and beverage policy which limits calories, saturated and trans fat, and sugars in snacks in K-12 schools and limits the sale of most sugary beverages in schools. Both states previously had no guidelines beyond USDA’s bare-bones

CSPI found that only 11 states have comprehensive food and beverage standards that apply to the whole campus, the whole school day, for all grade levels. Thirteen states limit portion sizes for snacks, and only 11 states limit portion sizes for beverages. Fifteen states limit the saturated-fat content of school snacks, and only ten address trans fat. Just five states set limits on sodium in school foods.

“The majority of states still rely on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s outdated

school nutrition standards,” said Wootan. “Those national standards limit only the sale of jelly beans, lollipops, and other so-called ‘foods of minimal nutritional value.’ Those standards don’t address calories, saturated and trans fat, sodium, or other key nutrition concerns for children today.”

CSPI based its grades on five key considerations:

- Beverage nutrition standards
- Food nutrition standards
- Grade levels to which policies apply
- Time during the school day to which policies apply
- Locations on campus to which policies apply

Over the last 20 years, obesity rates have tripled in children and adolescents, and only 2 percent of children eat a healthy diet, according to key nutrition recommendations by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Despite that, about a third of elementary schools, 71 percent of middle schools, and 89 percent of high schools sell items such as sugary drinks, snack cakes, candy, and chips out of vending machines, school stores, or a la carte lines in the cafeteria, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s 2006 School Health Policies and Programs Study:

**[http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/shpps/2006/factsheets/pdf/FS\\_FoodandBeverages\\_SHPPS2006.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/shpps/2006/factsheets/pdf/FS_FoodandBeverages_SHPPS2006.pdf)**

Full Report Card:

**<http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/2007schoolreport.pdf>**