

## Precis

Board members, as well as students, parents and members of the community, have expressed concerns about some of the effects of the current student assignment plan that does not provide base school assignments. Board direction is requested on considering any adjustments to the student assignment plan for 2013-14 to incorporate the use of base school assignments.

Fiscal Implications: To be determined.

Recommendation for Action: Board direction is requested.

## Backup

The Wake County Board of Education directs the superintendent and staff to begin developing a revised Wake County Student Assignment Plan for the 2013 – 14 school year. This effort should evaluate the current and previous assignment plans and integrate the best practices and strategies gained from the institutional knowledge of the Office of Growth and Planning (previous plan), and the data and research obtained by the Student Assignment Task Force (choice plan).

Finding an effective and sustainable means to assign students in Wake County has been a challenge, due to population growth, budget constraints, and other factors. While varying segments of the community place higher priorities on certain values, there are several key components that should be included in the proposed plan. They are as follows:

- Student achievement
- Stability
- Proximity

### **Student Achievement**

The Wake County Student Assignment Plan will play a critical role in developing and maintaining a system of healthy schools throughout the county that supports student achievement and equity. While every school may not be equal in terms of its needs and allocation of resources, the district will make every effort to ensure that each school provides the maximum opportunity for all students and teachers to succeed and that every child is provided with a high quality educational experience. To accomplish this, academic achievement targets will be developed to determine a range for optimal school performance. In addition, the Board will revisit Policy 6200 to develop appropriate socio-economic factors to consider in the assignment process. These may include the use of census data, and/or individual data provided by parents such as income, educational attainment, or other information.

### **Stability**

A focus on stability of assignment will be integral to the development of a multi-year plan. This will involve a periodic review of the plan at least every three years to monitor indicators such as population growth, demographic shifts, academic trends, and school performance data, as well as, program preferences expressed by parents. Thorough reviews and regular updates of the node system will increase stability by providing the system with the ability to keep neighborhoods and subdivisions

cohesive and intact, to the extent possible. Other possible features that should provide increased stability may include the development of a “stay where you start” policy, and programmatic feeder priorities.

### **Proximity**

Over the last two years, the System has worked to increase the number of students who attend schools closer to their homes. A base assignment plan will build on these efforts by assigning a school or schools that are within a proximate distance to each known address. This effort will provide each student a school assignment within a reasonable distance of his or her residence, and it will also provide prospective families to the area with a reasonable degree of predictability of a base school assignment. Current residents who are newcomers to the school system such as charter school and home-schooled students, will also have the same reasonable degree of predictability. Seat capacity is critical to success in achieving this goal.

This directive is intended to set a clear path for establishing a solid foundation upon which any successful assignment plan in Wake County can be built. This directive is not intended to be a policy or establish policy. It sets forth measurable objectives, targets and a sequence of tasks that the Wake County Board of Education directs the Superintendent and staff to perform as we move forward in the planning and implementation of the assignment plan for the 2013-2014 school year and beyond.

The Board directs staff to propose an assignment plan that is a multi-year address-based student assignment plan that provides reasonable predictability and stability in assignment. The plan should make student achievement a high priority at every school, while making sure that every student attends a reasonably proximate school. The goal of this plan is to also ensure that every student in the Wake County Public School System attends a healthy school.

## **Task Outline/Items for Consideration**

### Program and System Reviews

- Magnet Review (in process)
- Facility Utilization Review (in process)
- Node System Review

### Policy Development

- Policy 6200
- Stability Policy – “Stay Where You Start” Policy over a grade span

### Choice

- Expanded Magnet Options
- Calendar Choices
- Theme Schools and Academies (STEM, Global Network, Leadership)
- Programmatic Feeder Priorities
- Open transfer process for available capacity

### Community Engagement/Customer Service

- Family Assignment Counselors
- Satellite Outreach Centers