

## **February 2, 2010 – Board of Education Meeting**

At their Committee of the Whole meeting, the Wake Board of Education heard preliminary data from the calendar choice survey they commissioned. Full survey results, including those by school, are on the web. The school system received an overall 28 percent response rate, which was disproportionately from parents with students on a year round schedule. About 31.5 percent of students are on a year round calendar, but parents with students in year round made up 52.6 percent of those responding to the survey. Of the almost 40,000 parents who responded to the survey, 94.5 percent said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their child's school, and 88.75 percent said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their child's school calendar.

Of note, at Leesville Elementary, which has been a focus of discussions by newly elected Board member Deborah Prickett, 63.34 percent expressed a preference for the Year Round calendar, while 31.6 percent stated a preference for a Traditional calendar. At Leesville Middle School, 60 percent stated a preference for Traditional, while 36 percent preferred Year Round.

Board member Keith Sutton was concerned at the low response from racial minorities. Whites make up 51 percent of the school district but were 68 percent of the survey respondents. African Americans make up 26 percent of the school district's students but were only 14.6 percent of respondents, and Latinos make up 12 percent of the school system, but only 5.7 percent of respondents. Mr. Sutton asked that an additional public community engagement meeting be held in southeast Raleigh or Garner, and after some discussion, it was decided that the district would attempt to add that session for Feb. 11.

The Board also heard an update on the construction plan but made no

decisions.

However, at the end of the Committee meeting, Board member Anne McLaurin asked Board Chair Ron Margiotta why Attorney Thomas Farr had emailed the Board to meet with them individually. She asked that Mr. Farr meet with all of them at once in a closed session, instead of meeting with each individually, so that everyone would hear what he had to say at the same time. After some brief discussion, the Board agreed to all meet with Mr. Farr together at a future time and not meet individually in the meantime. In the main meeting, two student recognitions were postponed due to bad weather. And the Board also postponed decisions of their own.

The Board tabled a decision on how to adjust school assignments in order to accommodate families who wish to apply for calendar transfers. In their resolution opposing "mandatory" year round calendars, the Board stated they would "make every effort" to approve a family's calendar choice for school. Asst. Superintendent for Growth and Planning Chuck Dulaney sought Board guidance to provide for those accommodations, but the Board did not want to change the current reassignment plan without more study. So for now, there are no changes to the second year of the 3-year reassignment plan. Chair Margiotta asked about possibly extending the application deadline for parents to apply for year round and magnet schools. If the deadline is extended, it will delay when parents are notified of their students' final school assignment if they apply for magnet or year round schools. The proposal presented by Mr. Dulaney is online.

Three principals were named this evening: Kerry Chisnall was named principal of Northwoods Elementary in Cary. He replaces Mary Swann, who left to become principal of East Cary Middle. Margaret Ronco will fill in as interim principal of Creech Road Elementary School in Garner. Catherine Berry was hired last month to take the job but can't start immediately because she's a principal in Orange County. Ronco had been

a principal at Lincoln Heights Elementary and later Ballentine Elementary before retiring in 2008. Ian Solomon was promoted from assistant principal to principal of Durant Road Middle in North Raleigh. He replaces Robert Smith, who left to become principal of the new Mills Park Middle in Cary. Public comment included four students from Southeast Raleigh High School who spoke in favor of the diversity policy and magnet system.

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