

Year-Round School Vocabulary

What is a node? What is a base school? Odds are you've heard some new words and phrases in the past few months. Here's a basic vocabulary list to guide you.

Base School: In Wake County, students are assigned to a school based on where the student's parents or guardians live.

Cap: A cap is the maximum enrollment for a school as approved by the school board. This is determined by the number of teaching spaces or how many students can be appropriately taught in the building. When schools are capped, new students are moved to schools that are less crowded.

Charter School: Charter schools are public schools run by private organizations. They receive state, local and federal funding for students, but no state money to buy or build facilities. There are currently 14 charter schools in Wake County. According to North Carolina law, only 100 charter schools are allowed statewide.

Magnet School: A public school that draws students interested in specific subjects such as academics or the arts, from a surrounding region. Parents may submit applications for the Wake County Public Schools Magnet program during February. They typically receive notification in late April.

Node: A small slice of the county assigned to a specific elementary, middle and high school. A node determines where kids can go to school. The county is divided into more than 700 nodes, each identified by number.

Spot node: A piece of a node that might be assigned to different schools from the rest of the node because of crowding.

Traditional Calendar: Schools following the traditional calendar begin the school year in late August and end in early June, providing students with one long break over the summer.

Track: In the Wake County Public School System, students are split into four groups or tracks, with each track having a different schedule. Schedules are staggered so that at any given time, three tracks are in school, and one is on break. This allows an extra group of students to attend the year-round school who would not be able to fit into a traditional calendar school.

Track-out: This is the three-week period when students are on vacation, or tracked-out of school.

Track-out Programs: A number of providers in our community offer childcare during the periods when year-round students are out of school. The **YMCA of the Triangle** is the largest provider of tracking out programs for Wake County students.

Year-round Calendar: Wake County began its year-round program as a way to deal with a growing student population 14 years ago. The year-round calendar spreads the 180 school days throughout the entire year. Students attending a year-

round school are in school for 45 days and then have a 15-day break. (Sometimes this system is referred to as 45/15.)