

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION OF CAMDEN COUNTY, GEORGIA

Workforce Development Assessment

Prepared for

The Camden Partnership
Camden County Public Service Authority

Prepared by

Georgia Tech's Office of Economic Development & Technology Ventures

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OVERVIEW¹

Workforce development is a concern for communities worldwide; and there is room for improvement among most of these communities. Even those places that are successful in their efforts worry about the sustainability of their efforts. Therefore, workforce development is not an end in itself, but a continual process, and ever so important for competing in the global economy, today and in the future.

Camden's education system was the third most frequently mentioned economic development strength by area stakeholders, and stakeholders mentioned leveraging the education system as a leading opportunity. Stakeholders also cited Camden's workforce as a leading strength; it was the fifth most frequently mentioned among strengths. When asked to identify the most serious issues affecting economic development, having an available and prepared workforce was the fifth most frequently mentioned issue. Overall, community stakeholders rated "developing a quality workforce" as being more important to the county's future prosperity than any other economic development strategy.

This assessment is based on: (1) interviews with 93 community stakeholders in May and June 2005 and discussions with 11 leaders of Camden County's workforce development community from July through September 2005, (2) a review of relevant metrics, (3) responses from employers during Georgia Tech's existing business and industry interviews, (4) the Camden County Community Resource Studies, and (5) responses to a survey administered by Camden Children's Alliance & Resources, Inc. in 2004.

THE CURRENT WORKFORCE²

Camden County has an abundant available workforce.³

- Camden County's workforce grew significantly during the 1990s, but to a lesser extent since then. The workforce grew 44 percent from 11,618 to 16,724 members during that decade. This outpaced the rate of growth for the Coastal Georgia region and Georgia. Since 2000, however, the growth of the county's workforce has been marginal, and did not keep pace with the rate of growth for Coastal Georgia overall or the state.
- The civilian labor force includes those able-bodied persons who are currently employed or actively seeking employment. It does not include persons who may be able-bodied and skilled but are not seeking employment opportunities. When this happens, it is said a community can have "hidden talent," as is often the case for military base as well as retiree communities, and may very well be the case for Camden County.
- Reflecting an available workforce seeking work, as of July 2005, Camden County's unemployment rate was 5.6 percent, at par with the rate for Georgia. Unemployment rates are typically higher during summer months as it is the month following a peak graduation month. Consistent the state, Camden's unemployment rate dropped from 1990 to 2000, then rose from 2000 to 2004. Interestingly, during 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2004, Camden's rate was consistently below that for the state.⁴
- Camden County's share of residents of common military age (e.g., between the ages of 20 and 39) exceeded that of Coastal Georgia and the state. Such persons accounted for the largest share of Camden County residents in 2004.

¹ This report is part of the "Economic Diversification of Camden County, Georgia" series of reports that were completed by Georgia Tech in October 2005. For information on other reports in the series, please contact The Camden Partnership.

² This section includes extracted information from the companion report "Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Economic Development Report Card."

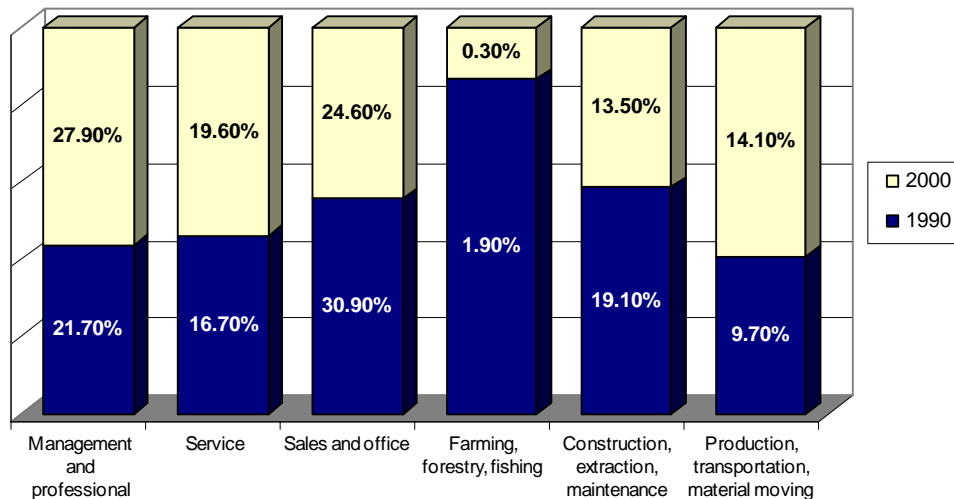
³ Sources: Georgia Department of Labor, U.S. Census Bureau

⁴ Source: Georgia Department of Labor

- Just 17.9 percent of those working in Camden County in 2000 lived outside the county. Leading home locations of commuters to Camden were Nassau (FL), Duval (FL), Charlton (GA), Glynn (GA), and Brantley (GA) counties.
- Camden has a growing workforce that is commuting outside the county for employment. Approximately 77.6 percent of working residents of Camden County worked in Camden County in 2000. Out-commuters almost quadrupled in number from 1990 to 2000. Duval County in Florida is the leading destination for these workers. Glynn and Nassau counties also attract significant numbers of residents from Camden. In some sense, Camden is serving as a bedroom community to both the Jacksonville (FL) and Brunswick areas. However, this out-commuting workforce represents an opportunity for Camden because often workers would likely choose to reduce their commutes if they could acquire a job of similar quality closer to home.

More than two-thirds (72.1 percent) of Camden County’s working residents held management, professional, service, sales, or office occupations - that is, white collar occupations - in 2000. Camden’s residents holding management and professional occupations grew from 21.7 to 27.9 percent. In other words, one in five Camden County residents held a management and professional occupation in 2000. This occupational category accounted for the largest share of residents. Camden also saw an increase in its share of residents holding production, transportation, and material-moving occupations, which is consistent with an area surrounded by distribution channels.

Occupational Shift of Camden County Residents

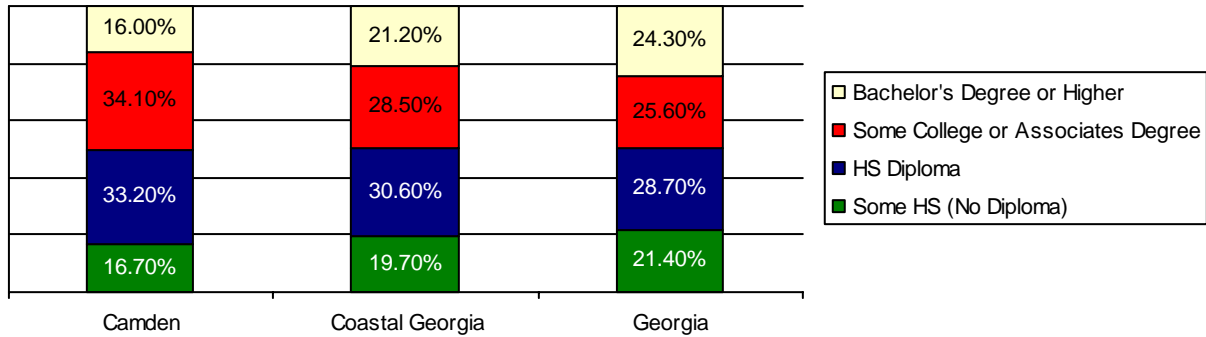


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The previous figure reflects the skill base of Camden County’s labor force in 2000. Due to the closure of Durango Paper Company and arrival of Express Scripts Call Center, many of those who were employed in production occupations are likely either now in service occupations or among the currently unemployed.

Although Camden lags behind the state, the surrounding regions, and the United States in its percentage of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher, it appears to have a higher proportion of its residents with high school diplomas and associate’s degrees or some college. The latter is particularly interesting to consider. More than one-third (34.1 percent) of Camden County’s adult residents engaged in some college, some earning Associates degrees, which are sometimes considered “transfer degrees” for a four-year college, but they are not pursuing further education.

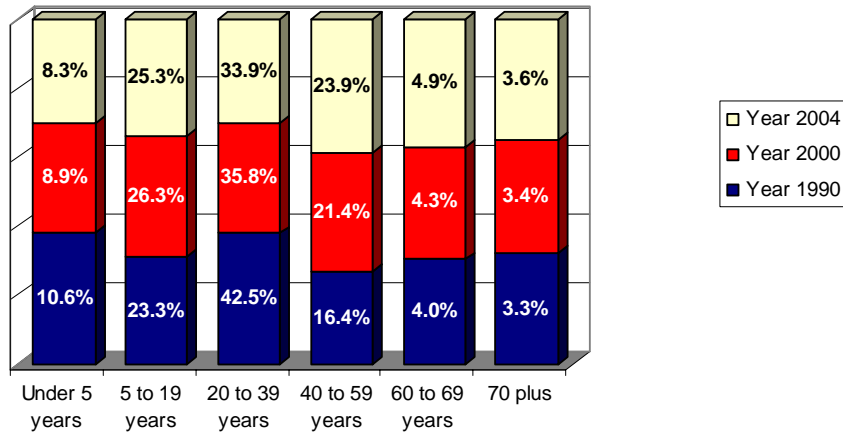
Educational Attainment of Adults 25 Years and Older, 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Camden County's growth in civilian workforce has largely kept pace with the area's population growth. Part of the growth in this workforce is due to a fair amount of net migration during the 1990s which accounted for 56.2 percent of the county's overall population growth. However, since 2000, Camden has experienced a negative net migration, yet still has seen positive growth in its civilian labor force. This signals that the growth is coming from residents within Camden County entering the workforce. Young adults may account for some of this, but with Kings Bay, it is likely that military personnel leaving active duty account for some of it, as well. Indeed, a growing segment of the population is those between the ages of 40 to 59, which, for Camden County may frequently include "young retirees" leaving the military after completing their duty at the Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay. This growing group of young but seasoned talent and their spouses represents a highly skilled workforce for Camden County.

Age Distribution in Camden County



Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

The Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay employs more than 8,500 persons of which approximately 54.7 percent are active duty.⁵ For just the three-month period of July through September 2005, the Fleet and Family Support Center at the Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay reported a total of 131 service

⁵ Source: Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay based on 2003 statistics.

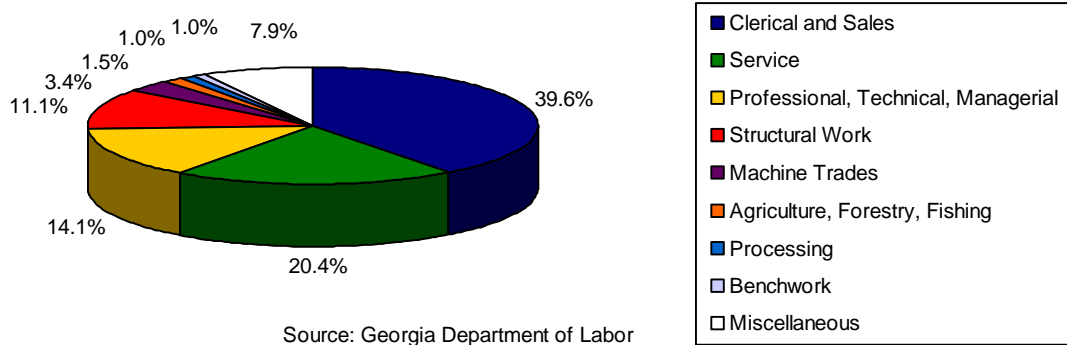
members who had separated or retired from the Navy. The service members possessed a variety of skills applicable to private or other civilian sectors. Mechanic and electronic related skills topped the list.

Service Member Position	Non-Military Applicability	July to September 2005
Machinist Mate	Mechanic	22
Electronics Technician	Electronics Specialist	19
Electricians Mate	Electrician	12
Officers	Management	10
Culinary Specialist	Culinary Specialist	10
Sonar Technician	Electronics Specialist	8
Fire Control Technician	Electronics Specialist	8
Missile Technician	Mechanic, Advanced Electronics Specialist	8
Engineman	Mechanic	5
Storekeeper	Supply Specialist, Logistics Specialist	4
Hull Technician	Sheet Metal Fabricator	4
Information Technology	Information Technology	4
Dental Technician	Dental Technician	3
Boats man Mate	Painter, Sandblaster, Welder	3
Master-at-Arms	Law Enforcement	3
Ship's Serviceman	Retail, Customer Service	2
Personnel man	Human Resources	2
Gunners Mate	Weapons Specialist	2
Builder	Construction, Building	1
Career Counselor	Human Resources	1
TOTAL		131
Based on data provided by the Fleet and Family Support Center at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay		

Military spouses also represent a highly skilled available workforce. In September 2005, the Fleet and Family Support Center's database of spouses available for work included 386 individuals. These spouses were reported to have skills in the following areas: human resources, medical / health care, security, administrative / clerical, training / instruction / teaching / facilitation, child care, information technology, counseling, accounting, management, and retail / customer service. Center staff report that 25 percent of military spouses have earned a college degree, and seek jobs offering compensation ranging from \$6.00 to \$15.00 per hour. Most spouses are reported to find employment within local businesses and government contractors. According to center staff, local businesses include doctor offices, legal offices, accounting practices, retail, and pharmaceutical benefits. In addition, some spouses attain positions with the Board of Education. Spouses are reported to be active community volunteers as well.

As of September 2005, Camden County housed 2,058 active applicants looking for work, according to the Georgia Department of Labor. A review of the application data shows a clear slant toward seeking non-manufacturing or non-production opportunities. More than one-third (39.6 percent) of the applicants were seeking clerical and sales-related occupations. Just over one-fifth (20.4 percent) were seeking service occupations. The third highest share (14.1 percent) of applicants sought professional, technical, or managerial occupations.

Active Applicants In Camden County, Georgia, September 2005



THE FUTURE WORKFORCE^{6, 7}

The potential for future workforce growth in Camden depends upon on: (1) its ability to retain its youth and cultivate desired skills among this youth, (2) its ability to retain other talent (military personnel and retirees and their families, out-commuters), and (3) its ability to attract talent - that is, entice newcomers to relocate to the community.

Camden County’s young residents (i.e., persons under 19 years of age) are a growing segment of the population. For example, in 1990, there were approximately 10,408 persons between the ages of 0 and 19. By 2000, that number grew to 15,392 and a little more to 15,447 in 2004. Beyond 19 years of age, age cohort analysis reveals some interesting trends. In 1990, Camden had 7,201 residents ages 20 to 29. Ten years later, those residents should be included in the 30-39 age group. That age group in 2000 included 7,634 residents, so Camden was evidently able to retain residents who were living there during their 20s to stay while they moved into their 30s. In 1990, Camden had 5,858 residents in their 30s. Ten years later, those residents would be in their 40s. The 40-49 age group in 2000 included 5,807 residents, so it appears Camden lost at least 51 residents in their 30s before they reached their 40s, perhaps reflecting the mobility associated with Navy personnel. Camden gained residents in each of the older age groups (50 to 59 years, 60-69 years, 70 plus years), signaling that a fair number of residents in their 40s, 50s, and 60s decided to stay in Camden through the next decade, and, also, that the community attracted a number of new residents. These findings are consistent with what one might expect of a military base community that is successful in retaining its military personnel after they leave the service.

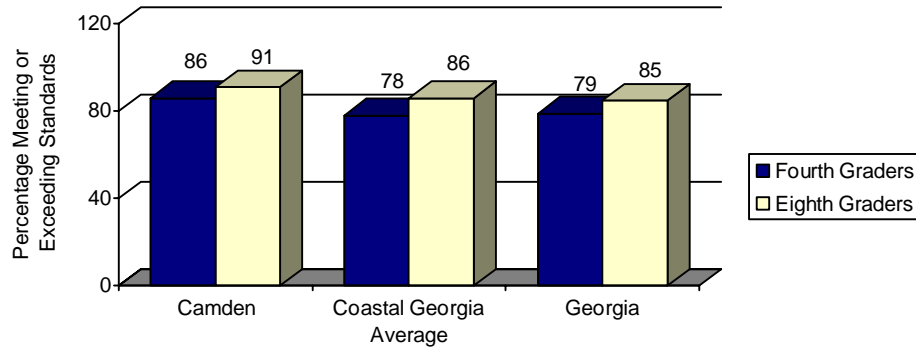
Performance of school-age children is important to review. The vast majority (86 percent) of Camden County’s fourth graders met or exceeded standards in reading comprehension for the 2003-2004 school year. Camden County’s fourth graders outperformed the Coastal Georgia region and state in terms of their performance in math, as well. Camden County’s eighth graders also outperformed the region and state in terms of their performance in reading comprehension. Eighty-eight percent of Camden’s eighth graders met or exceeded standards in math during 2003-2004, exceeding the average for Coastal Georgia (75 percent) and Georgia (73 percent).⁸

⁶ This section includes extracted information from the companion report “Economic Diversification of Camden County, GA: Economic Development Report Card.”

⁷ This section includes extracted information from the companion report “Economic Diversification of Camden County, Georgia: Asset Inventory.”

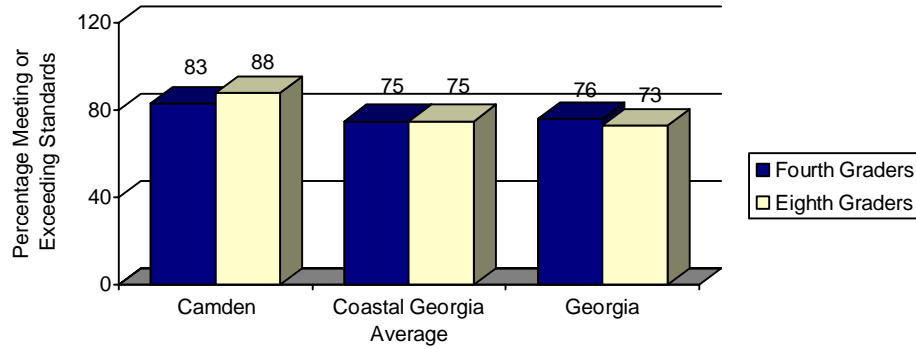
⁸ Source: Georgia Department of Education

Reading Comprehension, 2003-2004



Source: Georgia Department of Education

Mathematics, 2003-2004

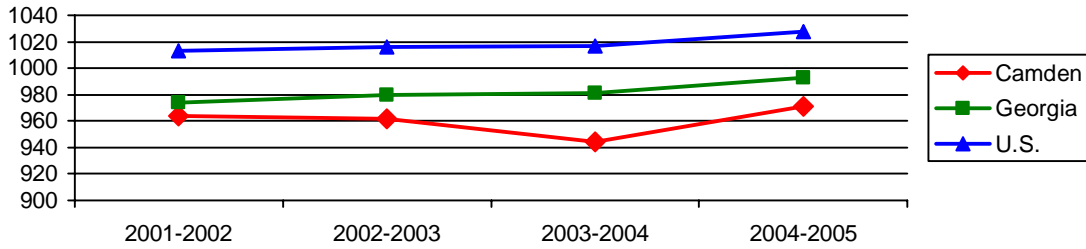


Source: Georgia Department of Education

Camden County's SAT performance during the 2004-2005 school year represents a notable improvement over 2003-2004, and ends what was a three-year downward trend in performance. The county's average SAT score in 2004-2005 was 971, compared to 944 for the previous year. However, Camden's average SAT score has been consistently lower than that for Georgia and the United States. In 2004-2005, a total of 337 students took the SAT exam, which is slightly down from 2003-2004 when a total of 354 students took the exam. Student performance on the math portion of the test in 2004-2005 broke a three-year period of decline with an average score of 485 which exceeded that of 2003-2004 (469), 2002-2003 (474) and 2001-2002 (483). Performance on the verbal portion has fluctuated over recent years. The 2004-2005 average score (486) represents an increase over 2003-2004 (474) but was just below the average in 2002-2003 (488) and slightly above the average in 2001-2002 (482).

Interestingly, when comparing student performance on math versus verbal, Camden students, along with Georgia students on a whole, performed better on the verbal portion in 2004-2005. This is opposite of what occurred at the national level overall.

Average SAT Scores



Source: Georgia Department of Education, The College Board

Camden County participation in the ACT has been rising over the years from 26 in 2001-2002 to 74 in 2002-2003 to 99 in 2003-2004. During those three years, student performance was consistently below that of the state and nation in every portion of the test, with the exception of mathematics in 2003-2004 when the county’s performance paralleled the state’s performance. However, according to data released by Camden County Schools in August 2005, Camden’s performance exceeded that of the state in every subject in 2004-2005 and also exceeded that of the nation for reading and science. A total of 86 students took the exam.

Comparison of ACT Performance

	2002-2003			2003-2004			2004-2005		
	System	State	Nation	System	State	Nation	System	State	Nation
Composite	19.0	19.8	20.8	19.6	20.0	20.9	20.9	20.0	20.9
English	18.4	19.3	20.3	18.9	19.5	20.4	20.1	19.4	20.4
Mathematics	18.6	19.7	20.6	19.9	19.9	20.7	20.5	19.8	20.7
Reading	19.3	20.1	21.2	19.9	20.3	21.3	21.5	20.3	21.3
Science	18.9	19.7	20.8	19.5	19.9	20.9	21.1	19.8	20.9

Source: Georgia Department of Education and ACT

Camden County’s high school dropout rate has fluctuated in recent years. The dropout rate refers to the percentage of children who drop out during any given year. During 2003-2004, Camden’s rate (5.7 percent) exceeded the rate for the state (5.1 percent) and represented a hike over 2002-2003 and 2001-2002. In 2003-2004, the dropout rate was highest among students who were white, male, and economically disadvantaged.⁹ However, while comparison data for the most recent year of 2004-2005 is not yet available, local school officials report a rate of 4.7 percent which is a notable drop from the previous year.^{10, 11}

⁹ Source: Georgia Department of Education.

¹⁰ Source: Camden County High School Guidance Office.

¹¹ Source: Georgia Department of Education.

Notably, the community’s high school graduation rate (70 percent) in 2003-2004 was up from 2000 (67.6 percent) and 1990 (62.9 percent). During the latter two periods, it was higher than the state rate.¹²

The largest share of Camden County’s high school graduates receive a diploma with dual seals in College Prep and Career Technology (formerly known as Tech Prep). This enables students to move on to a college or university or a technical college, and offers the greatest flexibility among the options. However, in recent years, there has been a growing trend toward selecting the college prep route among high school students in Camden.

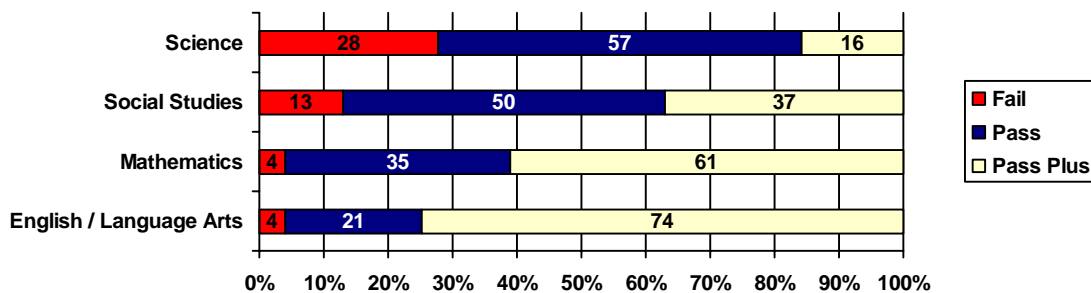
Diplomas Earned by Camden County High School Graduates

	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
College Prep Diplomas	141 (31.1%)	91 (19%)	80 (15.3%)	84 (17%)	127 (27.1%)
Career Tech Diplomas	148 (32.6%)	138 (28.9%)	148 (28.4%)	136 (28%)	139 (29.6%)
Diplomas with Dual Seals	123 (27.1%)	213 (44.6%)	251 (48.1%)	239 (50%)	186 (39.7%)
Special Ed. Diplomas	17 (3.7%)	20 (4.2%)	14 (2.7%)	21 (4.4%)	17 (3.6%)
Certificates of Attendance	25 (5.5%)	16 (3.3%)	29 (5.5%)	2 (0.4%)	0 (0%)
Total Graduates	454	478	522	482	469
Dropout Rate	6.4%	5.7%	5.2%	5.9%	4.8%
Completion Rate	65.7%	71.4%	67.6%	70.0%	94.7%

Source: Camden County School System, System Improvement Report,
<http://www.camden.k12.ga.us/downloads/Camden%20System%20Improvement-%202004-2008.pdf>

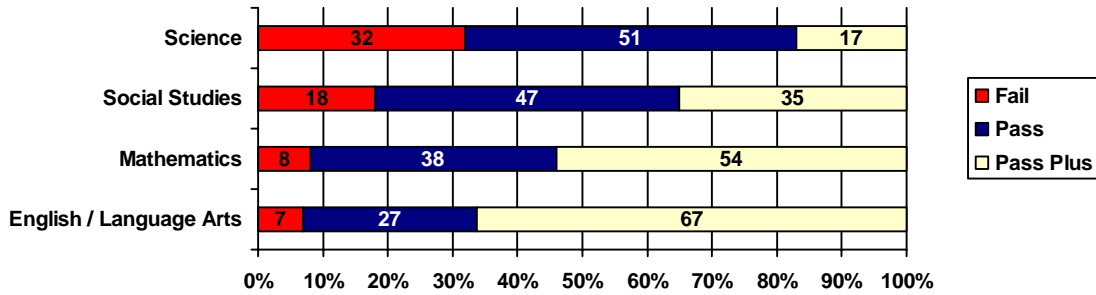
Camden County’s high school performance on the Georgia High School Graduation Test exceeded the state’s performance overall in all four skill areas - English / language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. The widest gaps in performance were in the areas of English / language arts and mathematics.

Camden County Performance on the Georgia High School Graduation Test, 2003-2004



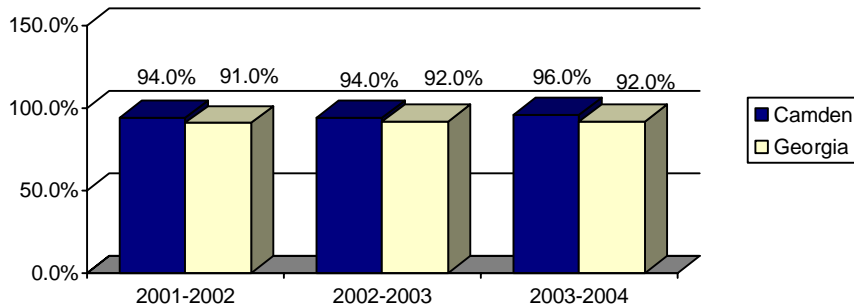
¹² Source: Georgia Department of Education

State Performance on the Georgia High School Graduation Test, 2003-2004



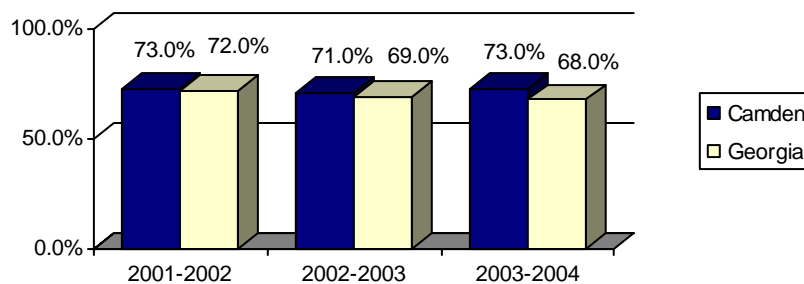
Developing skills in math and science is critical if Camden seeks to grow the knowledge-based workforce that is essential for supporting higher-wage, higher-skilled jobs. Specifically regarding at mathematics, 96 percent of Camden County’s students taking the high school graduation test passed the exam in 2003-2004, up from 94 percent in 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. This exceeded the performance for the state overall during all three school years. Camden’s high school graduation test performance in science increased slightly, shifting from 71 percent in 2002-2003 passing the test to 73 percent in 2003-2004, the same share the community saw in 2001-2002. During the same three-year period, the state saw a decrease in the performance of its high school students overall on the science test.

Camden Vs. Georgia High School Graduation Test Performance - Passing Mathematics



Source: Georgia Department of Education

Camden Vs. Georgia High School Graduation Test Performance - Passing Science



Source: Georgia Department of Education

However, during the 2003-2004 school year, Camden County High School did not meet the state's adequate yearly progress (AYP) requirements due to not meeting academic performance standards. As a result, the Camden County School System as a whole is reported to not meet AYP. (However, 11 of its 12 schools did.) On reviewing the AYP report, it appears that the high school meet 10 of 11 criteria, but the group of students appearing to need additional assistance are students with disabilities. Camden County High School is not - nor is any Camden County school - on the "needs improvement" list because it has not failed to meet AYP in the same subject for two or more consecutive years.¹³

In Fiscal Year 2003-2004, a total of 874 students from Camden County participated in the HOPE Scholarship Program, up from 22.6 percent from the previous year. Of those students, 85.7 percent were enrolled in a University System college, 5.5 percent were enrolled in a technical college, and 8.8 percent were enrolled in a private college.¹⁴

Adult education and training are top considerations among Camden County parents. When surveyed by Camden Children's Alliances and Resources, 60.9 percent of the 925 respondents indicated they considered Camden's adult education and training programs among the strengths for the community. Just over one-third (39.1 percent) indicated they considered them to be a weakness. Adult education and training were identified as a high priority resource by more than half (52.8 percent) of the respondents.

Youth Development Efforts

Youth development is a critical factor for building a quality workforce and a sustainable community. In 2005, Camden Children's Alliance and Resources, Inc. (CCAR) conducted a survey of 1,164 community residents who identified several youth development-related issues as key concerns.

Camden Children's Alliance and Resources, Inc. 2005 Survey

Issue	Not a Problem	Somewhat of a Problem	A Significant Problem	Percent
Job opportunities	149	398	462	45.8%
Unemployment	132	432	420	42.7%
Teen pregnancy	132	464	358	37.5%
Drug and alcohol abuse	164	443	348	36.4%
Teen violence	175	455	311	33.0%
Juvenile delinquency	178	454	295	31.8%
Children living in poverty	158	478	290	31.3%
Child abuse and neglect	199	461	268	28.9%
Children be born into two-parent families	290	441	243	24.9%
Children living in foster care for long periods of time	253	392	216	25.1%
Babies born to mothers with a high school diploma or GED	308	382	204	22.8%
Students complete high school	338	427	194	20.2%
Expectant mothers refrain from drug and alcohol use during pregnancy	282	433	176	19.8%
Students do well on state-required academic tests	471	365	145	14.8%

¹³ More information on the Camden County School System is provided on page 20.

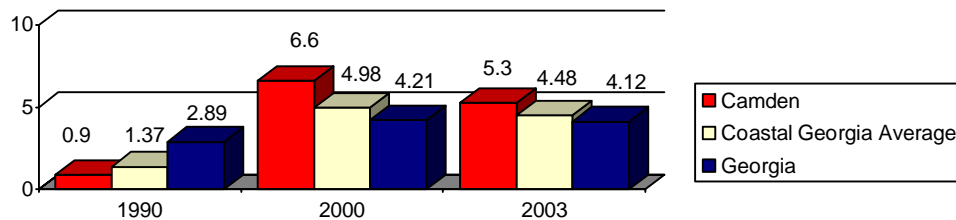
¹⁴ Source: Georgia Department of Education

Issue	Not a Problem	Somewhat of a Problem	A Significant Problem	Percent
Children less than 18 years old be in school or employed	410	378	120	13.2%
Children have the opportunity to attend preschool	571	293	116	11.8%
Expectant mothers receive prenatal care	655	246	48	5.1%
Babies born healthy	666	226	47	5.0%

Several of the more frequently identified youth development concerns related to what are largely seen as teen issues - teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, teen violence, and juvenile delinquency. Following those were a number of early childhood development concerns - children living in poverty, child abuse and neglect, that children be born into two-parent families, children living in foster care for a long time, and babies born to mothers without a high school diploma.

While child abuse and neglect was viewed as “somewhat of a problem” or “a significant problem” by those participating in the CCAR survey, in 2003, Camden County’s rate of child abuse was 8.7 per 1,000 children under age 18. While there appears to be a perceived prevalence of child abuse, as denoted by the survey results in the above table, the community’s child abuse rate was significantly lower than that for the state (21.2 per 1,000 children), as well as the average rate for Coastal Georgia (23.1 per 1,000 children). However, Camden’s child abuse rate in 2003 reflects an increase over 2000 (7.7 per 1,000 children) and 1999 (7.2 per 1,000 children).¹⁵ Camden County’s juvenile arrest rate (for ages 10 to 17) in 2003 exceeded the average for its Coastal Georgia region and the rate for Georgia, although its rate of 5.3 percent reflects a decrease since 2000, corresponding with trends in the region and state. Still, the community’s 2003 rate is approximately five times the rate of 1990.

Juvenile Arrest Rate in Camden County



Source: Georgia Bureau of Investigation

The teenage pregnancy rate (birth to teenagers aged 10-19 per 1,000) in Camden County was 28.4 per 1,000 female teenagers in 2002, shifting slightly upward from its rate in 2000 (28.0) and significantly lower than the rate in 1990 (47.6). Important to note, while Camden’s rate slightly increased from 2000 to 2002, the teenage pregnancy rate decreased on average within Coastal Georgia and within the state overall. Still, Camden’s teenage pregnancy rate in 2002 was lower than that of its Coastal Georgia region and the state.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

To assess workforce development needs, input was sought from area workforce development leaders in July 2005. The assessment of needs was also based on feedback provided by existing business and

¹⁵ Source: Georgia Department of Human Resources

industry in Camden County during interviews conducted in August and September 2005. In addition, data regarding occupational projections was reviewed.

What Workforce Development Leaders Say

During July 2005, several workforce development leaders provided their insights regarding Camden County's workforce development needs. Several issues were raised.

Work Ethic

According to one leader, Camden residents are not as desirous or as likely to see a need for education, and some people are extraordinarily proud of not having a high school diploma. "We have workers who don't work hard," said a leader, "but they want \$10 to 12 dollar per hour jobs and can't understand why someone doesn't hire them." Another leader indicated that part of Camden's workforce lacks understanding about dress code, the importance of timeliness, and other appropriate conduct.

These issues, explained one leader, are cultural and relate more to how people are raised than how they are educated. Another leader discussed this cultural facet as the effect of Durango, a union environment that employed mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters. Explained the leader, "It was understood that once you [were employed], you could make a good salary and benefits without further education." People were employed there who were not literate but did fine. Now that the mill closed, it's very difficult for them to move on as they don't have the skills, and some don't have basic literacy."

Another leader discussed the need to boost basic customer service skills among youth and the workforce, noting that customer service is a huge need in most business and industry.

Need for Quality Child Care

Several leaders discussed the need for quality child care. Camden County is reported to have several child care facilities, but also child care workers are reportedly not paid adequately. Said one leader, "We need to encourage or subsidize child care to the level where we have educated people educating our children and we're paying them what they're worth." This is a nationwide issue. Georgia's Smart Start Program was identified as one resource that could assist Camden's child care providers in providing quality care. In addition, it was shared that the existing child care centers have standard daytime operational hours, and the accessibility for shift job workers isn't there. One leader reported there to be a waiting list for child care. Adding a child care service component to Coastal Georgia Community College was also identified as a need.

Need for Better Youth Development

Related to the need for child care is the need for greater youth development to curb issues with alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, and juvenile delinquency. One leader advocated the need for youth development coordinators, those with prevention experience to help keep youth in high school and to help youth develop a career track that makes sense for them. Providing youth employment opportunities at after-school programs was another suggestion that would have a dual purpose - to train youth in a critical need area while providing youth development workers.

Another leader discussed the need for youth leadership development programs. Camden County currently has a youth advisory council as part of a regional effort in Coastal Georgia. The goal of this council is to place youth in non-elected board positions with area organizations. However, there is reportedly a lack of training in business and leadership skills for area youth.

Need for Entrepreneur Training

According to one leader, there are an "untold number of entrepreneurs that need help - mainly through education" in Camden County. The leader explained, "Successful entrepreneurs either come from families with money or out of the Navy. Those with money make it because they can ride till money comes, and [those from] the military will work themselves to death until it happens. The others need help." In addition to training for entrepreneurs generally, another leader advocated the need to provide such training to youth.

Lack of Public Transportation

The lack of public transportation was cited by some leaders as a major inhibiting factor linking residents to employment opportunities. One leader acknowledged Camden County's recently started rural demand response transit system as a good start, but, noted that there has not been much publicity and the community at large has not been made adequately aware of this new service. Another leader discussed the community's plans to develop a bike path, but explained that it was mainly focused on recreation rather than providing a major connective mode between housing and employment.

Disparity in Level of Work Available

Leaders noted the lack of high skilled jobs in Camden County. Said one, "There is a disparity between income and skill levels and the level of work available; there is not a lot of opportunity except for the service industry." Another leader described how Express Scripts tapped the lower-skilled labor force market (either via the Durango layoff or military spouses), explaining that the workers who are left are not willing to work in a call center environment.

Camden's low-skilled, low-paying jobs have reportedly meant that higher-skilled workers have had to go outside the county for employment or are stay-at-home consultants or telecommuters, or are on the

road two out of four weeks during a given month. As a result, explains one leader, Camden residents either work in the service industry or hold a professional occupation that offers some degree of a flexible work style. However, there is reportedly a lack of opportunities in between these two spectrums. As one leader put it, "There is a lack of jobs for the middle skilled workforce." Another leader pointed out the lack of jobs in the accounting, law and other professional service areas.

Need for Greater Outreach to Military / Military Spouses

One leader explained how there are a significant number of engineers currently affiliated with the base, so the technical workforce is present. This observation is substantiated to some degree by the data provided by the Fleet and Family Support Center at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay. One leader advocated the need to start providing additional training needed for young service members (getting out of the Navy) to make the transition into the commercial sector, noting that service members are often 38 to 40 years old when they separate, and are looking for a career with private enterprise. Another leader indicated that Camden County has not effectively captured opportunities that could be represented via spousal employment.

Lack of Opportunity for Certain Groups

One of the leaders reported a lack of jobs available for women, explaining that most women with an advanced educational background must choose between becoming an educator or real estate agent. It was also reported that there is very little opportunity for minority men, educated or not, though noting there are more opportunities for Black females than Black males. African American men are reported to have opportunities limited to yard work and maintenance. In addition, one of the leaders reported the need to conduct special outreach and provide English-as-a-second-language training to those residents who speak a primary language other than English.

Lack of Workforce with Basic Technical Skills

It was reported the Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay as well as the general business community often have to recruit outside Camden County to fill their need for individuals with basic technical skills such as computer programmers, information technology specialists, missile electronic technicians, computer support analysts as well as welders, steel fabricators, pipe fitters, and construction technicians. It was also reported that Camden has difficulty filling jobs in the medical field.

Lack of Coordinated Support

Camden County houses several organizations involved in workforce development efforts, but there appears to be a lack of effective coordination among those entities. That lack of coordination inhibits Camden's ability to meet area workforce development needs as effectively and efficiently as it could. Said one leader, "We need someone to coordinate and think past the day-to-day operations." Said another, "We need not to just go to meetings, but to learn how to work together on real initiatives." Some leaders discussed the fragmented efforts as a key challenge for knowing who or what organization to go to for what assistance. This fragmentation also fosters a lack of awareness concerning the availability of services.

Camden County does not have a career placement office. In addition, another leader discussed the need for an aggressive, vocational program that blends academia with it, noting that the Coastal Georgia Community College is a beginning, but not an end. This leader advocated for greater coordination to enable a better working relationship among the college, the Kings Bay Naval Base, and other workforce development providers.

One of the leaders recommended this level of coordination also take place beyond the county boundaries. "We need to work on a team and not just do it on a county level, but also a regional

level,” said the leader, “and leverage resources to avoid duplication of effort and so, for example, each county does not hire a consultant but perhaps three counties join forces to hire one consultant.”

What Existing Business and Industry Leaders Say

Georgia Tech interviewed a total of five industrial organizations, including three located on Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay and two manufacturers outside of Kings Bay. Area businesses provided a relatively high average rating (3.8 out of a scale of 1 to 5) for Camden’s K-12 education system. However, they provided relatively low ratings for the area’s workforce, averaging 2.6 out of a scale of 1 to 5. Furthermore, they named the lack of labor or a skilled workforce as a weakness or liability for conducting business. On the other hand, they cited Camden’s stable workforce to be an asset for doing business. Area businesses also cited limited access to educational and trade institutions as a weakness.¹⁶ Identified training needs included ethical conduct, maintenance skills and mechanical skills.

Occupations for the Future

The Georgia Department of Labor is predicting a growth of 34,640 jobs in Camden’s Coastal Georgia region (Workforce Investment Area Region 20) by 2012. For the same period, the Florida Department of Labor is predicting a growth of 95,143 jobs in Camden’s Coastal Florida region (WIA Region 8). The top five occupations in demand for Coastal Georgia are general and operations managers, registered nurses, elementary school teachers, retail salespersons, and cashiers. The top five occupations in demand for Coastal Florida are registered nurses, general and operations managers, customer service representatives, retail salespersons, and management analysts. For both regions, service-oriented, whether personal or business, positions appear to be high in demand.

Included in the occupational outlook, the Georgia Department of Labor predicts a growth of 17,150 net new jobs in “creative class” occupations for Coastal Georgia and the Florida Department of Labor predicts 39,333 such occupations for Coastal Florida. According to the labor departments in both states, both regions combine to already provide approximately 323,453 such jobs, with Coastal Florida accounting for 71.6 percent of that total. With Savannah and Jacksonville as regional anchors for this workforce, Camden may potentially provide the lifestyle amenities desired by this workforce. This knowledge-based workforce is largely seen as a critical driver for a community’s potential to compete in the global economy today and in the future.

“Creative Class” Occupational Projections – Coastal Georgia (WIA Region 20)

Occupational Area	2002	2012	Growth	AHW
Sales and related	28,370	33,820	5,450	\$16.76
Education, training, library	16,370	21,790	5,420	\$24.97
Health care practitioners and technical occupations	10,030	13,110	3,080	\$21.93
Management	16,690	19,550	2,860	\$30.76
Computer and mathematical	4,470	6,490	2,020	\$25.40
Business and financial operations	7,080	8,990	1,910	\$22.36
Architecture and engineering	3,140	3,640	500	\$24.22
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, media	2,540	3,030	490	\$17.83
Life, physical, and social sciences	1,400	1,780	380	\$22.24
Legal	1,610	1,990	380	\$22.61
Subtotal	91,700	114,190	22,490	
ALL OCCUPATIONS	288,540	329,270	40,730	

¹⁶ For further information, see companion report “Economic Diversification of Camden County, Georgia: Existing Business and Industry Support.”

The growth in “creative class” occupations in Coastal Georgia is projected at 24.5 percent by 2012, significantly outpacing the overall occupational growth (14.1 percent) projected for this region. These occupations are high-wage occupations as their average hourly wages significantly exceeding the average hourly wage for occupations overall. “creative class” occupations expected to achieve the highest growth in Coastal Georgia are those in the education, training, library; sales and related; health care; management; business and financial operations; and computer and mathematical areas.

While Coastal Florida’s base of “creative class” occupations is 2.5 times that of Coastal Georgia’s, its projected growth within these occupations is not as high. The growth in “creative class” occupations in Coastal Florida is projected to be at 17 percent by 2012, outpacing to some extent the overall occupational growth (14.6 percent) projected for this region. As seen in Coastal Georgia, these occupations are high-wage occupations as their average hourly wages significantly exceeding the average hourly wage for occupations overall. Wages for these occupations are notably higher in Coastal Florida than Coastal Georgia. Given Camden’s closer proximity to the regional anchor of Jacksonville than Savannah, this is important to note. “creative class” occupations expected to achieve the highest growth in Coastal Florida are those in the sales and related, health care, education, business and financial operations, and management areas.

“Creative Class” Occupational Projections – Coastal Florida (WIA Region 8)

Occupational Area	2002	2012	Growth	AHW
Sales and related	73,019	80,905	7,886	\$22.61
Health care practitioners and technical occupations	29,728	37,402	7,674	\$35.18
Education, training, library	28,055	34,305	6,250	\$25.02
Business and financial operations	32,168	38,295	6,127	\$24.94
Management	30,680	35,324	4,644	\$34.70
Computer and mathematical	15,470	18,752	3,282	\$30.75
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, media	8,063	9,425	1,362	\$24.41
Legal	7,036	8,138	1,102	\$32.18
Architecture and engineering	6,846	7,758	912	\$26.84
Life, physical, and social sciences	688	782	94	\$24.19
TOTAL	231,753	271,086	39,333	
ALL OCCUPATIONS	651,057	746,200	95,143	

ADVANTAGES FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce development leaders provided their insights regarding Camden County’s workforce development advantages. Several were identified.

Organizational Support

Camden’s abundant resources for fostering workforce development were cited frequently by leaders. Leaders discussed the several organizations that play a key role in Camden County’s efforts. Observations passed on by leaders are provided here, and several of these organizations are discussed in greater detail in the next section of this report.

Camden County’s school system is unanimously viewed as a positive asset. One leader, who is also retired Navy, described how Camden County’s schools are better than any he had seen in his 20-plus year Navy career that had taken him to locations all over the country. It was also mentioned that the school system partners very well with other organizations within the community to advance workforce

development. Several leaders mentioned the system's Youth Apprenticeship Program as being a very effective tool for introducing students to realistic job-based skills.

Coastal Georgia Community College's willingness to craft its curriculum to the needs of whatever company coming in was also mentioned as an advantage. Leaders acknowledged how this college provides Camden County with direct access to Georgia's QuickStart program. Said one leader, "The college has the facility and structure that allows flexibility to hand-tool an education or workforce development program on the academic or technical side, plus has the resources to cover the basics." Another leader pointed out that the college addresses different capacities by offering career tracks and temporary training.

The Navy College Program was also cited as a key asset, with programs available from Brenau University and Valdosta State University. Said one leader, "The Navy puts a lot of emphasis on higher education, and offers a number of good academic programs." What was not clear, and perhaps is an area of opportunity, is the level of partnership between the Navy College Program and Coastal Georgia Community College and Camden County's school system. Another possible area of opportunity relates to technical programs. Said one leader, "The typically auxiliary machinist may not be interested in academic degree but may be interested in being a HVAC technician." This leader provided further elaboration: "The Navy does a good job with training culinary specialists. A chef comes to the galley and this has been a great tool for the base. Those stationed at the base can take various courses, and once they complete all the courses they can get a certification while still in the Navy. The Navy could do this with other types of technical programs, such as the building, electrician, and auto repair or maintenance trades."

Other workforce development programs mentioned as assets by leaders include the Camden-Kings Bay Chamber of Commerce, Family Connections, Georgia Department of Family and Children Services, Georgia Department of Labor, Georgia Tech, Intellectual Capital Partnership Program (ICAPP), National Business Women's Association chapter, New Horizons computer training in Jacksonville, private businesses from Brunswick and Jacksonville that provide a variety of seminars, private colleges in Brunswick including Troy State and St. Leo, a real estate support group, the Camden County Joint Development Authority, the Camden Partnership, and the University of Georgia via the Fanning Institute. Several leaders discussed these assets as resources-in-place that have unrealized potential, and advocated the need for more cohesive efforts.

Diverse Workforce

Several leaders mentioned military retirees and service members opting to leave the Navy at the end of their duty as individuals with good experience and skills who could be a great resource. Some leaders consider this workforce to be untapped and not fully optimized. Said one leader, "We have a number of people retired from the military that are here or have come back here; they're a wonderful resource, they have training, good work ethic, and are fairly young in their mid-40s." Another explained, "We have people who are retired or are retiring to the area; they're young retirees who want to be near the coast and still want to work. They're educated, with lots of work experience from other areas, and are ready for their second careers."

In addition to the service members themselves, leaders described the spouses of active-duty personnel as an untapped resource. Said one leader, "Spouses are typically college graduates who are choosing not to work or are going to Jacksonville but would probably much rather work here [in Camden]." Another leader pointed out that reaching out to spouses could be beneficial in helping to foster a vested interest not only among the spouses but also the sailors who will be looking for the right community to live in after leaving the military.

In addition to the impact of the military, some leaders also reported a migration from the Jacksonville area, which is contributing to Camden's growing workforce. Leaders recognized that as Jacksonville continues to grow, so will opportunities for Camden to grow its workforce. While workers migrating to

Camden will undoubtedly work in Jacksonville at least in the short term, they represent an asset for Camden to leverage to grow a base of businesses or employment opportunities closer to home. By all accounts, Camden’s workforce was described as diverse, with individuals having different capacities to do a variety of jobs. The resounding point made by leaders is the need for a diverse set of jobs to match the variety of skills represented by the workforce. One leader explained that college graduates in Camden often work in retail due to the lack of jobs for skilled and educated workers, and they lack opportunities for advancement.

Community Leadership

Community leadership was also cited as a workforce development asset. For example, the events leading up to the siting of Coastal Georgia Community College in Camden County were shared by one leader as an example of this leadership. According to the leader, when Camden County decided six to eight years ago it wanted what is today referred to as the Camden Center, there were a number of hurdles to overcome. At the time, Coastal Georgia Community College operated out of a vacated school building in Kingsland. The college president discussed the community’s desire for a more permanent campus with the University System of Georgia Board of Regents and heard from the board that land would be needed for such a campus. The president relayed this to the community leadership who, in turn, secured a donation of 75 acres to site the campus. When the Board of Regents indicated the community would need to invest \$500,000, Camden County met this need expeditiously as well. Camden’s determination and coordinated action to have a permanent institution of higher education within the community impressed several leaders inside and outside the community.

PREPARING THE FUTURE WORKFORCE¹⁷

From its child care service organizations and school system to the Georgia Department of Labor, Coastal Georgia Community College, and the Navy College Program, Camden County houses several organizations that have been actively involved in preparing its future workforce.

Stakeholders were asked to express their views on how well the education system meets Camden County’s needs. They were asked to provide a rating of 1 to 5 where 1 means “not at all well” and 5 means “very well” for four specific categories of educational support. Generally, Camden County’s public school system was highly rated by stakeholders. They provided an average rating of 4.4 for the K-12 system, indicating they viewed that it met the community’s needs well. Post-secondary education, mainly through Coastal Georgia Community College, was also rated highly. Stakeholders provided an average rating of 4.1, also indicative of their views that the college meets the community’s needs well. Stakeholders also rated the available early childhood education fairly well, providing an average rating of 3.97. Private schools were not rated well overall. Several stakeholders were unaware of the presence of private schools within Camden, and those who were aware provided an average rating of 2.35.

EDUCATION SYSTEM	AVERAGE
Early Childhood	3.97
K-12 Public Schools	4.40
K-12 Private Schools	2.45
Post-Secondary Schools	4.11

Camden’s economic development partners were asked to share their views regarding how marketable Camden County is for five key economic development strategies related to the future prosperity of the community. For each, they were asked to use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all marketable”

¹⁷ Information included in this report on various workforce development organizations is based on interviews conducted with 11 workforce development-related leaders in Camden County representing the various organizations.

and 5 means “very marketable.” Camden County’s ability to grow a quality workforce through workforce retention and attraction, while receiving more favorable than unfavorable ratings, had the lowest average rating (3.56) among strategies by partners. Indeed, stakeholders viewed developing a quality workforce to be of utmost importance, while partners viewed Camden’s current marketability for this as high but not as high as the other strategies. Therefore, expanding workforce development efforts may be an important community action item for Camden to seize upon.

	MARKETABILITY RATING BY PARTNERS	IMPORTANCE RATING BY STAKEHOLDERS
Developing a quality workforce	3.56	4.76
Recruiting new industry to move to your community	3.87	4.53
Helping local businesses sustain and expand their operations	3.90	4.40
Supporting entrepreneurs / fostering business start-up activity	3.88	4.27
Attracting more tourists to visit your community	4.32	4.10

Information for the following workforce development organizations is largely based on interviews with and information from representatives of the organizations.

Early Childhood Development Programs

As of August 2005, Camden County was home to 11 child care learning centers, 35 family day care centers, and two group day care homes that were licensed by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning or participating in Georgia’s Pre-K Program. This includes the Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay Child Development Center, which reportedly will start accepting non-military affiliated children in the near future. In addition, the Fleet and Family Support Center at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay certifies 10 child development homes. Each of these centers is certified by the state as well as the National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Some of these facilities administer a pre-kindergarten program. Also, pre-K is offered at several local schools, including Crooked River Elementary, David L. Rainer Elementary, Kingsland Elementary, Mamie Lou Gross Elementary, St. Marys Elementary, Sugarmill Elementary, and Woodbine Elementary. Camden has 14 pre-K programs, which reportedly serve 200 children each year.¹⁸

In the Community Resource Studies published by The Camden Partnership in 2004, child care rates for weekday infant care average \$82 a week and \$71 a week for weekday 5-year-old care. The average waiting time for Camden’s licensed care providers ranges from one week to one month. This does not include the child care available at the Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay.

While several workforce development leaders discussed the need for quality child care and available care, community stakeholders also rated Camden County’s child care programs favorably, providing an average rating of 3.97, indicating their view that such programs were good. In addition, early childhood development programs were rated favorably by parents participating in the Family Connections survey. Almost two-thirds (65.3 percent) of the 818 parents responding to the question about child care and after school care programs identified these programs as a community strength. Just over one-third (34.7 percent) viewed them as a weakness. More than half (56.6 percent) indicated that they felt these programs are a high-priority resource, meaning that maintaining and/or strengthening them should be a community focus. And while there appears to be some level of

¹⁸ Source: Camden County Community Resource Studies, 2004

available child care, the care reportedly does not offer the flexibility associated with non-traditional work schedules nor is it the same as *quality* child care that was identified as a need by area leaders.

Extended Day Program

Camden County Schools Extended Day Program is a recreational after school program that meets in all nine of Camden County's elementary schools. Extended Day employs an average of 60 staff each year. Thirty-one are salaried employees and 29 are hourly employees. The program enrolls an average of 730 children a year and has a daily average attendance of 480 children.

Extended Day staff members are found through a variety of local agencies in Camden County. For example, Camden County High School provides a partnership with the Extended Day Program through its Youth Apprenticeship Program, Teacher Apprenticeship Program, Diversified Cooperative Training Program, and the Community Business Education Program. The Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay Fleet and Family Support Center's Spouse Employment Assistance Program, Georgia Department of Labor, and American Work, Inc. also provide staffing. Staff are trained in CPR and first aid every year through the American Red Cross, in crisis prevention through First District Regional Education Service Agency, in child abuse and neglect training through Camden County Schools and Prevent Child Abuse-Georgia, and in communicable disease transmission prevention through Camden County Schools, and they also receive 20 training hours a year in child development and school age programs sponsored by Coastal Georgia Community College Adult Learning Center and Coastal Georgia Resource and Referral Agency.

Extended Day Programs offer enrichment in nutritional awareness, physical fitness, and overall good-health practices with the help of community partners such as Coastal Health District and Camden County Health Department, Camden County School Nurses, Camden County Chronic Disease and Tobacco Use Prevention Coalition, and American Red Cross (e.g., Scrubby Bear Hand-washing Campaign).

It is reported that children are provided snacks and a wide variety of activities to choose from. Indoor activities include homework centers with minimal adult assistance as needed, arts/crafts centers, board games, construction zones, dramatic play, house keeping center, book nooks, music and dancing, science and exploration, and adult-directed and child-directed interest club activities. Outdoor activities include outdoor playground equipment, outdoor centers (bubble, sand, and water stations), large-group and small-group games, and wide assortment of individual play equipment.

Camden County School System¹⁹

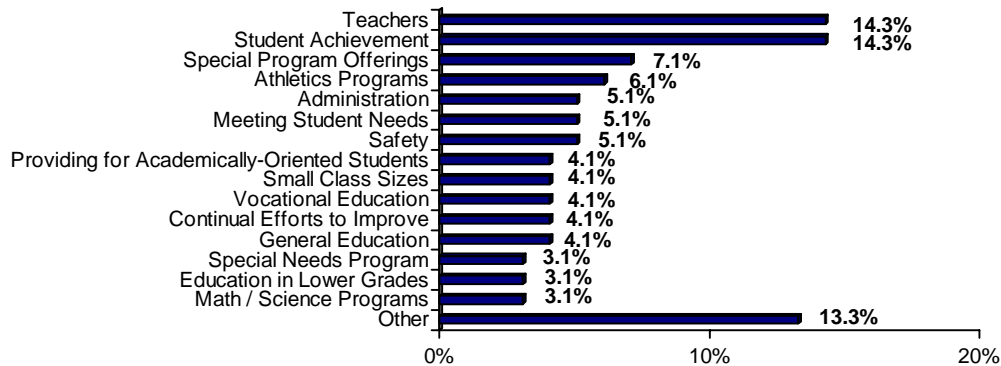
Camden County's public school system was highly rated by stakeholders who provided an average rating of 4.4 for the K-12 system, indicating they viewed that it met the community's needs well.

Stakeholder Views

When asked to identify the one thing the K-12 system excels in, stakeholders provided a total of 98 responses. Teachers and student achievement received the highest mention, each accounting for 14.3 percent of the total. This is interesting as the two are inextricably linked. Qualities receiving a fair degree of mention included special program offerings, the athletics programs, school administration, meeting the students' needs, and safety. Other qualities receiving some degree of mention included providing for academically oriented students, small class sizes, vocational education, continual efforts to improve, general education, education in lower grades, and math and science programs.

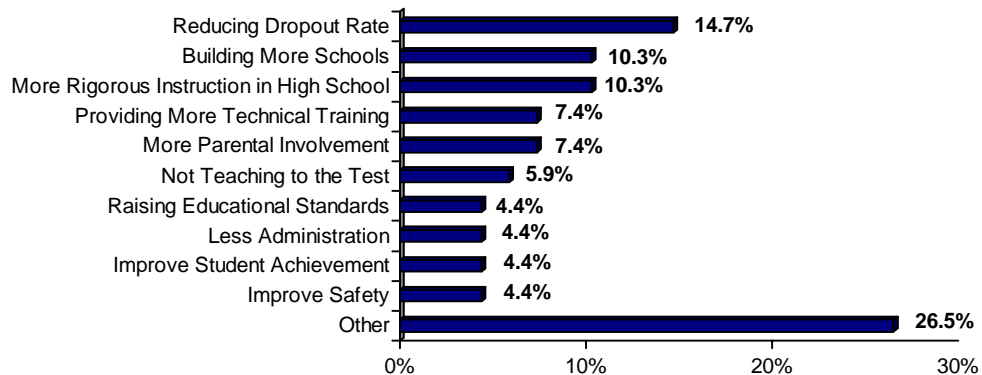
¹⁹ Information in this section is from the companion report, "Economic Diversification of Camden County, Georgia: Summary of Interview with Community Stakeholders," the Georgia Department of Labor, and officials from the Camden County School System.

What Do Camden County Schools Excel In?



When asked to identify the one thing in which the K-12 system needs improvement, stakeholders provided a total of 68 responses. Reducing the dropout rate received the most frequent mention, accounting for 14.7 percent of responses. Tying for the second highest share (10.3 percent) of responses were building more schools (mainly at the high school level, although mention also was made of middle and elementary schools) and providing more rigorous instruction in the high school. Other areas of improvement receiving a fair degree of mention included providing more technical training and having more parental involvement. Stakeholders also mentioned the following areas: not teaching to the test, raising educational standards, less administration, improving student achievement, and improving safety.

What Do Camden County Schools Need Improvement In?



About the School System

The Camden County School System includes nine elementary schools - four in St. Marys, four in Kingsland, and one in Woodbine. It also includes two middle schools, one in Kingsland and one in St.

Marys. The system operates one comprehensive high school in Kingsland, one alternative school located with the high school, and a 9th Grade Center (to provide transition assistance to eighth graders for high school) which is also part of the high school.

During the 2003-2004 school year, as mentioned earlier in this report, the Camden County School System did not meet the state's adequate yearly progress (AYP) requirements. However, 11 of its 12 schools did and all schools met test participation requirements. None of Camden County's schools was on the state's "needs improvement" list. A total of 9,417 students were enrolled in Camden County schools during the 2003-2004 school year. Six percent of the student population participated in the gifted program.

The system operates several special programs, many designed to help students be more successful in their school career. After school tutoring is provided. Summer Acceleration Camps expose students to upcoming goals and objectives for the year and are especially geared to students with difficulty in learning. The system operates a Saturday School for remediation purposes. There are several extracurricular programs ranging from the Spanish Club to the National BETA Club. The Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl is a program whereby students from different schools read and compete, and can advance to regional and state levels. Student to student mentoring is encouraged. For example, athletes work with younger aged students to read aloud and mentor. National Honor Society students mentor at risk ninth graders as well as volunteer time for childcare during Parent University sessions.

The school system employs 26 faculty members with endorsement to provide gifted and advanced instruction. Advanced Placement courses are offered in the following: biology, economics, English, psychology, chemistry, physics, calculus, and US history.

Elementary Schools

Elementary schools incorporate specialized academic and extracurricular programs. For example, Kingsland Elementary School employs the Jack and Jilly Reading Program for Kindergarten students; Accelerated Reader, Accelerated Math, Leap Frog Learning Systems, STAR Reading and Math; and also operates a literary club, photography club, running club, 3rd to 5th grade chorus, and school newspaper. Another example - Woodbine Elementary School utilizes Dr. Cupp's Reading Program for kindergarten and first-grade students, a science lab for second to fifth graders, a technology lab for kindergarten through fifth graders, and also operates programs in cheerleading, hand bells and chorus, read aloud club (with parents), a student council, and school newspaper.

Middle Schools

Camden County's two middle schools host special programs to advance scholarship. For example, Camden Middle School hosts an Academic Achievement Breakfast every nine weeks whereby students maintaining the highest grade point average and students of the month are recognized with their parents present. St. Marys Middle School conducts an annual writing fair. Both schools actively participate in an annual science fair.

Special outreach is conducted to eighth graders and their parents to help build an academic roadmap that will provide support in whatever career path is chosen. Counseling is provided to help students understand the reality of what they need to do both at the high school level and post-secondary side to achieve the career they seek. School officials report a high emphasis on math and science in their academic pursuits.

High School

Camden County High School is a comprehensive high school. Students at Camden High can access course offerings from four-year sequential programs in mathematics, English, and foreign languages for career as well as post-secondary vocational and academic pursuits. Honors, gifted, and advanced

placement classes are reported to be offered in all core areas. Specifically, advanced placement classes are available in English literature, English language, calculus, biology, and physics. Camden High encourages all students in 9th grade to pursue a college prep degree at a minimum, but also proactively advises students and their parents on the merits of pursuing a dual degree in College Prep and Career Technology. There is evidence of such counseling as a review of graduation activity over recent years reveals that more students have graduated with a dual degree in Camden than any other degree.

At Camden High, students graduate with 28 credits. Of these, 19 are required and the balance can be filled with arts and career technical offerings regardless of whether they're pursuing a college prep or career technology degree. Camden High offers a total of 32 choices for students to choose from. More than half (54.9 percent) of the high school students participated in vocational labs during 2003-2004. Career Technology courses are provided in agriculture technology, automotive technology, business technology, child care, culinary arts, ROTC, family / consumer finance, metal technology, health services technology, construction technology, engineering technology, and public safety. Work-based learning programs (internships, coops, apprenticeships, on-the-job training) include Cooperative Business Education, Diversified Cooperative Training, Teacher Apprenticeship Program (TAP) and Youth Apprenticeship Program.²⁰

Students in Camden are also exposed to trade and industrial skills through the SkillsUSA program. For example, one program held in 2005 enabled students and adults to compete in nail driving contests, jack hammering, and numerous other activities that promoted interest in trade and industrial study.

Camden County High School operates two dozen student clubs and organizations. Clubs focused on art, drama, foreign languages, 4-H, debate, literary works, and a variety of other areas have been organized. Camden County is reported to have strong performing and visual arts and music programs. These include Marching Band, Majorettes, Visual Ensemble, Art Club, Drama Club, and two to four after-school productions per year. Following is a brief description of some clubs focused on leadership development.

- The junior and senior beta clubs are set up for the "promotion of character, the development of leadership, the encouragement of good citizenship and community service, and the recognition of scholastic achievement." Students must maintain a grade point average of 90 or above for membership in the junior beta club and 94 or above for the senior beta club. Students must perform a minimum of 12 community service hours per semester.
- The Camden County National Honor Society was established "to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of character in students of Camden County High School." To be selected, students must maintain an average grade point average of 92.
- The Future Business Leaders of America includes over 100 student members and seven advisors who participate in community service projects, competitive events, leadership workshops, and professional conferences.
- Camden County's Key Club is a community service-oriented group. Students must complete a minimum of 12 service hours per semester. Examples of activities include adopt-a-highway, Habitat for Humanity, tutoring, animal shelter, visiting kids in the local hospital, caroling during the holidays, leading Relay for Life, planting flowers, fundraisers, and planning socials.

Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP)

Through the Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP), students are offered the opportunity to begin accumulating 2,000 hours of work experience while in high school to follow through their postsecondary

²⁰ See more on vocational education in the section on the Youth Apprenticeship Program on page 25.

training program. Youth Apprenticeship is offered to college and non-college bound students in all career cluster areas. YAP was added to the Camden County High School program in 1995 to augment the traditional “menu” of work-based learning programs. YAP focuses on six key clusters: agribusiness and natural resources, business / banking / financing / marketing, engineering technology (ranging from break specialists to a naval engineer), health and medical services, human resources, and the military. YAP is currently working to add a seventh cluster focused on the fine arts. Any student can choose any of the classes offered through YAP.

To be admitted into YAP, students cannot miss more than 13 days per year of school. Camden lacks an attendance policy, so YAP serves as an incentive for students. YAP will sometimes make exceptions for students at-risk for dropping out. For those students, YAP will set up a special contract where the students agree to be at school for a certain number of days in order to keep their work program.

Camden High has an articulation agreement with Coastal Georgia Community College through which CGCC and many other technical colleges accept the credits students earn through YAP while in high school as credit for technical college.

Instructional programs are offered related to each cluster. For example:

- Business Education Program: Related to the business / banking / finance / marketing cluster, students can take courses in business office procedures, banking, accounting, hospitality and tourism, multimedia, etc. This program serves approximately 1,200 to 1,400 students per year, and is the largest among the instructional programs.
 - Camden began offering an entrepreneurship course two years ago. The course raises awareness among students about the need to have a business plan, need for financing, and other needs relating to starting a business. However, it is reported to provide a basic overview of entrepreneurship but is not geared to equip students with the skills to start their own business immediately. The course raises awareness among students and also engages them in creative projects. For example, last year’s class handled the marketing aspects for the job fair where they helped to recruit 45 employers to participate and 500 students to attend.
- Trade Industrial Area: Related to the engineering technology cluster, basic industrial trade courses in the offered such as automotive, computer maintenance and repair, construction, drafting, and metal working. If students have had at least two courses in this area, the YAP office will assist them with setting up an interview with a nearby employer during their junior year. That program is staffed with five full-time teachers and serves approximately 400 students per year.
- Health Occupations: Related to the health and medical services cluster, students can earn their Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) accreditation while still in high school. This program serves approximately 180 students per year.
- Public Safety: Related to the human services cluster, this program offers a three-level course and students the ability to earn technical college credit. Approximately 60 students participate each year.
- Child Development: Related to the human services cluster, this program serves approximately 60 students per year.
- Pro-Foods Program: Related to the human services cluster, this program is certified by the National Restaurant Association and offers courses in the culinary field.
- Teacher Apprenticeship Program: Related to the human services cluster, this is a two-semester program for seniors where they spend the first half of the semester observing and the second semester being mentored by a master teacher. This is the only grade-based program through YAP where students need to maintain an 85 grade point average.

- Horticulture: Related to the agribusiness and natural resources cluster, students have access to training in horticulture, flora culture, aquaculture, etc.
- Fine Arts: Not related to any existing cluster, Camden is working to make this a separate cluster. The Arts in the School program is run by a theater that allows all students of any grade level (K-12) to participate in cultural events throughout the year. Youth apprentices can do sound and lighting, stage and set design, and marketing, and get to see many of the aspects related to theater management.

In addition to the instructional programs, YAP connects students to real life on-the-job training and work experiences. Approximately 200 students participate in some type of work-based learning program each year ranging from job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships to clinicals, coop positions, and teacher apprenticeships. During at least one period per day, approximately 160 students leave the high school for some type of on-the-job experience.

One of YAP's goals is to develop home-grown talent to stay within Camden County. There are several examples of where YAP has met this goal:

- A new teacher at one of Camden's elementary schools had formerly participated in YAP. Through the Teacher Apprenticeship Program, the student had volunteered in a number of positions at the very school she is now employed. She began working in the after school daycare program during her eleventh grade year, and eventually was able to earn nearly 900 hours of practical experience before she left high school. After receiving a degree, she returned to the school she had been affiliated with earlier.
- One of the first students to participate in YAP is employed, ten years later, at the Southeast Georgia Health Systems - Camden Campus. Although she is only 26 years old, she has been in some capacity with the hospital through all her training since she was a high school junior, and currently works as a radiology technologist.
- A student in the health and medical program had little financial support during his high school years. Through participating in YAP, he ended up graduating in 2003 as a state certified EMT and has been employed with Southeast Georgia Health Systems - Camden Campus since graduation. He was recognized as the 2005 Tech Prep Outstanding Student at the state Tech Prep conference in Atlanta.
- Trident Refit Facility has transitioned nearly 25 students over the past three years into permanent employment that begins with a sequence of two trade and industrial classes in grades 9 - 11. During spring of the junior year, students are offered the opportunity to enroll in Youth Apprenticeship and work at TRF during the summer to "co-op" their senior year with 20 hours of part-time work per week. Four shop rotations allow them to be pre-selected into noncompetitive, permanent employment and potential placement into the federal Navy civil service apprenticeship program. All students have simultaneously participated in joint enrollment options with Coastal Georgia Community College so they can transfer in both articulated and joint enrollment credit at graduation. This has allowed them to transition into the associate degree requirements of the TRF program. Trident seeks students with Algebra 2 completed, an SAT of at least 830, good attendance, and good work ethic.

Teacher Development

The Camden County School System has instituted an instructional lead teacher program, providing an instructional lead teacher (ILT) in every school. The ILTs are not classroom teachers but responsible for training, research, and gathering material and resources to help the classroom teachers. In addition, the school system provides "learning focused training," a framework for developing the best way to teach a student whereby teachers and students are asked what they need to know. The system

then works from there to build the curriculum, which is often beyond what the state requires. Also, faculty engage in collaborative planning where teachers can meet at grade levels one day a week to discuss curriculum and strategies for meeting curriculum throughout week.

Most schools are involved in Whole Faculty Study Groups through which teacher-generated professional learning is provided. Schools assemble their performance data, examine strengths and weaknesses, and then study, research, call in expert voices, and develop and measure plans to meet their students' needs.

Other teacher development programs include employment of the "What Works in Schools" and "High School That Works" models within the middle and high school levels. Here, instructional training is provided based on what works best elsewhere. In addition, there is active participation in the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI) where teachers receive special instruction on how to improve their teaching methods.

Through a partnership with the Coastal Georgia Community College, teacher internships and externships are offered. The college also provides a "Summer Educator Academy" to acquaint teachers with technical training programs and work-based applications.

Parental Involvement

Several programs designed to boost parental involvement exist within Camden County schools. They include:

- In 2003-2004, the schools implemented Parent LINK, a telephone system used to alert parents and communicate with parents on a variety of school matters. Parents receive an automatic phone call if their child is absent, and get calls announcing conference scheduling, PTA events, holidays and other school activities.
- The Pinnacle Viewer program provides parents with online access to their child's grades in almost real time. Parents are also alerted via e-mail anytime their child receives a grade that is below a certain grade. Students can also see how they're performing throughout the year, and this is reported to be especially used by high school students.
- Camden County also operates a Parent University. Parents attending this program go to a conference with a speaker program and participate in breakout sessions on a wide range of topics ranging from helping disabled students and behavior management to learning how to use the Pinnacle Viewer. Local businesses and agencies participate in various activities related to Parent University.
- Parent resource centers exist in most Camden schools. Within these centers are both materials parents can check out and computers they can use to go online and do research.
- Camden County also has an active PTA, with each school at the elementary, middle and high school levels having their own organization. The PTA coordinates a variety of workshops for parents. One example is a workshop on what to expect from and how to teach their children.
- Camden County has parent advisory committees that look at performance data and help determine curriculum development within the schools.
- Title 1 advisory committees also review performance data and provide advice to school system officials.
- Camden County's school councils are reported to be strong and active, with parent and business participation.

Community Connectivity

Camden County schools appear to be well-connected with their community at-large. Following are just a few examples.

- The Partners for Education program is fairly active, with area retailers such as Wal-Mart, Publix, and Winn Dixie involved. In addition, area employers such as Lockheed Martin also participate. A recent example is Lockheed's efforts to bring presenters to speak on the fine arts.
- The school system's Character for Education program involves active community partnership. Through this program, the school identifies one character trait to focus on each month for parents to reinforce with their kids. Area businesses post posters featuring the character trait of the month, as do area churches and civic associations who also sponsor the trait and provide opportunities for discussion.
- The Camden Collaborative Committee for Education manages the A+ Card program to reward honor roll students at the close of the grading terms. Local businesses offer incentives that are listed on the cards and distributed to honor roll students. The students can then redeem their card for the incentive.
- There is active partnership with the Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay. All the submarines have adopted a school through a program administered by the Camden Collaborative Committee for Education. Navy personnel tutor students, conduct various projects around the schools, and help with field day events and numerous other activities.
 - Health Occupations students along with those enrolled in Childcare and Teacher Apprenticeship co-hosted Special Olympics with the Naval Base. Students served as buddy partners to special athletes for the special day and assisted in helping athletes coordinate the centralized layout of the event.
- The Camden County Rotary Club features different teachers throughout the year as guest speakers. The club also provides special honors to teachers.
- St. Mary's Kiwanis is also reported to be quite supportive of area schools. For example, the club donated hundreds of books to support the Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl.
- Rotary members along with Lockheed employees have supported the *Choices* program for eighth grade students. The *Choices* program emphasizes the concept that education beyond high school will be necessary for life long learning and a successful working adulthood. Both 8th grade teachers and students respond well to the program.
- Local businesses inside and outside the county provide financial support for various programs such as teacher of the year. Banks are reported to readily provide financial support as needed.
- The schools have conducted fundraisers for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, the American Heart Association's Jump rope for Heart, tsunami relief, and other causes.
- Teachers and students engage in service learning projects. For example, with Habitat for Humanity, they participate in the House of Learning initiative.
- Mayors visit classrooms to help students understand their civic role.
- The Camden County Sheriff's Office is reported to be very supportive of the schools, participating in outreach efforts such as Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE).
- Visual art teachers often connect community partners to student talent. For example, students were engaged to develop a design for a park in the city of Kingsland. Students are also engaged to paint murals in homes and on community buildings.

- The Camden County School System hosts an annual spring job fair where employers are connected with students.
- The school system works closely with the Georgia Department of Labor's Division of Rehabilitation Services to assist students with special needs in gaining access to continued support services as they move from school to postsecondary training, vocational training, or the workforce, and with other partners to help improve services for Camden County's disabled youth and adults.
- School System faculty serve on numerous regional and local committees.

Technology in Schools

Camden County Schools employ wireless technologies. Faculty are reported to be well-equipped with technology tools (e.g., walkie-talkies, computers) and to utilize these tools not only for administrative purposes but also curriculum delivery purposes. Through the Tech in Classroom Suites program, teachers compete by school for technology suites. Supported through a grant by the Georgia Department of Education, the top two teachers per school who have demonstrated competency with the use of technology in their classroom receive a laptop, digital camera, smart board, three extra computers, and a printer to use for instruction in the classroom. Parent LINK and Pinnacle Viewer are examples of how Camden County schools utilize technology to connect with parents. Overall, Camden County schools fare better than the Georgia averages for technology. Although, on average, other systems have better access to instructional video.^{21, 22}

- 100 percent of Camden County public schools have high-speed internet access, just above the share (99.9 percent) for the state.
- 99 percent of Camden County's 592 classrooms have high-speed internet access, exceeding the share (98.2 percent) for the state.
- 95 percent of classrooms have at least one computer, notably higher than the share (88 percent) for the state.
- There were 5.56 students per computer (not including servers), exceeding the ratio (4.38 students per computer) for the state.
- 419 classrooms (71 percent) have access to PeachStar video, lower than the share (74 percent) for the state.
- 38 classrooms (6 percent) have access to some form of interactive video (other than GSAMS), lower than the share (9 percent) for the state.

Accomplishments

Camden County schools can boast of several things. Three elementary schools - Matilda Harris Elementary, Crooked River Elementary, and St. Marys Elementary - have earned recognition as Georgia Schools of Excellence. St. Marys Elementary is also a National Blue Ribbon School. The state school nurse of the year and state media specialist of the year have been from Camden County in recent years. And, one of Camden's teachers made it to the top five finalists for State Teacher of the Year in 2003. Following are a few more:

- Camden's theatre program won back-to-back Region Championships in 2004 and 2005. The theatre program was also invited to perform at the American High School Theatre Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland. (The program declined the invitation due to scheduling conflicts.)

²¹ Source: Georgia Department of Education.

²² Following data extracted from companion report "Economic Diversification of Camden County, Georgia: Asset Inventory."

- One of Camden's teachers earned the Construction Teacher of the Year award by the National Center for Construction Education and Research. The teacher was twice recognized as the Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year, and recognized most recently as the Georgia Wal-Mart Teacher of the Year.
- The Youth Apprenticeship Director has been a featured speaker at the state School to Work Best Practices Conference (2003), Tech Prep Conference (2004), National High Schools That Work (2004), and several professional development workshops. The director also serves as chair for the Southeast Georgia Youth Apprenticeship Advisory Committee and as secretary of Georgia Youth Apprenticeship Program Advisory Committee.
- Camden's Fine Arts Director serves as president of the Georgia Theatre Conference. The director served on the State Board of Georgia Thespians from 2000-2005, was named to the Georgia Thespian Hall of Fame in 2004, and also served on the Advisory Board of the Southeastern Theatre Conference through March of 2005. The director is also a member of the *Southern Theatre* Editorial Committee.
- Students involved in the SKILLS USA club annually excel in local, regional, and state competitions, regularly moving on to national competition.
- Camden High won the state AAAAA Georgia High School Association football championship in 2003. According to one school official "The near win in the 2002 championship made Atlanta, Georgia's capital city, a real place. It inspired students to broaden their horizons to explore postsecondary and work opportunities in North Georgia."

Coastal Georgia Community College

Coastal Georgia Community College (CGCC) is a commuter school with two campuses. Its main campus is in Brunswick and its other campus - known as the Camden Center and opened in May 2004 - is in Kingsland. However, CGCC has had a presence in Camden County since the early 1990s when the school operated out of a building formerly used as an elementary school. The CGCC receives its main funding from the University System of Georgia Board of Regents (BOR) as well as funding for equipment from the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE). The college, which is under BOR governance, serves Camden, Glynn, and McIntosh counties.

The building of the Camden Center was an initiative that began in the 1990s and represents a communitywide effort, which, as put by one leader, "brought together both the BOR and DTAE and got [the necessary] backing in a fairly small community." Camden County residents contributed the land, the sheriff's department contributed a significant donation toward the seed money required, local businesses and organizations also contributed seed funds, and the city of Kingsland paved the roads.

Camden Center offers mainly associate's degree courses. The CGCC offers some bachelor's and master's courses through a cooperative arrangement with Armstrong Atlantic State University and Georgia Southern University - some of these courses, although not the full program, are available through the Camden Center. Armstrong Atlantic offers bachelor's degrees in history, criminal justice, early childhood education, middle school education, nursing, and general studies (in business, criminal justice, political science, education, history, and psychology). The university offers masters in nursing, special education, early childhood education, and middle school education. The latter two offerings are available through the Camden Center, while the others are primarily available through the Brunswick campus. Georgia Southern's classes are all held at the Brunswick campus and include coursework for a bachelor's degree in business administration and master's degrees in business administration, nursing, early childhood education, and middle school education. The Brunswick campus is located approximately a half hour from the Camden Center where students can partake in classes on-site or via the Georgia Statewide Academic and Medical System (GSAMS) videoconferencing network. The Camden Center is also beginning to provide unique offerings. For example, a new program in heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) is only offered at the Camden Center.

The CGCC's enrollment is approximately 3,000, and it has been steadily growing over the years. In fall 2004, the Camden Center's head count was at 682. By spring 2005, enrollment at the Camden Center jumped to 732. During the 2004-2005 academic year, CGCC conferred degrees or certificates upon 340 graduates. Following are some descriptive statistics:

- More than half (58.2 percent) of these graduates earned an associate's degree.
 - Of those earning an associate's degree, more than half (55 percent) earned a transfer degree meaning they graduated from a program that would enable them to proceed to a four-year college.
 - The remainder (45 percent) of the associate's degree earners received a career degree meaning they graduated from a program that prepared them to immediately enter the workforce for a field that typically requires at least a two-year degree.
- Thirty percent of CGCC's graduates earned a certificate and 11.8 percent earned a technical certificate of credit.
- CGCC's most popular programs are related to health care - the Registered Nursing (RN) program and Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program. Together, these programs, the RN being a career degree program and the LPN being a one-year certificate program, accounted for nearly one-fourth (23.8 percent) of the graduates.
- Teacher education and business administration, both transfer degree programs, accounted for the next highest number of graduates.
- Computer and related technology programs, ranging from one-year certificates to Associate Degrees, accounted for 13.2 percent of the graduates.

The college is working toward offering all the student services available in Brunswick at the Camden Center as well. The Camden Center now houses a small book store, student development services (for academic advisement), a staffed library with several computer terminals, a learning center that offers tutorials and opportunities for study groups, and services for students with disabilities. The director of events is reported to be actively working toward scheduling events in the Camden Center. At the time of this assessment, the Camden Center did not offer child care or career placement services. The CGCC provides some student enrichment workshops at the Camden Center on topics such as how to use Galileo, improving study skills, test taking, writing and research, resume writing, and career exploration. The CGCC is reported to be planning continual expansion of services at the Camden Center as the need arises and resources become available.

The CGCC is currently working with several partners in Camden County. The college partners with the Camden County School System to provide dual-enrollment programs for high school seniors. Through these programs, seniors can earn credit for graduation simultaneously with earning college credit. Programs are offered in core classes such as English, college algebra, political science, and history. The CGCC also partners with the schools on the Youth Apprenticeship Program, enabling students to take relevant courses at the college. The Camden Center administrator maintains regular hours at the Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay to provide outreach and program assistance to military personnel and their families. The college works collaboratively with the University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center in Brunswick to run a non-credit "start-up-your-own-business" class, as well as computer application and beginning business courses.

Although there are no formal internship programs, service learning is a major component of the CGCC's nursing program. Students are expected to participate in clinicals and practicum linked to their area of study. In addition, all programs have advisory committees to ensure that courses cover relevant, practical material that can be applied in actual work settings. These committees are staffed by industry representatives from the three counties as appropriate. For example, the Manufacturing Maintenance Committee includes representatives from Bayer Acroft Science of Woodbine. The CGCC's

presence in Camden County is credited by many leaders with the community's success in attracting Express Scripts.

In addition to the standard two-year academic and vocational programs, CGCC offers several non-credit offerings to develop workplace skills. These include Web design, medical assistant training, and pharmaceutical assistant training. These programs are often accessed by existing professionals who seek to upgrade their skills or change careers.

A special initiative unique to CGCC is one focused on building skills among African-American males in the Coastal Georgia region. Supported through funding by external contributions and dating back to the mid-1990s, this program helps middle school black males develop skills to improve their academic performance and links them to instruction about behavior, role modeling, and career exploration assistance. Other special programs offered through CGCC include an adult literacy program run by DTAE, a small English as a second language (ESOL) program, and a special campaign to raise scholarship money specifically for Camden County students.

Future plans for CGCC include a horticulture program and patient-care technician program. The CGCC is also interested in developing programs in golf course management, banking and finance, and child care. Administrators hope to grow the offerings available in Camden County as the interest grows.

Navy College Program

The Navy College Program is administered on-site at the Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay. The program serves military personnel, their families, and civilians. Four full-time professionals, with knowledge of a variety of college programs available via colleges and universities around the country, provide guidance to prospective students. They provide counseling for 650 to 700 prospective students per year. Courses are offered directly by faculty of Brenau University and Valdosta State University, as well as via distance learning channels by colleges and universities around the country. Brenau offers bachelors and master's degrees primarily in business but also in other areas. Valdosta State offers two-year and four-year degrees in a variety of areas including computer science, criminal justice, and liberal arts.

On-base schools are considered service member opportunity colleges (SOC). For the Navy, these are referred to as SOCNAV schools. SOCNAV schools enter into a legal agreement in which they agree to: conduct an evaluation of every student after six semester hours; provide an assessment of every course the student will need to take based on prior college, rate, rank, service schools, and exams; and develop a list of every course the student must take to complete their degree. SOCNAV agreements are also intended to make it easier for students to transfer credits from one institution to another, whether located in the same state or different states.

Whether the Navy College Program can serve civilians is at the discretion of the Commanding Officer (CO). However, program officials report that past COs have been supportive because opening up to civilians increases the demand for course offerings thus enabling the program to offer more classes and degrees for the military, as well. The program enrolls 400 to 450 students per term, of which 60 percent are affiliated with the military (active duty or family member). The program graduates 100 to 120 students per year.

The Kings Bay Navy College Building includes six classrooms, the Navy College Learning Center, a computer lab, and science lab. There are also classrooms available around the base. Navy College Program officials estimate that the program could serve up to 600 to 650 students its full capacity. The Navy College Learning Center provides computer-based courses in math, English, reading, and basic skills to active duty and family members who can take courses ranging from third and fourth grade level to calculus 3.

The Navy College Program streamlines and shortens the admissions processes and other administrative requirements for its students. Military members can receive a turnaround time on their paperwork within 24 hours. The procedures differ from those required by the University System of Georgia's Board of Regents.

Colleges offering courses on the base follow the Navy College Program's admissions processes. Many of CGCC's offerings are also offered by Valdosta State on the base. However, the program's offerings on the base run on an accelerated eight-week cycle, with evenings and weekend classes, rather than the typical 16-week cycle administered through BOR colleges. This makes it difficult for students to take classes on the base and from CGCC during the same period. However, with CGCC's Camden Center in such close proximity to the base, opportunities for greater synergy in the future certainly exist.

Through the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) program, students can access external degree and independent study programs from 150 to 200 colleges around the country. Navy College Program officials report that degrees are available from the associate through doctoral levels. Anyone can come to the Navy College Program to take these courses, but would need to contact the schools directly to enroll.

Additional distance learning is offered to Navy personnel via 17 partnership colleges that offer degrees that are rate-specific - that is, degrees recommended by the American Council of Education for particular navy ranks, rates, and service schools - through distance learning online courses. These degrees are semi-technical - e.g., Thomas Edison's degree in nuclear technology - are navy-specific and offered to military personnel only. The Navy College PACE Program is available for active duty military who are considered part of a sea-going unit (submariners). This program includes distance learning courses as well as (on some ships) instructor-based courses, and enables personnel to take some courses while they're deployed and continue their studies with on-base courses when they return. The program's courses are free to Navy personnel, although distance learning is difficult when one is on deployment (due to Internet access and work schedules).

At the time of this assessment, there had been no joint programs or initiatives between the Navy College Program and the Camden County School System. In addition, observations shared by various leaders indicate that coordination between the Navy College Program and CGCC could be improved upon. Some leaders have reported the relationship between the two organizations to have been strained in the past. Affecting this opportunity for coordination is the apparent competition for students faced by all colleges.

Post-Secondary Institutions in Jacksonville, Florida²³

There are numerous organizations offering post-secondary educational opportunities in the Camden County area via their locations in Jacksonville.

- The **Florida Community College at Jacksonville (FCCJ)**, as the name states, is a unit of the state of Florida's community college system. As with CGCC, FCCJ offers technical certificates, two-year associate terminal degrees, and college transfer programs, as well as high school completion and adult literacy programs. The FCCU has a satellite campus in Yulee, just south of the state line, that offers an associate of arts university transfer degree, customized workforce education classes, adult literacy/high school completion programs, and outdoor education. More information about the college is available on-line at <http://www.fccj.org/index.html>.
- **Jacksonville University** is a private liberal arts college located in central Jacksonville. It offers undergraduate, graduate, and adult degrees in arts and sciences, business, and fine arts. More information about the university is available on-line at <http://www.ju.edu/>.

²³ Extracted from the "Economic Diversification of Camden County Georgia: Asset Inventory" companion report.

- The **University of North Florida (UNF)** is a unit of the State University System of Florida and is located just southeast of downtown Jacksonville. The school features 50 undergraduate degree programs with 96 areas of concentration, 24 graduate degree programs with 79 areas of concentration, and a doctoral program in Educational Leadership. It has colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Computing Sciences and Engineering, Education and Human Services, and Health. In 2004, UNF had a total of 14,120 students—including 11,000 undergraduates and 1,700 graduates—and 465 faculty members, 444 of whom held Ph.D.s or similar degrees. In-state tuition in 2004 was \$2,913 and out-of-state tuition was \$13,268. More information about UNF is available on-line at <http://www.unf.edu/>.

Camden-Kings Bay Area Chamber of Commerce

The Camden-Kings Bay Area Chamber of Commerce works closely with the Georgia Department of Labor, University of Georgia Small Business Development Center, and other partners to provide seminars and workshops on key training topics for business and industry. For example, two programs underway include a training program on business employee retention and one on customer service. In addition, the chamber is working with area news media and others to develop a training workshop on how best to market a small business.

Another workforce development initiative of the chamber is Leadership Camden. Through this program, community and chamber members attend a six-month program, with a two-day retreat in the first month. Participants visit different businesses to learn what they do, what they're needs are, and how they, the participants, can be supportive. They also participate in leadership seminars and meet with leaders of various service organizations within Camden including those within the health services, schools, military, emergency services, and local government sectors. Leadership Camden is currently on hiatus while the chamber is examining how to enhance it and potentially expand it to also include local government officials in future classes.

In addition, the chamber is working to offer a variety of programs geared to foster adult learning. Some examples include:

- Conducting quarterly luncheons with guest speakers on topics of interest to small business. For example, at a luncheon focused on small business tax accounting issues, the chamber invited a CPA comes in to talk about these issues, 45 minutes to take questions, and advise businesses about how they can deal with various challenges.
- Planning a two-hour seminar on employee retention - and how to be an "employer of choice."
- Developing a customer service training program with the Georgia Department of Labor for area employers and their employees.
- Planning a Business Expo with the Georgia Department of Labor with a job fair on front end and an expo of products of area businesses on the back-end to provide a "one-stop" shop.
- Developing a seminar on public relations and marketing for small businesses with local consultants and media.

Joint Development Authority of Camden County

The Joint Development Authority (JDA) of Camden County is often the first responder when it comes to addressing the workforce needs of current and future employers in Camden County. For example, the JDA worked closely with Express Scripts, the Coastal Georgia Community College, and Georgia's QuickStart Program to help develop a suitable program to meet Express Scripts' training needs at its new facility. Here, the JDA played the facilitator role, connecting the employer with the right resources and helping to determine which resources would be the right fit. This is similar to the role the JDA plays with other area employers.

The Camden Partnership

The Camden Partnership represents Camden County as far as Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay is concerned, both in Washington, DC as well as locally. The Camden Partnership is seen as providing a critical link between the base and community, and is led by a U.S. Navy retiree who once served as the Commanding Officer at Kings Bay. This organization has been successful in bringing together several organizations of diverse interests to focus on addressing key challenges, including those that are workforce and workforce development-related.

Camden Children Alliance & Resources, Inc. (Family Connections)

The Camden Children Alliance & Resources, Inc. (CCAR) is Camden County's local branch of the Georgia Family Connections Partnership. The CCAR focuses on capacity building and resource development and its goals are to help foster a healthy and drug free lifestyle and to raise the median income. It does not provide direct service delivery, but is the official planning agency focused on the well-being of families and children.

The CCAR identifies and helps secure funding and support for various workforce development-related programs such as youth development services (e.g., after school programs for middle school students), English-as-a-second-language services, and coordination of community efforts to address workforce issues (e.g., affordable / workforce housing, public transportation). The CCAR has supported the Youth Advisory Council, a leadership development program to get youth employed and serving in various boards of director positions, mainly for non-profit organizations serving the area. This council provides youth with life skills training and decision-making skills. It also provides opportunities for community service. Youth attend county commission and city council meetings and also have access to professional development opportunities such as those available through the Institute for Cultural Affairs for Facilitation Management. Other examples of how CCAR has supported workforce development needs include:

- Arrange for presentations at the middle schools on tobacco and drug awareness.
- Provide funding for busing from middle school to after school programs.
- Provide curriculum and resources for parenting classes to be held at different organizations (e.g., pre-schools).
- Support neighborhood-based prevention programs and after school care programs by providing funding and resources, connecting neighborhoods with people willing to conduct the programs, and bringing in outside consultants and experts to help develop the programs.

Need for Public Transportation

Through CCAR's community assessment, it was determined that the lack of accessibility was a critical gap affecting connectivity to jobs and services. (This was echoed by community stakeholders who mentioned transportation connectivity frequently as a serious issue affecting Camden's economic development and quality growth.) The CCAR identified a grant that required a local match and led a successful fundraising effort to acquire the match and start a rural demand response transit system. According to CCAR:

“Demand response (also called para-transit or dial-a-ride) is comprised of passenger cars, vans or small buses operating in response to calls from passengers or their agents to the transit operator, who then dispatch a vehicle to pick up the passengers and transport them to their destinations. A demand response operation is characterized by the following: (a) the vehicles do not operate over a fixed route or on a fixed schedule except, perhaps, on a temporary basis to satisfy a special need; and (b) typically, the vehicle may be dispatched to pick up several passengers at different pick-up points before taking them to their respective destinations and may even be interrupted en route to these destinations to pick up other passengers.”

The public transit system has the full backing of the Camden County Board of Commissioners. When Coastal Georgia Transportation faced financial challenges, the county agreed to provide the needed support. The Georgia Department of Transportation has acknowledged Camden County's public transit system - known as Coastal Georgia Transportation - as a model for how third-party transportation should operate.

The bus service runs throughout Camden County on fee-based mileage (\$5 per 10 miles) and charges \$20 for round trip to Jacksonville or Brunswick. Residents can arrange for transportation by calling 24 hours in advance, as well as arrange for emergency transportation with last-minute calls. There is reported interest in setting up regular routes, but the ridership has not been achieved yet. However, it is unclear to what extent the general public is aware of this relatively new transportation service.

Neighborhood Prevention Program

CCAR supported a neighborhood-based prevention program that started as what was essentially an ad hoc after school program. To prevent kids from being alone during the after school hours, a local parent initiated an effort to start meeting kids at the bus and provided them a safe haven to stay until their parents returned from work. The kids received homework help and other assistance. Eventually, this effort ended up serving 43 children five days a week, at no charge and all on the volunteer effort of this one parent. CCAR contributed \$3,500 to the program, and also helped the Camden County Public Service Authority secure community scholarships (totaling more than \$31,500). The latter enabled 45 children from high-risk neighborhoods to attend summer camp. More than 30 children learned to swim during this initiative, a critical skill for life on the coast.

Kings Bay Career Center

The Georgia Department of Labor's (DOL) local career center - known as the Kings Bay Career Center - is located in St. Marys. Its primary service area is Camden County. This center represents an unusual asset for Camden in that these career centers are often set up to serve more than one county. The career center philosophy is one that permeates DOL offices statewide - namely, to assist area residents with career development issues, and not solely with unemployment filings. However, it was reported that there remains a perception of this office as an "unemployment office."

Through the Kings Bay Career Center, patrons can receive education and training services about career options, for various occupations, for tapping into financial aid, and for other relevant needs. They can also receive personalized (one-on-one) employment assistance where they are counseled on exploring and assessing careers and conducting job searches. Patrons have access to the world's largest job listing network and an on-line job referral request system. They may be able to access, if eligible, transportation, child care, and other assistance while in training or start work. The Career Center makes available the latest technology tools - patrons have access to computers, laser printers, word-processing and resume writing software, Internet, e-mail, etc. This includes assistive technology for patrons with visual and/or hearing impairments. Generally, services are tailored to meet the special needs of the population being served. Patrons can also attend job-search skills workshops (e.g., writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing, salary negotiation) and access books and videos on job searching and other relevant topics through the self-help library. Also, through the Career Center, patrons can access information about unemployment insurance benefits.

The Kings Bay Employer Committee was created by DOL to link employers with employment resources and services. This committee includes a group of employers who meet on a monthly basis and provides an opportunity for networking. Monthly meetings are sponsored each month, typically by a resource agency and include a feature speaker provided through that agency. As of September 2005, there were 50 employers on contact list for the committee, and attendance at meetings is reported to average 30, a significant accomplishment over a year ago when the committee had five regular members. In addition to Camden, the committee includes employer members from Charlton (GA), Glynn (GA),

Nassau (FL), and Duval (FL). The committee has served to foster business-to-business support, as well as support for the schools, chamber, and other community service efforts.

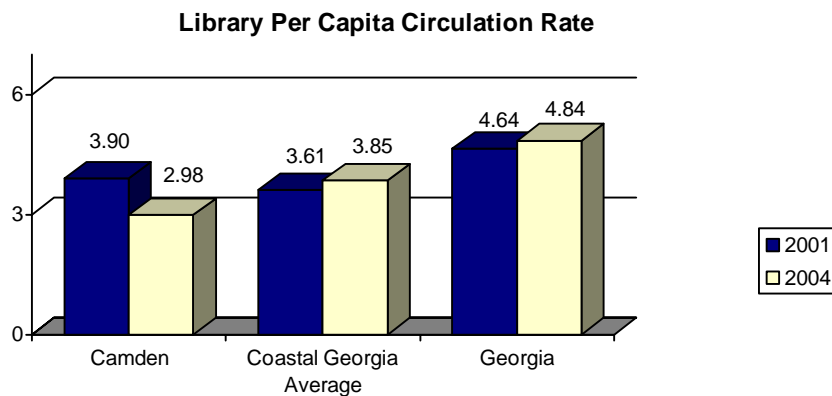
The department is partnering with the chamber on planning and hosting various workshops, such as the “employer of choice” seminar, as well as a combined job fair and business expo known as the “Coastal Career Expo, Business Expo, and Taste of Camden.” The event is designed to feature employers, foster business-to-business marketing, and provide opportunities for commerce to Camden’s food service businesses.

Fleet and Family Support Center at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay

The Fleet and Family Support Center provides services to active duty transitioning out of the military, military spouses and other eligible family members, retirees and their eligible family members, and transferring civil service employees and their family members. The center is reported to offer the full spectrum of services in the area of career development assistance, such as career guidance, counseling, transition assistance and workshops on resume writing, interview skills, how to find a federal job, dressing for success, job search building blocks, job fair preparation, filling out applications, etc. In addition, the center regularly job fairs for veterans. Staff work with the Georgia Department of Labor regularly. One example is the hosting of a youth expo at the high school. The center serves 500 to 600 walk-in clients per month. They also offer transition assistance program classes which serve 30 to 50 students at a time.

Public Libraries

Three public libraries exist in Camden County: the Camden County Public Library located in Kingsland, the St. Marys Public Library, and the public library available at Coastal Georgia Community College. Public libraries are often the gateway to a universal body of knowledge that is so critical for preparing to participate in the global economy. Recent data shows that the library per capita circulation rate has decreased in recent years. This may indicate a potential decline in the usage of library resources, but does not take into account library patrons who may use computers and other on-site resources and refrain from checking out materials. Still, during the same period, 2001 to 2004, the circulation rate increased with the Coastal Georgia region and the state. In 2004, Camden’s rate was lower than the average for its region and the rate for Georgia.²⁴



Source: Georgia Department of Adult and Technical Education

²⁴ Source: Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education

Other Relevant Organizations

Camden County houses a number of other relevant organizations that have an impact on workforce development. Examples include the United Way of Camden County, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the Toastmasters Club, to name a few.

State Incentives for Workforce Development

As described in the latest version of the *Georgia Economic Developers Association Incentives Manual*, several incentives exist in Georgia for fostering workforce development. The following has been extracted from that manual.

- QuickStart: Free and customized training is available to new and expanding manufacturing and office operations through the technical colleges.
- ICAPP: Free and customized training is available to new and expanding businesses in high-tech areas through area colleges and universities.
- Workforce Investment Act: Federal training resources are accessible to Camden County through the Georgia Department of Labor's Kings Bay Career Center.
- Child Care Tax Credit: Employers who provide or sponsor child care for employees are eligible for a tax credit of up to 75 percent of the employers' direct costs. Any credit claimed but not used in any taxable year may be carried forward for five years from the close of the taxable year in which the cost of the operation was incurred. In addition, employers who purchase qualified child care property are eligible to receive a credit totaling 100 percent of the cost of such property. The credit is claimed at the rate of 10 percent a year for 10 years. The qualified property credit may be carried forward for three years from the close of the taxable year in which the qualified property is placed in service. Both of these child care credits can be claimed simultaneously in any given taxable year.
- Basic Skills Education Tax Credit: A tax credit is provided to those businesses that supply or sponsor basic skills education programs for their employees. The program must be approved and certified by the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education. The amount of the tax credit can equal up to \$150 per employee who has completed an approved basic skills education program. Excess credit may be carried forward for up to three years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As our national and state economies increasingly rely on retaining and attracting talent, workforce development should be a continuous economic development priority for Camden County. The following recommendations for feasible action steps are proposed to implement the strategic goal for workforce development and address Camden County’s most urgent needs in this area.

Key Issue	Strategic Goal
Camden County’s potential for economic development and diversification depends upon its ability to develop a knowledge-based workforce, which can best be accomplished through improving the coordination and collaboration of its workforce development organizations and expanding efforts in key targeted areas.	➔ Join forces to ensure that workforce development is demonstrably excellent at all levels, from early childhood through adulthood.

1. **Camden County’s workforce development organizations should jointly create a permanent “one-stop consortium” to provide a fully integrated system of workforce development services.** The consortium, operating via a task force, should include representatives from each of the organizations profiled in this report and from the business community. Officials should consider inviting representatives from neighboring communities from which employees commute to Camden County to the task force. This task force could:
 - a. Serve as a single point of contact for all workforce development information related to Camden County and surrounding areas and meet regularly (for example, quarterly) to discuss workforce development challenges and investigate options for addressing those challenges.
 - b. Create a Web portal as a one-stop online destination regarding all workforce development-related resources available to Camden County.
 - c. Collaborate on providing the entire community with services such as community expo / job and resource fairs, skills-based workshops such as those currently being planned by the Camden-Kings Bay Area Chamber of Commerce in partnership with others, and retraining opportunities. Such activities can raise awareness among area residents about existing opportunities for employment and retraining and future workforce demands.
 - d. Identify potential job opportunities including those not advertised through traditional channels and those to address future needs identified by area employers, and coordinate efforts with the Georgia Department of Labor to disseminate information about those opportunities.
 - e. Communicate regularly with Camden County schools and institutions of higher learning about area employment needs and provide advisement about curriculum development.
 - f. Help area businesses understand state incentives and regional and local programs of assistance available for workforce development.
 - g. Facilitate greater involvement in and utilization of the plethora of existing workforce development resources.
 - h. Investigate the feasibility relating to collocating various workforce development resources in a central location, as it makes sense to do so.

2. **Camden County should conduct an extensive inventory of the talent available within the community to potentially identify “hidden talent.”** Military base and retirement communities often have “hidden talent” that is unknown to community leadership. Camden County is both a military base and growing (young) retirement community. Efforts to further understand the level of skills represented by area residents, whether permanent, transitional, or part-time, should be conducted. Special outreach should be conducted to military personnel and their spouses. The potential to leverage the Camden County Newcomers Club for these efforts should be explored. Such efforts are critical for understanding future needs for workforce development and for designing future business development strategies.
3. **Camden County’s local social service providers, business associations, media organizations, and school system should work with the Camden Children Alliances & Resources Inc. to collaboratively expand efforts to raise greater awareness among parents and young people about the hazards (for example, alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, high school dropout, juvenile delinquency) that risk their futures.** A volunteer service corps to aid in this effort should be explored. For example, volunteers could provide one-on-one mentoring to area youth, particularly those at risk, foster further awareness on hazards affecting teens and conduct career-building workshops. Military personnel and retirees are among those who could be recruited as volunteers.
4. **The Camden-Kings Bay Area Chamber of Commerce should proceed with rejuvenating and strengthening the Camden County Leadership Program.** Resources to help are available through the University of Georgia. The chamber should partner with the Camden County school system and its various youth leadership development-related organizations to develop a Youth Leadership component to this program.
5. **Camden County’s workforce development organizations should expand training programs for current and potential entrepreneurs.** The Camden County Board of Education, perhaps in partnership with the Camden-Kings Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, should create a high school enterprise (youth entrepreneur development) program. Planning assistance is available through the “Global Achievers” program, Georgia REAL Enterprises, and through other sources. In addition, expanding entrepreneur program offerings via the Camden-Kings Bay Area Chamber of Commerce and at the Coastal Georgia Community College, including those that can be conducted in partnership with the University of Georgia Small Business Development Center, should be considered.²⁵
6. **Camden County should foster greater coordination and collaboration among Coastal Georgia Community College and the Navy College Program at Kings Bay and among the Navy College Program at Kings Bay and Camden County schools.** These three resources represent key organizational support for workforce development efforts. Program administrators of each should consider meeting regularly (e.g., monthly) to discuss mutual interests and needs. The Navy College Program / Valdosta State University and Coastal Georgia Community College should come to a joint understanding about program offerings and consider developing a Memorandum of Understanding about which institution will offer what course during the year.
7. **The Camden County Board of Education and Coastal Georgia Community College should regularly review and adjust their curriculum and programs according to stakeholder**

²⁵ Global Achievers enables elementary, middle, and high school students “to learn the commercial and entrepreneurial skills required to set up a company, identify products, discover marketing opportunities, explore manufacturing skills and then export products. The students also work with their school partners to identify, import, and market products from around the world.” (Source: www.globalachievers.org). Georgia REAL Enterprises provides entrepreneurship curriculum and training from elementary to post-secondary grades. (Source: www.gareal.org).

concerns, employer needs, and projected occupational demand for the area as described in this report. Both organizations should consider:

- a. Expanding programs for skills in current demand by area employers and for occupations in projected high-demand areas for both Georgia and Florida workforce regions.
 - b. Expanding programs to develop more workers who can fit the “creative class” occupations as Camden could capture more of these jobs given its coastal location.
8. **The Camden Partnership, Camden County Joint Development Authority, and Camden-Kings Bay Area Chamber of Commerce should meet regularly with Coastal Georgia Community College officials to discuss program and curriculum needs, and receive feedback from CGCC. Camden County should consider what occupations businesses need to meet their workforce needs (through the interviews). Economic development leadership should work to match these occupations with degrees at CGCC, and look for gaps in occupation/degree matches.²⁶**
 9. **Camden County should increase publicity efforts of the newly developed public transit, and begin to immediately explore opportunities for transforming this service into a regular route service. County leadership should partner with every dissemination vehicle (news media, the chamber, local civic organizations, social service organizations, schools, etc.) to make residents aware of the current service and how it works. In addition, county leadership should begin to research what resources (and ridership) are required to transform the public transit into a regular-route service.**
 10. **Camden County should expand career development counseling efforts to students, from early grades through 12th grade. Expanding on the existing efforts to mentor students on how they need to prepare for various jobs, county leadership should consider developing “real life fact sheets” to help students understand the basics on required educational achievements, including various post-secondary avenues, basic expenses to expect while pursuing careers, related salaries, and what those salaries mean in real terms.²⁷ Such efforts should be targeted to elementary grades and up. In addition, the community should consider hosting career days especially geared to young children. Such efforts could help Camden address work ethic issues early on. Efforts should be taken to especially target and provide resources to at-risk students for not performing to their full potential.**
 11. **Camden County workforce development professionals should review the projected “creative class” occupations for Coastal Georgia and Coastal Florida, and counsel students on the academic and vocational work they need to pursue for attaining those occupations, both at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Counseling should especially be geared toward helping students understand the right courses and training programs to take that could prepare them for the higher-paying occupations projected for the area. The potential to link such efforts to the Youth Apprenticeship Program should be explored.**
 12. **Generally, workforce development professionals should work in concert with Camden’s economic development leadership on initiatives to foster job growth and development, especially in the knowledge-based business (KBB) sectors. These include supporting various marketing activities, expanding efforts to foster entrepreneur skills among students and adults, continuing to stay in tune with existing business and industry to address their expansion needs**

²⁶ This recommendation also intentionally appears in the companion reports “Economic Diversification of Camden County, Georgia: Business Growth Opportunities” and “Economic Diversification of Camden County, Georgia: Existing Business & Industry Support Assessment.”

²⁷ This practice has been implemented in Fannin County, Georgia.

from a workforce perspective, and continuing to emphasize, as well as look for ways to expand, incorporating math, science, and technical skills in all academic and vocational programs.²⁸

13. Using the positioning statement, **“Camden County offers expanding businesses and entrepreneurs a desirable Southern coastal location to thrive, with great access to nearby cities, major highways, airports and deepwater ports,”** economic developers should **develop a brand image and tag line, then launch a campaign to market the community.** This effort should be targeted to industrial and business prospects, existing business and industry, current residents (including young people and retirees), military personnel and their families, and second-home owners. It should also be targeted at tourists, but only during and after their visit to Camden County. The purpose of targeting visitors with this message is to appeal to those with the skills for “creative class” occupations. Retaining and attracting talent will be pivotal for future workforce, entrepreneur, and business development efforts.²⁹