

**AN ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY AND
STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS,
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM,
EDUCATIONAL SPACE UTILIZATION,
AND CAPITAL DEBT LEEWAY
OF THE
GRIFFITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2008 the Board of School Trustees of the Griffith Public Schools (GPS) authorized a feasibility study for the school corporation. The study was designed to include analysis of community and student demographics including the projected student population by grade configuration as well as an analysis of educational facilities and current space utilization. In addition, the study included an analysis of the capital debt position of the school corporation and recommendations on future facility improvement needs of the school corporation. It was believed at the outset of the study that there was excess classroom capacity at the elementary school level that could be more effectively and efficiently utilized by the school corporation. Thus, this study was commissioned to examine that belief and develop a sound data base for use by decision makers.

The study was directed by Dr. Robert L. Boyd, Department of Educational Leadership, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana. Dr. Boyd conducted the data collection and analysis. His work and analysis were greatly enhanced by the data support given to the study by the central office administrative and clerical staffs of the corporation as well as the building principals through his visits to each school facility. The information and perceptions of the administrative staff is demonstrative of a strong commitment to quality education for the Griffith Public Schools held by these groups.

THE COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL CORPORATION DEMOGRAPHICS LAKE COUNTY AND THE STATE OF INDIANA

Enrollment projections are very important in the planning process for any school corporation. Projected enrollment is a critical factor in examining the basic question for this study. However, projecting school enrollments is always subject to many variables that might modify apparent trends. National trends often apply to specific geographic areas and should be carefully analyzed before incorporation into a local study.

A number of important considerations must be taken into account when reviewing past, current and future enrollments of a school corporation. The public schools of any community are a reflection of the understanding of the people they serve. The geography, population trends, socio-economic status, and work opportunities in the community will influence the type of educational programs to be offered by the schools.

For this reason, a description of the more significant of these factors is essential in developing a perspective for the study of a school corporation.

In some instances these community factors may act as an inhibiting influence on the development of the highest possible quality of education. Such factors as a lack of understanding of the vital role education plays in the lives of today's citizens and a lack of resources to pay the price for quality education can inhibit the development of a sound educational program. Further, financial efficiencies are often difficult to achieve given the history, traditions and values of a given community.

The schools of a corporation have their own unique problems, which are the result of changes in population, in the nature of the school children, the social, cultural, and economic life of the area and the changes that occur in school programs. There are, however, other factors of a national scope that must be considered in planning and executing an educational program that meets the needs of the future citizens of our society. To the best of its ability, a modern school system must translate the demands of our times into experiences that equip students to live in a society that emphasizes change, mobility, and adaptability. Technological advances are creating a rapidly changing employment picture. The U.S. Department of Labor has estimated that these advances in technology will force some people to change the nature of their employment ten or more times during their lifetime.

While statistical summaries of any community can be misleading, they can provide prompts for thinking about the community and the role that a quality educational system does play in the viability of that community. In this regard, it is noted that according to the Federal Bureau of the Census, 492,104 people lived in Lake County in 2007. Part of Calumet Township, Lake County, Indiana makes up the Griffith Public Schools (GPS) and had a total population in 2006 of 122,009 or 24.6 percent of the total county population. That township population was nearly 94,000 less than it was in 1970 when the township included 215,940 people or some 39.5 percent of the county population. The 43.5 percent decrease in township population has had an impact on many of the public institutions in the township, including the public school corporations.

In 2006, nearly 26.1 percent of the county population was under 18 years of age, while 12.8 percent was 65 or over. The under 18 and over 65 percentages are both higher

than the state percentages of 25.0 percent and 12.4 percent for these two age groups, thus indicating a larger younger population overall in the county balanced by a much larger senior population. The median age in Lake County was 37.0 compared to a statewide median age of 36.3. Thus, the population of the county, in terms of median age, is a bit older than the state average. In terms of educational attainment, 80.7 percent of the county population has a high school diploma compared to 82.1 percent statewide, while just 16.2 percent of the residents have four or more years of college compared to 19.4 percent of the statewide population.

In 2004 the county's median household income was \$40,894 or about \$2,323 less than the state's median household income, while county per capita income in 2005 was \$29,136 or \$2,037 less than the statewide per capita income. This suggests a less than affluent county in terms of household and personal economics. The county had 214,119 employed workers with an April 2008 unemployment rate of 5.0 percent compared to 4.7 percent statewide.

Thus, the county population overall is a bit older, less educated, and earning far less money both in median household income and per capita income and has a much higher unemployment rate than is true across the state of Indiana. Such demographics suggest an important need to seek fiscal efficiencies in the operation of community institutions. Other statistics of note for Lake County were as follows:

Figure 1

General Demographic Characteristics for Lake County and Indiana

General Demographics	Lake County	State Or, County V State
*Total Population 1990	475,594	5,441,156
*Total Population 2007	492,104	6,345,289
*Total Population 2010 (Estimated)	483,183	6,417,198
*Preschool (age 0-4) 2006	34,517	7.0/6.8%
*School Age (age 5-17) 2006	94,404	19.1/18.2%
*Adults (age 18-64) 2006	302,080	61.1/62.6%
*Older (age 65+) 2006	63,201	12.8/12.4%
*K-12 School enrollment, 2006-07	97,972	2 nd of 92
*Median Age 2006	37.0	36.3
*Married couples with children	39,029	21.5/23.8%
*Married without children	49,444	27.2/29.8%
*Single Parents	20,558	11.3/9.1%
*Residents high school graduates	80.7%	82.1%
*Residents four years or more college	16.2%	19.4%
*Median household income 2004	\$40,894	\$43,217

*Per capita income 2005	\$29,136	\$31,173
*Median Value Home	\$97,500	\$94,300
*Poverty Rate, 2004	14.8%	11.1%
*Residential bldg permits, 2006	2,122	
*Residential bldg permits single family	1,769	
*Residential bldg permits multi-family	353	
*Assessed Value By Property Class		
Commercial/Industrial	59.6%	43.2%
Residential	33.4%	41.5%
Agricultural	1.2%	9.6%
Utilities	5.8%	5.6%
*Assessed Value Per Capita	\$7,336	74 th in State
*Total resident labor force (2005)	227,111	3,232,715
*Employed	214,119	3,073,006
*Unemployed	12,992	159,709
*Unemployment rate (April, 2008)	5.0%	4.7%
*44,631 workers commute into Lake County to work each day from: Porter(21,861) Illinois(13,450), Jasper(3,042), La Porte(1,871) Newton(1,626).		
*59,398 workers commute out of county to work each day to: Illinois(43,834), Porter(6,425), Out of State other(5,610), La Porte(1,226) and Jasper County(278)		

Source: United States Census Bureau, Indiana Business Research Center

The County seat of Lake County is Crown Point, Indiana. State highways 2, 55, 53, 231 and 51 serve the county as well as United States Highways 30, 12, 20, 6, and 41 and Interstates 80, 94, 65 and 90. The residents of Lake County are most typically employed inside their county of residency however some 59,398 workers or 26.2 percent of the resident labor force commute out of the county to Illinois, Porter, LaPorte, and Jasper Counties and other out of state locations to work. In 2005 some 227,111 residents of Lake County were in the labor force. The area tends to very directly reflect the state of the economy of Northwest Indiana and the Chicago, Illinois and southwest Michigan area.

Table 1 presents the total population of Lake County for 1970 to 2000 with U.S. Census Bureau estimated population for 2006.

Table 1

Total Population for Lake County, 1970-2000 with Estimate for 2006

Year	1970	1980	1990	2000	Estimate 2006
Population	546,253	522,917	475,594	484,564	494,202

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The total population of Lake County has decreased from 546,253 in 1970 to 494,202 in 2006 for a decrease of 52,051 people or 9.5 percent over the three-decade period while the state of Indiana's population was increasing by 17 percent. In 1990

Lake County was the second largest county in Indiana and remains second in 2006 despite the decline in total population. The sharp declines in county population in the 1970's and 1980's have been reversed in the 1990's and the early years of the current decade.

The Indiana Business Research Center projects Lake County will continue to grow from an estimated 493,297 in 2005 to 511,783 in 2025 or by 18,486 people or 3.7 percent, while their projection for growth for all of Indiana is projected to be 9.8 percent. Table 2 shows the projected growth by age cohort for Lake County for 2005, 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2025.

Table 2
Projected Population by Age Cohorts, 2005, 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2025
For Lake County, Indiana

YEAR	Age 0-4	Age 5-19	Age 20-24	Age 25-44	Age 45-64	Age 65+	Total
2005	34,811	108,598	32,302	127,801	126,362	63,423	493,297
2010	33,922	105,281	29,877	123,630	134,314	66,752	493,776
2015	34,253	100,597	30,707	123,930	131,764	74,940	496,191
2020	35,058	98,811	28,617	129,303	125,336	86,078	503,203
2025	35,600	99,444	27,560	133,335	116,519	99,325	511,783
% Change	2.3%	-8.4%	-14.7%	4.3%	-7.8%	56.6%	3.7%
State % Change	6.6%	3.1%	1.3%	-1.8%	9.3%	60.5%	10.4%

U.S. Census Bureau

It is noted that while the total population is projected to increase from 493,297 in 2005 to 511,783 in 2025, an increase of 3.7 percent, the age 5-19 school age cohort is expect to decrease significantly by 8.4 percent while the college aged 20-24 age cohort is projected to decrease by 14.7 percent. This compares to a statewide projected increase of 3.1 percent for the 5-19 cohort and a 1.3 percent increase for the 20-24 school-age cohort. Thus, the younger, school age, cohorts will decline more than is expected statewide. It should be noted that the age 45-64 age cohort is projected to decrease by a significant 7.8 percent by 2025. In addition, the age 65 and older group is projected to increase by 56.6 percent in Lake County from 2005 to 2025 while the statewide increase in this age cohort is projected to increase 60.5 percent. Clearly this older age cohort will increase in number more dramatically than the younger cohorts in future decades.

Of further significance are the projected decrease in the 45 to 64 year old cohort and the only slight increase in the 25-44 age cohort for Lake County. The 25-44 age

cohort is projected to increase by 4.3 percent in the county while the 45-64 age cohort is projected to actually decrease by 7.8 percent. This compares to a statewide increase of 9.3 percent in the 45-64 age cohort and a 1.8 percent decrease in the 25-44 age cohort. It is these age cohorts that generally supply a community with the younger families with school aged children as well as the community leadership for human service programming for young children. The median age in Lake County in 2005 was 37.0 years of age. The median age for the county is projected to be 37.5 in 2010, 37.9 in 2015, 38.3 by 2020 and 39.0 in 2025. This compares to a 35.9 median age in Indiana in 2005 and a projected 36.4 in 2010, 37.0 in 2015, 37.7 in 2020 and 38.4 in 2025. Thus the projected median ages for Lake County projects an older population than will generally be found across the state of Indiana in the future and certainly older than the current population.

Table 3 presents the total population of the political subdivisions of Lake County including a breakdown for Calumet Township, the southwest part of which is the GPS, with number and percent of change since 1970.

Table 3

Total Population of Political Subdivisions of Calumet Township and Lake County, 1970-2000 with Estimate for 2006 and Number and Percentage Change Since 1970

Township	1970	1980	1990	2000	Estimate 2006	Number Change	Percent Change
Calumet*	215,940	176,901	141,875	127,800	122,009	-93,931	-43.5%
GPS Total	215,940	176,901	141,875	127,800	122,009	-93,931	-43.5
Cedar Creek	5,010	6,365	8,704	6,727	11,767	6,757	134.9%
Center	21,946	24,017	24,369	26,191	29,795	7,849	35.8%
Eagle Creek	786	1,421	1,431	1,695	2,250	1,464	186.3%
Hanover	6,515	7,101	7,365	8,692	10,149	3,634	55.8%
Hobart	40,825	42,548	38,942	39,636	40,887	62	0.2%
North	203,480	185,736	166,928	165,656	159,026	-44,454	-21.8%
Ross	28,845	34,842	34,683	38,685	41,780	12,935	44.8%
St. John	16,829	33,718	42,782	53,701	61,976	45,147	268.3%
West Creek	3,391	4,316	4,223	4,961	5,727	2,336	68.9%
Winfield	1,331	3,661	4,987	6,878	8,836	7,505	563.9%
County Total	546,253	522,965	475,594	484,564	494,202	-52,051	-9.5%

*GPS Township / Source: U.S. Census Bureau

From Table 3 it is noted that Winfield, St. John, Eagle Creek and Cedar Creek townships grew substantially from 1970 to 2006 from a percentage standpoint, while St.

John and Ross townships led the county in terms of number growth. Calumet and North townships experienced significant number and percentage declines in population during the period. Calumet Township of the GPS comprised 39.5 percent of the county population in 1970 however by 2006 Calumet Township had decreased to a total population of 122,009 or just 24.7 percent of the total county population. Only Hobart Township in the county experienced insignificant change in total population during the period.

The student enrollment impact of this general population growth in GPS and the general geographic area of Lake County is demonstrated in Table 4 which presents the student population of Lake County school corporations for 1999, 2003 and 2007, the last five and ten years. Table 4 rank orders the sixteen school corporations by percent of student population increase/decrease over the past ten years. *Fastest growing among the seven school corporations was Crown Point School Corporation at 1,775 students or 32.4 percent, while Gary Community Schools was the clear loser in number of student population change with a loss of 5,574 students or 28.4 percent.* Griffith Public Schools lost some 85 students or 3.1 percent during the period.

Table 4

**Student Population of Lake County School Corporations, 1999-2007,
With Number and Percentage Change, Ranked Ordered by Percent of Change**

School Corporation	1999-2000	2003-2004	2007-2008	Corporation Number Change	Corporation Percentage Change
Crown Point SC	5,480	6,175	7,255	1,775	32.4
Hanover Community	1,543	1,583	1,910	367	23.8
Lake Central SC	8,260	8,674	9,878	1,618	19.6
Merrilville CS	5,982	6,528	7,074	1,092	18.3
School Town Munster	3,839	3,863	4,457	618	16.1
Tri-Creek SC	3,204	3,367	3,665	461	14.4
School City Hobart	3,467	3,617	3,856	389	11.2
School City Hammond	13,299	13,696	14,414	1,115	8.4
School Town Highland	3,251	3,360	3,476	225	6.9
River Forest CSC	1,440	1,439	1,484	44	3.1
Whiting School City	840	861	839	-1	0.1
Lake Station CS	1,514	1,438	1,489	-25	-1.7
Griffith Public Schools	2,776	2,694	2,691	-85	-3.1
SC East Chicago	6,302	6,444	5,905	-397	-6.3
Lake Ridge Schools	2,536	2,393	2,240	-296	-11.7
Gary CSC	19,652	17,381	14,078	-5,574	-28.4
County Totals	83,385	83,513	84,711	1,326	1.6
State Totals	988,064	1,010,659	1,046,606	58,542	5.9

The total student population in the area has increased from 83,385 in 1999 to 84,711 in 2006 for a 1,326 student increase that represents just a 1.6 percent increase. The total statewide public school student population grew from 988,114 to 1,046,762 or 5.9 percent during this same period. Thus, the student population decline in the GPS exceeds what is seen in the majority of school corporations across the county and in percent what is seen across the state of Indiana during the past ten years.

TOWN OF GRIFFITH, CALUMET TOWNSHIP, LAKE COUNTY AND STATE OF INDIANA GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Table 5 presents a profile of general demographic characteristics for the Town of Griffith, Calumet Township, all of Lake County and the state of Indiana as reported in the 2000 U.S. Census. It is noted that GPS is only a portion of Calumet Township which also includes Lake Ridge Schools and Gary Community Schools. However, the general demographic characteristics for both the Town of Griffith and all of Calumet Township are included with this analysis for comparison purposes.

In addition to the total township population of the GPS and the percentages for a variety of age cohort groups presented earlier, it is noted that 14.2 percent of the

Table 5

Profile of General Demographic Characteristics for Town of Griffith, Calumet Township, Lake County and State of Indiana, 2000 Census

General Demographic Characteristic	Town of Griffith	Calumet Township	Lake County	State of Indiana
Total Population	17,334 14.2 % of Township	122,009 25.2% of County	484,564	6,080,485
Population Under 5	6.5%	8.0%	7.1%	7.0%
Population Under 19	28.3%	32.2%	29.6%	25.9%
Population Over 65	10.9%	12.4%	13.1%	12.4%
Born In Indiana	67.3%	64.0%	62.8%	69.3%
Median Age	35.8	34.1	35.9	35.2
Less than High School Education	10.9%	24.7%	19.3%	17.9%
College Degree	15.1%	10.8%	16.2%	19.4%
White Population	84.0%	25.7%	66.7%	87.5%
African-American	10.1%	70.0%	25.3%	8.4%
Hispanic-Latino	8.4%	5.6%	12.2%	3.5%
Households With Children Under 18	33.9%	31.6%	32.8%	32.9%
Average Family Size	3.10	3.24	3.19	3.05

township population resides in the GPS. Further, it is noted that 25.2 percent of the county population is in Calumet Township. Some 67.3 percent of the town population was born in Indiana compared to 64 percent of the township, 62.8 percent of the county and 69.3 percent in the state of Indiana. This is the result of the nature of the net immigration to the area during recent years.

The median age in Griffith is 35.8 while the township is 34.1 compared to 35.9 for Lake County and 35.2 for the state of Indiana. The population of the school corporation is generally more Caucasian than the state of Indiana and at 84.0 percent compares to the township at 25.7 percent and the county at 66.7 percent. The town of Griffith has a slightly larger percentage of households with children under 18 than the township, county and the state. The town has 33.9 percent of their households with children under 18 compared to 31.6 percent for the township, 32.8 for the county and 32.9 percent in the state of Indiana. Thus, the population decline in the GPS includes less number of younger families with young children exiting than the rest of the area. The average family size in the town is a bit smaller than the township and county but larger than the state of Indiana at 3.10 persons per family.

As shown in Table 5 Continued below, total housing units in the town in 2000 was 6,990 or 13.0 percent of the households in the township, while the township had 27.5

Table 5 Continued

General Demographic Characteristic	Town of Griffith	Calumet Township	Lake County	State of Indiana
Total Housing Units	6,990 13% of Township	53,698 27.5% of County	194,992	2,532,319
Housing Units Built Since 1990	3.1%	3.1%	11.6%	17.3%
Housing Units Built Since 1995	9.0%	1.7%	6.2%	10.3%
Same House Since 1995	64.9%	62.8%	61.5%	55.0%
Different House/Same County Since 1995	24.4%	28.0%	25.8%	25.5%
Different House/Different State Since 1995	7.9%	6.6%	9.2%	8.0%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	33.2%	41.9%	31.0%	28.6%

percent of the housing units of the county. Only 3.1 percent of the housing units in the town have been built since 1990 and 9.0 percent built since 1995 demonstrating a stagnant primary housing market. Some 64.9 percent of Griffith residents are in the same home they were in 1995, while 24.4 percent are in a different house in Lake County than in 1995. Thus the area of the GPS represents a community of choice for the residents of the GPS. In-migration to Griffith is far less likely to have come from out of state, however, than is the case for the county where 9.2 percent of the population was in a different house in a different state in 1995 compared to Griffith at 7.9 percent.

Residents of the town are far more likely to own housing rather than rent when compared to the population across the township but has far more rental units than is found across the state of Indiana. Rental housing units make up 33.2 percent of the housing in Griffith but 31.0 percent of the housing units in the county while 28.6 percent in the state of Indiana are rental units.

As shown below, in terms of labor force statistics, GPS females are generally

Table 5 Continued

General Demographic Characteristic	Town of Griffith	Calumet Township	Lake County	State of Indiana
Female 16 Years + In Labor Force	64.9%	55.4%	56.0%	60.0%
Females With Children Under Six All Parents in Labor Force	68.6%	62.8%	58.3%	62.6%
Occupations:				
Management/Professional and Related	25.9%	21.4%	26.1%	28.7%
Service	13.7%	21.5%	16.0%	14.2%
Sales/Office	30.4%	27.3%	27.4%	25.3%
Construction/Maintenance	12.0%	8.6%	11.3%	10.0%
Production	17.8%	21.2%	19.1%	21.4%
Median Household Income	\$50,300	\$31,004	\$41,829	\$41,567
Median Household Income < \$50,000	49.9%	69.7%	58.5%	59.4%
Per Capita Income	\$21,866	\$15,643	\$19,639	\$20,397
Poverty Families With Child Under 18	4.1%	26.6%	38.4%	10.2%
Poverty Families With Child Under 5	4.4%	33.9%	51.1%	13.7%
Poverty Families No Husband Present	9.9%	35.8%	28.6%	23.4%

employed at a rate far greater than what is found within the township, county and across the state. GPS females with children under six years of age are more fully employed than the township and county female population while considerably more than at statewide levels. Employees living in Griffith are more heavily employed in the management and professional positions and sales and office positions, while the residents of the township are more heavily involved in the service, production and sales and office sectors of the economy.

Griffith residents are far more affluent economically than is generally the case in the township, the county and the state of Indiana. The median household income in Griffith is \$50,300 which is \$8,733 per year greater than the state and \$19,296 greater than Calumet Township. Just forty-nine and nine tenths percent of the town's households have a median household income under \$50,000 besting the township, county and state by significant percentages.

Approximately 10.2 percent of the families with children under 18 are at or below the poverty line in Indiana, while just 4.1 percent of Griffith residents are considered in poverty. The percentage of families with children under 18 years of age that are in poverty at the township level is 26.6, while at the county level it is 38.4 percent. This increases just slightly in the town for families with children under five years of age. In Indiana, 13.7 percent of the families with children less than five are at or below poverty levels, while in Griffith it is 4.4 percent and in Lake County 51.1 percent. Lastly, it is noted that in the families of the GPS with no husband present, 9.9 percent are considered poverty families while 23.4 percent of the state and 28.6 percent of the county's families where no husband is present were considered poverty families by the 2000 census. That percentage raises to 35.8 percent for Calumet Township.

Housing values is another important measure in determining the impact of changing population on school enrollments. Generally the higher price of the home, the less young, school aged children the occupants will have. In Indiana 55.3 percent of the homes are valued under \$50,000. In GPS just 38.6 percent are valued under \$50,000 while 80.3 percent of the homes in Calumet Township are valued under \$50,000. In Indiana, 36.4 percent of the homes are valued between \$100,000 and \$200,000, while in

Griffith 58.0 percent are valued between \$100,000 and 200,000. In Lake County 40.0 percent of the homes are valued between \$100,000 and 200,000. Griffith has just 3.3

Table 5 Continued

General Demographic Characteristic	Town of Griffith	Calumet Township	Lake County	State of Indiana
Housing Value Under \$100,000	38.6%	80.3%	52.42%	55.3%
Housing Value \$100,000-200,000	58.0%	18.3%	40.0%	36.4%
Housing Value Above \$200,000	3.3%	1.5%	7.6%	8.3%

percent of its homes valued over \$200,000 compared to Lake County at 7.6 percent and the state of Indiana at 8.3 percent.

Building permits issued in Lake County over the past ten years documents the population growth in the county. Over the past ten years, an average of 2,253 building permits were issued per year, while over the past five years an average of 2,563 building permits were issued. The vast majority of the building permits, over the past five and ten years were for single family dwellings.

The history of the number and kind of housing units constructed in Lake County from 1998 to 2007 is presented in Figure 2 below In addition, as for the secondary

Figure 2

Total Housing Units Constructed in Lake County, 1998-2007

Year	Total Units	Single Family	2 or More Family Units
1998	1,763	1,229	534
1999	1,826	1,415	411
2000	1,928	1,549	379
2001	2,047	1,470	577
2002	2,158	1,546	612
2003	3,008	2,042	966
2004	2,855	2,084	771
2005	2,916	2,211	705
2006	2,122	1,769	353
2007	1,912	1,425	487

housing market, existing homes, the available housing stock in Lake County is also rated as high, affordable and available.

The nature of the population of Griffith while a bit older is better educated, more fully employed in the professions, making more money and living in more

expensive homes than is generally the case in Calumet Township, Lake County and the state of Indiana. The GPS reflects less diversity in their population compared to the township, county and state.

The people who make up the economic and family profiles represented by such data as presented in Table 5 tend to have high expectations for their children and thus high expectations for their public schools. As Griffith Public Schools plans for its future in terms of needed facilities and the breadth and depth of its curricular and extra-curricular programs it will indeed need to consider the social and cultural nature of its population.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

As this report moves toward projecting future student population it is important to delineate some assumptions that if not accurate can change the outcome of the projections. Those assumptions are:

1. The legal age for attending schools in Indiana will remain the same
2. The percentage of children now attending public schools will remain at the present level
3. The school corporation boundaries will remain as they are at present
4. The students will progress through the grade levels at about the same retention rate as at present
5. The dropout rate will remain about the same
6. The current pattern of enrollment increases and decreases will remain the same

Table 6 presents the student enrollment for GPS by grade level and current grade configuration for the period 1998 to and including the 2007-08 school year. From 1998 to the current 2007-08 school year the Griffith Public Schools decreased from 2,814 students to 2,709. That represents a 105 student decrease or 3.7 percent.

The elementary enrollment, grades kindergarten through grade six, decreased from 1,435 to 1,320 for a 114 student or 7.9 percent decrease. The average class size for the seven elementary grades declined from 205 students per grade to 189 students per grade a decrease of 16 students per grade. It is important to note that the last five years of the comparison saw an average of 161 kindergarten students entering the system each year, while over the first five years an average of 172 kindergarten students per year enrolled in the school corporation. This is a further indication that the net in-migration of

families to the corporation has not consisted of younger families with younger school age children.

Table 6
Griffith Public Schools, Corporation-wide Enrollments, 1998-2007

Grade	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Kdg.	200	172	156	179	152	148	160	164	165	168
1	222	216	186	187	219	190	201	192	204	177
2	202	224	199	179	196	213	182	173	180	186
3	223	202	221	208	201	190	207	180	180	188
4	223	228	215	221	227	212	195	198	186	190
5	176	227	222	203	233	217	210	177	197	220
6	189	179	233	226	215	245	216	216	194	192
Elementary Total	1,435	1,448	1,432	1,403	1,443	1,415	1,371	1,300	1,306	1,321
Elementary Average	205	207	205	200	206	202	196	186	187	189
7	207	184	204	246	240	225	250	225	135	212
8	206	213	189	189	227	240	213	245	233	244
Middle School Total	413	397	393	435	467	465	463	470	468	456
Middle School Average	207	199	197	218	234	233	232	235	234	228
9	265	237	231	209	218	261	260	270	290	262
10	223	239	231	224	217	195	236	225	230	244
11	234	209	229	207	211	198	186	237	223	216
12	244	233	203	200	195	196	182	169	224	210
High School Total	966	918	894	840	841	850	864	901	970	932
High School Average	242	230	224	210	210	213	216	225	243	233
Corporation Total	2,814	2,763	2,719	2,678	2,751	2,730	2,618	2,671	2,744	2,709
Corporation Average	216	213	209	206	212	210	201	205	211	208
Number Change		-51	-44	-41	73	-21	-112	53	73	-35
% Change		-1.8	-1.6	-1.5	2.7	-0.8	-4.1	2.0	2.7	-1.3

The middle school grades, grades seven and eight have increased by 43 students or 10.4 percent over the past ten years. The average per grade at grades seven and eight has changed from 207 per grade to 228 per grade an increase of 21 students per grade.

The high school, grades nine through twelve have decreased significantly over the past ten years. In 1998 there were 966 students in grades nine through twelve averaging 242 students per grade. In 2007-08 there are 932 total students averaging 233 students

per grade. Again, however, when we compare the current average of 233 students per grade at the high school with the 228 students per grade at the middle school level and the 189 students per grade at the elementary school level it is clear that smaller cohort groups from the elementary and middle schools will not replace the cohort groups graduating from the high school. Such a view does not include net in-migration of student population to the district and taken alone would indicate a decreasing student enrollment for the high school in the near future.

Total enrollment change has decreased steadily from year to year over the past ten year period, while three of the years of the comparison saw some enrollment increase, in fact, the student population decline over the past ten years has been 105 students or 3.7 percent.

The ten-year high for total student population was the 1998 school year with a total of 2,814 students. It is noted that home school enrollment as reported to the Indiana Department of Education has averaged approximately 34 students per year for the past five years. In addition, some 101 students have migrated out of the corporation to other Lake County school corporations, while some 133 students have migrated into the Griffith Public Schools primarily from Hammond and the Diocese of Gary during the past school year.

PROJECTED STUDENT ENROLLMENTS

Table 7 presents an analysis of the resident live birth rates for Lake County and the number of kindergarten students entering the Griffith Public Schools five years later beginning with 1989. Such a calculation is important in determining future enrollments by providing a mathematical model for projecting future kindergarten enrollments. There has been a steady decrease in year-to-year resident live births in Lake County over the past 15 years. From 1989 to 1993 the county averaged 7,495 resident live births per year. For the period 1994 to 1998 resident live births decreased to an average of 7,161 per year. From 1999 to 2003 an average of 6,960 resident live births were recorded for Lake County. Thus a decline of an average of 535 less resident live births per year has occurred. In 2005, the most recent year for full year data, a continuing decline to 6,872 resident live births were recorded for Lake County. Only in 1991 did the county resident live birth rates show a major departure from the decreasing trend line.

In terms of kindergarten enrollment five years after a given years' resident live births, from 1994 to 1998 Griffith Public Schools enrolled an average of 2.74 percent of the resident live births from five years previous, net in-out migration. For the period 1999 to 2003 that average had decreased to 2.25 percent per year net in-out migration.

Table 7
Number of Live Births in Lake County from 1989 Through 2009
And Number of Students Entering Kindergarten in GPS Five Years Later

Birth Rate Year	Lake County Live Births	Kindergarten Enrollment Year	GPS Kindergarten Enrollment	Percent of Live Births as Kdg Enrollment
1989	7,183	1994	217	3.02%
1990	7,523	1995	201	2.67%
1991	7,686	1996	199	2.59%
1992	7,602	1997	207	2.72%
1993	7,481	1998	200	2.67%
Totals	37,475(7,495/yr)		1024(205/yr)	2.74%
1994	7,313	1999	172	2.35%
1995	7,329	2000	156	2.13%
1996	7,126	2001	179	2.51%
1997	6,903	2002	152	2.20%
1998	7,134	2003	148	2.07%
Totals	35,805(7,161/yr)		807(161/yr)	2.25%
1999	7,073	2004	160	2.26%
2000	7,040	2005	164	2.33%
2001	6,936	2006	165	2.38%
2002	6,824	2007	168	2.46%
2003	6,926	2008	166*	2.39%**
Totals	34,799(6,960/year)		823(165/yr)	2.37%
2004	6,975	2009	167**	2.37%**
2005	6,872	2010	164**	2.37%**
2006	6,924***	2011	165**	2.37%**
2007	6,923***	2012	165**	2.37%**
2008	6,906***	2013	165**	2.37%**
2009	6,906***	2014	165**	2.37%**

*Estimate based on the past three-year average.

**Estimate based on 2.37% of resident live births, the average of the past five years

***Estimate based on rate of decline the past five years

For the period 2004 to the present the Griffith Public Schools has enrolled 2.39 percent of the resident live births on a year-to-year basis again, net in-out migration. This decline in percentage is consistent with the analysis of the demographic data presented

earlier and suggests a continuing decline in total elementary student population into the future even as total general population increases. It is speculative to project any increase in resident live birth rates. Birth rates tend to decline during times of economic downturn and increase when the economy is robust and the general population of the GPS is increasingly older. It is less speculative to project that the percentage of resident live births in the Calumet Township will remain essentially unchanged. However, this study assumes a continuing resident live birth rate consistent with the average decline in the number of resident live births recorded over the past five years. Further, this study assumes that the percentage of resident live births that will enroll in the GPS five years later will be 2.37 percent, the average over the past five years.

This method of projecting may be conservative on the live birth side and liberal on the enrollment side. None-the-less, the projections are for kindergarten enrollments of 166 in 2008, 167 in 2009, 164 in 2010, and 165 in 2011 and beyond. These projections represent continued stability in kindergarten enrollment when compared to the 161 per year kindergarten average enrollment for 1999 through 2003.

While the above calculations help project how many students will enter the system in kindergarten in the future, year-to-year continuation rates help to understand how students stay with the system once enrolled. The continuation rate is a ratio between the total numbers of pupils at one grade level succeeding to the next grade level the next year. For example, if in one year there were 150 students in one grade level and the following school year that number was 160 in the next grade level, the continuation rate would be 106.7 or a net in-migration of 6.7 percent for that grade cohort. A continuation rate of less than 100 would be evident in a grade that one year had 150 students while the next year at the next grade there were just 140 for a continuation rate of 93.3 or a net out migration of 6.7 percent. These factors are influenced by migration in and out of the school district as well as retention policy and fluctuations in non-public school enrollments coming to the public schools.

Table 8 presents the average continuation rates for 2002-03 through 2007-08 by grade level and grade configuration for the Griffith Public Schools. Also, Table 8 presents the average continuation rates for the past three and six years. None of the school years had an average continuation rate below 100 percent. A continuation rate

between 99 and 101 would indicate stability, while a continuation rate below 99 over time would signal declining population and a rate over 101 over time would signal a growing student population. The three-year average continuation rate for the corporation at 101.9 indicates the continuing stability to slight decline in total population experienced by the corporation over the period studied. The continuation rates trend lower than

Table 8
Average Continuation Rate 2002-03 through 2007-08
With Three and Six Year Averages for GPS

Grade	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	3 Year Average	6 Year Average
Kdg								
1	111.2	125.0	135.8	120.0	124.4	107.3	117.2	122.2
2	104.8	97.3	95.8	86.1	93.8	91.2	90.4	94.8
3	102.0	97.0	97.2	98.9	104.0	104.4	102.4	100.6
4	109.1	105.5	102.6	95.7	103.3	105.6	101.5	103.6
5	105.4	95.6	99.1	90.8	99.5	118.3	102.9	101.5
6	105.9	105.2	99.5	102.9	109.6	97.5	103.3	103.4
Elementary Total	106.4	104.3	105.0	99.1	105.8	104.1	103.0	104.4
7	106.2	104.7	102.0	104.2	108.8	109.3	107.4	105.9
8	92.3	100.0	94.7	98.0	103.6	103.8	101.8	98.7
Middle School Total	99.3	102.4	98.4	101.1	106.2	106.6	104.6	102.3
9	115.3	115.0	108.3	126.8	118.4	112.4	119.2	116.0
10	103.8	89.4	90.4	86.5	85.2	84.1	85.3	89.9
11	94.2	91.2	95.4	100.4	99.1	93.9	97.8	95.7
12	94.2	92.9	91.8	90.9	94.5	94.2	93.2	93.1
High School Total	101.9	97.1	96.5	101.2	99.3	96.2	98.9	98.7
Corporation Total	103.7	101.6	101.1	100.1	103.7	101.8	101.9	102.1

would be expected in a growing school corporation. This is due to the fact that increases in total student population are across all grade levels of the grade configuration of the corporation with the noticeable exception of grades two and ten through twelve. The average first grade class over the past five years has averaged 17.2 percent more students than the previous year's kindergarten indicating a number of kindergarten students are enrolling in private or parochial programs and joining the GPS in first grade. This

relationship may change as the corporation moves toward all day kindergarten programs for all kindergarten students.

By using the projected kindergarten enrollments presented in Table 7 and the continuation rates as averaged in Table 8 for the most recent three-year period, the projected enrollment for the Griffith Public Schools, from the present to 2015 is presented in Table 9 for each grade level of the corporation. It is noted that the mathematical model used in these projections is generally within one to one and one-half percent accuracy over a six year period of projection. Drastic changes in local economic conditions can change the projections and thus need to be monitored carefully.

The total enrollment is projected to decrease from the current year total of 2,709 to 2,586 by 2015. That is a decrease of 123 students or 4.5 percent. The per-grade corporation average decreases from 208 students per grade to 199 students per grade in this projection.

Table 9

Griffith Public Schools Enrollment Projected by Five Year Average Resident Live Birth Rate and Three-Year Continuation Rates, 2007-2015

Grade	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Kdg	168	166	167	164	165	165	165	165	165
1	177	197	195	196	192	193	193	193	193
2	186	160	178	175	177	174	174	174	174
3	188	190	164	182	179	181	178	178	178
4	190	191	193	166	185	182	184	181	181
5	220	196	197	199	171	191	188	190	190
6	192	227	202	204	206	177	197	194	196
Elementary Total	1321	1327	1296	1286	1275	1263	1279	1275	1277
Per Grade Average	189	190	185	184	182	180	183	182	182
7	212	206	244	217	219	221	190	212	208
8	244	216	210	248	221	223	225	193	216
Middle School Total	456	422	454	465	440	444	415	405	424
Per Grade Average	228	211	227	233	220	222	208	203	212
9	262	291	257	250	296	263	266	268	230
10	244	223	248	219	213	252	224	227	229
11	216	239	218	243	214	208	246	219	222
12	210	201	223	203	226	199	194	229	204
High School Total	932	954	946	915	949	922	930	943	885
Per Grade Average	233	239	237	229	237	231	233	236	221
Corporate Total	2,709	2,703	2,696	2,666	2,664	2,629	2,624	2,623	2,586
Per Grade Average	208	208	207	205	205	202	202	202	199

The elementary enrollment, grades kindergarten through grade six as presented in Table 9 is projected to decrease from 1,321 to 1,277 for a decrease of 44 students or 3.3 percent, while the per grade average decreases from 189 to 182 students per grade.

The middle grades, grades seven and eight are expected to decrease from 456 to 424 or by 32 students or 7.0 percent, while the per grade average decreases from 228 to 212 students per grade.

A major change in population within the grade configuration of the corporation is also projected to for the high school. High school projections show the total student population decreasing by 47 students from 932 to 885, a decrease of 5.0 percent. The per-grade average decreases from 233 to 221 per grade at the high school level. It is noted that the main factors generating this projected decrease are the number of kindergarten students entering the school corporation each year and the continuation rates detailing how the students will persist year to year in the school corporation together with the net in-migration across all grade levels. Each of these factors was determined through a proven historical trend line and mathematical analysis. *Unless major community and/or economic changes occur within the community in the short term, these projections should be within a percent and a percent and a half of accuracy on a year-to-year basis.*

Table 10 presents a summary of the projected enrollments by grade configuration for the years 2007 through 2015. The Griffith Public Schools can plan for 1,300 elementary students, 500 middle school students and 925 high school students in the short-term future of the school corporation.

Table 10

**Griffith Public Schools
Corporation-wide Enrollments Projected by Five-Year Average Resident Live
Birth Rates and Three-Year Continuation Rates
By K-6, 7-8, 9-12 Grade Configuration, 2007-2015**

Grade Level	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
K-6 Totals	1321	1327	1296	1286	1275	1263	1279	1275	1277
7-8 Totals	456	422	454	465	440	444	415	405	424
9-12 Totals	932	954	946	915	949	922	930	943	885
K-12 Totals	2,709	2,703	2,696	2,666	2,664	2,629	2,624	2,623	2,586

***AN UPDATE OF THE ELEMENTARY SPACE UTILIZATION OF THE GPS FOR
2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR***

This document serves as an addendum to the elementary space utilization analysis from the 2007-2008 Educational Facilities Feasibility Study for the Griffith Public Schools. The 2007-2008 study was based on that year's elementary enrollment by grade and by school. This update uses enrollment figures for the start of the 2008-2009 school year.

Chapter II

**SPACE UTILIZATION FOR THE ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE AND HIGH
SCHOOL FACILITIES OF THE GRIFFITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2008-2009**

The Griffith Public Schools maintains four K-6 elementary schools, one grades seven and eight middle school and one grades nine through twelve high school. The four elementary schools and their 2008-2009 student enrollments compared to 2007-2008 are: Beiriger Elementary 259 down 16 students from last year; Franklin Elementary, 310 up 14 from last year; Ready Elementary, 463 up 11 from last year; and Wadsworth Elementary, 270 up six students from the 2007-2008 school year. The facilities contain appropriate spaces for the delivery of modern, effective and efficient elementary education programs, are well maintained and reflect positive learning environments. Franklin, the oldest by far of the four buildings, is in the poorest condition and in need of major infrastructure upgrades.

Actual Capacity of elementary schools is determined by 25 students per classroom and assumes support spaces are appropriate to the delivery of a modern, effective and efficient educational program. Functional Capacity is determined from Indiana Primetime guidelines using 18 students per classroom at kindergarten and grade one, 20 students per classroom at grades two and three and 25 students per classroom beyond grade three. Ideal utilization is generally thought to be between 90 and 92 percent of Functional Capacity. ***All of the four elementary schools of the GPS are well below ideal utilization percentages as shown in Table 11 below and, thus the corporation has considerable excess student capacity at the elementary school level. In total for the corporation, some 212 student excess Functional Capacity and 523 student***

excess Actual Capacity at the elementary level. Given a further projected decrease in total elementary student population generated in this study the corporation has the potential to free even more elementary classroom space.

The elementary schools are currently being utilized at 86.0 percent of their Functional Capacity and 71.3 percent of their Actual Capacity. Totally each of grades one through six have nine sections each across the four elementary schools and have per grade pupil/teacher averages of 21.9 at grade one, 20.4 at grade two, 19.4 at grade three, 21.8 at grade four, 20.7 at grade five and 22.8 at grade six. The primary grades are comfortably close to Prime Time Guidelines while grades four through six are well below the classroom averages of 25-28 students commonly found across the state of Indiana. The low averages are mainly a function of the fact that three of the four elementary schools are just two sections per grade level elementary schools which limits economies of scale for most school districts. The facilities are generally well maintained and reflect sound learning environments for students. Franklin Elementary presents some exceptions to this observation as will be explained below.

Table 11

Space Utilization of the Elementary Schools for 2008-2009 and the Middle School and High School of the GPS for 2007-2008

School	2008-2009 Enrollment for Elementary Schools and 2007-2008 Enrollment for Secondary Schools	Functional Capacity	Percent Utilized to Functional Capacity	Actual Capacity	Percent Utilized to Actual Capacity
Beiriger	259	390	66.4%	450	57.6%
Franklin	310	383	81.0%	450	68.9%
Ready	463	421	84.2%	550	110.0%
Wadsworth	270	320	84.4%	375	72.0%
Elementary Total	1,302	1,514	86.0%	1,825	71.3%
Griffith Middle School	456	563	81.0%	750	60.8%
Griffith High School	932	926	100.6%	1,235	75.5%
GPS Total	2,690	3,003	89.6%	3,810	70.6%

The following tables present an overview and the space utilization for each of the elementary schools of the Griffith Public Schools for the 2008-2009 school year.

BEIRIGER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Beiriger Elementary School was occupied in 1969 and is structurally sound but in need of infrastructure upgrades. It contains 28 classrooms, 13 of which are used for general education purposes, with a total of 64,715 square feet. It is located on a 16.47 acre site. The historical enrollments of the school are: 348 in 2001, 362 in 2002, 346 in 2003, 321 in 2004, 321 in 2005, 303 students in 2006 and 275 in 2007. The school continues to decline in total population.

Table 12 reflects that the 17 general purpose classrooms have an Actual Capacity of 450 students and a Functional Capacity of 390 students as the facility is being utilized for the 2008-2009 school year. With an enrollment of 259 students the school is being utilized at 57.6 percent of its Actual Capacity and 66.4percent of its Functional Capacity.

Table 12

Space Utilization of Beiriger Elementary School, 2008-2009

ROOM NUMBER	GRADE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY	ACTUAL CAPACITY
11	Kindergarten	24	18	25
9	1st	20	18	25
10	1st	20	18	25
5	2nd	16	20	25
6	2nd	16	20	25
13	3rd	19	20	25
15	3 rd	19	20	25
25	4th	20	25	25
28	4th	20	25	25
24	5th	19	25	25
26	5th	19	25	25
22	6 th	25	20	25
30	6 th	22	25	25
12	Kindergarten		18/18	25/25
17	UNASSIGNED		25	25
27	UNASSIGNED		25	25
8	Instructional Aide		25	25
1	Media			
2	Music			
3	Art			
4	Band			
7	Computer Lab			
14	Computer Lab			
16	Special Education			
18	Special Education			
19	Special Education			
20	PTC Room			
21	Science Lab			
23	Special Education			
38	Conference Room			
TOTALS		259	390	450

FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Franklin Elementary School was occupied in 1911 with a 1939 addition. It is structurally sound but in poor condition and needs infrastructure upgrades. It contains 22 classrooms, 14 of which are used for general education purposes while three general classrooms are unassigned, with a total of 63,160 square feet. It is located on a 6.72 acre site. The historical enrollments of the school are: 305 in 2001, 313 in 2002, 317 in 2003, 317 in 2004, 321 in 2005, 310 students in 2006 and 296 in 2007. For the 2008-2009 school year Franklin enrolled 310 students.

Table 13 reflects that the 17 general purpose classrooms have an Actual Capacity of 450 students and a Functional Capacity of 383 students as the facility is being utilized for the 2008-2009 school year. With an enrollment of 310 students the school is being utilized at 68.9 percent of its Actual Capacity and 81.0 percent of its Functional Capacity.

Table 13

Space Utilization of Franklin Elementary School, 2008-2009

ROOM NUMBER	GRADE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY	ACTUAL CAPACITY
104	Kindergarten, PM	19	18/18	25/25
109	Kindergarten, AD	22	18	25
203	1 st	18	18	25
201	1 st	19	18	25
204	2 nd	23	20	25
206	2 nd	20	20	25
101	3 rd	22	20	25
103	3 rd	20	20	25
115	4 th	23	25	25
110	4 th	22	25	25
113	5 th	25	25	25
114	5 th	24	25	25
111	6 th	27	25	25
112	6 th	26	25	25
201	UNASSIGNED		18	25
205	UNASSIGNED		20	25
207	UNASSIGNED		25	25
106	Special Education			
105	Special Education			
107	Music			
117	Art			
102	Computer Lab			
TOTALS		310	383	450

READY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ready Elementary School was occupied in 1958 and renovated in 1999. It contains 27 classrooms, 20 of which are used for general education purposes, with a total of 68,000 square feet. It is located on a 10.7 acre site. The historical enrollments of the

school are: 468 in 2001, 454 in 2002, 444 in 2003, 428 in 2004, 407 in 2005, 419 students in 2006, 452 in 2007 and 463 students for the 2008-2009 school year.

Table 14 demonstrates that the 21 general purpose classrooms have an Actual Capacity of 550 students and a Functional Capacity of 421 students as the facility is being utilized for the 2008-2009 school year. With an enrollment of 463 students the school is being utilized at 84.2 percent of its Actual Capacity and 110.0 percent of its Functional Capacity.

Table 14
Space Utilization of Ready Elementary School, 2008-2009

ROOM NUMBER	GRADE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY	ACTUAL CAPACITY
322	Kindergarten	19	18	25
339	Kindergarten	20	18/18	25/25
	Kindergarten	18	18	25
336	1st	26	18	25
314	1st	27	18	25
315	1st	27	18	25
333	2 nd	24	20	25
307	2 nd	24	20	25
329	2 nd	21	20	25
304	3 rd	19	20	25
325	3 rd	19	20	25
301	3 rd	19	20	25
104	4 th	24	25	25
122	4 th	24	25	25
328	4 th	22	25	25
119	5 th	22	25	25
126	5 th	21	25	25
101	5 th	18	25	25
123	6 th	24	25	25
105	6 th	24	25	25
108	6 th	21	25	25
131	Computer Lab			
	Media Center			
	Physical Education			
221	Art			
224	Music			
306	Special Education			
244	Speech Path			
TOTALS		463	421	550

WADSWORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Wadsworth Elementary School was occupied in 1961 and renovated in 2001. It contains 26 classrooms, 14 of which are used for general education purposes, with a total of 64,000 square feet. It is located on a 12.2 acre site. The historical enrollments of the school are: 311 in 2001, 310 in 2002, 304 in 2003, 300 in 2004, 278 in 2005, 268

students in 2006 and 264 in 2007. This school has 270 students enrolled for the 2008-2009 school year.

Table 15 demonstrates that the 14 general purpose classrooms have an Actual Capacity of 375 students and a Functional Capacity of 320 students as the facility is being utilized for the 2008-2009 school year. With an enrollment of 270 students the school is being utilized at 72.0 percent of its Actual Capacity and 84.4 percent of its Functional Capacity.

Table 15

Space Utilization of Wadsworth Elementary School, 2008-2009

ROOM NUMBER	GRADE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	FUNCTIONAL CAPACITY	ACTUAL CAPACITY
A107	Kindergarten	22	18	25
	Kindergarten	15	18/18	25/25
A118	1 st	20	18	25
A116	1 st	20	18	25
A113	2 nd	20	20	25
A115	2 nd	20	20	25
A123	3 rd	20	20	25
B101	3 rd	18	20	25
C134	4 th	20	25	25
C135	4 th	21	25	25
C120	5 th	18	25	25
C125	5 th	20	25	25
C130	6 th	17	25	25
C126	6 th	19	25	25
C127	Science Lab			
C117	Art			
C141	Music			
C143	Band			
C139	Computer Lab			
C140	Special Education			
B147	LGI			
A102	Pre-School			
A110	Pre-School			
A112	Pre-School			
TOTALS		270	320	375

GRIFFITH MIDDLE SCHOOL

Griffith Middle School has an Actual Capacity of 750 students as the 32 general and special purpose classrooms of the facility are being utilized for the 2007-2008 school year. Functional Capacity, based on 75 percent of Actual Capacity is 563 students per period. Functional Capacity at 75 percent of Actual Capacity allows for teachers to have access to their classrooms during planning periods as well as program and student population growth. With a current year enrollment of 456 students, the school is being utilized at 81.0 percent of its Functional Capacity and 60.8 percent of its Actual Capacity.

Table 16
Space Utilization of the General and Special Purpose Classrooms
For Griffith Middle School, 2007-2008

Room Number	Subject	Capacity	Pd1	Pd2	Pd3	Pd4	Pd5	Pd6	Pd7	Pd8	Total Students	Percent Utilized
A225	English	25	PRIDE	PREP	TEAM	17	26	22	24	21	110	62.9
A222	Math	25	PRIDE	18	TEAM	PREP	26	21	18	27	110	62.9
A226	SS	25	PRIDE	PREP	TEAM	18	27	22	23	20	110	62.9
G202	SCI	25	PRIDE	20	TEAM	PREP	25	21	23	21	110	81.5
	Reading	25	PRIDE	24	TEAM		PREP	24	22	22	112	64.0
A224	English	25	PRIDE	PREP	18	TEAM	23	22	12	16	91	52.0
A223	Math	25	PRIDE	12	PREP	TEAM	22	12	18	27	91	52.0
A227	SS	25	PRIDE	PREP		TEAM	25	24	21	18	88	50.3
G204	SCI	25	PRIDE	22	PREP	TEAM	22	15	20	20	99	56.6
A208	KYBD	25	PRIDE	21	22	20	PREP	TEAM	23	26	112	64.0
A103	F&CS	25	PRIDE	23	15	TEAM	PREP	26	21	17	102	58.3
A102	Art	25	PREP	20	18	19	28	24	PREP	24	133	76.0
FH	PE	25	PREP	PREP	23	23	24	21	24	29	144	82.3
FH	PE	25	PREP	PREP	30	31	32	20	28	29	170	97.1
BAND	BAND	50	PREP	23	PREP	15	17	23	27	HS	105	30.0
E100	CHOIR	50	DEAN	DEN	57	51	57	49	DEN	DEN	214	61.1
CAREERS	CAREER	25	DEAN	21	18	17	DEN	DEN	DEN	DEN	56	32.0
A229	Health	25	PREP	16	14	PREP	HS	HS	HS	HS	30	17.1
A205	English	25	PRIDE	25	16	24	TEAM	25	PREP	24	114	65.1
A204	Math	25	PRIDE	23	25	24	TEAM	16	25	PREP	113	64.6
A202	SS	25	PRIDE	22	24	25	TEAM	19	24	PREP	114	65.1
G207	SCI	25	PRIDE	22	26	20	TEAM	20	PREP	25	113	64.6
A103	F&CS	25									183	91.5
A211	English	25	PRIDE	26	20	21	20	TEAM	PREP	21	108	61.7
A206	Math	25	PRIDE	22	20	20	20	TEAM	23	PREP	105	60.0
A200	SS	25	PRIDE	20	23	27	22	TEAM	24	PREP	116	66.3
G203	SCI	25	PRIDE	23	22	24	22	TEAM	PREP	25	116	66.3
	F LANG	25	PRIDE	24	24	19	PREP	TEAM	25	24	116	66.3
TOTALS		750		427	415	1,018	1,005	826	791	802	7,038	71.8
A201	ST Skills											
A119	ST Skills											
A205	COMP											
H226	MATH LAB											

As shown in Table 17 below, Griffith High School has an Actual Capacity of 1,235 students as the 48 general and special purpose classrooms are being utilized for the 2007-2008 school year. The analysis does not include students out of the building during the school day to attend the Hammond Career Center and other students assigned to other than a regular classroom for a given period of the day. The Functional Capacity, based on 75 percent of Actual Capacity is 926 students. Functional Capacity at 75 percent of Actual Capacity allows for teachers to have access to their classrooms during planning periods as well as for educational program and student population growth. With a current year enrollment of 932 students the facility is being utilized at 75.5 percent of its Actual Capacity and 100.6 percent of its Functional Capacity.

Table 17

**Space Utilization of the General and Special Purpose Classrooms
For Griffith High School, 2007-2008**

Room Number	Subject	Capacity	PD 1	PD 2	PD 3	PD 4	PD 5	PD 6	PD 7	TOTAL	% UTILIZED
H121	English	25	26		21	24	25	20	25	141	80.6
H123	English	25		30	24	24	19	32		129	73.7
H125	English	25	23	22	21		23	25	27	141	80.6
H126	English	25	23	20		17	24	21	18	123	70.3
H127	English	25	26	22	28	25	21	24		146	83.4
H129	English	25	22		28	25	24	19	23	141	80.6
H131	English	25	22	18		26	16	23	26	131	74.9
H212	Fr. Lang	25	26	19	24		26	18	15	128	73.1
H214	Fr Lang	25	25	28	27	28	24		24	156	89.1
H216	Fr Lang	25	23		24	19	26	18	23	133	76.0
H225	Fr Lang	25	25	21	23	14			11	94	53.7
H218	Math	25	24	21	19	21	20		23	128	73.1
H220	Math	25	22	19	24	23		16	20	124	70.9
H222	Math	25	27	28	29		27	27	25	163	93.1
H223	Math	25	20	26		25	22	14	28	135	77.1
H224	Math	25		35	26	27		17	13	118	67.4
H227	Math	25	23		24	29	18	28	20	142	81.1
H100	Sci	25	9	16	24	25		10	9	93	53.1
H101	Sci	25	24	15		22	24	14	25	124	70.9
H102	Sci	25		18	22		22	14	20	96	54.9
H103	Sci	25	27	24	26	25		24	23	149	85.1
H106	Sci	25	21	16	24	20			21	102	58.3
H109	Sci	25	26	15		13	25	26	25	130	74.3
H211	SS	25		14	23	20	20	24	18	119	68.0
H213	SS	25	27	25		27	27	24	28	158	90.3
H215	SS	25	29	27	28		22	14	19	139	79.4
H217	SS	25	24	20		26	28	20	27	145	82.9
H219	SS	25		20	27	28	24	15		114	65.1
B109	BUS	25	26	23		26	25	25	28	153	87.4
B111	BUS	25	19	39		19	20	6		103	58.9
B117	BUS	25	25	27	26	25	22		27	152	86.9
G113A	FACS	25	22	9	11				15	57	32.6
G113B	FACS	25		19		4		24	25	72	41.1
G113C	FACS	25			22	22	23	7		74	42.3
H122	Art	25	25	11	15	14	20	16	23	124	72.6
B112	Art	25					22	21	18	61	34.9
B114	Art	25		24	21	22		22	23	112	64.0
E100	Music	50	28		54	24	8	49		163	46.6
E101	Music	25							36	36	20.6
E104	Music	50		45						45	12.9
WGT	Phys Ed	25	26	21	28	23	28	24		150	85.7
D137	Phys Ed	25	28	22		27	22	27	27	153	87.4
GYM	Phys Ed	50			48	55	57	58	27	245	70.0
C110	Tech	25	9	20	22	23		19	25	118	67.4
H111	Spec Ed	15	17	15	8	12	7		11	70	66.7
H113	Spec Ed	15	4		3	5	5	19	7	43	41.0
B108	Spec Ed	15				8	12			20	19.0
B115	Spec Ed	15			7	3	13	7		30	28.6
Hammond	CC										
TOTAL		1,235	773	794	781	845	792	811	828	5,603	62.1

GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

A general assessment of school facilities classifies a school facility into one of the following four categories:

ADEQUATE – 20 YEARS OF FUNCTIONAL LIFE: (Facility is generally structurally sound, well maintained, and contains spaces which are appropriate for a modern educational program. Its functional student capacity provides for effective and efficient educational programming.)

MARGINALLY ADEQUATE IN THE SHORT TERM: (Facility may be generally structurally sound and well maintained, but contains spaces that are less than appropriate for educational programming into the 21st century and shows the need for attention to several areas that go beyond normal cosmetic attention. Such a facility often requires extensive study to determine its feasibility for remodel or discontinued use in the long term. Its functional capacity is marginal in terms of effective and efficient educational programming)

INADEQUATE – REMODEL: (Facility is generally structurally sound, but contains spaces that are less than appropriate for educational programming into the 21st century and shows the need for attention to several areas as well as the need for immediate attention to major cosmetic renovation. Its functional capacity after remodeling would provide for effective and efficient educational programming)

INADEQUATE – DISCONTINUE USE: (Facility has outlived its usefulness as an appropriate educational facility and generally would require more capital expenditure to remodel than to replace the facility. Further, remodeling would yield spaces less than appropriate for the delivery of modern educational programming into the 21st century)

The basis for the assessment rating on each facility is based on a “congruence of purpose” with educational program and is drawn from the Indiana Department of Education General Elementary Facility Guidelines and the Profile Chart for Evaluating School Buildings as shown in Figures 2 and 3 below. *All of the current facilities of the GPS were evaluated as Adequate – 20 plus years of functional life remaining by the researcher. However, Franklin Elementary School is in rather poor condition and needs major infrastructure upgrades. A determination by school corporation decision makers will have to be made regarding the feasibility of major expenditures for instructional space at Franklin Elementary School given the limited capital debt leeway of the corporation and excess space that currently exists at the elementary school level in the corporation.*

Figure 2
DOE General Elementary Facility Guidelines

Indiana Department of Education General Guideline	Comply YES	Comply NO	General Remarks
General Classroom Sq.Ft. at a Minimum of 900 Sq. Ft.			
Media Center – Minimum of 1,000 Sq. Ft. plus Auxiliary Areas.			
Media Center – Seating for 10% of Students at 25 Sq. Ft. per Student			
Physical Education – Minimum of 4,000 Sq. Ft. plus Auxiliary Areas.			
Multi-Purpose Area – Minimum of 1,800 Sq. Ft.			
Music – Minimum of 1,000 Sq. Ft. plus Storage.			
Art – Minimum of 1,000 Sq. Ft. plus Sink and Storage.			
Kindergarten – Minimum of 1,100 Sq. Ft. plus Storage and Restroom Facilities.			
Special Education – Each Area 900 Sq. Ft. and Auxiliary Restroom, Storage and Play Area.			
Speech Pathology – Minimum of 150 Sq. Ft. with Acoustic Features.			
Administration – Office, Reception, Storage, Conference Provided.			
Cafeteria – Minimum of 10-12 Sq. Ft. per Seat.			
General Storage at 2 Percent of Gross Area			

Figure 3
Profile for Evaluating School Facilities

SCHOOL FEATURE	MISSING	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Site Location					
Site Size					
Site Condition					
Exterior Condition					
Interior Condition					
General Purpose Classrooms					
Special Purpose Classrooms:					
Art					
Music					
Kindergarten					
Physical Education					
Special Education					
Science Labs					
Practical Arts Labs					
Media					
Technology					
General Administration					
Health Services					
Cafeteria					
Conference Rooms					
Kitchen					
Teacher Work Area					
Custodial Area					
Decorations					
Paint and Plaster					
Flooring					
Ceilings					
Lighting					
Drinking Fountains					
Furniture and Equipment					
Electrical Systems					
Heating and Ventilating					
Plumbing System					
Water Supply					
Restrooms					
Sewage Disposal					
General Layout					
Expandability					
Flexibility					
Handicap Accessibility					

SUMMARY

A surplus of educational space exists at the elementary school level in the GPS. While facilities are modern and effective for the delivery of educational program the excess cost of operations in terms of maintenance, operational expenses, and staffing will continue to be a drain on the General Fund budget of the school corporation as enrollments stabilize or decline and state of Indiana revenues for the General Fund are determined.

The middle school and high school have sufficient space to accommodate student population and program in the near term future of the school corporation.

Chapter III

INDIANA SCHOOL FINANCE SOURCES AND TIMING OF REVENUE AND PURPOSE OF EACH BUDGET FUND

Indiana school finance, and especially the source of revenue for the General Fund of school corporations was dramatically altered in the 2008 session of the Indiana General Assembly. In the future all revenue to support the General Fund will be determined by the Indiana General Assembly and will be funded through state revenue sources. No longer will local property tax revenues be used to fund a school corporation's General or Pre-school Special Education Fund. In addition, while the Debt Service Fund, that fund used to finance facility enhancement programs, will continue to be funded by local property tax but projects may be subject to a referendum vote of the citizens of the school corporation.

/----- BUDGET FUND-----/

Characteristic	General Fund	Debt Service Fund	Capital Projects Fund	Transportation Fund	Bus Replacement Fund	Pre-School Special Education Fund
State Funds	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
Property Tax	No*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No*
CAPS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Type of CAP	General Assembly	No	Tax Rate	Appropriation	10% of Fleet Per Year	General Assembly
Funds Received	Monthly	PT on June 30, Dec. 31	PT on June 30, Dec. 31	PT on June 30, Dec. 31	PT on June 30, Dec. 31	Monthly
Salaries, Benefits, Fixed Costs,	X					X
Retire Capital Debt		X				
Facility Updates and Technology			X			
Operations				X		
Fleet Replacement					X	

* Starting in 2010

As shown in Table 18 below, the total assessed value (taxable wealth for property tax purposes) increased from \$93,590,250 to \$638,965,879 from 2000 to 2007. That is an increase of \$545,375,629 or 582.7 percent. The total tax rate decreased from \$6.4880

to \$1.5590 or \$4.9280 or 76.0 percent. Tax rate multiplied times each \$100 of assessed value, less credits and exemptions, equals the property tax bill.

Table 18
Total Assessed Value, Tax Rates by Fund and Total Tax Rate for
Griffith Public Schools, 2000-2007

BUDGET YEAR	ASSESSED VALUE	GENERAL FUND	DEBT SERVICE FUND	CPF FUND	TRANS OPER FUND	SCHOOL BUS REPLACE	PRE SCHOOL SPEC ED	TOTAL TAX RATE
2000	93,590,250	2.9346	2.0331	1.0379	0.4724	0.00	0.0100	6.4880
2001	92,387,070	3.0335	2.6015	1.0379	0.5117	0.0479	0.0100	7.2425
2002	279,378,407	1.0544	0.9006	0.3369	0.1708	0.0413	0.0033	2.5073
2003	586,365,160	0.4967	0.6014	0.1652	0.0852	0.0256	0.0033	1.3774
2004	588,620,171	0.6135	0.6808	0.1897	0.0888	0.0155	0.0016	1.5899
2005	579,518,045	0.6647	0.7206*	0.1424	0.0801	0.0177	0.0016	1.6271
2006	579,189,658	0.7052	0.6654*	0.2047	0.1139	0.0084	0.0016	1.6992
2007	638,965,879	0.6579	0.5960*	0.2079	0.0958	0.0000	0.0014	1.5590

- Includes Pension Bonds

The necessity for securing more funds for education will continue as long as any or all of the following occur:

1. Inflation continues.
2. Pupil population increases.
3. School building costs continue to increase.
4. Educational program demands increase.
5. Teachers become more experienced and add to their education.
6. Student drop-out rates decrease.
7. Increased length of school year.
8. Support services increase.
9. Fixed costs of utilities continue to rise.
10. Continued improvement in public school productivity.

Financing School Construction

The cost of school building construction and renovation continues to increase and often out-gains the cost of private corporate construction primarily as a result of Public Works pay requirements. Assuming the past is a valid indicator and predictor of the future, school building construction and renovation will continue to increase in cost, at least at the rate of inflation. *While no one likes to pay more tax, capital project costs need to be viewed by educational decision-makers as investments in the future rather than expenditures of current dollars. Such are investments made in students, in the community, and the welfare of the state and nation.* Such investments, however, must be made only after careful consideration of educational program requirements. The

needs of students regarding educational program are changing rapidly. School facilities that can deliver modern programs are a necessity.

Long Term Debt v. Pay-as-you-go Capital Projects:

Bonds, lease-rental contracts, and state of Indiana loans are methods of long-term debt through which school districts may rapidly obtain needed funding for buildings and/or building renovations. School buildings are expected to last 50 or more years; therefore, one point of view contends that long-term debt is a just and fair means of sharing the cost of education with future generations. Another point of view however, expresses concern that future generations may have their own unique financial problems and needs, and that they should not be burdened with the results of decisions in which they had no voice. Pay-as-you-go advocates would utilize capital projects funds and increased tax levies to meet building costs as needed. Obviously, pay-as-you-go plans eliminate interest costs and place the burden of payment on the generation with whom the problem originated. Not so obvious is the local economic impact of withdrawing funds from the private sector, and subsequently holding those funds in the Capital Projects Fund until needed for a building program and the economic effect of a substantial tax rate increase. Further complicating the pay-as-you-go v. long-term debt issue is that building construction and renovation costs continue to increase; tomorrow's dollars, in all likelihood, will not generate the same purchasing power as today's dollars.

A final consideration in weighing finance methods is the impact on consistency of the local debt service rate. Long-term debt programs have built-in features that permit debt service tax rates to be maintained at a relatively constant or decreasing level. Pay-as-you-go programs generally require certain high peak effort years.

Even though each school district must study its own unique problems and local philosophy relative to debt management before adopting a program, general guidelines for adopting a program should be observed:

1. Long term debt programs may appropriately be considered by communities characterized by stable population growth and taxable wealth if little or no additional capital improvement projections exist beyond present need.
2. Pay-as-you-go programs may appropriately be considered by communities characterized by rapid expansion or continuing capital improvement needs.

In reality, final consideration is generally a compromise position between the pay-as-you-go and long-term debt approaches. Debt programs of approximately twenty years have generally commanded favorable market interest rates, and appear to be a reasonable compromise with the intergenerational theory of the impact of debt.

Financing School Buildings Via Building Corporations

Funds for school building construction in Indiana are derived from a variety of sources. Public school officials are charged with the responsibility of measuring impact of alternate financing methods on the financial structure of their school district. In fact, the optimum method of providing building funds often involves a combination of several sources.

Long-term indebtedness typically extends beyond two years. Indiana law permits long-term debt to be financed with the sale of General Obligation Bonds. Historically, long-term debt has been used by school corporations for purchase of pupil transportation equipment (general obligation bonds only) or for facility construction and improvement.

Lease/Rental Corporations. School corporations are authorized by law to enter into lease-rental agreements with school building authorities that have constructed school buildings in accordance with laws, rules, and regulations governing school construction. Such agreements provide that when debt is retired, capital equipment becomes the property of the school corporation. As such, these agreements are not considered as indebtedness against the two percent constitutional limitation of indebtedness.

The school building corporation obtains its funds by issuing bonds. There is no legal limit on the size of the bond issue. Such bonds are classed as first mortgage bonds, and are secured by annual payments from the school district as specified in the lease agreement. Lease contracts must be for a minimum of fifteen years, and may not exceed thirty years. School building corporations technically are not quite as secure as general obligation bonds, and consequently may have slightly higher interest rates. The higher rates on school building corporation bonds are also due to the usually longer terms of issue.

Lease/rental payments are calculated on the basis of anticipated interest rates at the time of the bond sale. Ordinarily payments are in excess of amounts needed to amortize the debt, and to pay small annual expenses of the building corporation.

Consequently, trustee banks acquire surplus funds that are maintained through investment and ultimately are used to retire bonds prior to scheduled maturity.

Borrowing, repaid either directly by the school district or through a lease/rental arrangement, provides a means through which to stabilize tax rates. Lease/rental contracts require a fixed payment each year with provision for "calling" or retiring bonds early when surplus funds are available, or when interest rate conditions become more favorable. General obligation bonds mature serially over the years, and may be grouped to provide a constant or declining tax rate.

Private Corporations. In 1957, the Indiana General Assembly expanded the concept of the lease/rental plan by enacting a law permitting school districts to lease school buildings from private corporations. Lease provisions with private corporations are similar to those with school building corporations, with the notable exception that a fifty-year lease instead of a thirty-year lease, and terms for less than fifteen years are possible. The absence of cost of bond issuance and different provisions for interest during construction becomes the basis of private corporations ability to compete financially with the local non-profit school building corporation. School district officials need to consider carefully the relative merits of the private corporation for-profit method, and of the school building corporation method when developing their financial program. Careful analysis of all the costs associated with each method should be made. If provisions for "advanced refunding" to take advantage of lower interest rates cannot be guaranteed, lease arrangements with private corporations are not advisable.

Funding Sources

General Obligation Bonds. Bonds are a legal written promise to repay borrowed funds at a specific time with a affixed interest charge. Bonds have been used to finance school building in Indiana for over one hundred years. These general obligation of "full faith and credit" bonds generally receive favorable interest rates from buyers.

The use of general obligation bonds issued for major building programs is restricted by a severe debt (two percent) limit. Indiana's constitution limits school districts' and other civil corporations' bonding power to two percent (2%) of taxable property; however, courts have ruled that civil governmental units, which are coterminous with the school corporation may also issue bonds for school purposes, for a

maximum of two percent (2%) of assessed valuation. This ability, in effect, permits local communities to raise a maximum of four percent (4%) based on community wealth. Loans from the Veterans Memorial School Construction Fund and the Common School Fund stipulate such loans shall not be considered as part of the constitutional limitation on indebtedness.

Construction Loan Funds. Indiana administers two loan programs for school districts demonstrating dire need, and are otherwise qualifiers for aid. The Common School Fund advances loans to school districts meeting need and local effort requirements. The rate of interest is fixed at one percent (1%) less than nationally recognized index of municipal bond averages, selected by the State Board of Education, rounded down to the next lowest even percent. The local school district must raise an amount equal to two percent (2%) of adjusted assessed valuation in order to qualify for an advance from the Common School Fund. A second loan fund, the Veterans Memorial School Construction Fund, provides up to \$250,000 at one percent (1%) interest to be paid over a twenty-year period through deductions from state aid tuition distributions. A Veterans Fund Advance requires that the district have less than \$8,400 AAV/ADA, debt service rate in excess of \$3.00, and have levied a minimum of fifty cents (\$.50) tax rate for school building purposes during each of the previous three years.

Capital Projects Fund. The 1987 General Assembly, through Public Law 85 established a Capital Projects Fund that replaced the Cumulative Building Fund. The legislative intent of Public Law 85 was to provide a means for a phase-out of the Cumulative Building Fund, and for the eventual implementation of a Capital Projects Fund for all school corporations in the state.

A school corporation may establish a Capital Projects Fund with respect to any facility used or to be used by the corporation, other than a facility to be used primarily for interscholastic, extracurricular activities, and which is to be used for one or more of the following purposes:

1. Planned construction, repair, replacement or remodeling;
2. Site acquisition;
3. Site development;
4. Repair, replacement or site acquisition that is necessitated by an emergency;

purchase, lease, or repair of equipment to be used by the school corporation, other than vehicles to be used for any purpose and equipment used primarily for interscholastic; or,

5. Purchase, lease, upgrading, maintenance or repair of computer hardware.

Public Law 85 requires the school corporation to prepare a Capital Projects Fund Plan. The school board is required to approve a resolution to establish a Capital Projects tax levy and adopt the plan. On approval by the school board the plan is advertised, a public hearing is conducted and the plan with requirements for tax levy and appropriations are submitted to the Department of Local Government Finance for their review and approval. The plan must apply for at least three (3) years immediately following the year of adoption. Tax rates for the Capital Projects Fund may not exceed \$0.33 on each one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed valuation of the school corporation. Interest earned on Capital Project Fund revenues are to be deposited in the Capital Projects Fund.

The Ability of GPS to Finance School Building Projects

Financial Resources and Debt Limits. A ratio of debt-to-assessed-valuation is used as one guide to limits of school indebtedness. *School finance authorities have advocated a ratio of debt to assessed valuation not to exceed 10 percent to 15 percent.* School corporations in Indiana embarking on recent school construction programs have ratios ranging from 0 to 43 percent. The ratio itself is of little consequence; rather, the bond rating a school is able to obtain is of greater significance, because interest rates and bond ratings vary inversely.

Table 19 demonstrates the varying debt limits using the 2007 payable 2008 assessed valuation of the GPS \$638,965,879. A reasonable debt limit by this measure, for GPS would fall within the range of 64 to 95 million dollars for school construction or renovation given the current assessed valuation. This amount would be reduced by outstanding capital debt obligations. Currently the GPS has approximately 47.5 million dollars in capital debt outstanding. Thus, the GPS has between 16 and 48 million dollars of capital debt leeway.

Table 19
Capital Outlay Funds Available To the GPS Based On
Varying Debt Limits Using the 2007 Assessed Valuation

Assessed Valuation	Available Funds With Debt Limit of:	
	10 Percent	15 Percent
\$638,965,879	\$63,896,588	\$95,844,994

Source: GPS Central Office

Table 20 presents the outstanding principal debt of the GPS as of July 2008. The current two major issues do not retire until 2022 and 2024 respectively.

Table 20
Outstanding Principal on Capital Debt Outstanding Of the GPS
As Of July 2008

Debt Obligation	Principal Outstanding July, 2008	Year Retired
Common School Loan of 1995	450,000	2014
Common School Loan of 1997	1,321,695	2021
Common School Loan of 2005	50,000	2010
Common School Loan of 2005	75,000	2009
Common School Loan of 2004	12,631,600	2024
Common School Loan of 2006	150,000	2011
Common School Loan of 2007	200,000	2012
Ready Elementary, 1997	4,365,000	2016
Lease Rental Amended 1999	26,114,000	2022
Building Bonds of 1999	582,050	2013
Veterans Memorial Loan of 2008	429,000	2022
Common School Loan of 2008	900,000	2033
Common School Loan of 2008	250,000	2013
TOTALS	\$ 47,518,345	

With current capital debt to assessed value ratio of 7.4 percent, the GPS has limited capital debt leeway to accommodate planning for the future of educational facilities. To be sure the school corporation will need to proceed with careful planning to meet the educational facility needs of the corporation in the most effective and efficient manner possible. *The community expects quality education and equity in terms of educational facilities throughout the corporation.*

With a 2007 total assessed value of \$638,965,879 a capital bond at six percent for twenty years would require approximately \$0.015 cents per million on the local Debt Service tax rate to retire the principal and interest.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are submitted by the researcher and were generated from an analysis of the data presented in this study.

The current grade configuration of the Griffith Public Schools (GPS) is four grades kindergarten through grade six elementary schools, one middle school for grades seven and eight and one high school for grades nine through twelve. Clearly, an excess of sufficient and appropriate educational and support facilities exists at the elementary school level in the GPS and constitutes the major facility challenge to the future delivery of modern educational programs in the GPS. That challenge is embedded in the operational expense associated with the operation of four elementary schools, three of which, at two sections per grade, are well below total enrollment numbers to achieve efficient economies of scale. In addition, the complexity of future General Fund revenues from state of Indiana sources has the potential to exacerbate the corporation's efforts to provide the best elementary educational programs in the future. Alternative organizational structures to achieve three rather than four elementary schools in the corporation should be considered together with the individual school boundary needs that such reorganization would require.