

January 10, 2012 – Summary of Board of Education Work Session and Meeting

Note: Work Session handouts are available at <http://www.wcpss.net/Board/work-session-materials/>

Chairman Hill opened the work session with a reminder to all that the board is modeling behavior for more than 140,000 students.

Hill discussed joint meetings with the Board of Education (BOE) and the Wake County Board of Commissioners (BOC). In addition to the two full Boards meeting, a meeting of the just the leaders of both boards would take place first. This was common practice prior to Mr. Margiotta's term as Chair. Debra Goldman objected to this proposal and would like both full boards to be included at all meetings. Her objection was noted and Chairman Hill promised to keep her, and all other BOE members informed about the outcome of the leadership meeting. Dates of the meetings are to be determined.

During a discussion of the BOE calendar, Dr. Jim Martin proposed an additional public comment opportunity each month. Currently, there is only one public comment period at the BOE monthly meeting. It was during this same discussion that Debra Goldman questioned Chairman Hill about increasing the time for public comment from two minutes to three minutes. She asserted the Chair cannot make this decision, but per board policy, this must be presented as a vote. At this time, Ms. Goldman asserted many other [BOE policies](#) had been violated, including 1300, 1321, 1323, 1200, 1510, and 1517. Later during the Board meeting, she indicated that she felt the Board was also in violation of policy 1326.

Nicole Kreiser, Wake County Debt and Capital Director with the BOC presented countywide student population growth data. Ms. Goldman requested this information be presented again at a joint meeting with the BOE and BOC.

Stephen Gainey presented a request for legislative change because 12 month employees (notably Specials teachers in multi-track Yrs) are unable to use annual vacation time; the request is to allow local boards of education to write policy granting flexibility for these teachers.

Judy Pepler, Chief Transformation Officer, reported on the Harvard Strategic Data Project Grant, saying that the Wake County Public School System was one of 10 school districts in the country selected for a Harvard Strategic Data Project District grant. Over the next two years, the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard will invest nearly \$700,000 over the next two years for professional development, travel, faculty advising and in-depth analysis for the district.

Leadership from the Student Assignment Team: James Overman and Susan Pullium followed up on [questions raised by BOE at the January 3rd work session](#). Feedback from staff was as follows:

- The choice plan timeline will stay the same and move forward with selection process opening to parents on January 17th.
- An evaluation of current nodes will be done as the plan rolls out.
- Changes can be made as the plan rolls out, but feeder patterns need to remain fixed for this year (2012-2013).

- Ms. Pullium said that the system is committed to guaranteeing individual students a 12 year feeder pattern, but feeder patterns could change for incoming kindergarteners down the road.
- About 600 rising 6th graders and 550 rising 9th graders may be assigned to feeder patterns *without transportation*, though magnets or proximate choices will shrink these numbers. Current thinking is to wait to see where these parents choose to enroll their students and then look into options to provide transportation. The Community-Based Advisory Board will develop benchmarks for schools for evaluation.
- Seats allocated for students from low-performing nodes at high performing schools— There is concern that allocating these seats could skew achievement balance at some schools. Dr. Martin suggested that WCPSS use incentives for schools with few low achievers—with every 5% rise in high needs students, the school would get X number of months of employment for remediation as well as *electives*, as an example.
- Mr. Tata explained that we have been pushing for school-wide Title I rather than targeted Title I. On average schools with roughly 35% of students receiving free/reduced lunch (F&R) receive federal Title I money. By spreading around the F&R students and not addressing those student individually, each Title I school would receive the Title I money for enrichment for *all* students. This could serve as additional incentive for schools to recruit a wider variety of students, but would dilute the funding to aid at-risk students.
- Ms. Evans suggested that displaced magnet students be given equal priority with proximate students; Mr. Overman agreed to examine the ramifications.

Board Meeting

Opening comments by Chairman Hill, Superintendent Tata and BOE members

Public Comment Period consisted of 18 speakers:

- 5 speakers expressing various concerns over choice plan and/or feeder patterns
- 2 speakers in support of choice plan
- 7 speakers, mostly students, from Exploris Middle school, expressing concern over re-entering WCPSS within the choice plan with the same priority as students new to the system
- 1 speaker representing numerous Carpenter Village families, requesting Davis Drive Middle School as their feeder pattern
- 1 speaker expressing concern over high poverty schools being created as a result of the choice plan and a call for an update on Walnut Creek Elementary
- 1 speaker advocating for teacher assistants and janitorial staff to be restored in the 2012-2013 budget
- 1 speaker regarding the role of magnets within the choice plan (supportive of magnet program)

In an unprecedented act, 3 minority board members: John Tedesco, Debra Goldman and Deborah Prickett responded to specific speakers (by name) or topics from public comment. This is not and has not been common practice for the BOE, nor is it common practice with other governing bodies such as Town Councils and Board of Commissioners.

The N.C. State Board of Education revised the State graduation requirements in April 2011 to increase the graduation requirement for social studies from three courses to four. The new requirement will begin with the freshmen who enter high school for the first time during 2012-13. These courses will include World History, Civics and Economics, American History I: The Founding Principles and American History II.

Each high school social studies course is intended to be a stand-alone course. Thus, high school courses may be sequenced in any way a district or school determines is the best fit for the population they serve. There are no prerequisites for any of the high school courses for social studies; however, it is highly recommended that students successfully complete American History I: The Founding Principles prior to enrolling in the American History II course. The Academics Division recommends the following sequence of high school social studies courses: World History, American History I: The Founding Principles, American History II, and Civics and Economics.

A vote passed 8:1 to decline a purchase offer for WCPSS surplus property in Matthews, NC. This property was awarded to the system some years ago as the result of a lawsuit. The board directed staff to make a counter offer at a higher price.