

## 2-1-11 Board of Education Meeting

About 3,500 students will have changes in base assignments for the 2011-12 school year, as the result of changes approved by the Board of Education yesterday. Walnut Creek Elementary, the one school opening this fall, is likely to have a student population that is 81 percent low income. Many of the reassigned 3,500 students will be "grandfathered" and able to remain in their current schools for the coming year, but about half will change schools

The Board approved all but three of the proposed changes that made it to the first phase of the assignment plan discussed last night. They went through [each of the proposed changes](#), one by one. Changes affecting about 200 additional students will be discussed at a Tuesday, February 15, Board meeting and public hearing. The three proposals not approved involved reassigning some nodes from West Lake, Lufkin Road, and Apex middle schools to Carnage and moving one node from Lacy Elementary back to Conn Elementary. Stories are on line from the [News & Observer](#), [WRAL](#) and [NBC-17](#). [WRAL's blow-by-blow blog](#) gives a chronological summary.

About 90 percent of the students in the reassignment plan are low-income students. Analysis showed that the reassignments (before the three omissions) will increase the proportion of low-income students at about 20 schools by more than 5 percent, and poverty rates will decline at about 10 schools by more than 5 percent. Despite [the Board's stated intention](#) not to create high poverty schools, the reassignments will result in wider gaps between schools. Research has shown that high poverty schools have more difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified teachers and administrators than diverse or high wealth schools.

At yesterday's meeting, Superintendent Tony Tata was sworn in. You can watch the ceremony and listen to his address [online on WRAL](#).

School Facilities director Don Haydon gave an update on projected enrollment growth in the next decade. He said approximately 3,400 additional students are expected for this fall. By 2014, current elementary school enrollment will exceed the district's capacity, and by 2020, WCPSS is projected to have a deficit of about 16,000 seats. Middle school capacity will be reached by 2017 with a deficit of about 5,000 seats by 2020. High schools will reach capacity by 2012, and even with the opening of Rolesville High in 2013, by 2020 there is a shortage of almost 20,000 high school seats projected, requiring the construction of five new high schools by 2020. The construction budget for one high school, Rolesville High School, is currently about \$72 million. Even with the slowdown in the economy, the Wake schools are projected to have continued growth.

The Board voted 5-4 to increase and expand legal services from attorney Kieran Shanahan, a former Raleigh City Council member, up to \$35,000. Mr. Shanahan is set to advise the Board on redistricting of Board of Education elective districts as well as the pending lawsuits and investigations from accrediting agency AdvanceEd and the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education.

Charter and private schools report an increase in applications, [according to WRAL](#).

WRAL also has a short update on plans in the N.C. General Assembly to [expand charter schools](#) in the state.

Tomorrow's meeting of the Economically Disadvantaged Student Performance Task Force meets at Ligon Middle School at 4:30 to 6:30 pm tomorrow. Topics will include a presentation on achievement of African American males in Wake County Schools, as well as continued discussion of funding equity between schools. At last month's ED task force meeting, members reviewed a draft policy on program equity, policy that arose from the [Curriculum Management Audit](#) conducted five years ago. The audit was spearheaded by Academic chief Donna Hargens and discusses the issues of program equity across the districts various schools. Discussions in the ED task force have focused on Fund 6 spending at schools, which are the unrestricted funds raised by individual schools. A revised agenda for the task force meeting is attached.