

Wake County Public School System is a GREAT school system- that doesn't mean we are perfect or that we shouldn't try to improve- but we are the envy of many other systems. We have teachers and administrators who have devoted their lives building our system into what it is today.

I wonder if the general public knows that Wake was recently praised by EdWeek magazine (June 7, 2011) for having the third highest graduation rate for large districts at 80.3%. Disaggregated data shows that graduation rates for our African American students have increased from 63.9% to 67.2%. Graduation rates for our Hispanic students have increased from 54.2% to 64.1%. The top two districts, Fairfax County and Montgomery County, spend significantly more per pupil at over \$12,000 and \$11,000 respectively. Wake spends \$8,500 per pupil.

I applaud Superintendent Tata for mentioning our increased graduation rates in his recent Town Hall. And I thank our dedicated teachers, principals, and students for their hard work to reach this great accomplishment.

I'm very surprised that this news hasn't made the front page of the N&O- or that I've not heard board members shouting it from the rooftops. Instead, over the last 19 months, we've heard Mr. Tedesco call us the Titanic- and compare our system to that of Toyota. Could our improved graduation rates be related to the PLT's (Professional Learning Teams), an educator driven initiative that the board majority put to a halt Dec. 1, 2009 without any study?

As we move to make some quite significant changes to our system, please do so with great care. The collective community of Wake County is depending on you.