INTRODUCTION

Cleveland County is located in the piedmont of the southwestern portion of North Carolina. The county, in the foothills of the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains, is centered between Charlotte and Greenville/Spartanburg.

The population is 98,269 with Shelby as the county seat. Cleveland County has a history of agricultural resources as well as industries that are highly sophisticated in technology. Manufacturing is the largest employment sector in the county. A variety of firms manufacture such products as textiles, medical instruments, flight control systems, transmissions, electric motors, compact audio and ROM discs. The current average unemployment is rate is 7.1%, and the economy is making a slow recovery. The estimated median household income is $39,730 with 14.8% below the poverty level.

Cleveland County has a student population of approximately 16,978. The student population is 66% white, 28% African-American, 3% Hispanic, and 3% other.

There are 28 schools in the district: 4 high schools, 2 alternative, 4 middle schools, 2 intermediate schools, and 16 elementary schools. The 2006-2007 total operating budget of Cleveland County Schools is $143 million. Per-pupil expenditure (2004-2005 school year) excluding child nutrition is:

State	$4889.47
Federal	$ 516.11
Local	$1393.00
Total	$6798.58