

Speech on Magnets

Last month, 15 magnet schools were recognized by Magnet Schools of America as national schools of excellence, national schools of distinction or honorable mention schools. But despite this high praise for our magnet schools, our nationally recognized magnet program has been under threat by this Board's actions on Student Assignment.

The recent assignment decisions of this Board reduced magnet seats—a questionable decision given the high demand for magnets. Parents want more magnet schools. Yet this Board majority is undermining magnets.

This Board majority is driving families away from magnet schools that have been shown to offer high quality education, offer county-wide parent choice, save money by using older buildings to full capacity.

Your policies don't make sense. And they cost money.

In fact, your decisions will cost our taxpayers more money if they lead to high poverty schools. That's what happened in Charlotte—the Board undermined their own magnet schools with bad assignment policies, and

some magnets are being closed and many are racially segregated. In Charlotte, parents have less choice. Their high poverty schools cost more money. That's called a "lose-lose" situation.

We have a strong magnet program here in Wake County, offering choice and saving money. So, Superintendent Tata, I'm here to ask that you use the Alves Choice Plan to strengthen our existing magnet program even further, make it even better. This can easily be done.

1. Under the Choice Plan, keep magnets open as county-wide choices for all parents in regards to program.
2. All magnets should provide transportation—without transportation, it's not a real choice.
3. Magnets should have at least 60 percent of their seats as magnet choice seats—that's the key need for programs to stay viable and offer true choice.

This Board has left it to you, Superintendent Tata, to do this work—they have not gotten it done. Give us choice as parents and save us money as taxpayers. Thank you.