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The End of a Diversity Policy? Wake County Public Schools and Student Assignment CASE

Summary

This case is grounded in three overarching themes: the policymaking process, the role of different actors in policymaking, and education policy. It also provides a strong dose of the role of politics with regard to these three themes and provides students with windows into a complex, controversial, and nationally-known set of circumstances concerning the issue of assigning students to schools. Students will learn about the multiple perspectives and factors that went into Wake County, North Carolina's school assignment process. In doing so, the case offers multiple opportunities for students to develop their own insight about and strategies for addressing the challenges faced in Wake County. The case highlights, importantly, that policymaking often happens with the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, including but not limited to elected officials, the media, advocacy organizations, lobbyists, individual citizens, and others. It also raises the question of using research and other evidence in policymaking, which is important for students to understand, given the fast-growing evidence-based policy movement. Given the seemingly endless sources and quantity of information, a challenge for students will be to determine what information to consider in making recommendations and what information to set aside.

This case was a winner in E-PARCC's 2014-15 "Collaborative Public Management, Collaborative Governance, and Collaborative Problem Solving" teaching case and simulation competition. It was double-blind peer reviewed by a committee of academics and practitioners. It was written by Jenni Owen and Megan Kauffmann of the Sanford School of Public Policy and Center for Child and Family Policy at Duke University. This case is intended for classroom discussion and is not intended to suggest either effective or ineffective handling of the situation depicted. It is brought to you by E-PARCC, part of the Syracuse University Maxwell School's Collaborative Governance Initiative, a subset of the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC). This material may be copied as many times as needed as long as the authors are given full credit for their work.

Note: At the time of this writing, the Wake County Board of Education had not completed its school assignment plans for school year 2012-2013. Moreover, on October 11 and November 8, 2011, Wake County voters elected a new slate of Board of Education members, significantly changing the makeup of the Wake County Board. For updated information on the board and the status of the board's plan, please visit the Wake County Public School System's website at <http://www.wcpss.net/>.

I. Introduction

"Like a tree planted in the water, we shall not be moved," affirmed Reverend William Barber as he sat in a Wake County Board of Education member's chair as an act of civil disobedience.¹ On the afternoon of June 16, 2010, Barber, the President of the North Carolina chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), along with three others protesting the Board of Education's decision to end the 10-year-old school diversity student assignment policy, sat in the board members' seats and refused to leave. The protesters hoped the sit-in would compel board members to reconsider the board's decision, which they believed could result in the racial and socio-economic resegregation of schools.

Refusing to budge from the seats of the board members, Reverend Barber, Duke University professor Tim Tyson, Wake County parent Mary D. Williams, and Minister Nancy Petty read speeches, led songs, and discussed civil rights history.² The protesters had prepared their pro-diversity message and knew they would be arrested for refusing to leave the board members' seats; their arrest was an opportunity to draw the media's attention to their cause. Their protest marked the beginning of a string of organized board meeting disruptions showing disapproval of the board's March 24th decision to end the diversity policy.

II. Background

At the time of the controversial decision to end the diversity policy, the Wake County Public School System had been struggling to manage rapid student population growth for several years. In 2009-2010, Wake County was the 18th largest school district in the nation, and the largest school district in the state, with an enrollment of 139,599 students.³ From 2000 to 2010, student enrollment grew approximately 40 percent.⁴

From 2005-2010, Wake County was the fastest growing district in North Carolina. The table below presents information about the five largest districts. Despite some of the challenges Wake County faced in managing population growth, the graduation rate in 2007- 2008 was higher than that of most of the other four largest districts. Wake County also had a smaller proportion of minority students and fewer students on free and reduced lunch status than the other four largest districts. For a more complete picture of the population growth and economic situation in Wake County in the late 2000s, see Appendix 1.

Comparison Table of Five Largest School Districts in North Carolina in 2010								
District	Percent Growth (2005-10)	Number of Students (2009-10)	Number of Schools (2010)	Race (2008-9)			Percent who applied for FRL* (2009-10)	Graduation Rate (2007-8)
				WHT	BLK	HSP		
Wake	22.5%	139,064	163	51.8%	30.6%	11.5%	37.1%	78.8%
Mecklenburg	12.7%	132,075	178	33.7%	45.6%	15.5%	53.3%	66.6%
Guilford	6.5%	70,710	121	39.5%	45.8%	8.9%	55.0%	79.7%
Cumberland	-0.4%	51,471	85	36.8%	52.1%	7.2%	57.7%	71.3%
Forsyth	7.4%	51,323	69	45.2%	35.6%	17.1%	52.8%	70.8%

Sources: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Wake County Public School System
 *FRL = Free and Reduced Lunch Status

Rapid student growth complicated student assignment to schools, as did the Wake County Public School System's stated goal to "achieve student diversity in all schools," in the student assignment policy.⁵ This clause, hereafter referred to as the "diversity policy," was implemented so that the population of low-income and low-performing students did not surpass a certain percent at each school.

The Diversity Policy and Proposal for Change

The diversity policy, adopted by Wake County Public Schools in 2000, was instated to achieve socio-economic diversity in the district's schools. The policy required schools to have no more than 40 percent of students on free or reduced lunch status and no more than 25 percent of students achieving below grade level.

In the spring of 2010, the Wake County Board of Education voted to end the diversity policy, claiming the policy was the cause of disruptive long-distance busing and school instability for students. The board proposed an alternative assignment plan whereby students would attend schools within geographic "zones" close to their homes, and they would have a choice to attend schools outside of their zone once they reached middle school. This "community schools" assignment plan included no diversity requirement. See Appendix 2 for insight into why 2010 was the year in which such massive proposed changes emerged.

The diversity policy was a part of the wider student assignment model that considered distance, stability, choice, facility utilization, alignment with the magnet schools program, and higher needs placements when assigning students to schools.⁶ The policy required schools to have no more than 40 percent of students on free or reduced lunch status and no more than 25 percent of students achieving below grade level.⁷ The requirement reflected research that suggested mixed classrooms of high- and low-income students could have a positive effect on low-income students' test scores.⁸

In addition to achieving economic diversity in schools, the Wake County school district sought to achieve racial diversity in schools, as did states across the nation that were trying to racially desegregate schools to abide by federal legislation and by Supreme Court decisions.⁹ Paradoxically, the Supreme Court decisions and federal legislation required school districts to racially desegregate public school systems, but forbade the use of race as a factor in student assignment. These two decisions provided a conundrum for public school systems across the nation.

The Wake County school system devised a policy to address this conundrum. Because low socio-economic status and low academic achievement are disproportionately high among students of color, Wake County realized that by requiring economic diversity, the 40 percent/25 percent policy would also result in racial diversity. Thus, they creatively complied with the court cases and became a model for other school districts that sought to achieve racial diversity but were prohibited from using race as an assignment factor.

Note: An understanding of the history of school desegregation in the United States is important to grasp the historical weight behind the Wake County Board of Education's actions. For a brief history of the racial desegregation of schools in the United States, see Appendix 3.

The Role of the School Board

The government body with the authority to manage student growth is the Wake County Board of Education, hereafter referred to as the "school board." The school board is comprised of nine elected officials who hold monthly meetings and serve four-year terms. One of the board's most important tasks is to create a student assignment plan, which must be completed by May 1st of each year.¹⁰ The school board also has the authority to make policy relevant to personnel, administrative services, student services, and instructional services; the county superintendent and administrative staff implement the policies (for a fuller description of the structure and financing of public education in the United States, see Appendix 4).¹¹ The board was responsible for creating the diversity school assignment policy in 2000, and they were responsible for its reversal in 2010.

To manage the assignment process during this period of growth in the early 2000s, the school board began implementing several strategies. The school system converted several traditional

calendar-year schools into year-round schools, a system whereby instead of having a two-month break from school during the summer, all students attend school for 45 days followed by a 15-day break for the entire school year. Year-round schools relieved pressure on the system because one quarter of the student body was always on the 15-day break; the ability to space out student attendance allowed the district to minimize new school construction and to save on operating costs, such as new equipment.¹² To manage growth, the school board also approved new school construction: the district built 21 new schools from 2006-2010.¹³ In addition, the school board managed growth by setting up "modular classrooms," or mobile classrooms, outside of school buildings.¹⁴ For a list of terms and definitions relating to education in Wake County, see Appendix 5.

Mounting Frustration with the School Assignment Policy

In the early 2000s, parents began to express frustration with the school assignment plan in Wake County. Because the diversity policy set a maximum percent of low-income students at each school, and because population was growing rapidly in some areas of the county, approximately five percent of the school population was reassigned every year.¹⁵ As school board member Horace Tart said in the winter of 2008, "When you look at some schools you have an overcrowding problem and others you have a diversity problem and sometimes when you address one problem, you create another."¹⁶

Some Wake County parents felt they had reason to complain. They felt that the frequent reassignments reduced their ability to become involved in their children's schools.¹⁷ In addition, some of the reassignments placed one child in a family in a year-round school and another child in the family in a calendar-year school, making it difficult for parents to coordinate the family schedule.¹⁸ Reassignment also negatively affected some children who had to endure lengthy bus rides and the emotional difficulty of establishing new friendships each time they switched schools.¹⁹ Many parents expressed that they valued diversity but did not want their child to be bused 20 miles from home to help schools achieve that diversity.²⁰

Discontented parents could call attention to the example of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district in North Carolina, which in 2002 transitioned from a diversity busing model to a school choice model, whereby families would decide where their children would attend school.²¹ This example of a school district transitioning away from a diversity busing model likely emboldened some critics of the diversity policy to draw comparisons between Charlotte- Mecklenburg and Wake County school districts and question why the diversity policy was still in place.

While it was not clear to what extent reassignment in Wake County was attributable to population growth or to the diversity policy, many parents clearly wanted a change to the school assignment process. When the election for the Wake County School Board occurred in the fall of 2009, between six and eight percent of parents in the county voted.²² While seemingly low, that was twice the normal turnout for school board elections.²³ These voters overwhelmingly supported four candidates who campaigned on a platform of changing the diversity assignment model toward the "community school" assignment model, whereby children would attend schools close to home. The candidates who won the vote promised stability in school assignment, increased school choice for parents, and shorter bus rides. Together with one incumbent who supported community school, these four newly elected school board members formed a five-member voting majority (out of nine total members) that was empowered to make a change to the assignment system.

On March 24, 2010, the school board voted 5-4 to end the 10-year-old diversity policy. The school board's March decision sparked a controversy that pitted those in favor of community schools against those who feared that schools would become both racially and socio-economically segregated under a community schools assignment plan.

As the school board moved forward to design the community school assignment plan, a process predicted to take between 9 and 15 months, they faced the challenge of creating geographical school assignment zones that were small enough to allow students to be close to their schools, but large enough to allow for racial and economic diversity.²⁴ The school board was confronted by a dilemma. Should the board ensure for socio-economic diversity in the community schools assignment plan? Or, should they design the assignment plan with the primary goals of assigning students to schools close to home and expanding school choice, regardless of the plan's effect on school diversity?

III. New Board, New Policy

The five school board members pursuing reform of the diversity policy were the incumbent, Ron Margiotta, and the four newly elected members: Debra Goldman, Chris Malone, Deborah Prickett, and John Tedesco. John Tedesco would come to be known as the face of the school board's movement towards community schools assignment, but the other members were also strong proponents of the community school model.

As one of their first actions in office, the voting majority established incumbent Ron Margiotta as the board chairman. Margiotta had nine years of experience serving on a New Jersey school board, and he was an entrepreneur in the warehouse and installation service business.²⁵ In 2000, he moved to North Carolina to be close to his daughter and grandson.²⁶ Margiotta joined the North Carolina school board in 2007 because he wanted to change the policy that resulted

in his grandson not being able to attend a school close to home. Margiotta supported expanding parents' ability to choose which schools their children attended, whether they chose a school within their community or not. He also supported re-evaluating the assignment policy to determine whether long-distance busing was the most effective way to address population growth and assignment needs.²⁷

Debra Goldman, a firefighter, emergency medical technician, and Wake County parent joined the board with the stated aim of improving communication between parents and the school board. She also had goals of providing home-to-school proximity and ending mandatory assignment to year-round schools. Goldman believed that resources should be devoted toward strengthening the relationships between low-income youth and their parents.²⁸

One of the four new members, Deborah Prickett, had a career working in public education, both with the Wake County Public School System and with the State of North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction. She took a strong stand against frequent reassignment of students, having experienced it with her own children.²⁹ She also advocated for children to have access to schools within their neighborhood, to reduce traveling time of students, to enhance student "stability and consistence" in education, and to increase collaboration with parents.³⁰

Chris Malone was a former Wake Forest Town Commissioner within Wake County, had worked in the private sector, and was also a Wake County parent. He believed that community schools would provide more stability for students and that parents should have a choice between year-round and traditional schools.³¹ Importantly, Malone also believed that the demographic composition of a school has no effect on student achievement.³²

John Tedesco became the primary public voice for the community schools voting majority. With a background as Vice President for the Boys and Girls Club of Wake County, Tedesco had a track record of working with youth. He advocated for parents to have more choice in school assignment, and he also advocated for the idea that community schools would strengthen neighborhoods and encourage parental involvement.³³ In addition to being the spokesman for the voting majority, he also became the chair of the school board's Student Assignment and Economically Disadvantaged Task Force committees.³⁴

These four candidates' objectives, when coordinated, were clear. They wanted home-to-school proximity, less long-distance busing, more parental choice, and less frequent re-assignment. They also sought an alternative to socio-economic integration to address the academic needs of low-income students, and they were united in their move to end the diversity policy.

The four board members who were in the voting minority on March 24th – Kevin Hill, Anne McLaurin, Carolyn Morrison, and Keith Sutton – all publicly supported the diversity policy, and all of their terms were to expire in November 2011. At the March 24th meeting, Morrison, a former teacher, principal, professor, and college department director in Wake County, proposed an amendment that would prohibit resegregation.³⁵ Morrison was making a statement that she believed the plan could lead to economically and racially segregated schools. The amendment was voted down, 5-4.³⁶

At the same meeting, McLaurin, a medical doctor active in the Wake County School Health Advisory Council, proposed an amendment using direct language from the North Carolina State Constitution, saying that any assignment plan must provide "all students at all schools with an equal opportunity to a sound, basic education."³⁷ The amendment was passed unanimously. McLaurin did not approve of the decision to end the diversity policy, but she recognized that she needed to continue functioning with the board and move forward with the decisions they made.³⁸ (While McLaurin had accepted the end of the diversity policy, her husband, Raleigh Mayor Charles Meeker, did not. By September 2010, Meeker was organizing the 12 mayors of the cities of Wake County --Raleigh being one of these 12 - to form a committee that would review the school board's assignment plan.³⁹)

Hill, former chairman of the school board before Margiotta, had grown up in segregated schools in Raleigh and worked as an educator and principal in Wake County schools for 28 years.⁴⁰ He said of his decision to support the diversity policy, "For me, there's an important perspective that comes from having graduated from a segregated school system and having worked in an integrated school system."⁴¹

Sutton, Legislative Affairs Program Manager at the Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the only African American serving on the board, expressed frustration at the majority five's swift decision-making on March 24th, saying, "When it doesn't seem like there's any will to work or compromise, it is quite frustrating."⁴²

These four members would continue to express a commitment to the diversity policy throughout the community school assignment plan design. However, as they were a voting minority, it was unlikely they would achieve the inclusion of a diversity requirement unless one of the other five members in the voting majority served as a swing vote. Given the united campaign of the four newly-elected members and the clear intentions of Margiotta, that swing vote was unlikely to happen in the coming months.

IV. Toward a New School Board – Support for the Community Schools Approach

The four candidates found no shortage of advocacy groups and individuals to support their view. They were supported by a variety of interests groups, individual donors, and public policy research groups. Having coordinated their platforms, the candidates were all supported by the Wake Schools Community Alliance, a membership-based advocacy group, which campaigned and raised funds for them. A similar advocacy group in Apex desiring more stability in student assignment and more parental choice, Wake CARES, also endorsed the four school board members.

The four board members also received large contributions from two individual donors: Bob Luddy, a founder of private and charter schools, contributed \$18,000 to the school board candidates and the Wake Schools Community Alliance the year before the elections. Art Pope, founder of the North Carolina public policy group the John Locke Foundation, contributed \$15,015 to the Republican Party, which funded the campaign mailers the four candidates distributed prior to the election.⁴³

The John Locke Foundation, a conservative think tank, publicly supported the new school board members. Articulated by the foundation's president John Hood on NC Spin, a public debate television program broadcast in North Carolina, the foundation disagreed with the diversity policy, which they felt resulted in "forced busing."⁴⁴ The foundation also claimed the diversity policy was not resulting in improved academic performance for low-income and minority students, and that neither race nor income should be a factor in school assignment.⁴⁵ Valuing parental choice, the foundation envisioned an assignment system that would use choice as the primary factor in assignment. As Hood described in his publication "The FAQs of the Busing Dispute," an assignment process based on choice would:

"1) divide a large district such as Wake into a number of student-assignment zones, drawn according to traditional municipal and community lines; 2) allow parents to rate their top choices of schools within their zones, aiming to give the vast majority either their first or second choice; 3) allow parents to apply for schools outside their assignment zones as long as there is space and they provide transportation, while giving low-income families free transportation to the school of their choice; 4) resolve ties on the basis of siblings and proximity; and 5) maximize parental choice and satisfaction by allowing local schools to adopt differing themes, curricula, and instructional styles, to the extent allowed by state law."⁴⁶

The interest groups, individuals, and policy groups that supported the community schools idea clearly wanted to increase parental involvement, limit reassignment, and implement a greater

degree of parental choice. Their objectives were combined into the platform of the newly elected board members.

V. The Status Quo Is Working – Defenders of the Diversity Policy

Those that supported the diversity policy were not as well-organized initially as supporters of community schools. After the school board decided to end the diversity policy, interest groups, individuals, advocacy groups, public educators, public officials, and members of the faith community began to organize their efforts in opposing the decision.

After the school board was elected and their purpose to move toward community schools assignment became clear, Reverend William Barber, President of the North Carolina chapter of the NAACP, became the major spokesperson for the group "Friends of Diversity," which was organized to oppose the school board decision. Barber attended racially-segregated schools in kindergarten in North Carolina and attended school during the desegregation years of the 1960s and 1970s.⁴⁷ Barber has had a long career as a pastor in Goldsboro, North Carolina, and he worked for several social causes, from health care reform, to outreach for at-risk youth, to promoting diversity in schools. Barber appeared on the talk show NC Spin and the local National Public Radio (NPR) station to discuss the merits of school diversity and the negative consequences that might ensue if the community schools assignment plan did not maintain diversity. On his website, Barber passionately expressed his concerns:

"You and I here tonight know that when children are packed into the most underfunded, most segregated, most high poverty schools it is nothing but a form of institutionalized child abuse. It is noble for the current Wake County policy to promote diversity and to stand against high-poverty schools. It is a nightmare for John Tedesco and the rest of his anti-diversity slate to hijack the school board to move away from this noble goal."⁴⁸

Barber was flanked by supporters in the education and faith community. Tim Tyson, a visiting professor of American Christianity and Southern Culture at Duke University and author of the nationally acclaimed book "Blood Done Sign My Name," accompanied Barber to the first demonstration after the school board decision and was one of the four protesters arrested for sitting in the members' chairs and refusing to leave. He sat with Reverend Barber because he was concerned that creating school zones based on where students live would create racially and economically segregated schools.⁴⁹

Minister Nancy Petty, another of the four who were arrested at the June school board meeting, also appeared on NPR to call attention to the role that diverse schools play in preparing students to engage with others of different cultures and backgrounds.⁵⁰ On the program, Petty stated that parents' negative reactions to the diversity policy were a result of their frustration with different, larger problems affecting the school system. She believed that doing away with the diversity policy in response to negative reactions from parents was short-sighted.⁵¹

Petty and Barber also co-authored an open letter to the public based upon their reflections when being handcuffed and processed at the Wake County Jail on June 15, 2010. In this letter, deliberately meant to be reminiscent of civil disobedience letters written by Martin Luther King Jr. and Henry David Thoreau, Petty and Barber referenced 40 years of research suggesting that "high poverty, racially isolated schools hurt children's life chances."⁵² The letter affirmed their commitment to using non-violent civil disobedience tactics, such as prayer vigils and marches, to oppose the decision to end the diversity policy.⁵³

Another defender of the diversity policy, former Governor Jim Hunt, who is still active nationally on education issues, expressed his concerns in a public address at an education conference, saying:

"Here's one thing that won't work – packing certain schools full of low-income, poor, low-achieving students. That will not work. We do need to have reasonable diversity. I understand about wanting students to go to school pretty close to home. I think there's a way to work this out fairly if we work at it. But we can't ignore it and say it doesn't make any difference who is in these schools. It does make a difference."⁵⁴

Two advocacy groups, Wake Up Wake County and Wake Education Partnership, also became more vocal in their defense of the diversity policy. In response to the ending of the diversity policy, Wake Up Wake County formed the "Great Schools in Wake" coalition, which supported diversity as one of their core values.⁵⁵ While they did not want to see an end to the diversity policy, they did want to decrease the frequent reassignments.⁵⁶ The NAACP was a member of their coalition of 43 organizations.⁵⁷ For the other members in the coalition, see "Great Schools in Wake Coalition Partners" in Appendix 6.

The Wake Education Partnership focused on producing research briefs and blogs that expressed their view about the merit of diversity in the classroom. In a report issued in February 2008, the partnership stated its position that "socio-economic balance is absolutely critical to maintaining healthy schools," citing research that suggests mixed-income schools

are likely to bring positive academic benefits to low-income children.⁵⁸ Their research was often cited by the four board members that were in the voting minority.⁵⁹

These individuals and groups had several shared objectives. They wanted to re-focus the school assignment debate so that population growth was seen as a major reason for the school reassignments and long-distance busing. In addition, they wanted to stop language that linked diversity to low levels of student achievement. Pointing to research, they believed the opposite was true; they viewed diversity as a key component in providing a high-quality education for each student.

Individuals on both sides of the debate had very different opinions about the value of diversity in community schools. Their arguments would heat up to become a national controversy with two distinctly defined sides.

VI. Clashing Priorities, Clashing Values

Those who advocated for the community schools assignment plan valued home-to-school proximity, parental choice, and less frequent reassignment, or more "stability" for Wake County children. Those who advocated for the diversity policy valued the role of socio-economically diverse classrooms in improving student performance, and some articulated a belief in the value of diversity irrespective of its impact on achievement. Throughout the spring and summer of 2010, the values of these two groups were pitted against one another. The key dispute was over which group's values were more important; it seemed to both sides that encompassing all of these values in the new assignment plan was impossible. For a listing of the key stakeholders in the school assignment dispute and for a timeline of events, see Appendices 7 and 8.

The Role of Research

Both sides used research to bolster their positions. Proponents of the community schools model emphasized how research supported their views. Analyzing the district's 2009-2010 End of Grade test scores, Terry Stoops, the Director of Education Studies at the John Locke Foundation, concluded that Wake County Schools' student test score gains were not as high as other North Carolina counties with a higher percentage of low-income students.⁶⁰ Stoops asserted that their modest gains in test scores proved their diversity policy was not helping the district achieve growth in academic performance faster than other districts.⁶¹ The president of the John Locke Foundation, John Hood, also cited opinion polls from two public policy polling agencies within North Carolina, the Civitas Institute and Public Policy Polling. These polls

demonstrated that a majority of residents who were polled disapproved of the diversity assignment policy.⁶²

However, defenders of the diversity policy countered the John Lock Foundation with research that showed how socio-economic diversity could contribute to the academic success of low-income children. Appearing on the NPR show, "The State of Things," Gerald Grant, Professor of Education Emeritus at Syracuse University, cited research showing that students who live in diverse settings are:

- better problem solvers,
- more likely to attend college,
- less likely to be in prison later in life, and
- able to gain important social networking skills needed for employment.⁶³

The Wake Education Partnership also produced a policy brief that outlined research studies over the past two decades with findings that:

- students in high-poverty schools are more likely to have uncertified or inexperienced teachers, and
- low-income students in affluent schools have higher math scores than low-income students in high-poverty schools.⁶⁴

Defenders of the diversity policy also pointed to a public opinion poll conducted in 2002 by the Wake Education Partnership that claimed 95 percent of parents were satisfied with the schools their children attended.⁶⁵

As the dispute began to take shape through debates in print journals, online media outlets, radio, and television, both sides used research to defend their positions. However, demonstrations and protests would prove to be more effective at gaining media attention than research results.

Tensions Rise for All to See and Hear

The dispute over the end of the diversity policy was anything but private. The initial confrontation that resulted in the arrest of Reverend Barber and three others at the June 16th school board meeting was the first of many public acts of disapproval led by the Friends of Diversity and supporters. A month later, on July 20, 2010, 16 people were arrested for disrupting the school board meeting by shouting "forward ever, backwards, never!" and holding signs of protest; Reverend Barber and Reverend Nancy Petty were among those arrested during

the protest, making it their second arrest. In addition to the 16 who were arrested, 100 protesters stood outside the building holding signs saying that the board decision could lead to resegregation, and shouting in frustration upon the news of Barber and Petty's second arrest.⁶⁶ On August 10th, six more protesters were arrested at a Wake County school board meeting for speaking over their allotted time in the public comment period and for causing a disturbance through chanting and singing.⁶⁷ Among those arrested were two Wake County teenagers.⁶⁸

These actions drew national attention to the Wake County School Board's decision. National media, including The New York Times and The Washington Post, commented on the Wake County School Board decision. The negative attention swelled in August when the secondary school accrediting agency AdvanceEd, concerned that removing the diversity policy would harm students' quality of education, called the district's accreditation into review.⁶⁹ AdvanceEd began its review when the North Carolina chapter of the NAACP lodged a complaint against the schools, claiming that some board members had "racist attitudes."⁷⁰ If AdvanceEd were to deny Wake County Schools accreditation, it could affect students' competitiveness when applying for colleges.⁷¹ Despite the threats of AdvanceEd, the school board continued its planning process, confident that with the public comment they were soliciting and the models they were using, their approach would ultimately improve the students' quality of education.

The dispute had the potential to reach even greater heights. On September 24, 2010, the North Carolina chapter of the NAACP filed a complaint against the Wake County School Board, saying the board violated Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that any organization that receives federal funding must not engage in discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.⁷² The complaint was filed with the hope that the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights would accept the complaint and begin the process of investigating the Wake County School Board.⁷³ If the federal complaint did not succeed in derailing the community schools assignment plan, the NAACP was considering taking their complaint to trial.⁷⁴

VII. The Proposed Community Schools Assignment Plan

Amidst all of the media attention and meeting disruptions, the Student Assignment Committee still had a job to finish. In August 2010, when they began drafting the new assignment plan, the committee imagined that instead of assigning students to individual schools, they would create zones encompassing several schools that students could attend.⁷⁵ This design would achieve the dual goals of increasing parental choice and home-to-school proximity. The design guaranteed students admittance at a school within their zone and allowed parents and students a range of school options within the zone.⁷⁶ They envisioned that most students would

get their first choice of school.⁷⁷

Maintaining the former socio-economic diversity standard was not a goal of the committee.⁷⁸ In fact, attaining socio-economic diversity seemed to be a daunting task for the chair of the committee, Tedesco. "There's no way we can draw up zones that can balance out the inequities in demographics from Zebulon to Apex," Tedesco said at the first Student Assignment Committee meeting in July. "We can't bus all the way from Zebulon to Apex. I can't make Garner look like Apex."⁷⁹

On July 27, 2010, the Student Assignment Committee met to review four zone maps that were created as samples of school assignment options. Each of the four zone maps varied in the number of zones created, ranging from seven to 39 zones. If a map had smaller zones, students could be guaranteed attendance at a school close to home, which would not be the case with larger zones. However, in smaller zones, students would have fewer schools to choose from and would have less school diversity than they would if they were in larger zones.⁸⁰

At the meeting, the board rejected the sample map of 39 zones and decided to post the other four sample maps on the Wake County Public School System website for public comment through September 6, 2010.⁸¹ They planned to regroup on August 31, 2010, to make a decision about which sample map would best meet their goals. At the August 31st meeting, the School Assignment Committee decided to move forward with one of the zone maps, the map of 16 zones that was created by following high school assignment patterns (see "Sample Regions based on High School Attendance Zones" in Appendix 8).⁸² The committee also decided to extend the public comment period through the entire planning phase, which could last until May 2011.⁸³

The committee observed that the zones did not offer the same education options in terms of types of available schools. Even though the zone boundaries were based on high school attendance zones, one zone did not contain a high school. Some zones also did not offer year-round school options or middle schools. Taking this into account, the committee decided that in addition to breaking up the county into 16 zones, they would clump the zones into five regions: Central, East, North, South, and West. While students would not be granted school choice in elementary school, they would be granted school choice at the middle school and high school level.⁸⁴

While Tedesco was satisfied with the map that was decided upon during the August 31st meeting, some citizens at the meeting expressed concerns that the Central region would have a disproportionate amount of low-income students.⁸⁵ The News and Observer, North Carolina's third largest circulation newspaper, analyzed the available racial, economic, and school performance data and also concluded that "A small-zone system of about 16 districts, based on the current high school districts, would create extreme variations in race and income levels."⁸⁶

What Would Community School Zones Mean and Do?

The new community schools assignment plan of 16 zones and five regions outlined in late August had no language requiring schools to maintain a diversity ratio. With no diversity requirement, it was likely that the new plan would affect the economic and racial diversity of Wake County Schools and could potentially result in some of the 16 zones having more high-poverty and racially-homogenous schools than other zones.

The table below presents data for two of the five regions under the new community schools assignment plan. The data presented on free and reduced lunch status (FRL), racial composition, grade proficiency, and school availability is based on what these indicators for the zones and regions would be under the community schools plan. The table shows data for a particular high school zone within each region to illustrate the difference in FRL, race, grade proficiency, and school availability that exists between zones and regions. For a more complete table of FRL, race, and grade proficiency for all zones and regions based on the 2009-2010 high school attendance zones, see Appendix 9.

Wake County Zone and Region Comparison			<i>Source: Wake County Public School System</i>		
Western Region			Central Region		
	Green Hope HS Zone	Region		Enloe HS Zone	Region
FRL	7%	14%	FRL	68%	52%
White	56%	62%	White	4%	27%
Black	9%	10%	Black	70%	47%
Latino	9%	8%	Latino	21%	17%
Asian	26%	15%	Asian	1%	4%
Proficient on 9th grade reading test	97%	95%	Proficient on 9th grade reading test	66%	72%
Elementary Schools	8	23	Elementary Schools	6	20
Middle Schools	1	7	Middle Schools	2	6
High Schools	2	4	High Schools	2	4
Student Population	13,493	34,027	Student Population	10,216	23,192

Using this data, two scenarios illustrate how the new plan would affect diversity and also show how zonal and regional divisions would affect the amount of choice students and parents would have.

Scenario 1: A rising ninth grader lives in the Green Hope high school zone, in the Western region of Wake County. As the student deliberates where she will attend high school, she can consider a school within her Green Hope zone, which has a student population of 7 percent of students on free and reduced lunch and a ninth grade reading proficiency of 96.7 percent.⁸⁷ The student population is 56 percent white, 9 percent black, 26 percent Asian, and 9 percent Hispanic.⁸⁸

The student can also consider attending a high school within her region. Her region has an average student population not too dissimilar to her zone in terms of racial composition, with a population that is 62 percent white, 10 percent black, 15 percent Asian, and 8 percent Hispanic.⁸⁹ The average ninth grade reading proficiency level in the region remains nearly the same, at 95.2 percent.⁹⁰ However, the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch status doubles from the zone to the region, with 14 percent of students having free and reduced lunch status in the region.⁹¹

Scenario 2: A rising ninth grader lives in the Enloe/Southeast Raleigh high school zone, in the Central region of Wake County. As the student deliberates where she will attend high school, she can consider a school within her Enloe/Southeast Raleigh zone, which has a student population of 68 percent of students on free or reduced lunch and a ninth grade reading proficiency of 66 percent.⁹² The student population is also 4 percent white, 70 percent black, 1 percent Asian, and 21 percent Hispanic.⁹³

The student can also consider attending a high school within her region. Her region has a student population that is substantially more diverse than her zone in terms of racial composition, with a student population that is 27 percent white, 47 percent black, 4 percent Asian, and 17 percent Hispanic.⁹⁴ The ninth grade reading proficiency level in the region is also substantially higher than the proficiency level in the zone, at 72.5 percent.⁹⁵ In addition, the free and reduced lunch population of the region is also less than in the zone, at 52 percent of the student population.⁹⁶

These two scenarios illustrate three important points. First, the Central region and the Western region are quite different in terms of the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch status, racial composition, and grade proficiency. Second, these two high school zones are very different in terms of the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch status and ninth grade proficiency. Under the diversity policy, students in the Enloe zone might have been bused to the Green Hope zone to achieve the 40 percent/25 percent requirement.⁹⁷ Third,

once students reach the middle school or high school level and they are permitted to choose schools outside of their zone but within their region, their options for having increased economic and racial diversity in the classroom expand.

VIII. Making Difficult Choices

Facing a media-savvy coalition of diversity policy supporters on one side, and an electorate of Wake County residents and parents on the other, the Wake County School Board can take several possible courses of action but will have difficulty in appeasing both sides equally. Any decision the board makes about student assignment will reflect their preference between the competing goals of achieving home-to-school proximity, school choice, and socio-economic diversity in the school assignment plan.

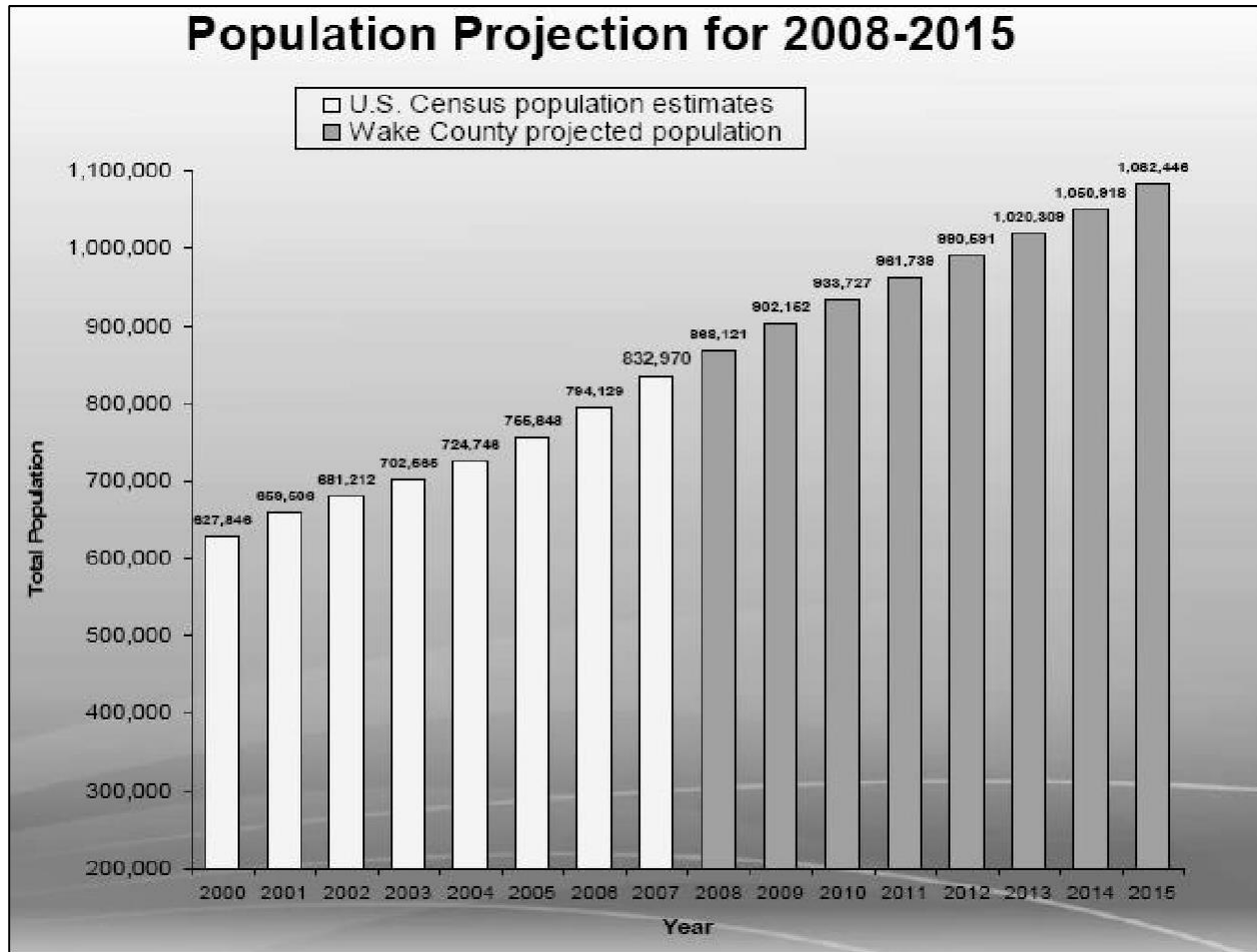
See Teaching Note.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Wake County Population Projection for 2008-2015
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APPENDIX 1

Wake County Population Projection for 2008-2015⁹⁸



Economic Indicators for Wake County (Figures collected by Wake County Public Schools)⁹⁹

2007 Median family income: 3\$79,588*
 2007 Median household income: \$61,554*
 2007 Population below poverty line: 8.3%*
 2007 Unemployment rate: 4.7%****
 Dec. 2008 Unemployment rate: 6.1%****
 2008 Average residential property value: \$254,471 (County)
 High: \$310,424**
 Low: \$130,450**

* 2007 U.S. Census Bureau
 ** Wake County Revenue
 *** Triangle Transit
 **** NC Employment Security Commission

APPENDIX 2

Wake County, NC, and the end of a diversity policy: Why 2010?

In the early 2000s, the Wake County Board of Education's diversity policy was heralded at local, state, and national levels as a best-practice policy for maintaining socio-economic diversity in public schools. Many Wake County families with children in public schools liked the policy because they believed it helped the district avoid the formation of high-poverty schools, and they appreciated diversity in the classroom. However, many Wake County families opposed the policy because they believed it was responsible for frequent reassignment of students and that it had a role in prohibiting students from going to the school closest to their home.¹⁰⁰ In 2002, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district ended its student assignment policy that required socio-economic diversity ratios, adding fuel to the fire of diversity policy opponents in Wake County.

In the face of this opposition, what social and political factors enabled the diversity policy to stay in place from 2000-2010? Why was 2010 the year the Wake County school board ended the policy, and not sooner?

Based on interviews with several former and current Wake County school board members, many factors led to the board's decision to end the diversity policy in 2010. These factors included:

- The downturn in the economy in the mid to late 2000s,
- Population growth,
- The advent of year-round schools,
- Frequent student reassignment,
- The formation of parent advocacy groups,
- National, partisan support of certain school board candidates, and
- A coalition between some groups of parents and conservative Republicans.

Some of these factors were present in the early 2000s and grew over time to become more prominent in 2009; other factors, such as the development of partisan loyalties among the school board members, developed in the late 2000s.

The struggling economy is one of these factors that heightened some community members' discontent with the student assignment policy. Board member Anne McLaurin explained that, in the late 2000s, Wake County was experiencing the negative effects of the economic downturn and the school district had less funding, which may have had an effect on student performance.¹⁰¹ As McLaurin said, "A system that had been performing well and meeting educational goals, under stress, started performing less well."¹⁰²

There are some who argue that the long distance busing necessitated by the student assignment plans of the 2000s contributed to discontent with the diversity policy. A different perspective suggests that the socio-economic and academic performance ratios that the diversity policy required necessitated the busing, and that many families' lives were unwillingly disrupted by this busing. However, as former school board member John Gilbert highlighted, in the East Raleigh district where the majority of students who are bused out of their district reside, a candidate that opposed busing has never been elected.¹⁰³ In addition, former school board member Roxie Cash attested that only 3 percent of all students in the county were subject to long-distance busing.¹⁰⁴ Roughly 2.5 percent of the district's students were bused from the inner city schools into the suburban schools, and the other .5 percent were bused from the suburban schools to the Wake County magnet schools.¹⁰⁵

As examined more fully in other areas of this case, the tremendous growth in Wake County's school-aged population in the 2000s required the school board to address the issue of limited capacity in the schools. As explained by former school board member Carol Parker, to accommodate this growth, the board passed a bond for school construction, but the construction did not keep pace with the growth.¹⁰⁶ To address the need, the county turned some traditional calendar-year schools into year-round schools and designated that some of the newly built schools would operate on a year-round schedule.¹⁰⁷

In 2007, Wake CARES, a parent advocacy group, filed a lawsuit against the school district, claiming that students should not be forced to attend year-round schools. This eventually resulted in the appeals court ruling that the county had the right to assign students to year-round schools.^{108,109} In the opinion of Parker, the court case sparked the beginning of a larger parent mobilization movement.¹¹⁰ In Cash's opinion, not only were parents unhappy with the instability of the assignment process, but they were also unhappy with what they felt was disrespectful treatment at school board meetings.¹¹¹

Wake CARES voiced the concerns of these parents, and the Republican Party partnered with Wake CARES in the late 2000s.¹¹² Several "high dollar" Republicans contributed to the Wake CARES campaign for the four Republican school board candidates in 2009.¹¹³ Commenting on the Republican victory in the school board elections in 2009, Parker states, "In my opinion, it was a parent uprising that was married to a conservative Republican uprising to take over the board of education."¹¹⁴ What the parents wanted, in the opinion of Parker, was stability and a larger role in making assignment decisions for their own children.¹¹⁵ What Republicans wanted, in the opinion of Cash, was to limit the scope of the school board's control over assignment, increase parental choice, and perhaps even pave the way for the development of more charter schools and more voucher programs for private schools.¹¹⁶ With four open seats on the school board in 2010, there emerged a window of opportunity for forming a Republican majority that would represent the concerns of Wake CARES.

In addition, as Gilbert, Cash, and Parker pointed out, a majority of the newly elected school board members in 2010 had lived in the Northeastern states of the country, states that generally assign students based on a neighborhood schools assignment policy.¹¹⁷ Gilbert, Cash, and Parker argue that the newly elected board members saw the value in having neighborhood schools, and they wanted to implement an assignment policy similar to what they were familiar with.¹¹⁸

The 2010 school board also represented a departure from previous Wake County boards in that it was divided along partisan lines, with school board votes often falling distinctly on partisan lines. McLaurin, Gilbert, and Cash agreed that previous boards did not vote on issues according to party positions. Gilbert said, "Since 1981 to the fall of 1999, there was not a single partisan vote taken on the school board."¹¹⁹ McLaurin concurred, expressing that this was the first time in her memory that partisan politics played a role in Wake County school board decisions.¹²⁰ Roxie Cash also agreed, saying "My take on this is that it's a national movement. Partisan politics started to play more and more of a role; more people were being recruited to run for specific reasons by national politicians."¹²¹

As discussions with former and current school board members reveal, a variety of economic, social, and logistical factors contributed to the reversal of the diversity policy in 2010. These factors developed over time, possibly explaining in part why the diversity policy was in place for 10 years. In the opinion of current and former school board members, year-round schooling, reassignment, long-distance busing, poor relationships between the school board and parents, national political influence, and a downturn in the economy all led to the 2009 election of four candidates who pledged to revise the student assignment policy.

APPENDIX 3

History of School Desegregation

The desegregation of public schools is a contentious issue that the United States Supreme Court has repeatedly addressed since 1896. The end of slavery in America did not mark the end of racial segregation.

Until the early 1960s and 1970s, most public school systems across the nation had separate facilities for black and white students.¹²² "Separate but equal" facilities for blacks and whites was declared constitutional in the Supreme Court decision of Plessy vs. Ferguson in 1896. However, historical accounts show that these separate school facilities were woefully far from equal. For white students, school terms were longer, teachers were paid better, physical structures were in better condition, and course availability was greater than for black students.¹²³ In many cases, black students were given the used textbooks of white students.¹²⁴

In the early 1950s, the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) organized several plaintiffs to challenge segregation in the elementary and secondary public school system in South Carolina, Washington D.C., Delaware, Virginia, and Kansas – a series of cases known as Brown vs. Board of Education.¹²⁵ These cases resulted in a Supreme Court decision in 1954 that declared a separate but equal education system for different races was unconstitutional, meaning that public school systems across the nation could no longer deny black students attendance at their schools.

However, many school districts across the country ignored the Brown decision, made little or no movement to racially integrate schools, and in some cases, violently opposed attempts at integration.¹²⁶ In the American South, attempts to skirt around mandated desegregation included using classroom partitions and segregated lunchrooms to separate students.¹²⁷

In the 1970s, the Swann vs. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education Supreme Court decision established that federal courts had the right to impose busing on school districts to achieve desegregation. In response to this, in the early 1970s, school boards across the nation, including Wake County, drew up diversity plans to be in compliance with Supreme Court decisions.¹²⁸ As school assignment plans generally placed students in schools located in their neighborhood and most Americans lived in racially-segregated neighborhoods, many of these school systems relied on elaborate busing strategies to ensure that schools were racially integrated.¹²⁹

The article "School Segregation under Color-Blind Jurisprudence : The Case of North Carolina," written by Charles T. Clotfelter, Helen F. Ladd, and Jacob L. Vigdor, presents a summary of the experiences of two school districts in North Carolina that drew up diversity assignment plans and then eventually deviated from those plans. As Clotfelter et al outline, from 1971-1995 in North Carolina, the school district of Winston Salem/Forsyth implemented a school assignment plan that prioritized a racially-diverse student body at each school.¹³⁰ In 1995, the district began a school choice plan, dividing the district into sections and allowing parents to choose which schools their children would attend within a particular section.¹³¹

Similar to the Winston Salem/Forsyth school district, as Clotfelter et al illuminate, in the 1970s and 1980s the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district implemented an assignment policy that required racial quotas in each school and had a busing schedule to help achieve this goal.¹³² The racial quotas were challenged in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the court decided that race could not be a factor in student assignment plans.¹³³ In 2002, the district turned away from the racial diversity assignment plan and moved toward a model where parents could choose one school from a range of schools within their designated neighborhood for their child to attend.¹³⁴

Complicating the school assignment plans, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 forbade the use of race as a factor in school assignment. Furthermore, the 2007 Supreme Court decision of *Parents Involved in Community Schools vs. Seattle School District* and a series of Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals decisions also established that school districts could not use race as a factor in school assignment.¹³⁵ Paradoxically, schools were expected by Supreme Court orders to racially desegregate their schools, but they were not permitted by the Civil Rights Act to use race as a factor in assignment.¹³⁶

In 2000, the Wake County school board creatively complied with both decrees by designing a diversity policy based on free and reduced priced lunch and student performance instead of race. The policy was hailed by the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights and The New York Times as a model for other school districts.¹³⁷

In the early 2000s, North Carolina schools were less racially segregated than the residential areas where they were located.¹³⁸ However, in several of the largest school districts in the state, including Wake County, racial segregation in schools increased between 2000-2001 and 2005-2006.¹³⁹

APPENDIX 4

The Structure and Financing of Public Education in the United States

Education Structure

In the United States, each state is divided into school districts. Each school district is governed by a Board of Education, commonly referred to as the school board, which is comprised of elected individuals who serve fixed terms.¹⁴⁰ In most districts, the school board hires the district superintendent, determines the budget, and sets operational policy.¹⁴¹ The power of the school board in each school district is defined by state laws.¹⁴²

In North Carolina, each school district's Board of Education is comprised of nine members who are elected every four years on a staggered cycle.¹⁴³ The board sets school operational policy, which is then implemented by the school district superintendent and the superintendent's administrative staff.¹⁴⁴ The superintendent is appointed by the Board of Education.¹⁴⁵ The Board of Education in each school district sets a budget for its activities which is approved by the County Board of Commissioners in each school district.¹⁴⁶

For a more detailed presentation of education structure in the United States, please follow this link created by the U.S. Department of State:

<http://www.ait.org.tw/infousa/enus/education/overview/edlite-local-dist.html>.

Education Finance

In the United States, public schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade are funded through a combination of federal, state, and local funding. In lieu of school fees that are used in other countries, in the United States state and local funds are used to pay for most of the expenses required to maintain a school, such as staff and teacher salaries and construction costs.¹⁴⁷ Federal funds are restricted to supporting the needs of target populations, such as low-income or handicapped students.¹⁴⁸

The proportion of school funding provided by the federal, state, and local government varies by state. In North Carolina in 2009, 69 percent of all spending on schools in North Carolina came from the state government (a high percentage, relative to other states), 24 percent came from the county government, and 7 percent came from the federal government.¹⁴⁹

The North Carolina state government raises revenues for schools through the sales tax and the North Carolina Lottery, and the local (county and city) governments typically raise revenues through local property and sales taxes.¹⁵⁰

In North Carolina, flat grants are given by the state to each school district, based upon the "average daily membership," or attendance, at each school.¹⁵¹ Through this system, a flat monetary amount is given per pupil to the districts; however, supplements are also made to districts with low local tax effort or with high populations of special needs or at-risk students.¹⁵²

For a more detailed look into how education finance functions in the United States, please follow this link from *Education Week*, a source for education news:
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/school-finance/>.¹⁵³

Appendix 5

Terms and Definitions

Many of the terms and definitions provided here are particular to the North Carolina and Wake County context in which the case took place. As such, the terms may vary between counties and states.

1. **Board of Education** – The Board of Education, commonly referred to as the school board, is the elected body that governs a school district. The school board sets operational policy, hires the district superintendent, and determines the budget for the school district.
2. **Calendar Year School** – In North Carolina, most public schools operate on a schedule where students attend school for approximately 10 months, beginning in August, and finish the school year in June, so that they do not attend school for 11 weeks in the summer. This is called a calendar year school.
3. **Civil Disobedience** – A term created by Henry David Thoreau in an 1848 essay defending his refusal to pay a state poll tax raising funds for a war in Mexico and for the Fugitive Slave Law, civil disobedience are any acts of individuals who violate the law because the law goes against their conscience or moral beliefs.¹⁵⁴ Civil disobedience tactics were used widely during the Civil Rights Movement in 1960s America.
4. **County** – A county is a form of local government. Most states are divided into counties, and most counties are governed by an elected board of county commissioners.¹⁵⁵ The county collects taxes from individuals living within the county and provides services such as building roads, ensuring water quality, assessing property value, planning and zoning, and administrating election and judicial functions.¹⁵⁶ The kinds of services provided by the city, county, and state vary from state to state. In North Carolina, there are 100 counties which are governed by a County Board of Commissioners.
5. **Free or Reduced Price Lunch** – Free or reduced price lunch is a term used by federal and state government to define a benefit given to students whose household income is below a certain income criterion. The income criterion is set by the state. In North Carolina in 2009-2010, in order for a student from a family of four to receive free lunch, his household's income must be at or below \$28,665. In order to receive reduced price lunch, his household's income must be at or below \$40,793.¹⁵⁷ Follow this link to learn more about the National School Lunch Program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/>.¹⁵⁸
6. **Grade Level Proficiency** – Grade level proficiency is a standard the state sets for the level of skills it desires students to achieve at a given grade level.
7. **High-Poverty Schools** – While there is no standard definition for a high-poverty school, some researchers have determined that high-poverty schools are those with 60 percent or

more of the student body population with free or reduced price lunch for elementary school, and 53 percent and 39 percent for middle school and high school, respectively.¹⁵⁹

8. **Magnet School** – A magnet school is a public school in Wake County that has an innovative and themed curriculum intended to draw high achieving and talented students into its program. In Wake County, magnet schools are typically located in low-income neighborhoods and require an application process for admission.¹⁶⁰ Follow this link to learn more about the Magnet School program in Wake County: <http://www.wcpss.net/magnet/>.
9. **School District** – A school district is a set of schools within a geographical area. Some states have multiple school districts within a county but, in North Carolina, most counties are served by one school district. North Carolina has 100 counties, and 115 school districts.¹⁶¹ The Wake County school district serves the entire county.
10. **Supreme Court** – The Supreme Court is the highest judicial body in the country. Decisions set by the Supreme Court are as powerful as laws enacted by the legislative body.
11. **Year-Round School** – Instead of an 11-week break in the summer, in year-round school, students have a series of short breaks throughout the entire year. In Wake County, students have a 15-day break every 45 days.¹⁶²

Appendix 6

Great Schools in Wake Coalition Partners

1. A Word to Move On
2. Action for Children North Carolina
3. Advocates for Children's Services
4. BiggerPicture4Wake
5. Brooks Elementary PTA
6. Cameron Park Homeowners Association UPHA
7. Cameron Village Neighborhood Association
8. Coalition of Concerned Citizens for African American Children
9. Concrete Homes NC
10. Conn Elementary PTA
11. Fairmont United Methodist Church
12. Fox Road Elementary PTA
13. Harriet B. Webster Task Force for Student Success
14. Hunter Elementary PTA
15. JTW Antiracism Team–UUFR
16. League of Women Voters of Wake County
17. Methodist Federation for Social Action
18. NAACP–3 Wake Chapters
19. NC Association of Community Development Corporations
20. NC Justice Center
21. NC Policy Watch
22. NC Social Justice Project
23. NC Student and Parent Advocacy Group
24. North Carolina A. Philip Randolph Institute, Inc.
25. North Carolina Housing Coalition

26.

26. Pakistan American Coalition for Education
27. Peace and Justice Mission Group
of Pullen Memorial
28. ProTrain LLC
29. Pullen Park Neighborhood
30. Raleigh First Baptist Church
31. Raleigh Grad Swings
32. Raleigh
Interdenominational
Ministerial Alliance
33. Raleigh–Wake Citizens
Association
34. Real G.I.R.L.S. Leadership
Academy, Raleigh
35. Social Action Committee of the
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
of Raleigh
36. Social Justice Ministry,
Community United Church of
Christ
37. St. Matthew AME Church of Raleigh
38. Stough Elementary PTA
39. Triangle East Chapter, 100
Black Men Inc.
40. University Park
Homeowners Association
UPHA
41. Wake Coalition of Rim
Schools
42. Wake Up Wake County
43. YWCA of the Greater
Triangle

Appendix 7

Key Stakeholders

1. ***The John Locke Foundation*** – The John Locke Foundation, through media appearances, public televised debates, and articles, supported the five school board members who ended the socio-economic diversity policy and designed the community school assignment policy. The John Locke Foundation strongly advocated for a "choice" element to be added to the community school assignment plan that would maximize parent's ability to choose which schools their children would attend.
2. ***National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)*** – the North Carolina state chapter of the NAACP strongly disapproved of the school board's move to end the socio-economic diversity policy. The NAACP believed that ending the policy and moving toward a community schools model would result in schools that were racially and economically segregated if no measure to preserve diversity were put in place. The NAACP filed a federal complaint against the Wake County school board and also filed a complaint with a national school accreditation agency in an effort to derail the school board's community schools assignment plan.
3. ***The Wake County Board of Education*** – in the fall of 2010, four new school board members were elected to the Board of Education with the promise that they would allow parents more school choice and the ability to send their child to the schools that are closest to home. Once elected, these four members joined a fifth incumbent member to form a voting majority. In the spring of 2010, the five-member majority quickly voted to end the county's 10-year-old economic diversity school assignment model. In the summer of 2010, the Board of Education drew up school assignment plans that favored the goals of increasing school-to-home proximity and giving families the ability to choose which schools their children would attend; the plans did not include a requirement that schools maintain socio-economic diversity. The plans were to be implemented in the 2012-2013 school year.
4. ***Wake County Parents*** – the Wake County parents that voted in the winter 2010 school board campaign overwhelmingly voted for the four school board candidates who campaigned on a community schools platform.
5. ***Wake Education Partnership*** – The Wake Education Partnership is an independent non-profit that advocates for excellent schools on behalf of the business community and the larger community. They focus specifically on retaining effective teachers in the district, developing effective leaders, and creating safe and healthy schools. The partnership holds the position that a socio-economically mixed classroom benefits low-income students. Their research was often cited by the four board members in the voting minority.

6. **Wake Schools Community Alliance** – The Wake Schools Community Alliance is a membership-driven advocacy group of parents and community members that raised funds for the four school board candidates who campaigned with a community schools platform and won in the fall of 2010 school board campaign.
7. **Wake Up Wake County** – Wake Up Wake County is a non-partisan advocacy group whose main objective is to direct and manage growth to ensure the county is a place with a high quality of life, active citizens, and accountable government.¹⁶³ In response to the ending of the diversity policy, they formed the 43-member "Great Schools in Wake" coalition, which supported diversity as one of their core values and held a public forum discussing the implications of the end to the diversity policy.

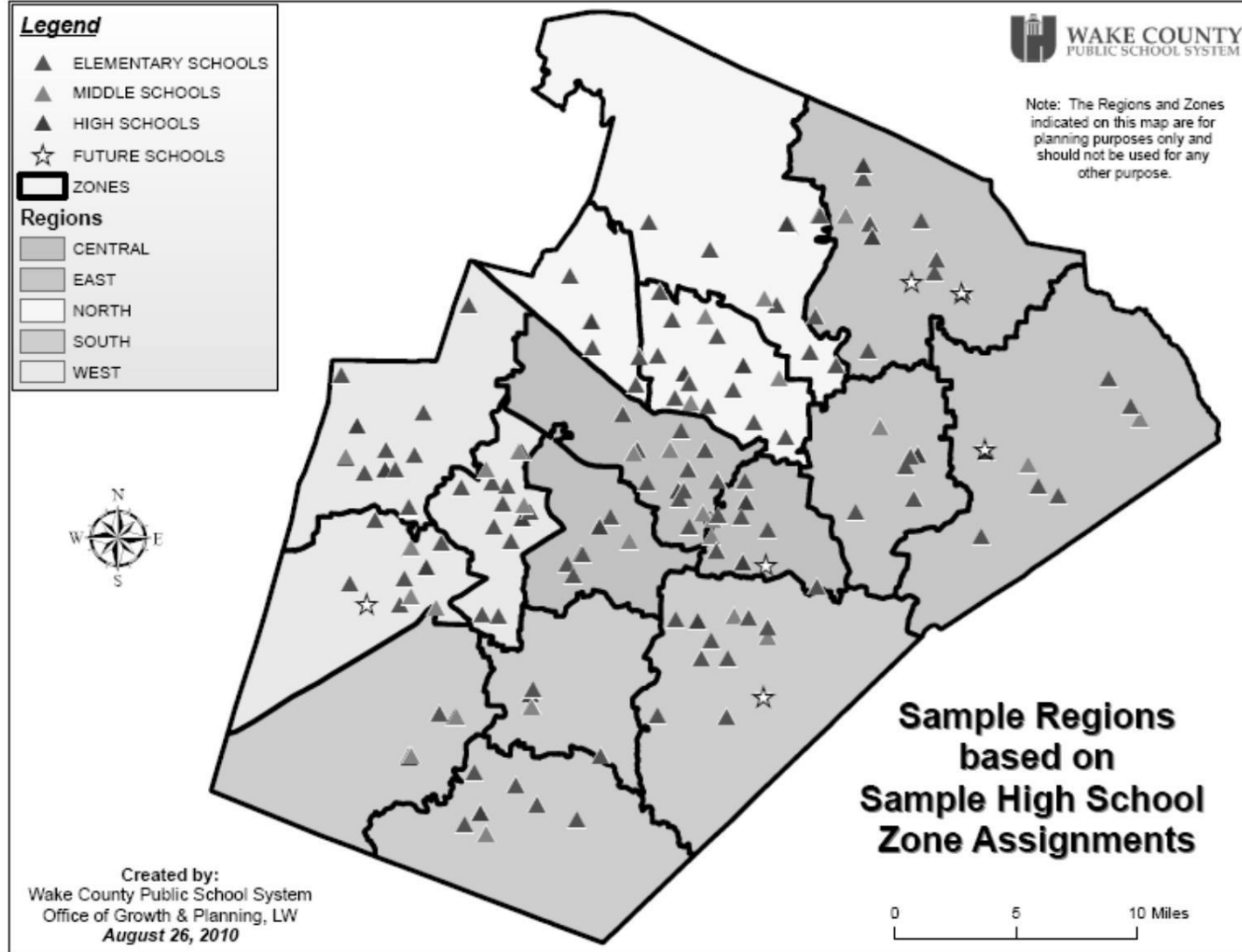
Appendix 8

Timeline of Events

<p>2000 – Wake County School Board adopts a diversity policy whereby no school population will surpass 40 percent of students on free or reduced lunch or 25 percent of students below grade level proficiency.</p>	<p>July 20, 2010 – Sixteen protesters, including Reverend Barber and Minister Petty, are arrested for disrupting a school board meeting. One hundred protesters demonstrate outside the building where the meeting is held.</p>
<p>October - November, 2009 – Four candidates are elected to the Wake County School board: John Tedesco, Deborah Prickett, Debra Goldman, and Chris Malone. The new members form a voting bloc with Ron Margiotta to begin changing the school assignment policy.</p>	<p>July 27, 2010 – John Tedesco holds the Student Assignment Committee's first meeting. Four assignment plans are reviewed and the committee makes the plans visible and asks for public comment through early September.</p>
<p>March 23, 2010 – Wake County School Board votes to move toward a community schools model of school assignment</p>	<p>August 10, 2010 – Six protesters are arrested for speaking during the public comment period of a school board meeting. Among those arrested are two teenagers.</p>
<p>May 18, 2010 – Wake County School Board votes to end the diversity policy</p>	<p>August, 2010 – A school accreditation agency, AdvanceEd, calls the new assignment policy into question and issues a review of the policy.</p>
<p>June 16, 2010 – Four protesters are arrested for sitting-in at a school board meeting. The protesters are Reverend William Barber, Minister Nancy Petty, Professor Tim Tyson, and Wake County parent Mary D. Williams.</p>	<p>August 31, 2010 – The Student Assignment Committee meets to digest public comment over the sample assignment maps and decides to use the High School Attendance Zone map moving forward. They decide to break the county into 16 attendance zones and 5 regions. Students will be assigned to their zone during elementary school, but can attend middle schools and high schools within their region. Magnet schools continue to be open to students throughout the county.</p>
	<p>September 24, 2010 – Reverend William Barber and the NAACP file a complaint that the school board violated Title IV of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964.</p>

Appendix 9

Sample Regions Based on High School Attendance Zones,
map approved by Wake County School Board on August 31, 2010*



*"Tentative Assignment Zone Map," accessed on September 9, 2010, at: <http://www.wcpss.net/assignment-drafts/>

Appendix 10

Free and Reduced Lunch Estimates by Sample Region Based on 2009-2010 High School Attendance Zones¹⁶⁴

This chart provides information on the grade level breakdown of students, the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch, and the racial makeup of students in each region and zone. The zones are listed above each region summary.

Demographic Summary of High School Attendance Zones											
	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	%Free and Reduced Lunch	%White	%Black	%Hispanic	%Asian	%American Indian	%Multi racial
	K-5	6-8	9-12	All	All	All	All	All	All	All	All
ATHENS(CENTRAL)	2993	1294	1556	5843	47%	37%	30%	18%	9%	0%	5%
BROUGHTON (CENTRAL)	3676	1564	1893	7133	37%	53%	28%	11%	4%	0%	3%
ENLOE/SOUTHEAST RALEIGH (CENTRAL)	4638	2497	3081	10216	68%	4%	70%	21%	1%	0%	3%
CENTRAL REGION SUMMARY	11307	5355	6530	23192	52%	27%	47%	17%	4%	0%	4%
EAST WAKE (EAST)	2701	1447	1791	5939	55%	35%	38%	21%	1%	0%	5%
KNIGHTDALE (EAST)	2965	1437	1826	6228	44%	27%	42%	21%	3%	0%	5%
WAKE FOREST/HERITAGE/ROLESVILLE (EAST)	5660	2723	3289	11672	21%	60%	24%	7%	3%	0%	5%
EAST REGION SUMMARY	11326	5607	6906	23839	35%	45%	32%	14%	3%	0%	5%
LEESVILLE (NORTH)	3403	1532	2445	7380	16%	67%	15%	7%	6%	0%	5%
SANDERSON/MILLBROOK (NORTH)	6536	2952	4072	13560	46%	35%	36%	20%	4%	0%	5%
WAKEFIELD (NORTH)	4892	2635	3522	11049	21%	63%	18%	10%	4%	0%	4%
NORTH REGION SUMMARY	14831	7119	10039	31989	31%	52%	25%	14%	5%	0%	5%
FUQUAY VARINA (SOUTH)	3706	1750	1942	7398	26%	65%	16%	12%	1%	0%	5%
GARNER (SOUTH)	4441	2210	2760	9411	39%	40%	35%	18%	1%	1%	5%
HOLLY SPRINGS (SOUTH)	3442	1514	1819	6775	16%	68%	15%	9%	3%	0%	5%
MIDDLE CREEK (SOUTH)	2610	1248	1569	5427	17%	75%	8%	11%	3%	1%	4%
SOUTH REGION SUMMARY	14199	6722	8090	29011	26%	60%	20%	13%	2%	0%	5%
APEX (WEST)	4883	2446	3041	10370	11%	72%	7%	6%	10%	0%	5%
CARY (WEST)	4651	2252	3261	10164	26%	60%	13%	14%	7%	0%	5%
GREEN HOPE/PANTHER CREEK (WEST)	6920	2984	3589	13493	7%	56%	9%	4%	26%	0%	5%
WEST REGION SUMMARY	16454	7682	9891	34027	14%	62%	10%	8%	15%	0%	5%
DISTRICT SUMMARY	68117	32485	41456	142058	30%	51%	25%	13%	6%	0%	5%

*FRL calculated by applying a % value to current membership based on FRL data from April 2009, membership data taken from current mainframe data as of July 26, 2010

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