



Fort Wayne Community Schools
Board of School Trustees

January 25, 2010

School Choice at FWCS

We Are Your Schools

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Presentation Objective

To illustrate how school choice is communicated and administered and how it supports the FWCS mission and goals

AGENDA

1. How school choice supports FWCS mission and goals
2. How school choice is communicated
3. How school choice is administered
4. Next Steps



How School Choice Supports District Goals

FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

DISTRICT GOALS

- **Achieve and maintain academic excellence**
Eliminate the achievement gap among all groups of students by maximizing the achievement of all.
- **Engage parents and the community**
Engage all segments of the community to support the education of young people.
- **Operate effectively with integrity and fiscal responsibility**
Demonstrate effective and efficient use of taxpayer dollars by using best management practices and systematic long range planning.

DISTRICT GOALS

**Achieve and maintain
academic excellence**

School Choice Role:

- Opportunity for students to attend school that best suits their needs.
- Each year we process approximately 3,400 applications.

DISTRICT GOALS

Engage parents and the community

School Choice Role:

- Parents review options and make conscious decision about child's school.
- Middle and high school representatives meet with parents and students to talk about expectations at the next level.
- School Choice Fair attracts and retains students.

DISTRICT GOALS

**Operate effectively with integrity
and fiscal responsibility**

School Choice Role:

- Choice Fair supported by sponsorships.

National City
Now a part of





DISTRICT GOALS

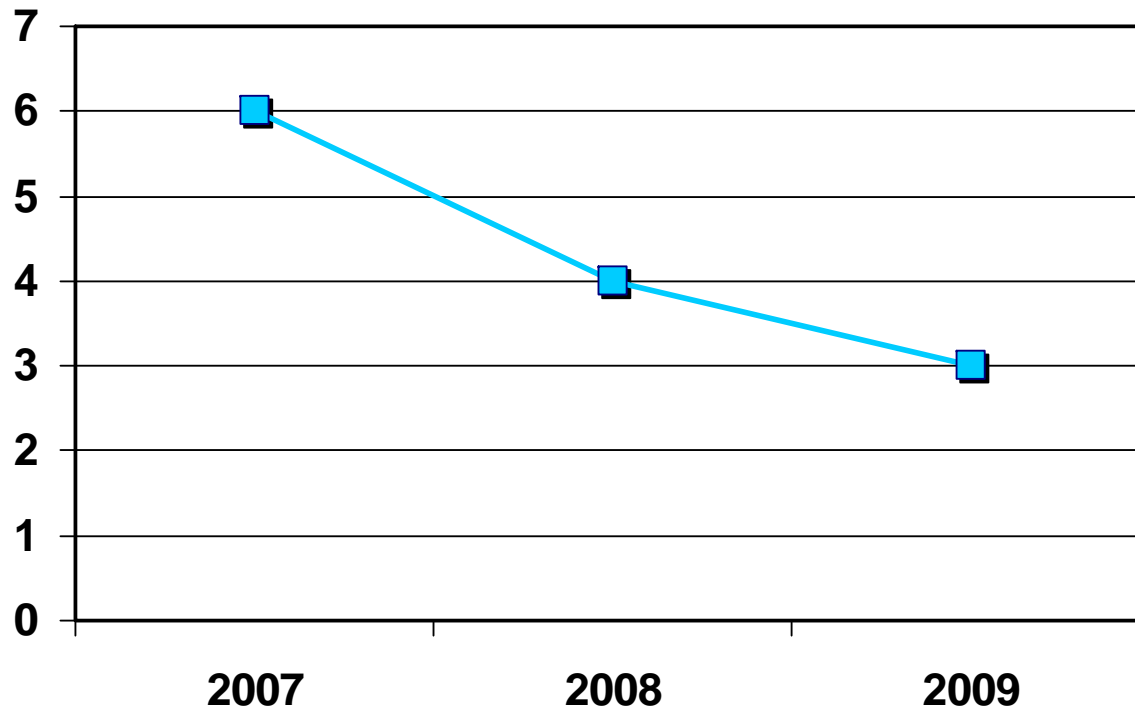
**Operate effectively with integrity
and fiscal responsibility**

School Choice Role:

- Efficient processing of applications.

Average Time to Process an Application

DAYS





How School Choice is Communicated

FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



How School Choice is Communicated

- School Catalog – mailed early January to grades PreK-five and eight
- Pre-school Visits – Student Services representatives visit each pre-school program to share information
- Student-Parent Handbook – mailed in August to all families
- School Choice Fair – January 30, 2010 at Northrop High School



School Choice Fair

Communication and Promotion

2010 Theme: "Fort Wayne Favorites"

- School Catalog
- Radio
- Television
- Flyers sent home to all families
- Announcements at athletic events
- School Newsletters
- School Signage
- Yard Signs



School Choice Fair Other Promotion

- Mad Ants and Komets on site
- Student Musical Performances
- Student Art Display
- Vera Bradley Drawing
- United Way Book Donation



Why Promote the School Choice Fair?

- Increase and Maintain Enrollment
- Showcase FWCS Offerings
- Instill Employee Pride and Teamwork
- Engage Parents and the Community



Data from 2009 Choice Fair

81 percent favorable

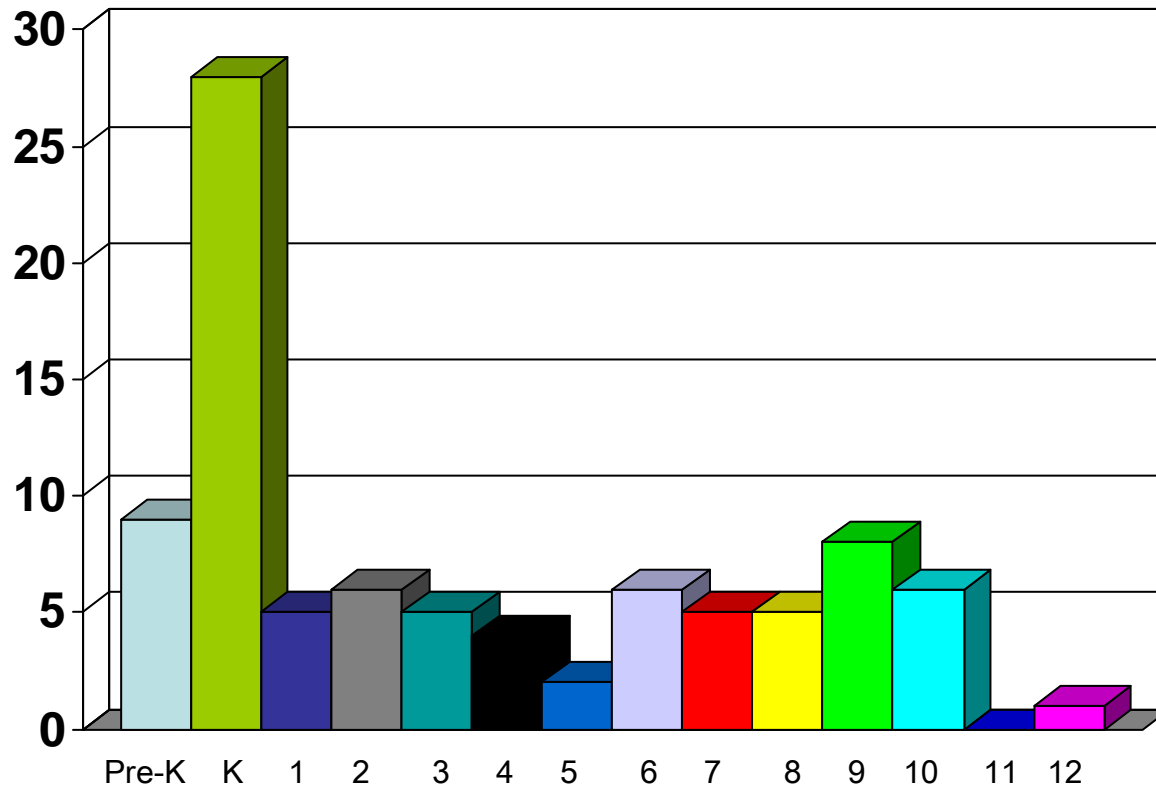
- How did attendees hear about it?
 - 32% Flyer
 - 23% TV
 - 18% Radio
 - 18% Word of Mouth
 - 6% Postcard
 - 6% Newspaper
 - 5% FWCS Web Site
 - 3% Pre-School



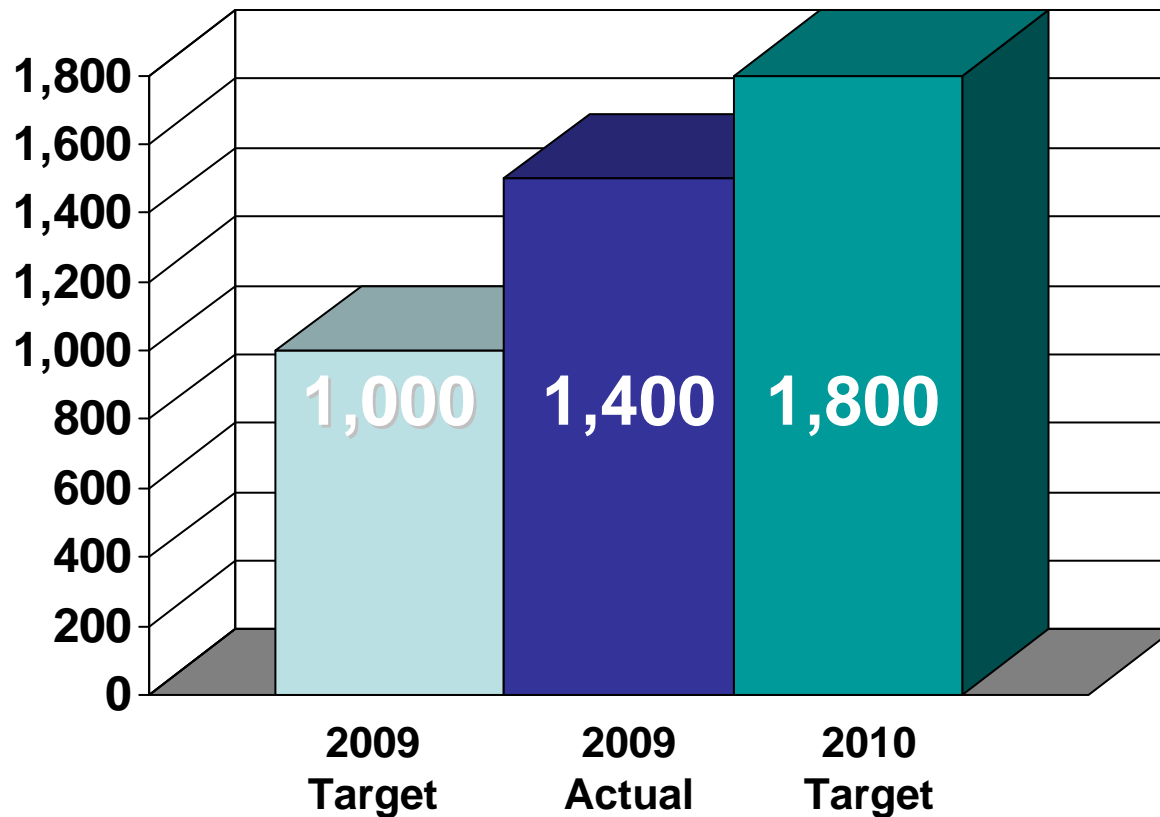
Data from 2009 Choice Fair

- Why did attendees come?
 - 52% New enrollees
 - 29% Changing schools
 - 24% General information
- Where students currently attend:
 - 32% None or Pre-School
 - 60% FWCS
 - 8% Non-FWCS, Non-Pre-School

Grades Attendees' Children Entering



Attendees at School Choice Fair





Data from 2009 Choice Fair

Attendee Comments:

“Friendly people answering all questions.”

“I liked that all schools were present.”

“I appreciated the information, friendly people and the food!”

“I always found someone with great information.”

“I appreciated the diversity and everyone’s willingness to help.”



How School Choice is Administered

FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS



School Choice Administration

- The FWCS lottery process has been in place for 22 years.
- In the early years parents had a choice of 5 magnet schools and 10 magnet programs to select from.





School Choice Administration

- **Fairness**
- **Transparency**
- **Honesty**
- **Racial Balance**
- **Convenience**



School Choice Administration

- Lottery process begins in January of each school year for the upcoming fall placements.
- Parents select up to two school choices. Students are selected based on space availability and racial balance.
- Applications due in Student Services by the end of February to be considered “on time.”

School Choice Administration

- Once all applications have been processed, computerized lottery system creates three random lists of “on time” applications.
- Public lottery held in March of each year in the board room.
- Parents are notified of their child’s status.
- Application process continues throughout the summer.

Next Steps

- ✓ Come to the School Choice Fair on January 30, 1-4 p.m. at Northrop High School
- ✓ Applications due February 26
- ✓ March 5 – Secondary Lottery
- ✓ March 26 – Elementary Lottery