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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WAKE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MAJORITY  
SPENDING SPREE CONTINUES**

Raleigh, NC—October 6, 2011—Based on data culled from School Board documents and newspaper articles since December 2009, Great Schools in Wake (GSIW) has identified cost impacts from unjustified decisions approved by the Board majority amounting to about \$114,000,000 in one time costs. Of that figure, over \$27 million are lost sunk costs from previous investments in building improvements, land acquisition, and accommodations for displaced students, and over \$86 million are from new capital costs—including \$52.6 million to lease the new Cary central office space over the next 15 years. Estimated annual costs for these decisions total about \$8.6 million per year.

“For almost two years, the Board majority has exhibited a lack of fiscal responsibility to taxpayers with ill-conceived, hastily made decisions,” said Yevonne Brannon, Chair, GSIW. “When items are brought up for discussion by Board minority members who have repeatedly asked for supporting data, their reasonable requests are dismissed and multi-million dollar decisions are made without proper research, discussion of options, or the appropriate cost analysis.”

Among the highest cost items approved since December 2009 are:

- Lease for new central office space (2011-2026): \$52,619,409
- Abandonment Forest Ridge HS Site \$15,400,000
- Conversion of Leesville schools to traditional calendar: \$14,100,000
- Previous Longview School improvements (sunk cost): \$11,900,000
- Acquisition of Rolesville HS Site & Improvements: \$ 9,900,000
- Converting Longview to Boys Academy: \$3,600,000 (one time)  
\$2,800,000 (annual)
- Converting Pilot Mill Site to Girls Academy: \$1,300,000 (one time)  
\$3,300,000 (annual)
- Costs of Transportation (est. new student assignment plan): \$2,175,000 (one time)  
\$1,333,000 (annual)
- Converting Hilburn to K-8 \$2,100,000
- Walnut Creek Elementary School: \$1,000,000

(additional annual operations over regular elementary school costs)

These cost estimates don't factor in millions of dollars in federal magnet grants and Disadvantaged Student Supplemental funding that will be lost because of changes made to the Student Assignment Policy in 2010. In addition, funding sources for existing programs, such as the Renaissance School Plan, (annual cost \$920,000) and Broughton High School's International Baccalaureate program (annual cost \$150,000) will go away at the end of the school year; therefore, these programs will require ongoing funding from WCPSS if they are to continue.

"The Board majority has not acted as a responsible steward of Wake County taxpayer dollars," added Brannon. "Their decisions to, among other things, create new programs without first determining market demand, abandon already approved projects with significant sunk costs, and create policies that prevent us from securing federal grants is completely irresponsible."

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**About Great Schools in Wake Coalition:**

A project of WakeUP Wake County, Great Schools in Wake Coalition (GSIW) is a community coalition of organizations, business leaders, parents and citizen advocates who are working to ensure educational excellence in the Wake County Public School System. GSIW's mission is to provide accurate information to educate the public about policy initiatives that would impact the quality of education, foster well-informed discussions about critical education issues, and advocate for policies that improve public education in Wake County. For more information on the Coalition or to join, please visit: [greatschoolsinline.org](http://greatschoolsinline.org).