

Good afternoon Chair Margiotta, Dr. Hargens and School Board Members:

The voices of teachers have been missing in the debate about the school board's actions so Wake NCAE decided to ask the dedicated professionals who are in Wake County classrooms every day how they feel about diversity and its impact on students' academic success.

A random telephone survey of 501 Wake County teachers, who are Wake NCAE members, was conducted from Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> – Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> by HCM Marketing Research, a firm with more than 50 years' experience. We wanted to be sure that the survey was conducted with the utmost professionalism and integrity so that unbiased and accurate results would be obtained.

Teachers overwhelmingly say that Wake County's diversity policy has had a positive impact on academic achievement. Teachers are in the classroom every day and see firsthand what kind of learning environment is best for their students.

This viewpoint is supported in an October 15<sup>th</sup> Washington Post article by Stephanie McCrummen and Michael Bimbaum.

According to a new study that suggests economic integration is a powerful but neglected school-reform tool, low income students in Montgomery County, Maryland performed better when they attended affluent elementary schools instead of ones with higher concentrations of poverty. The study tracked the performance of 858 elementary students in public housing across Montgomery County from 2001 to 2007.

Richard Kahlenberg, a senior fellow at the Century Foundation, a progressive think tank based in New York stated that "today, 95 percent of education reform is about trying to make high-poverty schools work. This research suggests that there is a much more effective way to help close the achievement gap. And that is to give low-income students a chance to attend middle-class schools."

Researchers see the results as especially significant because Montgomery, one of the nation's best and largest public school districts with 144,000 students, has been uncommonly aggressive in seeking to improve the performance of students in schools with higher poverty.