

10-05-10 Board of Education Meeting Minutes

In addition to voting to abandon the Zone-based Student Assignment plan, the Board of Education reviewed the schematic design for the planned Rolesville High School, voted to retain the Effectiveness Index as a method of assessing students and teachers for a short time, and approved the 2011-12 calendar.

The Committee of the Whole meeting began with a review of schematic plans of planned Rolesville High. Board member Debra Goldman expressed concern about five exterior stairwells that could pose safety hazards, given they were enclosed with only metal meshing and were open to the elements. During the Board meeting, the design was approved although it was agreed that administrators will look into the cost of enclosing at least two of those stairwells, some of which were along the four-story portion of the building.

After voting to abandon Zone-based assignment plans, Board member Debra Goldman again voted with members Carolyn Morrison, Kevin Hill, Anne McLaurin and Keith Sutton to retain use of the Effectiveness Index, an in-house data tool developed by the system's Evaluation and Research department used to evaluate teachers and students. Interim Supt. Donna Hargens said the District is moving to use EVAAS (Education Value-Added Assessment System), a SAS-developed tool, for assessing students and teachers. For example, EVAAS has been used for placing students in advanced math classes. Dr. Hargens said WCPSS will have all teachers trained on EVAAS by mid-October, and staff are using EI as a bridge to new data tool. The NC Department of Instruction has directed school districts to use EVAAS, which is available to all NC Schools for free. Board member Deborah Prickett added the item to the agenda to eliminate the use of the Effectiveness Index and replace it "exclusively" with EVAAS. Mr. Hill noted that the EI was a useful tool for some principals, available at no cost, so there was no need to bar its use. Critics have said the Effectiveness Index was biased against low income students.

Earlier in the public comment, a student from Apex High School thanked the Board for allowing Boy Scouts and other groups to recruit through distributing literature in the school system. After his presentation, former County Commissioner Gary Pendleton spoke, wearing his Boy Scout leader uniform and he thanked the Board for supporting scouting.

WRAL has a clip that shows Ms. Goldman reading the directive abandoning the zone plan and the vote that follows.

The Student Assignment Committee is scheduled to meet at 11:30 am, Tuesday, October 12, at the WCPSS offices, 3600 Wake Forest Road, Raleigh.

The Superintendent Search Committee will meet at 5:30 pm, Thursday, October 14.

The District 8 (Ron Margiotta) Board Advisory Council meets at 6 pm, Monday, October 18, at Turner Creek Elementary School, 6801 Turner Creek Road, Cary.

The Board of Education will hold its next work session at 1 pm, Tuesday, October 19. The work sessions take the place of the Board's former standing committees. The Board will have its next action meeting on Tuesday, November 9. It is skipping its usual first Tuesday meeting in order to avoid meeting on Election Day.

Communications chief Michael Evans announced "Make a Difference Day"--Saturday, October 23--WCPSS will participate in the 20th anniversary of the day of national volunteerism. The system will invite all county residents to help increase early childhood literacy by creating and dropping off "Early Literacy Kits" on October 23.