

FREE GUIDE

Winston-Salem School Research Checklist

WS/FCS • Magnet & Choice • Enrollment Guide

Everything Relocating Families Need to Know

TERESA OVERCASH

Broker/Owner | CRS, ABR, ALHS | 29 Years Experience

REALTY ONE GROUP RESULTS

336-262-3111 | www.homesintriadnc.com

STEP 1: DEFINE YOUR FAMILY'S PRIORITIES

Write these down first — this keeps you from spiraling.

Your child's needs: academics, arts, STEM, language immersion, learning support, sports, smaller setting, etc.
Your daily reality: work schedule, drop-off/pick-up, after-school care, commute tolerance. Your flexibility: will you consider magnet/choice options or only residential assignment?

- List your child's academic/extracurricular needs
- Define your daily schedule constraints (work, drop-off, pick-up times)
- Decide: residential assignment only, or open to magnet/choice applications?

STEP 2: USE THE WS/FCS SCHOOL LOCATOR

This is the single most important step — the school plan changes by address.

Use the official WS/FCS School Locator at wsfcs.k12.nc.us and type the exact address. If the address is new construction, double-check with Student Assignment (new streets can lag behind maps).

- Go to the WS/FCS School Locator (wsfcs.k12.nc.us) and enter the exact address
- Screenshot/save the results for your records
- For new construction: double-check with Student Assignment office
- Note the assigned elementary, middle, and high school

STEP 3: UNDERSTAND YOUR OPTIONS

WS/FCS families typically have three pathways:

1) Residential schools (based on address) 2) Zone options 3) Magnet/Choice options (application-based).
WS/FCS publishes the Choice and Magnet Application Process with active deadlines. If magnet/choice matters to your family, deadlines are part of your relocation timeline — not something to figure out later.

STEP 4: BUILD YOUR SCHOOL SHORTLIST

- Residential assigned school (from the locator)
- One magnet/choice option you'd realistically apply to (if applicable)
- One backup option you can live with if Plan A doesn't work out

STEP 5: RESEARCH WITH RELIABLE TOOLS

North Carolina School Report Cards (NC DPI)

Don't stare at one letter grade. Look at growth + trends + context. A school can be improving fast even if a rating site doesn't reflect it yet. Visit ncreportcards.ondemand.sas.com for official state data.

- Review NC DPI School Report Cards for each school on your shortlist
- Look at growth trends, not just a single letter grade
- Read magnet program descriptions to understand what the focus actually means
- Check WS/FCS boundary maps for elementary, middle, and high school zones

STEP 6: QUESTIONS FOR TOURS & OPEN HOUSES

- What time is drop-off/pick-up, and how does car line actually work?
- What after-school options exist (and what time do they end)?
- What's the homework load like (typical weeknight)?
- How do teachers communicate (app/email/weekly folders)?
- How does the school support different learning needs?
- What does "advanced" or "enrichment" look like here?
- What do families say the school does well — and what's improving?
- How are discipline and bullying concerns handled?
- What clubs/arts/sports are available — and when do they meet?
- For magnet/choice: what is the admissions process and timeline?
- What transportation options exist (and who qualifies)?

STEP 7: MAKE YOUR DECISION

- Are you only shopping addresses that match your residential assignment?
- Or are you comfortable with a magnet/choice application outcome?

If magnet/choice is your plan, your relocation timeline should include:

Application window dates • Acceptance notification dates • Backup plan if you don't get the first choice. These are not "later" tasks — they are part of your relocation planning.

KEY RESOURCES

WS/FCS School Locator: wsfcs.k12.nc.us

Magnet/Choice Applications: wsfcs.k12.nc.us (Student Assignment page)

NC School Report Cards: ncreportcards.ondemand.sas.com

WS/FCS Boundary Maps: wsfcs.k12.nc.us

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