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BOARD ACTION THREATENS WAKE COUNTY STUDENT SUCCESS

School Board Majority Vote Could Deny Students and Families Millions in Scholarship Dollars, Educational Loans

Raleigh, NC—January 12, 2011—With stunning disregard for the costs and consequences of their actions, Wake County School Board majority members are contemplating dropping high school accreditation, rather than participate in an investigation to be conducted by a highly regarded, independent agency.

This action is likely to cost students millions of dollars in academic and athletic scholarships and educational loans, limit acceptances to colleges, universities, and military programs, and may impact an individual's ability to get a job after graduation. Wake County has more than 8,000 graduating seniors in the Class of 2011.

“The community is shocked by news that the Board majority would consider jeopardizing the educational future of our students,” said Yevonne Brannon, Chair, Great Schools in Wake. “This majority repeatedly claims to care about the wellbeing of students, yet, when the going gets tough, they put their own self-interests ahead of those of our children. Once again, they are rushing to judgment without regard for how their decisions will impact the reputation of our award winning school system.”

According to accreditation agency AdvanED, which serves more than 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 69 countries, their “accreditation process engages the institution in a continuous process of self-evaluation and improvement.”

Notice of a board meeting to discuss accreditation was disseminated with less than the 48-hour notice required by the North Carolina Open Meetings Law; many affected will not be able to attend the meeting. “I can't believe that this school board would vote on something so important with no discussion and opportunity for public input. In short, this Board majority is refusing to be held accountable by anyone, and that should concern us,” Brannon said.

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About Great Schools in Wake Coalition:

A project of WakeUP Wake County, Great Schools in Wake Coalition (GSIW) is a community coalition of organizations, business leaders, parents and citizen advocates who are working to ensure educational excellence in the Wake County Public School System. GSIW's mission is to provide accurate information to educate the public about policy initiatives that would impact the quality of education, foster well-informed discussions about critical education issues, and advocate for policies that improve public education in Wake County. For more information on the Coalition or to join, please visit: greatschoolsinline.org.