

I would like to make a statement regarding the Directive that we are about to address. The Policy committee and our Student Assignment Committee clearly need a directive by the Board. I stated that more than once in our meeting on Wednesday. I have spent the better part of the past five years studying research and data as it pertains to Wake County. The information spans generations. I am talking about REAL research, data driven analysis, not concepts written by someone trying to sell books or television advertising time. The Policy Committee will need to craft a policy, but **it is not up to the Policy Committee to make a determination or recommendation as to which direction the Board, as a whole, should take.**

I got involved because I believe so strongly in a community based school system for many reasons. If you have never lived through the agony of having a child at school so far away from home that you cannot attend their events, meetings, teacher conferences, or be able to pick them up if they are injured or sick. If you have never experienced firsthand the pain of having your child attend a different school each year, with different people, in a different town. If you have never experienced the pain of having your child's status on a team at their school ripped away from them, whether the team be academic or athletic, because they are at a new school via a new assignment and don't have "history" there. If you have never had your child's future plans destroyed because they were reassigned mid high school career to a school that doesn't provide classes for their level (whether AP or academic), or their language, the one that they have already invested in for a semester or a

year. You have never had to make a choice to drive your child to school and home every day, and to go through multiple transfer requests and hearings, and have to quit your job for the sake of your child being able to attend the school near your home, or the school that they previously attended (even if far away) to maintain stability for your child, without transportation. If you have never experienced the pain of having to take your child to work on a school project with a classmate, who lives on the other side of the county. (What if the parent doesn't have a car available?). If you have never felt the sting of being the one that is told that your community isn't good enough, and you need to take a bus to another town, If you have never experienced any of these, or the many, many other circumstances that the children and families of Wake County are subject to, you are very, very lucky. The current system takes a lot for granted. These examples only begin to scratch the surface.

I have spoken about the value of diversity, I have spoken my feelings on the value of our magnet programs, and about the process for making policy. I have never once varied in my view of the importance of what I believe. I felt strongly enough in my research and beliefs that I ran for office. I am not a politician. I am a hard working, dedicated Mom and wife, and a true public servant by heart. I vote and discuss things based on my research and my feelings as to what is right or not right. I believe that anyone on this Board who isn't up to speed on all of this information needs to do some work. I am frightened by the lack of information that some of my colleagues have reviewed. This need to happen, not just at a work session, but on your own time. I have dedicated my life

to this. I am up at all hours, travelling all over the place, learning, listening and seeking information.

WE have valuable tools at our service and I would like to see all of you invest the time in familiarizing yourselves with these. I still believe that the Policy committee MUST craft the policy for the assignment committee to follow. BUT, as I have stated over and over again, the BOARD needs to make a determination, once and for all, as to which direction we will head. We are wasting too much time circling issues and decisions. We need to come to some conclusions, finish the work on the policy and then craft the actual assignment plan. The growth in Wake County is not waiting for us to continue a debate that has already spanned years. The community based schools idea is not one that goes against diversity. The two ideas can work in tandem. Until you can absorb that, and start looking at things from a realistic and honest standpoint, we will not ever be able to craft a holistic and effective assignment policy (6200).

This is why the Board needs to vote on the direction we are to take. I have been asking for this for months. I asked for this again, several times during our Policy Committee meeting. I had asked for someone to work directly with me on this, and am thankful that Mr. Tedesco stepped up to the plate. Together we have crafted this Directive. I believe once we formally adopt a directive, a blueprint of sorts for our School System, that we can then continue our work on the path that is chosen by the Board of Education. I certainly did not choose the path that we are currently on, and I encourage you to open your minds, and to support this Directive.