



Statistical Profile of the Osceola County School District

The Osceola County School District is facing many challenges including low student performance and rapid population changes.

County Profile

This section describes the statistical characteristics of Osceola County and the Osceola County School District. Statistics include socio-economic indicators, school district information, student population descriptions, student performance indicators, and staff descriptions. We compared these statistics with five peer school districts and the state as a whole in order to put these indicators into context. The peer districts were selected based on their similarities with the Osceola County School District across a number of categories, including the size of the student population and demographic information. For the Osceola County School District, the five peer districts are Alachua, Collier, Lee, Leon, and Manatee.

County History and Geography

Osceola County was formed from parts of neighboring Orange and Brevard counties in 1887. The county was named for one of the two Native American chiefs who resisted being removed from the lands of central Florida during the Second Seminole War (1835-1842). The name figuratively means, “black drink cry.”

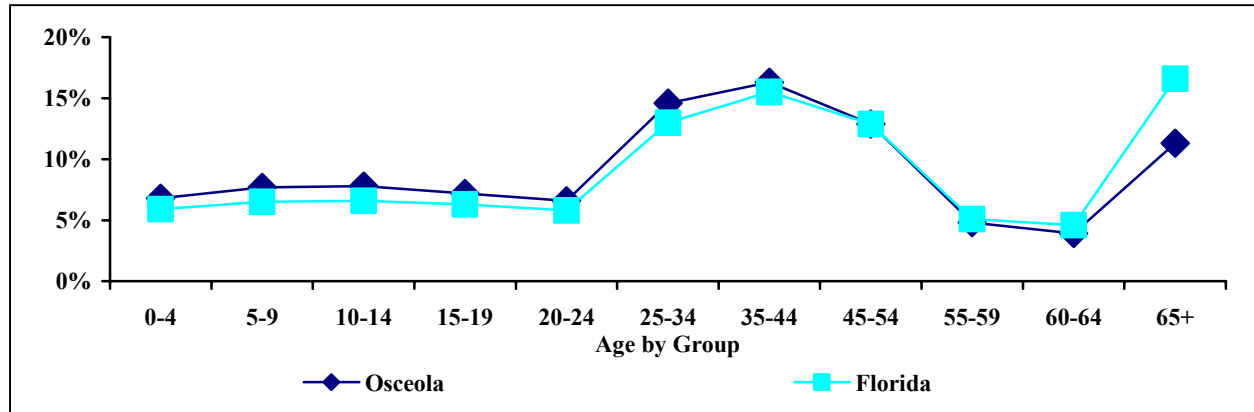
Osceola County is a medium-sized county located in the central part of Florida. It is bounded by Orange County (Orlando) on the north, Brevard (Melbourne) and Indian River counties to the east, Okeechobee (Okeechobee) and Polk (Lakeland) counties to the south and Polk County on the west. The county’s total land area is 1,506 square miles. The city of Kissimmee is the county seat, and the city of St. Cloud is the only other incorporated city in the county.

County Socio-Economic Demographics

Based on the 2000 Census, Osceola County has a total population of 172,493. This represents a 60.1% growth rate from 1990, which is a staggering growth rate with significant implications for the Osceola County School District. In comparison, Osceola County’s population growth rate was more than double the state’s growth rate for the same period of time (23.5%). Almost 27% of the residents of Osceola County were under the age of 18 and 11.4% of residents were 65 or older in 2000. This indicates that Osceola County’s population is generally younger than that of the state as a whole. Exhibit 2-1 compares the major age groups for Osceola County and Florida. In 2000, the largest difference between Osceola’s residents and the state’s was in the 65 and older group. The proportion of residents 65 and older in Osceola was about 6.3% less than the state’s.

Exhibit 2-1

The Size of Osceola’s School-Aged Population Was Slightly Higher Than That of the State, but the 65 or Older Population Was 6.3% Less Than That of Florida for the Year 2000



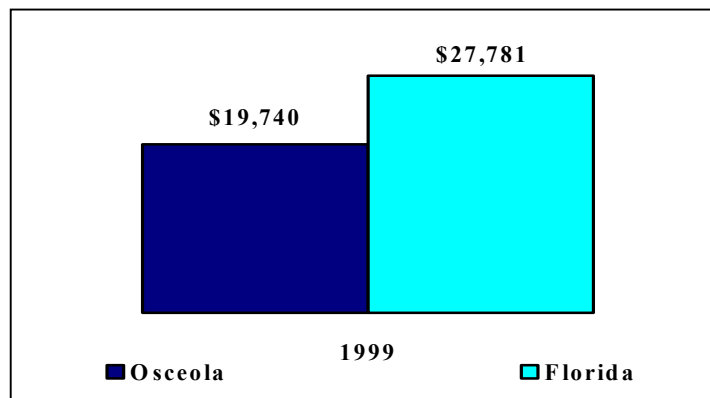
Source: US Census: Population Estimates by Age Group: April 1, 2000.

Osceola County has a workforce of almost 90,000 people. Osceola’s economic base is dominated by tourism, serving as a “gateway” to Disney World and other central Florida theme parks and attractions. Historical industries such as cattle ranching, citrus and other agriculture still provide a significant amount of employment in the district, although new forms of light industry are emerging. The county’s primary private sources of employment (within the district) include McLane/Suncoast Inc. (wholesale distributor, subsidiary of WalMart), Florida Hospital-Kissimmee, Osceola Regional Medical Center, Hyatt Orlando-Kissimmee, Walt Disney Imagineering (artistic production), Splendid China (amusement park), Orange Lake Resort and Country Club, Mercury Marine (marine electronic equipment), Tupperware Corporation (house wares), and Lerio Corporation (plastic products).

As shown in Exhibit 2-2, the per capita income of Osceola County residents is significantly lower than the per capita income of the state as a whole. In 1999, per capita income of Osceola County residents was \$8,041 below the state average.

Exhibit 2-2

Per Capita Income of Osceola County Residents Was \$8,041 Below the State Average in 1999



Source: Florida Research and Economic Database, 2002.

Exhibit 2-3 illustrates the level of poverty in Osceola County and five peer school districts in 1997. Osceola County has a similar percentage of total population and children below the poverty level compared to its peer districts, and almost identical to the state’s percentage of both.

Exhibit 2-3

Osceola Has Comparable Percentage of Persons Under the Poverty Level

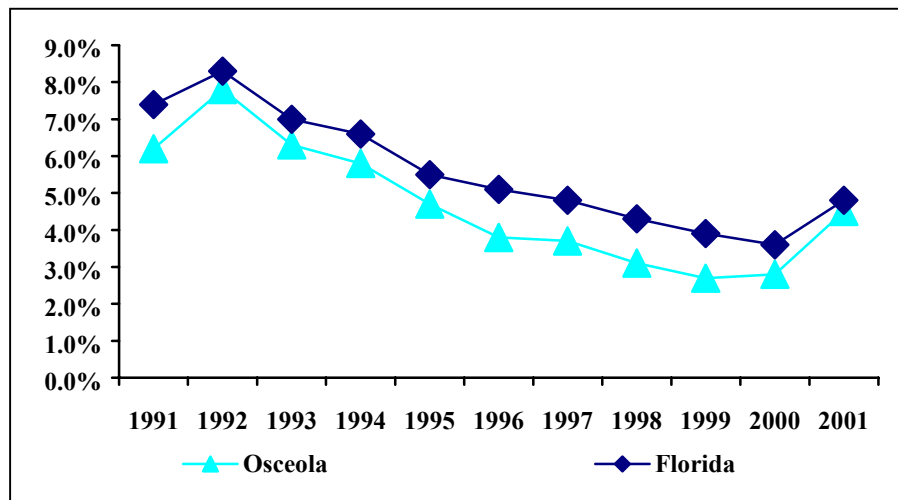
School District	Percentage of Total Population Below Poverty Level	Percentage of Children Below Poverty Level
Alachua	18.3%	23.0%
Collier	11.2%	20.5%
Lee	11.5%	19.9%
Leon	13.8%	17.4%
Manatee	11.7%	18.9%
Osceola	13.4%	21.8%
Florida	14.4%	21.8%

Source: State and County Quick Facts, U.S. Census Bureau, 2002.

Unemployment is low in Osceola County. As shown in Exhibit 2-4, the unemployment rate in Osceola County has been lower than the state’s rate for the years between 1991 and 2001. During these years, Osceola County’s unemployment rate has been on average 1% lower than the state’s unemployment rate.

Exhibit 2-4

Osceola’s Unemployment Rate Has Been Consistently Lower Than the State’s Over from 1991 to 2001



Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation; Bureau of Economic and Business Research.

School District Profile

The following section provides a profile of the Osceola County School District in comparison with its five peer districts and the state. The information and data in this section is primarily obtained from standardized reports developed and published by Florida’s Department of Education (DOE). Any special circumstances in the district not accounted for in the DOE data, remain excluded from this section so that peer comparisons are standardized. Information in this section is presented across four main areas.

Statistical Profile

- District Information
- Student Performance
- Student Characteristics
- Staff Characteristics

School District General Information

The Osceola County School District has 17 elementary schools; 6 middle schools; 8 high schools, and 20 specialty schools and centers. ¹ The district's main administration building is located in Kissimmee. The district has five board members and an appointed superintendent.

According to state records as of October 2001, the district served 37,744 students in grades pre-kindergarten through twelfth. These children include 17,855 elementary students (PreK-fifth), 8,953 middle school students (sixth through eighth), and 10,936 high school students (ninth through twelfth). Exhibit 2-5 shows the growth in student population of Osceola and its peer districts for 2001 compared to 1997. ² Comparing fall 1997 student population with fall 2001, the district's student population has grown significantly more than any of its peers.

Exhibit 2-5

Growth in Student Population in Osceola Was Higher Than in Its Five Peer Districts in Fall 2001 Compared With Fall 1997

School District	Student Population		
	Fall 1997	Fall 2001	Percentage of Growth
Alachua	30,063	29,599	-1.5%
Collier	29,261	36,475	24.7%
Lee	53,787	60,661	12.8%
Leon	31,455	31,802	1.1%
Manatee	33,705	38,250	13.5%
Osceola	28,740	37,744	31.3%
Peer Average (excluding Osceola)	35,654	39,357	10.4%
State	2,290,726	2,495,426	8.9%

Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts (Survey 2 demographic data, October, 2001), Department of Education.

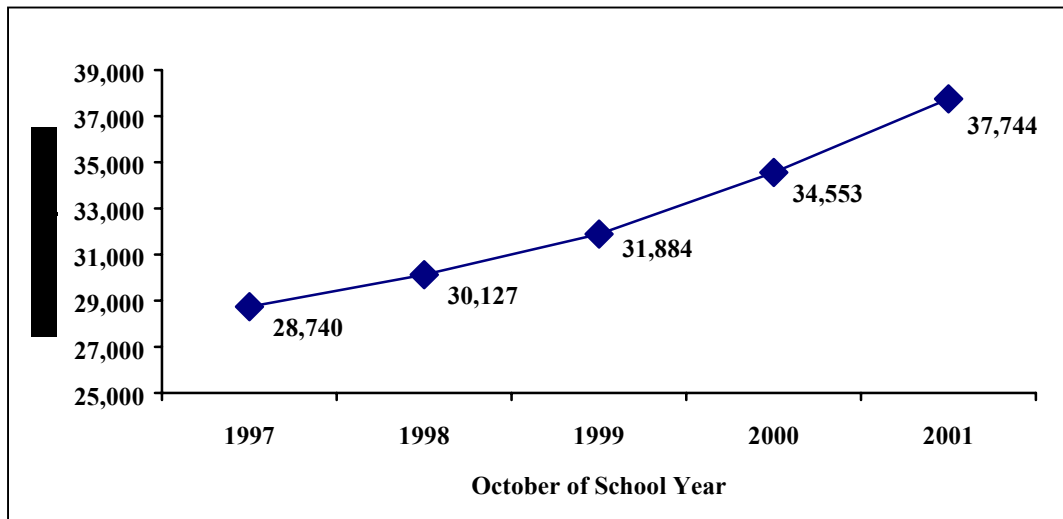
In fact, the growth rate in Osceola is much higher than the state's rate of 8.9% for the same time period. Exhibit 2-6 shows detail of the Osceola County student enrollment for fall 1997 through fall 2001.

¹ Specialty schools include partnerships with the Department of Juvenile Justice, vocational schools and charter schools. Because charter schools are authorized by the school district and are ultimately accountable to the school board (which can revoke a charter if the arrangement is detrimental to the district's students), students enrolled in charter schools are included in the overall student population for most statistics.

² October 2001 is the most recent comparable data available at the time of the review.

Exhibit 2-6

Osceola’s Student Enrollment Has Climbed Quickly Over the Past Five Years



Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts (Survey 2 demographic data, October, 2001), Department of Education.

School District Financial Information

The 2001-02 budgeted appropriations, other financing uses, and fund balances for the Osceola County School District are approximately \$384 million. The school district receives revenue from federal, state, and local sources. The majority of all state revenue is from the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). This funding source, established by the Legislature annually, prescribes state revenues for education as well as the level of ad valorem taxes (property taxes), which must be levied by each school district in the state. It also includes restricted funding called ‘categoricals,’ which are funds specified by the Legislature for selected district services, such as instructional materials (textbooks). Exhibit 2-7 shows the district’s budget for Fiscal Year 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-7

District Revenue, Appropriations, Other Financing Issues and Fund Balances for Fiscal Year 2001-2002

Category	Revenue-Ad Valorem Tax Levies	Revenue-Other Sources	Total Appropriations, Other Financing Issues and Fund Balances
General Fund	\$ 59,590,110	\$ 143,062,147	\$ 202,652,257
Special Revenue – Food Services		12,989,813	12,989,813
Special Revenue - Other		3,361,482	3,361,482
Debt Service Funds	3,752,038	23,658,996	27,411,034
Capital Projects Funds	18,437,534	111,305,959	129,743,493
Enterprise Funds			
Internal Service Funds		17,917,164	17,917,164
Trust Funds			
Subtotal	\$ 81,779,682	\$ 312,295,561	\$ 394,075,243

Category	Revenue-Ad Valorem Tax Levies	Revenue-Other Sources	Total Appropriations, Other Financing Issues and Fund Balances
Less Transfers			
From General Fund			
From Special Revenue – Food Services			
From Special Revenue - Other			
From Debt Service Funds		\$139,621	\$139,621
From Capital Projects Funds		10,201,685	10,201,685
From Enterprise Funds			
From Internal Service Funds			
From Trust Funds			
TOTAL	\$81,779,682	\$301,954,255	\$383,733,937

Source: School District of Osceola County, District Summary Budget 2001-02.

The Osceola County School District’s staffing ratios for 2000-01 are shown in Exhibits 2-8. In all three administrator to staff ratios, the district has the lowest district staff ratios of it peers. At the same time, the district’s teacher student ratio is the highest among its peers for most categories.

Exhibit 2-8

Osceola’s Staffing Ratios For Administrators to Teachers Are the Lowest Among Its Peers and Its Teacher to Student Ratios Are the Highest

School District	Staff and Faculty-Student Ratios					
	Administrators to Classroom Teachers	Administrators to Total Instructional	Administrators to Total Staff	Classroom Teachers to Students	Teacher Aids to Classroom Teachers	Guidance to Students
Alachua	1: 12.14	1: 14.21	1: 28.44	1: 17.71	1: 4.22	1: 404.12
Collier	1: 11.58	1: 13.29	1: 25.72	1: 17.21	1: 2.92	1: 271.44
Lee	1: 13.88	1: 15.35	1: 28.05	1: 18.04	1: 5.54	1: 481.52
Leon	1: 12.79	1: 14.66	1: 28.35	1: 16.66	1: 3.01	1: 414.98
Manatee	1: 14.58	1: 16.19	1: 32.54	1: 16.64	1: 2.99	1: 443.10
Osceola	1: 15.23	1: 18.07	1: 35.60	1: 19.19	1: 2.78	1: 461.98
State	1: 14.20	1: 15.89	1: 29.04	1: 17.68	1: 4.29	1: 438.18

Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts, Staff and Student Data, Department of Education, 2000-2001.

The Osceola County School District’s expenditures per FTE for 1998-1999 are shown in Exhibits 2-9 and 2-10.³ Osceola’s expenditures at \$5,377 per FTE was the lowest of its peer districts. The expenditures include funds from the General and Special Revenue Funds.

³ The most recent year available for comparison among peer districts was 1998-99.

Exhibit 2-9

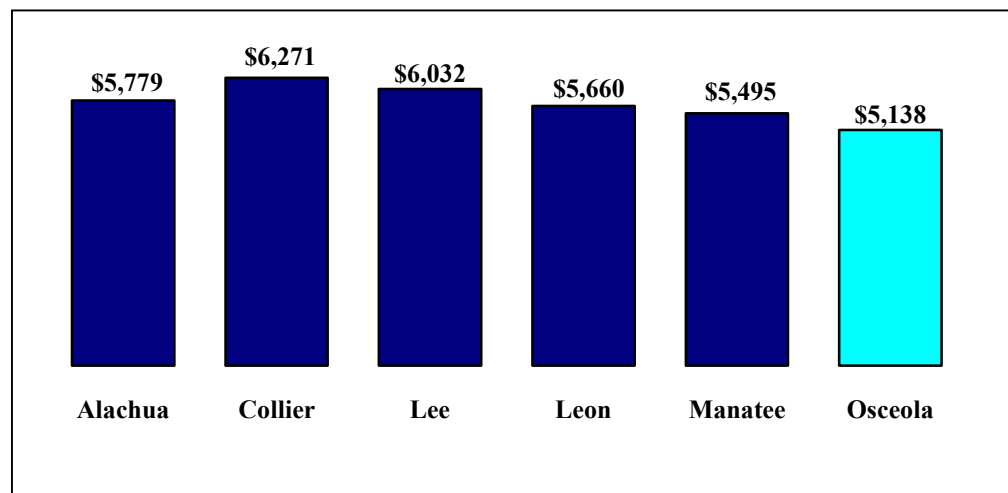
Osceola's 1998-99 Expenditures Per FTE Are Similar to Its Peers

School District	1998-99 Expenditures Per FTE		
	Unweighted FTE	Current Expenditures	Expenditures Per FTE
Alachua	29,072.51	\$168,016,975.68	\$5,779
Collier	31,011.28	194,458,102.59	6,271
Lee	54,006.55	325,752,593.51	6,032
Leon	31,168.62	176,402,026.31	5,660
Manatee	34,045.71	187,090,125.30	5,495
Osceola	30,235.88	155,364,401.22	5,138
Peer Average (excluding Osceola)	35,860.93	\$210,343,964.68	\$5,866
State Total	2,335,660.58	\$13,141,468,926	\$5,626

Source: Florida Department of Education. Profile of Florida School Districts Financial Data.

Exhibit 2-10

Osceola's Expenditures Per FTE Are Lowest Among Its Peers



Source: Florida Department of Education. Profile of Florida School Districts Financial Data.

Exhibit 2-11 details the per pupil expenditures in the districts based on category of student. The Osceola County School District's expenditures per FTE were the lowest among its peers and the state for both regular and at-risk students, and slightly above average for exceptional students.

Exhibit 2-11

Osceola's Expenditures Per FTE Are Higher for Regular Students, but Much Lower for At-Risk and Exceptional Students

School District	2000-01 Expenditures Per FTE		
	Regular	At-Risk	Exceptional
Alachua	\$4,511	\$6,302	\$7,340
Collier	4,708	5,018	8,722
Lee	4,329	5,794	6,787
Leon	4,516	5,522	7,446
Manatee	4,324	4,436	7,339

School District	2000-01 Expenditures Per FTE		
	Regular	At-Risk	Exceptional
Osceola	4,097	4,095	7,765
State	\$4,441	\$5,424	\$7,726

Source: Florida District Indicators Report, Department of Education, 2002.

Student Performance

The effective delivery of educational services is the first and most important aspect of all school district missions. Critical to the delivery of these services is how districts can maximize student performance while keeping within current budget constraints. Indicators of how well the district is accomplishing this include test scores, graduation rates, and dropout rates. This section profiles student achievement of the Osceola County School District, as well as performance information about its peer districts.

Student Test Scores

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test measures student performance on selected benchmarks in reading and mathematics that are defined by the Sunshine State Standards. The standards articulate challenging content that Florida students are expected to know and be able to do. The standards were developed in seven content areas and were adopted by the State Board of Education in May 1996. All public schools are expected to teach students the content found in the Sunshine State Standards. Students' proficiency in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 10 is measured by the FCAT and is scored on levels 1 through 5. Exhibits 2-12 and 2-13 illustrate the standard lower and upper scoring ranges for the five levels in 2002.

Exhibit 2-12

FCAT Reading Achievement Levels and Lower and Upper Scoring Ranges for Tests Administered in 2002

Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
3	100-258	259-283	284-331	332-393	394-500
4	100-274	275-298	299-338	339-385	386-500
5	100-255	256-285	286-330	331-383	384-500
6	100-264	265-295	296-338	339-386	387-500
7	100-266	267-299	300-343	344-388	389-500
8	100-270	271-309	310-349	350-393	394-500
9	100-284	285-321	322-353	354-381	382-500
10	100-286	287-326	327-354	355-371	372-500

Source: Student Assessment Services Section, Department of Education.

Exhibit 2-13

FCAT Mathematics Achievement Levels and Lower and Upper Scoring Ranges for Tests Administered in 2002

Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
3	100-252	253-293	294-345	346-397	398-500
4	100-259	260-297	298-346	347-393	394-500
5	100-287	288-325	326-354	355-394	395-500

Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
6	100-282	283-314	315-353	354-390	391-500
7	100-274	275-305	306-343	344-378	379-500
8	100-279	280-309	310-346	347-370	371-500
9	100-260	261-295	296-331	332-366	367-500
10	100-286	287-314	315-339	340-374	375-500

Source: Student Assessment Services Section, Department of Education.

Exhibit 2-14 provides mean scoring results for the 2001-02 FCAT reading exam and their corresponding performance levels. Osceola County's mean reading scores ranged from 271 to 293. As seen in this exhibit, all grades would be placed in level 2 for reading with the exception of ninth grade that scored a level 1. Osceola students scored lower in all grade levels compared to both the state and its peers.

Exhibit 2-14

Osceola's 2001–2002 FCAT Mean Reading Scores Are Lower Than Those of Its Peers and the State

District	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Alachua	299 (3)	306 (3)	283 (2)	298 (3)	297 (2)	300 (2)	302 (2)	312 (2)
Collier	288 (3)	295 (2)	283 (2)	292 (2)	295 (2)	294 (2)	286 (2)	302 (2)
Lee	299 (3)	304 (3)	285 (2)	292 (2)	296 (2)	299 (2)	288 (2)	301 (2)
Leon	312 (3)	321 (3)	304 (3)	313 (3)	317 (3)	313 (3)	311 (2)	317 (2)
Manatee	296 (3)	299 (3)	293 (3)	299 (3)	300 (3)	298 (2)	289 (2)	304 (2)
Osceola	281 (2)	284 (2)	271 (2)	276 (2)	284 (2)	280 (2)	278 (1)	293 (2)
State Average	293 (3)	299 (3)	285 (2)	291 (2)	294 (2)	295 (2)	287 (2)	303 (2)

Source: Department of Education. District FCAT Reading and Mathematics Results 2002.

Exhibit 2-15 details the 2001-02 FCAT mean mathematics scores for Osceola County School District and its peers. Osceola County's mean mathematics scores ranged from 276-311. Osceola's students placed in level 2 in all grade with the exception of sixth grade that scored in level 1. Performance at a level 2 score indicates that the student has limited success with the challenging content of the Sunshine State Standards, and level 1 indicates that the student has little success. Students at this level answer many questions incorrectly and are not successful with questions that are most challenging. Osceola consistently scored at a lower level on average than the state and its peers.

Exhibit 2-15

Osceola's 2001–2002 FCAT Mean Mathematics Scores Are Lower Than Those of Its Peers and the State

District	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10
Alachua	300 (3)	297 (2)	315 (2)	304 (2)	300 (2)	312 (3)	298 (3)	324 (3)
Collier	297 (3)	295 (2)	315 (2)	303 (2)	299 (2)	311 (3)	292 (2)	322 (3)
Lee	298 (3)	293 (2)	319 (2)	295 (2)	292 (2)	309 (2)	287 (2)	318 (3)
Leon	326 (3)	317 (3)	331 (3)	314 (2)	316 (3)	322 (3)	308 (3)	330 (3)
Manatee	296 (3)	291 (2)	317 (2)	301 (2)	294 (2)	311 (3)	291 (2)	323 (3)
Osceola	284 (2)	283 (2)	296 (2)	277 (1)	276 (2)	295 (2)	276 (2)	311 (2)
State Average	302 (3)	294 (2)	318 (2)	298 (2)	292 (2)	305 (2)	286 (2)	319 (3)

Source: Department of Education. District FCAT Reading and Mathematics Results 2002.

The FCAT also provides a method for evaluating student performance compared to national standards. The Norm-Referenced Test (NRT) portion of the FCAT contains questions that are scored separately

Statistical Profile

from the rest of the test. Students receive a score for these questions and a National Percentile Ranking (NPR). The NPR indicates the percentage of students who earned the same score or lower on these select questions. Students who score at the national average earn a NPR of 50. Exhibits 2-16 and 2-17 present the mean NRT and NPR scores for reading and mathematics for students in Osceola County and its peer districts.

Exhibit 2-16

Osceola’s 2001–2002 FCAT Mean NRT and NPR Scores in Reading Are Lower Than Those of Its Peers and the State

District	Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10	
	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR
Alachua	625	59	648	60	655	53	665	55	680	56	702	64	697	52	706	56
Collier	621	55	644	57	653	51	664	54	681	57	698	61	688	44	703	52
Lee	629	61	649	61	656	54	663	53	681	57	700	63	690	46	700	49
Leon	641	71	660	70	667	64	674	64	695	70	712	73	703	57	713	61
Manatee	627	60	646	59	659	57	666	56	684	59	702	64	690	45	703	52
Osceola	616	51	639	52	646	46	654	44	675	51	690	53	683	39	695	44
State Average	624	57	644	57	654	52	662	52	680	56	697	60	688	44	701	50

Source: Department of Education. District FCAT Reading and Mathematics Results 2002.

Exhibit 2-17

Osceola’s 2001–2002 FCAT Mean NRT and NPR Scores in Mathematics Are Lower Than Those of Its Peers and the State

District	Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6		Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9		Grade 10	
	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR	NRT	NPR
Alachua	618	61	636	63	653	61	668	66	688	70	694	70	714	73	720	70
Collier	612	56	634	61	651	59	667	65	684	67	693	69	709	69	717	70
Lee	617	61	636	63	654	62	662	61	679	64	688	66	705	66	711	64
Leon	634	74	648	73	665	72	676	73	696	78	702	77	719	77	724	75
Manatee	619	63	636	63	655	64	667	66	683	67	691	69	708	68	718	71
Osceola	609	53	629	57	642	50	654	54	672	57	679	57	696	57	707	61
State Average	618	62	634	62	653	61	664	63	680	65	687	64	704	65	714	67

Source: Department of Education. District FCAT Reading and Mathematics Results 2002.

The FCAT Writing exam is also administered throughout each of the state’s 67 districts. The FCAT Writing test is an assessment that measures student writing proficiency in Grades 4, 8, and 10. The test requires students to write responses to assigned topics in a single testing period. Beginning in 2000, the Florida Writing Assessment Program (FWAP), also known as Florida Writes!, is called FCAT Writing. Prior to that year, writing was assessed separately through a test called Florida Writes! Scoring for the FCAT exams range from 1, the lowest score to 6, the highest score. Exhibit 2-18 provides 2002 FCAT Writing results. Osceola’s mean scores ranged from 3.1 to 3.6. Osceola’s results are lower when compared to the state average and to its peer districts for all grade levels.

Exhibit 2-18**Osceola's FCAT Writing 2002 Results
Are Slightly Higher Than Those of Its Peers**

District	Combined Mean Score		
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 10
Alachua	3.5	4.1	4.1
Collier	3.2	3.7	3.8
Lee	3.5	3.8	3.8
Leon	3.5	4.0	4.1
Manatee	3.3	3.7	3.9
Osceola	3.1	3.4	3.6
Statewide Average	3.4	3.8	3.8

Source: Department of Education, 2002.

The 1976 Legislature created a competency test to be used as part of the requirements for a regular high school diploma. All eleventh graders must take the High School Competency Test (HSCT) and must pass both parts of the test (reading and mathematics) to qualify for a diploma.⁴ Exhibit 2-19 compares the percentage passing rate for the Osceola County School District and its five peers for the 2000 HSCT exam. Osceola County students had passing rates comparable to those of its peers and the state average.

Exhibit 2-19**Percentage of Students Passing the HSCT in Osceola County
Is Comparable to Its Peers and the State Average**

District	Grade 11: Percentage Passing	
	Communications	Math
Alachua	81	79
Collier	75	83
Lee	72	74
Leon	82	81
Manatee	77	79
Osceola	74	76
State Totals	75	76

Source: Department of Education.

Another indicator of performance of its students is the results of the college placement tests as taken by twelfth graders. Students are likely to take either the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) or the ACT (American College Test) tests as they prepare to graduate high school. Exhibit 2-20 compares Osceola's results with its peers. The mean SAT score and the average ACT composite score for Osceola students were lower than those of the state and its peers.

⁴ This test is being gradually replaced with the FCAT given in the tenth grade.

Exhibit 2-20

Osceola Students' Average Score Was Lower Than the State Average on Both the SAT and ACT Test in 2000-2001

School District	SAT			ACT		
	Number Tested	Percentage 12th Graders Tested	Mean Score	Number Tested	Percentage 12th Graders Tested	Composite Score
Alachua	868	52.8%	1,063	559	34.0%	20.8
Collier	782	49.0%	1,019	640	40.1%	20.4
Lee	1,359	42.9%	994	977	30.9%	20.1
Leon	883	53.6%	1,051	697	42.3%	20.8
Manatee	705	46.5%	996	524	34.5%	20.9
Osceola	583	38.1%	945	484	31.6%	19.6
State	54,827	45.8%	993	40,508	33.8%	20.3

Source: Florida District Indicators Report, Department of Education, 2002.

Graduation and Students Continuing Their Education

The dropout rates and graduation rates for the Osceola County School District's previous three school years are compared against its peers in Exhibit 2-21. The district's dropout rate and graduation rate have remained stable since the 1998-99 school year. Osceola graduations rates are lower than both those of its peers and the state average.

Exhibit 2-21

Osceola's Dropout Rates and Graduation Rates Have Remained Stable Over the Last Three Years

School District	Dropout Rate			Graduation Rate		
	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-2001	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01
Alachua	5.7%	6.3%	6.1%	63.3%	63.7%	61.2%
Collier	5.8%	5.6%	4.2%	63.0%	63.3%	64.5%
Lee	4.9%	4.6%	5.6%	69.4%	67.8%	65.9%
Leon	4.0%	3.5%	3.1%	64.7%	67.3%	64.2%
Manatee	7.4%	6.3%	4.5%	56.2%	61.4%	65.2%
Osceola	6.1%	5.5%	4.2%	55.7%	58.9%	58.4%
State	5.4%	4.6%	3.8%	60.2%	62.3%	63.8%

Source: Department of Education.

The percentage of Osceola high school graduates for school year 1999-2000 continuing their education was lower than its peers. The percentage of the Osceola County School District's graduates continuing their education is compared against its peers in Exhibit 2-22.

Exhibit 2-22

The Percentage of Osceola's 1999-2000 Graduates Entering Postsecondary Education Was Lower Than That of Its Peers

School District	Total Graduates Reporting	Total Continuing Education	Percent Continuing
Alachua	1,244	976	67%
Collier	1,118	746	54%
Lee	2,199	1,267	47%

School District	Total Graduates Reporting	Total Continuing Education	Percent Continuing
Leon	1,189	948	62%
Manatee	1,227	797	54%
Osceola	1,178	747	50%

Source: Postsecondary Plans Report, Department of Education, 2000-01.

Most Osceola high school graduates continuing their education are attending a community college. Exhibit 2-23 describes the type of continuing education being pursued by Osceola graduates and their peers.⁵

Exhibit 2-23

Graduates by Type of Postsecondary Education Being Pursued

School District	Total Continuing Education	Total Graduates				Private University/College	
		Community College		State University		Number	Percentage
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage		
Alachua	976	624	64%	346	35%	30	3%
Collier	746	282	38%	386	52%	70	9%
Lee	1,267	651	51%	519	41%	84	7%
Leon	948	529	56%	394	42%	20	2%
Manatee	797	484	61%	239	30%	36	5%
Osceola	747	516	69%	176	24%	47	6%

Source: Postsecondary Plans Report, Department of Education, 1999-2000.

Student Characteristics

This section provides information about the student population of the Osceola County School District, as well as information about five of its peer districts. The size and demographics of a school district’s student population is an important consideration in understanding the challenges it faces. For instance, a different set of challenges exists for a district that is growing versus one that has a declining student enrollment. Exhibit 2-24 shows a history of pre-kindergarten through twelfth-grade membership from fall 1997 to fall 2001 for Osceola and its peers. Student population has climbed rapidly in Osceola County over the last five years. The growth is more rapid than the statewide trend as well as the average for the peer districts over the same time period.

Exhibit 2-24

Student Population in Osceola Schools Increased Rapidly

School District	Fall 1997	Fall 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001
Alachua	30,063	29,673	29,874	29,673	29,599
Collier	29,261	30,790	32,306	34,199	36,475
Lee	53,787	54,777	56,104	58,351	60,661
Leon	31,455	31,612	31,123	32,048	31,802
Manatee	33,705	34,077	35,450	36,557	38,250
Osceola	28,740	30,127	31,884	34,553	37,744

⁵ Students may be in multiple settings, therefore, sum of detail may exceed total unduplicated count.

School District	Fall 1997	Fall 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001
Peer Average (excluding Osceola)	35,654	36,186	36,971	38,166	39,357
State	2,290,726	2,331,958	2,376,128	2,430,128	2,495,426

Source: Department of Education, 2002.

Exhibit 2-25 provides information regarding the racial/ethnic makeup of the 2000-01 student population of Osceola County and its peers. The Osceola County School District's percentage of white students was generally lower than that of its peers and the state average. The percentage of black students in Osceola County was considerably lower than its peers and the state's percentage, but Osceola's percentage of Hispanic students was significantly higher than that of its peers and the state's percentage.

Exhibit 2-25

Osceola's Hispanic Student Population Exceeded the State Percentage in 2000-01

School District	White	Black (Non-Hispanic)	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian	Multi-Racial
Alachua	54.5%	37.2%	4.1%	2.5%	0.2%	1.6%
Collier	56.1%	11.6%	30.0%	0.7%	0.5%	1.0%
Lee	65.4%	15.6%	15.9%	1.1%	0.3%	1.7%
Leon	55.1%	39.8%	1.9%	1.7%	0.1%	1.3%
Manatee	66.0%	17.3%	14.5%	1.0%	0.1%	1.0%
Osceola	49.1%	9.5%	36.7%	2.4%	0.2%	2.1%
State	52.5%	24.8%	19.1%	1.8%	0.3%	1.4%

Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts, 1999-2000.

Exhibit 2-26 provides information on the membership of Osceola's fall 2001 student population by grade. There were no grade level groupings in which Osceola County has the most students. The proportion of Pre-K and kindergarteners in Osceola is the smallest of its peers. This may indicate a shifting demographic in the population that will reduce the need for elementary resources in this district.

Exhibit 2-26

Osceola County's Student Population Distribution By Grade Level was Similar to Its Peers in Fall 2001

School District	Pre-K and Kindergarten	1 st – 5 th Grades	6 th – 8 th Grades	9 th – 12 th Grades
Alachua	3,046 (10.3%)	10,663 (36.0%)	7,044 (23.8%)	8,846 (29.9%)
Collier	3,819 (10.5%)	14,316 (39.2%)	8,391 (23.0%)	9,949 (27.3%)
Lee	5,939 (9.8%)	23,283 (38.4%)	14,821 (24.4%)	16,618 (27.4%)
Leon	3,407 (10.7%)	12,285 (38.6%)	7,122 (22.4%)	8,988 (28.3%)
Manatee	3,883 (10.2%)	15,076 (39.4%)	8,979 (23.5%)	10,312 (27.0%)
Osceola	3,209 (8.5%)	14,646 (38.8%)	8,953 (23.7%)	10,936 (29.0%)
Peer Average (excluding Osceola)	4,019 (10.2%)	15,125 (38.4%)	9,271 (23.6%)	10,943 (27.8%)
State	234,102 (9.4%)	963,913(38.6%)	599,259 (24.0%)	702,887 (28.1%)

Source: Department of Education, 2002.

Exhibit 2-27 provides further detail about the district’s student population. The Osceola County School District has a similar proportion of students with disabilities compared to its peers and the state, and a lower proportion of gifted students.

Exhibit 2-27

The Percentage Of Osceola’s Students With Disabilities Is Similar to That of Its Peers, While Its Percentage of Gifted Students Is Lower

School District	Percentage With Disabilities			Percentage Gifted ¹	
	Elementary	Middle School	High School	Elementary	Middle School
Alachua	15.6%	19.5%	15.2%	10.3%	15.3%
Collier	15.1%	17.8%	13.7%	2.2%	5.5%
Lee	15.5%	17.2%	11.2%	7.5%	14.1%
Leon	23.7%	16.1%	12.0%	3.3%	9.3%
Manatee	20.5%	18.9%	14.2%	2.1%	5.4%
Osceola	15.0%	15.0%	12.5%	0.5%	1.5%
State	15.2%	15.3%	12.0%	3.8%	7.0%

¹Percentage of high school students identified as gifted was not reported in these reports.

Source: Florida District Indicators Report, Department of Education, 2002.

Staff Characteristics

Staff characteristics provide a look at the personnel employed by the Osceola County School District, as well as information about five of its peer districts. Exhibit 2-28 provides information regarding the number of full-time staff (administrative, instructional, and support) employed by the district in 2000-01. The Osceola district had the lowest number of full-time staff compared to all of its five peer districts.

Exhibit 2-28

The Osceola County School District Had a Lower Number of Full-Time Staff Than Most of Its Peers in 2000-01

School District	Full-Time Staff								Total
	Administrators		Instruction				Support	Non-Pro	
	District Level	School Level	Elementary	Secondary	Exceptional Education	Other	Pro		
Alachua	62	77	661	690	322	303	181	1,658	3,954
Collier	74	88	849	709	294	302	129	1,723	4,168
Lee	66	159	1,179	1,221	639	416	281	2,352	6,313
Leon	41	107	769	707	368	327	202	1,676	4,197
Manatee	41	105	909	816	376	264	173	2,067	4,751
Osceola	38	71	663	684	245	378	133	1,669	3,881
Peer Average (excluding Osceola)	57	107	873	829	400	322	193	1,895	4,676
State	2,660	6,810	56,642	49,723	22,158	22,028	7,346	107,722	275,089

Source: Profiles of Florida School Districts, 2000-2001, Department of Education.

Exhibit 2-29 provides information regarding average salary for teachers in the Osceola County School District and its peers. Over the last 10 years, Osceola County School District teachers have generally had an average salary lower than those of teachers in its peer districts and the state as a whole.

Exhibit 2-29

Osceola Generally Has the Lowest Teacher Salaries Compared to Its Peers

School District	Average Teacher Salaries			
	1992-93	1997-98	2000-01	2001-02
Alachua	\$26,859	\$30,960	\$34,216	\$33,970
Collier	36,650	39,356	41,643	42,511
Lee	30,993	35,083	38,343	39,443
Leon	29,343	31,870	36,433	36,269
Manatee	29,899	34,097	36,997	37,444
Osceola	26,966	29,648	33,421	34,939
State	\$31,172	\$34,473	\$38,230	\$39,276

Source: Florida Department of Education, Average Teacher Salaries by Degree Level, 2000-01.

Exhibit 2-30 provides information regarding the number of teachers by degree level for the Osceola County School District and its peers for 2001-2002. The education attainment of Osceola County’s teachers was below the average attainment of all degrees for its peers. Alachua County is a significant outlier among all counties because of the presence of the University of Florida and the higher level of degree saturation that this generates.

Exhibit 2-30

In 2001-02, Osceola Had the Lowest Percentage of Educators With Master’s and Doctoral Degrees Compared to Its Peers

School District	Type of Degree (Number and Percentage of District Total)							
	Bachelor's		Master's		Specialist		Doctorate	
Alachua	772	40%	966	50%	129	7%	54	3%
Collier	1,206	56%	895	41%	33	2%	24	1%
Lee	2,094	61%	1,244	36%	54	2%	41	1%
Leon	1,061	52%	901	44%	61	3%	29	1%
Manatee	1,285	58%	849	39%	45	2%	26	1%
Osceola	1,305	64%	676	33%	40	2%	17	1%
State	92,222	61%	53,664	35%	4,244	3%	1,767	1%

Source: Florida Department of Education, Average Teacher Salaries by Degree Level, 2001-02.

Exhibit 2-31 provides information regarding the average number of years of experience for teachers by degree level for the Osceola County School District and its peers in 2000-2001. The experience level of Osceola County’s teachers was lower than its peers for all degrees.

Exhibit 2-31

In 2001-02, Osceola Educators Had Less Experience on Average Compared to Their Peers

School District	Type of Degree (Average Years of Experience)			
	Bachelor's	Master's	Specialist	Doctorate
Alachua	12.6	16.2	17.1	18.7
Collier	8.4	15.4	16.5	17.3
Lee	11.2	18.2	20.2	20.9
Leon	12.9	17.4	20.3	21.8
Manatee	10.1	15.0	19.9	14.2
Osceola	7.8	14.1	13.8	16.6
State	10.7	15.9	19.0	17.1

Source: Florida Department of Education, Average Teacher Salaries by Degree Level, 2000-01.