

6-21-11 Board Meeting Notes

The Blue Plan will form the basis of the next comprehensive Student Assignment plan, beginning in the 2012-13 school year. The next student assignment plan gives parents multiple choices for school assignments and ends the use of node based assignments. With [little Board discussion in yesterday's work session](#), the Board of Education members heard a presentation from James Overman and Supt. Tony Tata on plans to go forward with the blue course of action and have a final plan in September or October. The "[test drive](#)" is still open, through Friday, for interested parents to make choices based on current drafts of the plan. The experiment will enable the district to better predict how parents will choose under a choice system.

After re-electing Ron Margiotta by a 5-4 vote to serve as [chair](#) through December, the Board spent almost two and a half hours, voting 56 times, to elect a vice-chair. Members Debra Goldman, Keith Sutton and John Tedesco were nominated, and during most of the voting, Ms. Goldman received one vote, Mr. Sutton four and Mr. Tedesco three. Finally, in the 56th round, Ms. Goldman switched her vote to Mr. Tedesco and with the 4-4 vote, Mr. Margiotta was able to vote and break the tie, 5-4 in favor of Mr. Tedesco.

During the rest of the action meeting, the Board voted to add ten minutes to the end of the school day, if needed, to meet new state requirements. The school system plans to request a waiver to the new state regulation, which expands the school year to 185 days (increased from 180) and to 1025 hours of instruction (increased from 1000), effective with the 2011-12 school year. The new regulation was included in the state budget, approved over the veto of Governor Beverly Perdue by the General Assembly. Adding five days will not be possible for four-track year-round schedules and would cost Wake County approximately \$500,000 in additional bus transportation, and thus, the district plans to request a waiver for the coming school year and, if needed, only meet the instructional hours requirement. Staff has said that they expect the Department of Public Instruction to grant waivers for this next year, given of the lateness of the adjustment.

The Board also voted to rejoin the N.C. School Boards Association. Previously, the new Board majority had voted to leave the Association, making Wake County the only local school system in the state that was not a member. In recommending that WCPSS rejoin the organization, Chair Ron Margiotta said returning would help the Board formulate better policy.

The Board also voted to approve the final budget. After brief discussion, Board member Anne McLaurin was the only board member to vote against the budget, saying she was concerned about reduced per pupil spending in the coming year, given flat funding from the County and reduced funding from the State.

The Board named Michael Armstrong, formerly an assistant principal at Combs Elementary, as principal of Bugg Elementary School.

In the work session, staff also reviewed for the Board plans to build ten new schools between 2014 and 2016. The proposal would use existing funds in the 2006 capital plan as well as rely on a bond referendum in the Fall of 2012 or Spring of 2013.

Last week, Supt. Tony Tata and other community leaders launched new additions to the [district's Global Schools and STEM programs](#), with many schools that are under-enrolled joining the initiatives.