

## **8-18-11 Board of Education Meeting Minutes**

In the last Board meeting in the Wake Forest Road location, the Board of Education heard more details on the Student Assignment plan. The staff presented a plan that recommends keeping magnets as they currently are and building a feeder pattern based on proximity to elementary schools.

Under the current version of the new Choice Student Assignment Plan, magnet schools will be in three groups: Group 1 (Brentwood, Bugg, Combs, Conn, Fuller, Hunter, Millbrook, Poe, Powell and Washington) will have 55-60 percent magnet choice seats and 40-45 percent proximity seats (those children who live in close proximity to magnet schools). Group 2 (Brooks, Douglas, Framington Woods, Joyner, Partnership, Underwood and Wiley) will have 40 to 45 percent magnet seats and 55-60 percent proximity seats. Group 3 (Smith, Wendell, and Zebulon) will have about 10-20 percent magnet choice seats and 80-90 percent proximity seats. The goal is to have more uniform magnet proportions among the schools in any one group. Students who live near magnets, but do not choose or do not get into magnet schools, will have a choice of a high achieving school in a nearby zone. The county will be divided into four quadrants, and magnet schools are assigned to a quadrant, so that achievement choices are in closer proximity to students so as to lessen travel time to achievement schools.

The staff said more than 21,000 residents participated in the "test drive" of the choice plan in June. Proximity and calendar choices were dominant preferences, said James Overman, team leader for the revamped student assignment plan. Nodes in Western Wake were more likely to have participated, he said, and about 150 nodes did not have any participants. Overman said outreach efforts would be concentrated on those latter nodes that did not participate.

A next step will be to take the "test drive" data and apply transportation analysis to the outcomes, to determine transportation costs under this proposed plan.

More details were also released on proposed feeder patterns. Staff said 89 percent of parents supported having a feeder pattern for schools (meaning student from a elementary school student would go onto a specific middle and then high school). The year-round schools face challenges due to a shortage of four-track year round middle schools that can receive elementary school feeders. In addition, John Tedesco raised specific concerns, including one about Farmington Woods in Cary feeding into Garner schools. Staff noted that Farmington Woods has an IB program and that students should have a choice to continue in the closest IB schools, which are East Garner Middle and Garner High schools. Debra Goldman wondered whether other Cary schools should also have the IB program. The feeder patterns quickly became complicated, given the locations of schools not neatly fitting into a clear feeder patterns in many cases.

The next steps, in addition to transportation analysis, are to continue modeling, revise the plan based on modeling, and develop outreach to parents, Overman said. The Board will receive another briefing during the September Board meeting. Board members Keith

Sutton and Kevin Hill asked for further public discussions of the plan, given new details released today, and Supt. Tony Tata agreed to pursue those types of public discussions.

[WRAL has a blog summary](#) online. WRAL also did a [story on upcoming construction](#) decisions that the Board must make. There is left over funding from the last Bond referendum to construct at least two schools. Today, the Board said they want to make final decisions on which of the planned schools to build based on how the Student Assignment Plan is decided.

More details on student assignment and the building plan are expected at the next Board meeting, which will be held Tuesday, September 6, at the School Administration's new location, the leased Crossroads building: 5625 Dillard Drive, Cary. Every department, except the Superintendent's office, has moved to the Cary offices as of today.