

My concern today is building capacity. A change in assignment policy could result in both underutilized and overcrowded schools, particularly in areas where high growth drives reassignment. Charlotte now struggles to deal with capacity. Suburban schools are overcrowded and downtown, high poverty, majority minority schools are below capacity, failing, and threatened with closure. Children at these schools will be bussed out of their communities - so much for their neighborhood school.

I attended a forum for Wake County Commission candidates before the election. All of them, Democrat and Republican, said that Wake County will soon need a large school bond issue to deal with capacity problems and that in the current divisive environment it will be difficult to pass. The community needs to trust you, the school board. I have for you the signature of 800 people gravely concerned about school capacity as well as other adverse effects of a neighborhood school assignment policy.

I'm uncertain that I trust this board. I am disturbed by Mr. Tedesco's recent newspaper quote about the incoming Wake County Commission where he said, "Now we've got a majority of commissioners who care about educating all of our children." Your comment is demeaning and I defy you to find one person in this county who doesn't care about educating our children. I'm also perplexed by Mr. Margiotta's call to rescind the Wake commissioners statement of concern about the possibility of re-segregated schools when you openly state it is not your intention to create segregated, poor schools.

We are a divided community deserving of a thoughtful, deliberative board - not a board that divides us into winners and losers. Please accept with an open heart the plea of these 800 people for a school system that ensures maximum utilization of school facilities, provides expanded educational opportunities, reduces high concentrations of poverty and supports diverse populations.