



Guilford County Schools Kindergarten Kickoff 2024

2025 Golden Achievement Entry

Guilford County Schools – Greensboro, North Carolina
PreK-12 Urban District | 67,000 students
Chief Communications Officer/Communications Department (14 Team Members)

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RESEARCH

In Guilford County Schools (GCS), improving support for students at key transition years, including kindergarten, is a tenet of the district's [Strategic Direction](#). According to the [Hechinger Report](#) and research from the Associated Press, fewer students are enrolling in kindergarten since the pandemic. Guilford County Schools was not immune to this downward trend in kindergarten enrollment. Prior to 2024, GCS kindergarten registration for the upcoming school year didn't open until April 1, and many families didn't register until the summer or even later, well after budget and allotments were provided to schools, meaning that the district might have to move teachers after the start of the school year. Also, schools were not required to host events to encourage kindergarten registration. Though many did, there was no consistency in the scope, scale or timing.

PLANNING

A successful campaign in 2023 brought students in earlier, but overall enrollment was still down. Building on the success of the previous year, we decided to open the application window much earlier – January 31, 2024, to coincide with the start of the Choice schools application period. To increase consistency among our more than 60 elementary schools, we instituted a districtwide Kindergarten Kickoff on April 10, 2024, shortly after spring break, and asked every elementary school to host an event on that date. The event had to be at night to allow working families to participate. We also developed a \$40,000 budget using ESSER and marketing dollars to pay for take-home swag for every incoming kindergarten student who attended an event, as well as paid advertising.

Goals

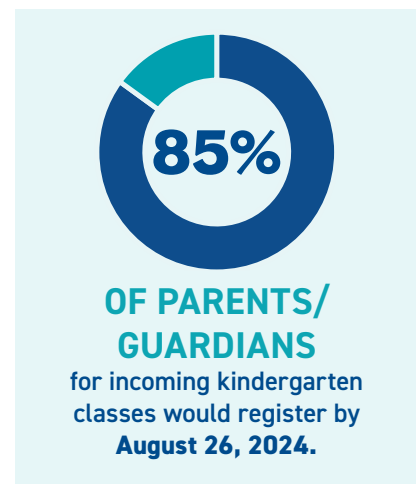
- To welcome kindergarten families to Guilford County Schools and give them a positive first impression of our district
- To ensure that families register their children for kindergarten well in advance of the first day of school
- To help families understand the importance of kindergarten in a child's overall academic progress

Objectives

- 85 percent of incoming kindergarten parents will register their child for school by August 26, 2024.

Key Messages

- Guilford County Schools offers a caring, inclusive environment in which students will learn, grow and thrive.
- Kindergarten is a crucial time in a child's life. We need your child in school, every day.
- It's important to register early so that schools are ready to welcome your child on the very first day.

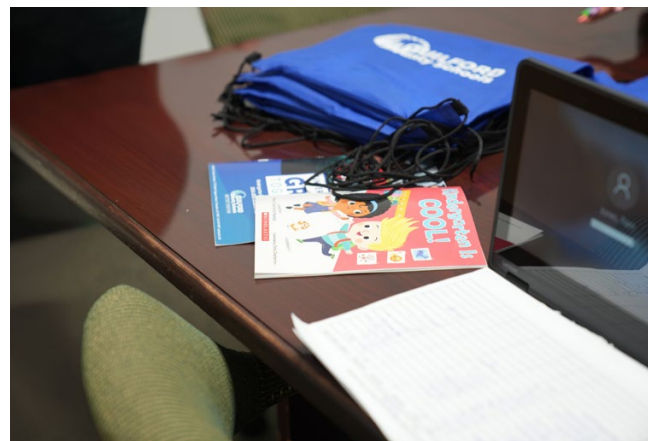


Budget

ITEM	TYPE	VENDOR	AMOUNT	UNITS	TIME
Yard signs	Marketing	System	\$3,564.96	300	n/a
Billboards	Marketing	Lamar	\$5,562.50	3	12 weeks
Coloring books	Promotional materials	GCS Print Shop	\$2,597.00	3,000	
Drawstring bags	Promotional materials	4imprint	\$3,741.40	3,000	
Crayons	Promotional materials	Staples	\$3,240.00	3,000	
Books	Promotional materials	Barnes & Noble	\$1,503.83		
Radio ads	Marketing	Audacy	\$7,650.00		
Radio ads	Marketing	Norsan	\$5,000.00		
Scholastic books	Promotional materials	Scholastic	\$7,301.70	3,000	
TOTAL			\$40,161.39		

IMPLEMENTATION

Information about kindergarten registration was shared during the GCS Choice Showcase, an event that draws more than 4,000 attendees, including many kindergarten families, who were encouraged to register for kindergarten at their neighborhood schools while they awaited Choice school placements. Students who attended the Kindergarten Kickoff school-based events received a take-home bag with books and information about preparing for kindergarten. Schools used these events as creative opportunities to make families feel welcome and wanted, complete with signing ceremonies and photo opportunities. Marketing and ESSER funds also paid for radio ads in Spanish and English, billboards and yard signs for schools to distribute both at school and to their community partners. Schools also received a communications toolkit with messages and social media posts they could use with their school communities. TV interviews, YouTube videos and targeted device marketing also spread the word to potential GCS families.



Giveaways for the Guilford County Schools Choice School Showcase outreach.

EVALUATION

The campaign was successful: While our districtwide enrollment trended down, 20th-day kindergarten enrollment for 2024-25 was 4,627, an increase of 58 students from 2023-24, and 98 percent of those who enrolled had done so before the first day of school. Through a feedback loop with school principals, we learned that some felt the single-date event was too restrictive, so plans for 2025 give schools more flexibility but also increase the number of events schools are asked to host, including both daytime and evening hours.

APPENDIX

Kindergarten Registration Billboard

A billboard for kindergarten registration. It features a photograph of a smiling teacher with a black headband reading a book to a group of diverse young children in a classroom. The teacher is holding a book with a colorful illustration. The children are looking at the book with interest. In the background, there are educational posters on the wall, including one that says "you give cards" and "you give candee".

 **GUILFORD**
County Schools
BETTER TOGETHER

**Kindergarten
registration
now open!**

Register online at gcsnc.schoolmint.net

Kindergarten Registration Lawn Sign

A lawn sign for kindergarten registration. It has a blue background with a white central box containing the text "KINDER 'GARDEN' GROW TOGETHER". The word "GROW" is in large blue letters, and the letter "O" is replaced by a green hand icon with a leaf growing from it. Below the sign, there is a QR code and the text "Scan Me to Register!".

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gcsnc.schoolmint.net**



Kindergarten Orientation Coloring Book Sample Pages

COME

GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS

For you for joining our Kindergarten Kickoff experience! Guilford County Schools is eager to be your student and family to the best place to learn and grow. If you are a returning parent, it's to see you back in Guilford County Schools.

First day of school will be here before we know it, and as that date in August approaches, along comes many hours for your student. It marks the beginning of a long and beautiful learning year, putting in place the foundational blocks that will support them throughout their life. From learning sight words to making new friends, each experience will contribute to positive learning experiences for your child.

We always serve as the first educator in your child's life, and we welcome parents as partners throughout the K12 experience. We know that the transition to kindergarten can be difficult, but our goal is here to help you and your child navigate any challenges that arise. It's an exciting time for both of your child, and together, we will prepare your child for a bright future.

Thank you for all you do to support your child's educational progress. You've planted the seeds, now let them grow!

Stephany Oakley
 Stephany Oakley
 Superintendent
 Guilford County Schools

2024-2025 Academic Calendar 2024-2025

AUGUST 2024						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

19-22 Mandatory Teacher Workdays
 22-23 Optional Teacher Workdays
 26 First Day for Students

OCTOBER 2024						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

18 Optional Teacher Workday

DECEMBER 2024						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

23 Vacation Day
 24-26 Winter Holidays
 27, 30-31 Vacation Days

FEBRUARY 2025						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

17 Mandatory Teacher Workday

APRIL 2025						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

14-17 Vacation Days
 18 Spring Holiday

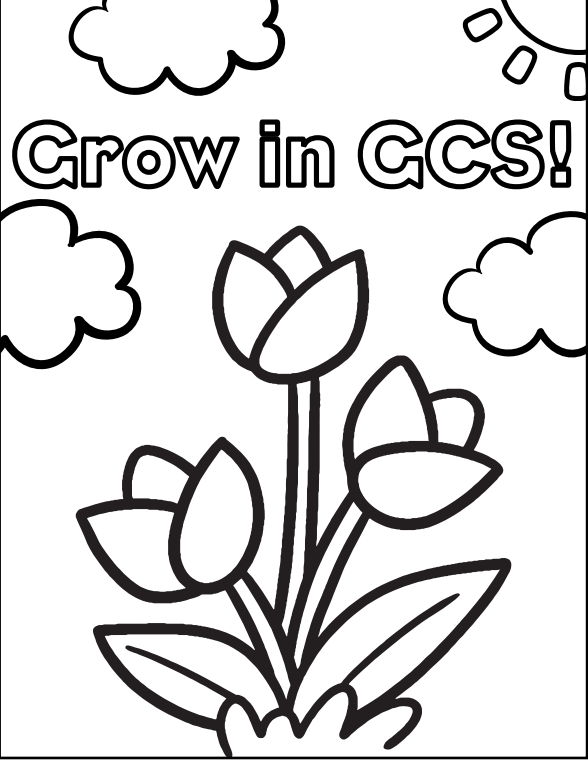
JUNE 2025						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

11 Last Day for Students, End of 164 Day
 12 Mandatory Teacher Workday
 13 Optional Teacher Workday

Legend

- First/Last Day for Students
- Vacation Day
- Optional Teacher Workday
- Holiday
- Mandated Teacher Workday

Let's plant a flower!



Kindergarten Registration Ad

GUILFORD County Schools
BETTER TOGETHER

Kindergarten registration now open!

Register online at gsnc.schoolmint.net

Scan Me to Register!

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Kindergarten Registration Social Media

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