

# Choctaw spent less on instruction than other county systems during 2005-06 school year

By Dee Ann Campbell  
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER – Choctaw County spent more money per student in its public schools than many of the other 67 counties in the state last year, but a lesser percentage of that money was spent on instruction.

According to the State School Board's 2006 'Report Card' released on Friday, the Choctaw County public school system spent an average of \$7,202.56 per student out of total expenditures of \$20,892,021.58. But only 49% of that amount was spent on instructional-related materials and services.

Some larger systems – with much larger budgets – spent comparable amounts on their students. For example, Baldwin County spent about \$7,425 per student in 2006, with revenues of over \$256 million dollars. However, 63.2% of that revenue was spent on instruction.

Compared to surrounding counties, Choctaw County fares well in amount spent per student, but still falls behind on how much of that money is actually spent on instruction.

Clarke County, for example, had educational revenues totaling about \$27.5 million last year, and spent less than Choctaw County on each student – \$6,922. But by contrast, Clarke Co. spends almost 67% of their expenditures on

instruction, some 18% more than is spent on instruction in Choctaw.

Washington County had revenues of \$26,779,847 for its school system last year, spending \$6,581.52 per student. Of their annual expenditures, almost 66% was spent on instruction.

With expenditures of just over \$21.5 million, Sumter County spent 65% of that money on instruction.

In Marengo County, with expenditures totaling only \$12 million – just a little over half of Choctaw County's expenditures – the system

spent more money per student at \$7,471.90, and 66.5% was for instructional purposes.

In fact, only three other county systems and two city systems in the state spent less than 50% of their expenditures on instruction. Lowndes County used 46% of their

expenditures on instruction, and Mason County and Henry County both listed about 49%. Gadsden City Schools spent 47.5% of their expenditures on instruction, and Trussville spent a low 34.4%.

The state as a whole spends 62.9% of all

expenditures on instruction, earning the state a C+ in this category on the annual Report Card. On a national level, spending per student earns a grade of D, with a D- given to the Southeastern states collectively.

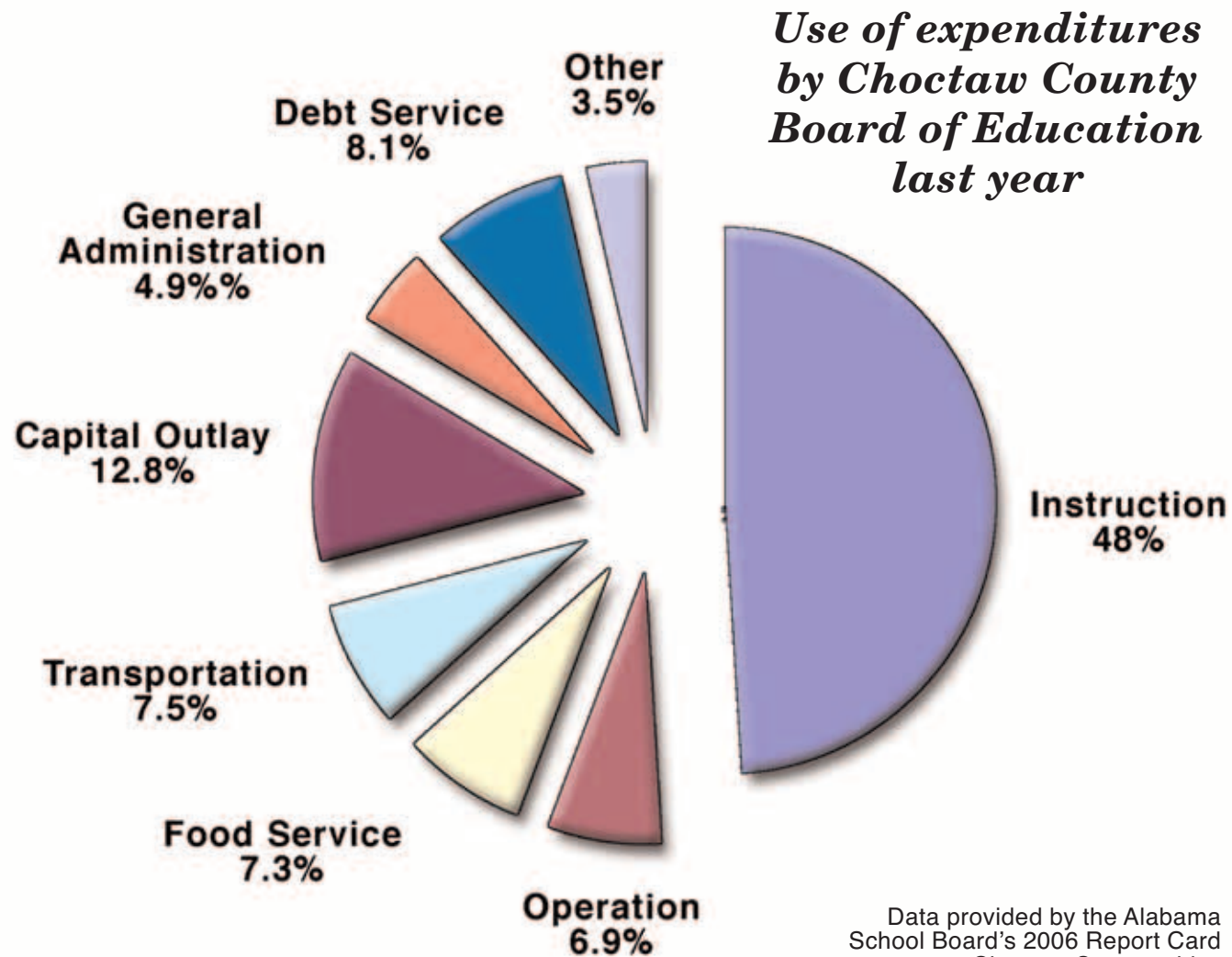
In other categories of spending listed by the state's Report Card, Choctaw County had other areas that are in contrast to other systems.

In addition to the instruction expenditures, another 6.9% of Choctaw County's total expenditures for 2006 was spent on operational services, 7.3% on food service, 12.8% for capital outlay projects, 4.9% on general administration, and 7.5% on transportation.

Comparing those numbers to other counties reveals that only 7 other county systems spent a larger percentage of their budget on transportation than does Choctaw County, and only 5 of the 67 counties spent more for general administration.

Although the county had over \$20 million in expenditures, revenues for the school system totaled only \$18,969,699.44, with 54% of that revenue coming from the state, 18.8% from federal funds, 24.5% from local taxes, and another 4.4% from other local sources.

But the scenario is not uncommon. In fact, 15 other counties in the state had slightly higher expenditures last year than revenues.



Data provided by the Alabama School Board's 2006 Report Card  
Choctaw Sun graphics  
by Mickey Bryant

## MLK Youth Banquet

Friday,  
January 12  
Lisman

"I have a dream that one day my children will be judged not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

--Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
August, 1963



ABOVE: Kashannon Chaney and an unidentified younger child participate in the program on Friday evening. AT RIGHT: Young people of all ages attended the event.



Lisman Mayor Thomas Jackson spoke to the crowd of youth.



AT LEFT: An inspiring Praise Dance was presented by this group of boys who participated in the program.

AT RIGHT: Guest speaker Lovelle Buchanan speaks to the audience of young people.



Choctaw Sun photos  
by Dan Melvin