

## Elementary programs

The first six years of formal education are often called "the wonder years." In Wake County, elementary school programs are designed to capitalize on the natural curiosity or wonderment which children show during this period. Developmentally appropriate activities and skills are stressed. Educational opportunities are planned to meet the instructional needs of each child.

An elementary program guide has been prepared for parents with a detailed description of all K-5 programs and services. Parents who have specific questions, or who would like to see the programs in action, can call their child's principal to discuss their interest or to schedule a visit.

### SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE 1989-90 ELEMENTARY PROGRAM INCLUDE:

- \* Piloting a program for four-year-olds at three schools.
- \* Conducting personalized screening of all kindergartners as part of the Early Prevention of School Failure (EPSF) program.
- \* Expanding foreign language instruction to include all students in kindergarten through second grades.
- \* Extending student and teacher contact with scientists and engineers in the classroom through a partnership with North Carolina State University.
- \* Initiating the first phase of a comprehensive writing guide which emphasizes the process of writing and appropriate instructional strategies.
- \* Introducing a new statewide test in language arts and mathematics for first and second graders.
- \* Continuing Volunteers in Visual Arts, an art appreciation program staffed by parent volunteers.
- \* Maintaining Family Math Nights at selected schools to increase parent involvement.
- \* Launching a new academically gifted resource curriculum based on a thematic approach for students in third through fifth grades.
- \* Implementing EXCEL, a program for young gifted children in kindergarten through second grades.



*One of the most important skills a child can learn is the love of reading.*



*Teachers adjust the curriculum to meet the needs of each child. Whatever a child's needs, the instruction provided is appropriate for that child's level.*

#### Community-school effort

Wake schools forge important partnerships with the community. For example, Swift Creek Elementary and a variety of community groups are combining efforts to help students and parents from Walnut Terrace, a low-income housing project. Students are tutored in a variety of subjects by members of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. Funding for the project comes from the United Church of Christ Association. The Raleigh Housing Authority provides the use of an apartment.

Children who last year completed a year of tutoring were rewarded with a dinner and awards ceremony at Shaw University. Specific gains in student performance have resulted from the partnership.

#### Preschool handicapped program

Handicapped three- and four-year-old children have a number of services available to them, including:

- ★ hearing impaired services at Farmington Woods Elementary

- ★ autistic services at Millbrook and Adams elementary schools

- ★ speech/language services at a number of sites

Staff members are available to provide family services and to help identify eligible children.

School system programs are closely coordinated with Wake County agencies already serving preschool, handicapped children. For further information contact Jane Stikeleather at 790-2677.

### Elementary Curriculum

Wake County elementary schools serve students in grades K-5. Students entering kindergarten undergo a unique screening process known as Early Prevention of School Failure



(EPSF). The program indicates to teachers and parents a child's strengths and weaknesses so that instruction can be geared accordingly.



Students receive concentrated study in mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies. That basic education is then supplemented with instruction in health, art, computer education, and media.

Over the next few years the system will be introducing dance, drama, and Spanish into all elementary grades. Kindergartners through second graders receive



Spanish instruction twice a week, and fourth and fifth graders have dance and drama instruction once a week.

Special programs are available for academically gifted students or those with physical, emotional, or learning handicaps.