

Holly Wittenborn
School opening plan for 2020-21

Here in Wake County and NC we are just now getting the first wave of Covid 19. The infection rates and hospitalizations are going up. The idea that we can safely open schools in August is unrealistic. We can not keep the students and staff safe by implementing reactionary school closures. By the time you detect one case in the building there are probably already dozens or hundreds of others. Proactive school closures—closing schools before there's a case there—have been shown to be one of the most powerful nonpharmaceutical interventions that we can deploy.

A coherent remote learning curriculum will be needed. Many families will not be able to send students into school because of high risk health conditions of the child or a family member. The chances that schools will need to be closed and switched to remote learning ,shortly after opening ,seems pretty high. The abrupt changes and uncertainty from a reactionary approach will cause unnecessary stress and chaos. It will also be highly disruptive to learning to bounce back and forth between classroom and virtual learning.

We should start our school year with remote learning. This will provide a safe, reliable and quality education plan for students. It will also help protect our families, community and health systems from being overwhelmed by the surge that will follow if schools open while this virus is active in our area.

Deanna Harris
Advanced Math in Middle School

We are concerned about the inconsistent instruction of advanced mathematics courses in middle schools. Students taking compact math, Math I and Math II while middle schoolers are not receiving the same, consistent instruction within individual schools and across the district from year to year.

For example, as a 6th grader (2018-19), our child completed compact math through online instruction with little to no direction from a face-to-face teacher. The year before that, 6th graders taking compact math were assigned to a teacher who was available to assist them with the online instruction. This year the 6th graders taking compact math have had the benefit of face-to-face instruction with our AIG teacher all year.

As a 7th grader (2019-20), our child completed Math I (MVP math) with a face-to-face teacher all year. Even with the nine weeks of remote learning, the Math I teacher consistently provided lessons, review, and support to confirm mastery of the necessary Math I standards. This year the same teacher was able to provide a face-to-face class for the Math II (MVP) students. However, next year (2020-21) with only five rising 8th graders ready for Math II will most likely not have the advantage of face-to-face instruction and will be forced to take NCVPS Math II course which is not MVP or face-to-face.

We understand that class size and teacher assignments impact whether schools are able to provide face-to-face instruction or must rely on NCVPS online instruction. However, this does not address the inconsistencies across the district and the flip-flop between MVP and NCVPS math for some of our students.

Nicolette Galvin

Over crowded for social distancing

There is no way for social distancing when we already have 30 plus kids in a classroom. We should all have a choice what we want to do and not told. We all have different circumstances at home and illnesses. Give a choice for us to pick what works best for our families.

Dasa York

Green school initiatives

I would love for our schools to work to reduce our environmental footprints. The school system as a whole has a tremendous opportunity, in that together, our combined food waste could be diverted from the traditional waste system, to composting. Our combined waste is huge. Together, we could create a better world, supporting richer soil, less water runoff waste, and less landfill waste. This is a great teaching opportunity for students, promoting science and environmentalism.

Jen Andrew

SROs in public schools

I join with Enloe High School students Jasmin Loraine Benas, Srivani Edupuganti, Teya Franks, and Reagan Razon as well as over 2,800 others who signed a petition by the Enloe students demanding the removal of Wake County school resource officers. The same Raleigh police officers who use violent force against peaceful protesters should not be in our schools.

I want a future where all students are treated with dignity, love, and respect. But with police officers in Wake County schools, Black students have 73% of school-related delinquency complaints despite representing only 22% of the student population. I am concerned that school resource officers are funneling Black and Brown students toward the school-to-prison pipeline. Wake County Public Schools should follow Minneapolis in a Board of Education vote to terminate all law enforcement contracts.

Instead of paying for school police officers, Wake County Public Schools should reallocate funds toward preventive programs and alternatives to criminalization. This includes fully-staffed, school-wide restorative justice initiatives; community peacebuilders; social workers; physical and mental healthcare professionals; other resources to support families and community members as determined by them.

I stand with the Enloe High School students as well as the Southern Coalition for Social Justice and Education Justice Alliance. I want #PoliceFreeSchools so all Wake County students feel safe. Thank you all for your hard work and for your consideration.

Whitney Tucker

Law Enforcement in Schools

I believe that every child deserves to feel safe, especially in school. The presence of school resource officers (SROs) within the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) has threatened that safety for

some of our students, and I therefore urge the Wake County Board of Education to terminate contracts with all law enforcement agencies operating within Wake County public schools.

While there are conflicting studies about the effectiveness of police in schools, research is clear on the fact that they bring a slew of unintended negative consequences for students. These consequences include higher rates of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests that funnel children into the criminal justice system. Racial bias operates in the reporting and prosecution of delinquency complaints, fueling the school-to-prison pipeline and limiting opportunity for Black and brown children. In Wake County, Black students have 73% of school-related delinquency complaints despite representing only 22% of the student population. I am concerned about these outcomes and racially disproportionate impacts, and I believe that the Wake County Board of Education should be concerned as well.

To ensure a safe learning environment for all students - regardless of race - I urge you to vote in favor of terminating all law enforcement contracts within WCPSS. There are better investments to be made in our children's safety and well-being than police.

Mir Garvy

Accommodations for special needs children re: 2020-2021 school year

To superintendent Cathy Moore and all Wake County school leaders:

In all the news coverage in the N&O, and after reading the various comments and perspectives shared on thoughtexchange.com about the 2020-2021 school year, I have yet to hear what WCPSS plans to do to accommodate the learning needs of its students with disabilities, specifically as it relates to the following:

- Special needs children face very challenging learning obstacles and are sure to experience learning loss if school moves to a staggered/alternating schedule. These children work incredibly hard to make the gains that come naturally to typical children; retention of those gains is critical.
- Parents are untrained, unprepared, and inexpert at teaching special needs children (even with remote assistance). Most parents can't afford paid tutors for their children—and special needs tutors are particularly hard to find and even more expensive than regular tutors.
- Working parents, myself included, must figure out the childcare quandary. As you are already aware, this is a complication not just for parents of special needs children but for thousands of families in Wake County. However, for families like mine, this problem is even more extreme. Older siblings aren't equipped to babysit brothers or sisters with special needs, medical needs, or behavioral issues (not to mention they are supposed to be studying themselves); older children or teens with special needs cannot be left home alone; and when it comes to paid childcare, these children must have oversight from caretakers with specialized training.
- It is extremely dysregulating for most children with special needs to have unpredictable, ever-changing daily routines. It is well-documented that children with disabilities—and autism spectrum disorder in particular—need consistency in their daily schedules to manage themselves and their emotions. Obviously, a staggered week-on/week-off or day-on/day-off schedule will be extremely problematic.

- When schooling remotely (Plan C), if this past spring is any indicator, there is a complete lack of special therapies (speech, OT, etc.). For instance, from March 13 to June 12, my son received zero hours of the speech therapy his IEP mandates. This begs the question: what is the plan to deliver IEP-ordered speech therapy, OT, and other services next year if schooling is staggered or fully remote?

- As for the requirement to operate at 50% capacity and maintain six feet of social distance, social distancing in a SPED classroom is already in full effect. For instance, in my son's classroom, there are eight students and four teachers. There is no reason whatsoever for his classes to be canceled.

My request, as the full-time working parent of a child with autism and ADHD is this: make accommodations in your strategic planning for the special needs population you're accountable to educate. I cannot emphasize strongly enough that education for all children—with disabilities or not—is essential. Because SPED students can be educated in a socially distanced manner, they should be given the option to do exactly that—regardless of what Plan (A, B, or C) the rest of the county's school children are under.

I have grave concerns that if a staggered or remote option (Plan B or Plan C) is selected without an accommodation for the special needs segment of the county's student population, WCPSS would be violating the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. IDEA, as you are aware, requires the school system to educate all students with disabilities in an appropriate manner and in the least restrictive environment.

I argue that it is not appropriate for parents who have zero training in special education to be educating special needs students. As a taxpayer and law-abiding citizen of Wake County, if you cannot provide educational needs in accordance with my son's IEP through all-day, every-day education next school year, I will need tax rebates and additional monies to compensate me 100% for my direct, out-of-pocket costs related to special needs education, childcare, and speech therapy. That is the only acceptable alternative to eliminating or reducing my son's school hours. It is my sincere hope we can resolve this matter swiftly, privately, and amicably.

Sincerely,
Mir Garvy

Lynne Walter, MSW

Please vote to end all existing and proposed contracts with SROs--no more police or law enforcement in Wake County schools!

Dear Board of Education Members,

As you know, especially now during the COVID-19 pandemic, we are facing an even greater need for mental health and counseling professionals in schools. I know it's already a struggle to figure out how to provide these positions and services at this present moment, let alone as everyone is planning for a return to physical schools sometime after the COVID-19 pandemic is over.

Freeing up the money spent on School Resource Officers and using it instead for the lifesaving and necessary counseling and support services for kids in our school system (such as school social workers,

counselors, psychologists, and nurses) is the most useful way to use these dollars...*especially* if we actually believe in centering students in all our decision-making.

Please vote against all existing and proposed SRO contracts in the final vote at your meeting tomorrow!

Brandon Lee
SROs

I join with Enloe High School students Jasmin Loraine Benas, Srivani Edupuganti, Teya Franks, and Reagan Razon as well as over 2,800 others who signed a petition by the Enloe students demanding the removal of Wake County school resource officers. The same Raleigh police officers who use violent force against peaceful protesters should not be in our schools.

I want a future where all students are treated with dignity, love, and respect. But with police officers in Wake County schools, Black students have 73% of school-related delinquency complaints despite representing only 22% of the student population. I am concerned that school resource officers are funneling Black and Brown students toward the school-to-prison pipeline. Wake County Public Schools should follow Minneapolis in a Board of Education vote to terminate all law enforcement contracts.

Instead of paying for school police officers, Wake County Public Schools should reallocate funds toward preventive programs and alternatives to criminalization. This includes fully-staffed, school-wide restorative justice initiatives; community peacebuilders; social workers; physical and mental healthcare professionals; other resources to support families and community members as determined by them.

I stand with the Enloe High School students as well as the Southern Coalition for Social Justice and Education Justice Alliance. I want #PoliceFreeSchools so all Wake County students feel safe.

Thank you,

Brandon Lee

Charles Nichols
SRO's in schools

Dear School Board Member,

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Thank you for taking this matter seriously.

Sarah Vidrine
School Resource Officers

Every child deserves to feel safe in school. The presence of school resource officers (SROs) within the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) threatens that safety for some of our students, and I therefore urge the Wake County Board of Education to terminate contracts with all law enforcement agencies operating within Wake County public schools.

Research demonstrates that the presence of police in schools brings a slew of unintended negative consequences for students. These consequences include higher rates of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests that funnel children into the criminal justice system. Racial bias operates in the reporting and prosecution of delinquency complaints, fueling the school-to-prison pipeline and limiting opportunity for Black and brown children. In Wake County, Black students have 73% of school-related delinquency complaints despite representing only 22% of the student population. I am concerned about these outcomes and racially disproportionate impacts, and I believe that the Wake County Board of Education should be concerned as well.

To ensure a safe learning environment for all students - regardless of race - I urge you to vote in favor of terminating all law enforcement contracts within WCPSS. There are better investments to be made in our children's safety and well-being than policing schools.

Kristopher Nordstrom
SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Renewing the MOU with minimal changes appears incredibly misguided. The current MOU has been insufficient in preventing incidents of police violence on students, and it has been insufficient in preventing SROs with inappropriate views, such as calling anthem protesters criminals, from serving in the role.

At a minimum, the Wake County School Board should commit to removing SROs from middle schools. Research using North Carolina data indicates that SROs at the middle school level do nothing to improve school safety (see: <https://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/article221962265.html>).

This funding should be redirected to interventions proven to improve school safety, such as increasing mental health supports.

Thanks

La-Mine Perkins
SRO Contract

As a parent of children who attend WCPSS schools, I urge you not to remove police from schools. I have seen first hand the negative consequences of having Student Resource Officers (SRO) in schools on my children. Oftentimes children who are in need of services and support are referred to SROs where they will receive punitive consequences rather than being met with support. This was true of my nephew who was referred to SROs for behavior rather than a social worker who could have addressed the root cause of his behavior. This was also true of my son who was referred to SROs for things that did not result in a SRO referral for many of his white peers. Every child deserves to feel safe, especially in school. Sadly this is not true for many students especially those of color. The presence of school resource officers (SROs) within the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) has threatened that safety for some of our students, and I therefore urge the Wake County Board of Education to terminate contracts with all law enforcement agencies operating within Wake County public schools.

While there are conflicting studies about the effectiveness of police in schools, research is clear on the fact that they bring a slew of unintended negative consequences for students. These consequences include higher rates of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests that funnel children into the criminal justice system. This data is supported by the lived experiences of countless black and brown children. Racial bias operates in the reporting and prosecution of delinquency complaints, fueling the school-to-prison pipeline and limiting opportunity for Black and brown children. In Wake County, Black students have 73% of school-related delinquency complaints despite representing only 22% of the student population. I am concerned about these outcomes and racially disproportionate impacts, and I believe that the Wake County Board of Education should be concerned as well.

To ensure a safe learning environment for all students - regardless of race - I urge you to vote in favor of terminating all law enforcement contracts within WCPSS. There are better investments to be made in our children's safety and well-being than police.

While we are unable to provide a school social worker and nurse and every school, we somehow manage to find Student Resource Officers. I urge you to redirect this funding to preventative services that will better allow students to reach their full potential.

Neville Eclov
Remove Wake County SROs to Keep Students Safe

As a parent whose daughter will soon be enrolled in kindergarten in WCPSS, I join with Enloe High School students Jasmin Loraine Benas, Srivani Edupuganti, Teya Franks, and Reagan Razon as well as over 2,600+ others who signed a petition by the Enloe students demanding the removal of Wake County school resource officers. The same Raleigh police officers who use violent force against peaceful protesters should not be in our schools.

I want a future where all students are treated with dignity, love, and respect. But with police officers in Wake County schools, Black students have 73% of school-related delinquency complaints despite representing only 22% of the student population. I am concerned that school resource officers are funneling Black and Brown students toward the school-to-prison pipeline. Wake County Public Schools should follow Minneapolis in a Board of Education vote to terminate all law enforcement contracts. Instead of paying for school police officers, Wake County Public Schools should reallocate funds toward preventive programs and alternatives to criminalization. This includes fully-staffed, school-wide restorative justice initiatives; community peacebuilders; social workers; physical and mental healthcare professionals; other resources to support families and community members as determined by them.

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Jyothi Sakthikumaran
Save DDMS Orchestra

Hello Board members,

I got to know that the DDMS Orchestra is again under the axe. My son just graduated from DDMS and I can't explain the role that orchestra played in his life. He has anxiety issues and I was really worried when he was entering middle school. Orchestra was one thing that he was looking forward to and that soothed him a lot. I see orchestra not only as something to add on to your resume, but something that would highly help kids in regulating their emotions as music is a great outlet. The importance of mental health cannot be stressed enough in this time period, and we as responsible citizens and parents need to make sure that there are enough outlets for the younger generation to let out and nothing is better than music. So I kindly plead with the board to save the DDMS Orchestra. It would be a great savior for many kids and I want each one of them to gain just like my son did!

April Deveaux
Suggestions for School Structure in 2020-2021

My name is April Deveaux. I'm the mother of a 4 and a 6 year old. My 6 year old recently completed Kindergarten at Hilburn Academy. While the teachers worked very hard to put together a learning program, it consisted of a number of different learning platforms including Seesaw, Padlet, Google Meet, etc. Additionally, access to these platforms varied by device. For example, my son has an iPad, however, there were several times that he had to use my laptop to complete assignments and participate in group meetings. All of this resulted in my husband and I having to be totally hands-on with his learning, as he was not able to navigate all of these things by himself. I did this while working full-time from home. I saw evidence of lack of participation in a handful of students that I imagine did not have as much assistance from their parents or caregivers. My suggestions for the upcoming year surround this problem:

1. Consider continuing in-person learning with elementary students and distance learning with upper grades. This can be achieved by spreading the elementary students across elementary and middle schools (with the upper grades 3-5 moving into the middle schools as is necessary to maintain half of the class size).

2. Younger middle schoolers (grades 6-7) can be spread between the middle and high schools in the same manner as above.
 3. Grades 8 and above are remote learning with a rotating schedule. Students may come into the classroom once or twice a week and participate in distance learning on remote days. In-person instruction will allow teachers to check in with the students and allow for hands-on learning activities like science labs. In this scenario, high-risk teachers could stay home to teach remotely.
 4. Students in elementary schools can be rotated into classrooms by activity (ie literacy, math, science/social studies, specials). Alternatively, a teacher may live-stream into classrooms for each activity, and instructional assistants may assist students with completing the activities. In this manner, you reduce the number of teachers you need for each grade level, allowing those that want to work remotely to be heavily involved in lesson planning and remote live instruction. This may also assist in greater equality of instruction across grade levels and potentially across districts.
 5. Consider partnering with parks and recreation community centers, regional libraries, and YMCAs to obtain additional space for student learning as well as extra space for before- and after-care.
 6. Lastly, every student participating in remote learning should have a chromebook laptop, or the learning platforms MUST be consistent across devices. It's not acceptable for a child to have to use a parent's phone to complete remote learning work. Teachers can supplement with learning packets with worksheets that students can complete without the need for a stylus or typing.
- The state of Maryland is considering a similar plan as they plan for reopening schools. I hope that these are helpful suggestions.

Kondo

To save Davis Drive Middle School Orchestra program

My son has been enjoying the Davis Drive Middle School Orchestra program since he started his middle school life 2 years ago. We, as parents, can see there are lots of positive outcomes from this program, not only for scholarly but also in terms of personality. It is really sad to see this program will be terminated, despite many students are learning/enjoying and parents are supporting it, we hope WCPSS could reconsider this decision, and in terms to keep it at least for one more year!

Sviatoslav Kendall

Get rid of SROs

Students need counselors and nurses on hand to nurture and protect them. They do NOT need SROs on hand to terrorize and arrest them. Stop wasting our money on our unConstitutionally under-funded schools to pay for SROs whose very presence undermines the whole point of school in the first place.

Corinne Kokenes

petition not to sign the MOU or the contracts made with the police department

I petition for the Wake County School Board to not sign a contract with any police department regarding SROs in public schools, or to sign the MOU.

Erica Flory
every tray counts

Please consider supporting this program county wide.

Mehul Shah
Equitable educational opportunities

I am advocating for reinstating the orchestra program at Davis Drive Middle school. This is a historic and award-winning orchestra at our beloved neighborhood school, a program that has existed despite enrollment fluctuations over the past 20+ years. I am advocating for something that is meaningful to everyone in our community, especially those in our community who do not have the means for private lessons and private orchestra groups. I strongly believe that equal educational opportunities should be provided for all students and that includes neighborhood schools.

With the COVID- 19 outbreak, and our school year cut short, we have lost some valuable time and opportunity to bolster support and participation. Investing in our children is a long-term, ongoing process, which requires patience and more than one semester of effort. It is disappointing that the program was removed without having benefited from a full school year cycle to rejuvenate it. We are aware that there is a push to consolidate certain programs within the WCPSS Magnet School program, in an effort to bring students from our neighborhoods to those schools. We, as the major stakeholders and customers of WCPSS, have not been consulted about the changes that have been planned for in this regard. We want our neighborhood schools to thrive for everyone and preserve the opportunity for everyone to have access to our award-winning music programs at both the middle and high school levels. Right now, this program is available to everyone in our community through our neighborhood schools. Moving it to magnet schools provides opportunity for very few students. The role of the public school is to provide equitable opportunity for every member of the community, regardless of where they live, or the luck of the draw at magnets. With this action, the school and district are sending a clear message that classical music training is only meant for the few in our community. As a parent of a current and a former DDMS orchestra student I know that music is a vital part of creating a well-rounded and motivated student, and I think that our school community would like to preserve this culturally-enriching program in our community for everyone, including people of all backgrounds, citizens and new immigrants, as well as some in our midst who are part of the 40 million unemployed workers, due to the crisis of COVID-19.

I respectfully and kindly ask for you to reconsider your decision to remove this wonderful asset to our school and larger region. I believe that everyone deserves the chance to experience the rich musical, cultural, and long-term academic and social benefits that our orchestra program provides. Thank you!

Prasida Vasantarao
Save Davis Drive Orchestra

Please save our Davis Drive Middle school orchestra. Thank you

Kurt Schafer
SPECIAL EDUCATION INFO NOT REACHING PARENTS

Dear Superintendent Ms. Moore, Chair Mr. Sutton, Vice Chair Ms. Cash and Board Members

When will MTSS and RTI interventions be available at all schools in WCPSS? Who is monitoring these interventions? SLD identification changes are due to occur in July 2020. NCDPI sent survey requests for parental input on several media platforms.

Parents seek assistance, input and direction through special education process. Who do we call when we have questions? The school is not helpful. Parents do not feel supported, receive proper guidance, for our children.

Will WCPSS consider sending text alerts to SPED parents on SPED related topics, seminars, support groups, SPED tutors? Does anyone want to know us? Do we have a voice?

WCPSS is the largest school system in North Carolina and we have no SEPTA (SPECIAL ED PTA). A Plethora of information, resources, support groups, websites are available at the district level.

Unfortunately, it DOES NOT make its way into the hands of SPED parents. Work with parents and help us. Our children matter.

Thank you for your time.
Kurt Schafer

Benjamin Dante Davisson
Discipline Data and Supports not Implemented

Dear WCPSS Board of Education:

Thank you for your presentation and sharing the discipline data from 2018-2019 school year in your public viewing work session. My wife and I viewed this meeting. Principals and Assistant Principals have power and authority to assign short- and long-term suspensions. What training is provided to ensure principals are not using inequitable practices, discrimination, with assigning suspensions. What training is involved with principals to ensure the punishment fits the crime? What training is currently in place where students learn all the rules and its consequences? Are all students tested on the handbook? What continuum training is in place for principals to ensure they are practicing in a fair and reasonable manner. Out of school suspensions are not productive unless students are a threat and a safety concern to all staff, teachers and students.

What are the offenses that students are being held accountable for? It would be beneficial for everyone to learn from the mistakes of others. Your presentation neglected deeper data. Every high school has its own rules and handbook. If you want to lower the rate of incidents, WCPSS should consider educating our students. Every student should be taught in school and have relative mastery on the student conduct code. The code needs to be thorough if you will hold students accountable.

Lack of knowledge, immaturity, undeveloped teenage brain, with no training is reactive and not proactive. When positive discipline is incorporated students feel respected and supported, positive behavior is continually reinforced, and school climate improves. Additionally, this structure allows for the use of

restorative practices that seek to build positive relationships within the school community. In contrast, overly harsh and punitive measures, such as zero tolerance policies, lead to reduced safety, connectedness, and feelings of belonging, and have historically been unsuccessful at improving student behavior or the overall school climate.

Slides presented by Mr. Koh and Mr. Walker explain MTSS. Is this optional at the school level? Are principals encouraged or required to implement return to school MTSS protocol. Has the staff mastered the material? The goal should be the same. We want the best outcomes for our children. We need to rethink the school to prison pipeline. Educate and Remediate stop failing our kids. Stop failing generations. Thank you.

Mr. Jeffrey Abeldt

Conflict Resolution Team Not Provided or DO REQUESTS GO TO HUMAN RESOURCES

Dear Ms. Moore, Mr. Sutton, Ms. Cash and Board Members

I want to thank each of you for working hard as a team. Parents speak out and expect solutions in a timely fashion, what happens instead is frustration builds and we become desperate. Will WCPSS put serious thought in creating qualified team members to handle issues, conflicts, suggestions and improvements?

Speaking out is important, advocating for change, expressing improvements should be viewed as important to a school board. It is of value that parents want relationships and want to feel connected to their child's school. If concerns are not addressed families do not engage. I politely encourage you to support your staff, offer seminars, classes, incentives, and monitor results on problem solving, ability to innovate, create and commit to issues.

Parents and caregivers are not the problem and yet we are labeled within our child's school.

Thank you for your time
Mr. Jeffrey Abeldt

Melinda Morrison

Google Classroom Access to Parents

Dear Cathy Moore, Chair Keith Sutton and Board Members

Other school districts in other states value and recognize the importance of parents/guardians being active participants in their child's education. As they further the eLearning platform, they are happy to announce that all parents/guardians will have the opportunity to receive weekly email summaries showing their child's progress in their Google Classroom(s). These weekly email summaries will include missing work, upcoming work, and class activities such as announcements, questions, and assignments recently posted by teachers.

Will WCPSS get on board and do the same for parents. We need access. How do we get into Google Classroom?

Thank you
Melinda Morrison

Angela & Franklin Reeves

Is it a teacher responsibility to communicate to parents a high school student failing a class

Dear Cathy Moore, Chair Keith Sutton and Board Members

My husband and I appreciate the hard work being performed over these last few months. As a board you are working very hard during the global pandemic. We both attended the open house night for our stepson. (HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL) We provided our information on the sign in form and yet has never been contacted by his teacher.

High School teachers can quickly assess if a student is on track to master the state standards and pass the class. When does it become a teacher responsibility to communicate this to the parents? If a child is on the borderline of passing, why has a teacher not contacted the parents? Our stepson was hovering borderline passing. Are teachers required to connect with parents and/or guardians on helping the child? Or do we leave it up to the teacher to decide if they want to get involved and contact parents. This was fall semester. If we continue remote learning and actually grade assignments will teachers be communicating to parents. We are disappointed that our stepson failed the class, but even more disappointed in no communication from his teacher. This does not help our child.

Regards

Angela & Franklin Reeves

Corinne Kokenes

petition not to sign the MOU or the contracts made with the police department

I petition for the Wake County School Board to not sign a contract with any police department regarding SROs in public schools, or to sign the MOU.

Julie Hosen

Archived Public Comments Missing from Website (April 14, 2020 & March 24, 2020)

Dear Board Members and Communication Chair

Please review the WCPSS website and see that public comments from these two board meetings are placed online. The PDF file is not shown for dates March 24, 2020 and April 14, 2020. I see that you have included the link in my last public comment 2 weeks ago. The PDF is not attached under the table of contents. VII PUBLIC COMMENT. Your WCPSS does not have the PDF listed. Please update and fix the website. This is my second request.

Thank you,
Julie Hosen

[NOTE: They have now been added to eBoards. [April 14](#) and [March 24](#)]

Joseph Ivey

IA's with degrees not given a chance to be hired

I am really concerned about WCPSS Principals not giving IA'S with a 4 year degree that is accepted by NCDPI through The Residency Licensure Program a chance to get a job teaching. Many of your IA'S have experience along with their degree and would to be given a chance and your administrators have favored certified over an IA who is already enrolled in the residency licensure program an the district applies for the license for them. This has got to stop and individuals should be given a chance.

Leigh Williams
Sustainability in Schools

At the last meeting, I voiced concerns about the environmental crisis that has been pushed to the background because of more immediate and urgent crises. At the same time, I urged you not to ignore this other looming crisis because ignoring issues and not being prepared is what has made the world so deeply impacted by these current crises today.

Since the pandemic began, waste contributions to the South Wake Landfill, the one WCPSS uses, are up by 20%. We already know from studies in 2011 and 2019 that 25% of this is methane producing food waste that could be diverted by composting. We also know from these studies, that the landfill is projected to hit capacity by 2040 (that's without the pandemic increase). No other suitable place for a landfill has been found. A school district the size of Wake County can have a huge impact on the 2040 projection. WCPSS can lead the way to making this resource last longer!

I want to thank the school board for making the switch to compostable trays from polystyrene last year. It was a huge step in the right direction! I find it funny, however, that when I proudly announce that this was done, even to people with no knowledge of or concern regarding waste, I typically get one of three responses 1) the district used Styrofoam?! 2) why don't they just wash the dishes like they did back when I was in school? 3) If the trays are compostable, why aren't they being composted.

We can't do anything about the years of single use polystyrene trays we've already put into circulation or the landfill. I understand that just washing the dishes would require quite a lot of retrofitting in older schools, but the third one, composting the trays (along with the vast amounts of food waste that accompany them), is something that forward-thinking folks can do in 2020. Another idea is not to compound the problem by adding more single use (individually packaged foods) into the mix in order to make us feel safer. If we are to increase the amount of packaging on our children's food, I would hope that change would be based on data. As it stands, The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) states: "The CDC, FDA and CDPH are not aware of any reports at this time that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food or food packaging." Adding more packaging (which would likely mean a more unhealthy, processed option) does not help the current crisis and actually compounds the environmental crisis.

(For more data on single use and food serving regarding the pandemic, please see this link:
https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5d696bc69fa6c2515873360a/5ec27e9c3a74a3a03380d5ab_Covid%20Fact%20Sheet_5.15.20.pdf?fbclid=IwAR279LLrJQFI9c_q1h1kvepZJ46hckLEsg-wM_owaOqiUjIK9wTCcWNnVVA

I ask you to not to put the looming environmental crises on the back burner and instead to address it now by adding language on the school system's commitment to sustainability in the Strategic Plan.

I also ask you to follow up this commitment with action. You don't have to do it alone; there are many private and public partners in the area willing to help make this happen; we simply need to work together.

Thank you, Leigh Williams, WCPSS parent

Amy Killoran
DDMS Orchestra Program

When considering where to buy a house and enroll our children in school when moving here, we decided on Davis Drive Elementary/Middle School, largely because of its orchestra program. While we were disappointed that the elementary school didn't have an orchestra, unlike where we moved from, we figured my son could pick it back up in 6th grade and not be too far behind. Unfortunately, we were notified during quarantine/remote learning that the orchestra was eliminated. This is an award-winning program, part of what makes Wake County schools great, and shouldn't be eliminated. Not to mention it is a music program that can be done with minimal COVID-19 exposure, unlike singing or blowing into a horn. Please reinstate funding for the orchestra so middle schoolers won't be behind their magnet school peers and peers from across the country by high school!

Tanya Shewchuk
Davis Drive Middle School Orchestra Program

Dear School Board Members and WCPSS Officials,

I am writing to request your advocacy and support in restoring the Davis Drive Middle School Orchestra Program, as it was recently removed from the school's elective offerings. Our DDMS orchestra parent group received word of the cancellation of the program from the administration during the recent COVID-19 shutdown.

Our students have been left reeling due to the virus and now the elimination of their program of study. Investing in our children is a long-term, ongoing process, which requires patience and more than one semester of effort.

As WCPSS leadership witnessed when you graciously visited our school last fall to meet with our large parent group, the parents of Davis Drive Middle School enthusiastically want to preserve the gift of music for our students and community, and grow a program with a more than 20 year history in our community! In our experience, where there is a will, there is a way.

We are aware that there is a push to consolidate certain programs within the WCPSS Magnet School program. We, as the major stakeholders and customers of WCPSS, have not been consulted about the changes that have been planned for in this regard. We want our neighborhood schools to thrive for everyone, and preserve the opportunity for everyone to have access to our award winning music programs at both the middle and high school levels. Right now, this program is available to everyone in our community through our neighborhood schools. Moving it to magnet schools provides opportunity for

very few students. The role of the public school is to provide equitable opportunity for every member of the community, regardless of where they live, or the luck of the draw at magnets. With this action, the school and district are sending a very clear message that classical music training is only meant for the few in our community, that have the financial means for private lessons. It is simply not acceptable to us to abolish an historic and established program within our neighborhood schools in Western Wake. We know that music is a vital part of creating a well-rounded and motivated student, and we would like to preserve this culturally-enriching program in our community for everyone, including people of all backgrounds, citizens and new immigrants, as well as some in our midst who are part of the 40 million unemployed workers, due to the crisis of COVID-19.

Our orchestra is a more than twenty year tradition worth preserving at Davis Drive Middle School. Its elimination will decimate the orchestra in Western Wake and forever damage orchestra programs in our region as a whole.

Our students have been deeply affected by the lockdown/shutdown of our schools, and we would hate to have them further traumatized by losing their program and beloved teacher upon returning next fall. We are respectfully requesting that the district take another look at these plans and reinstate the DDMS Orchestra Program this fall.

John Marshall
SRO Contracts

If SROs are removed and children are harmed as a result, those who initiated or participated in their removal will be liable. I support the police and I demand safe schools.

Noreen Sample
Resource Officer

We absolutely need Resource Officers especially for Domestic Violence Protective orders. I have one for myself and kids and it saved our lives.

Amy Marshall
SRO's

I am the parent of three children in WCPSS. I urge you to retain all SRO contracts, as they are needed to keep middle and high schools safe for kids. Without SRO's, teachers and administrators including principals, will be the only ones breaking up fights that will inevitably occur. This is not the teacher's job. Many good teachers will quit if you remove SRO's, because teachers should not have to put themselves in the middle of a fight with students who are physically larger than themselves. Removing SRO's will also lead to uptick in student drug activity. Gang activity in schools will increase. More kids will leave Wake County Public Schools for private, charters, and homeschool. SRO's should be respected by students and can help build positive relationships between law enforcement and students. Reducing SRO's would be negligent and irresponsible of this board, and could lead to child injuries, for which this board and superintendent could be held legally liable.

Laura Macklem
School Resource Officers

I am wondering what evidence has been presented to the board showing school resource officers are not effective or needed. Is the level of violence between students, and drug possession and use in schools at such an all-time low, trained officers are not needed? Has there been a misconduct issue with SROs? I don't see any reason why SROs would not continue at our schools, and urge the board to reject any political ploy to oust SROs from our schools. If you do oust SROs, the public is owed evidence for the basis for this decision.

Gyula Holleschak
Davis Drive Middle School Orchestra

I am reaching out to the WCPSS board members to be brave, and support the parents and consider reversing the decision made by the Davis Drive Middle School administration to eliminate a historic Orchestra program during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I believe the award winning orchestra program at Davis Drive Middle School has provided endless benefits to many children from different socioeconomic backgrounds in our local community over the past 20 years. There are many journal articles and publications that highlight the benefits that early music education, especially Orchestra, provides, such as teamwork, commitment, discipline and coping with pressure. These skills are essential to prepare every child to reach their full potential, and lead productive lives in a complex and changing world.

The loss of the Orchestra program appears to contradict parts of the core beliefs of WCPSS, especially, the following: "Every student is uniquely capable and deserves to be challenged and engaged in relevant, rigorous, and meaningful learning each day." The Orchestra program provides challenge, engages and has provided meaningful learning to a generation of students at Davis Drive Middle School.

It is indeed this rigor and challenging engagement of our Davis Drive Middle School students, through orchestra, that has created such a successful and driven student body, and propelled our students to achieve their potentials in high school and post-secondary pursuits.

I would like the Board Members and the audience to consider one of the many favorite quotes from President Obama (May 2016), as I feel that this is very relevant and I hope that with some courage, the board will work with the parents to bring back the orchestra program to Davis Drive Middle School and perhaps, take a leap and work to expand it to all schools in Wake County:

"Sometimes art is dangerous, and that's why governments sometimes get nervous about art. But one of the things that I truly believe is that if you try to suppress the arts, then I think you're suppressing the deepest dreams and aspirations of the people." -Barack Obama

Isabella Mia Norris Santos (student) and Luisa Santos (mom)
Why music is important in the development of a student.

Music has been very important in my life. It has shaped who I am and helped me through hard times like the ones we are facing now with COVID-19 pandemic. Music helps us students develop many skills such as social-emotional, readiness, and language. Whenever I'm having a bad day, music class has always healed me and made me feel better. Us students have learned many things while being in music class, we have learned to work as a team and never give up, treat each other well, and always believe in ourselves. Playing an instrument by ourselves is very different than playing an instrument in a whole orchestra. While I'm playing with my school orchestra, I feel like I'm part of something, I start thinking of goals that I want to reach, like being a music teacher or a professional musician. I will be very sad if the orchestra program left DDMS because I know school for me won't be the same.

Tammy Platts
School Resource Officers

I seriously hope that the Board is not considering removing SRO from our schools. The officers at our school are actively involved with so many aspects of the school community that have nothing to do with security. I have seen ours interacting and having conversations with students as they pass through the hall to change classes and during lunch times. The SRO's at our middle school have been an active part of pep rallies, fundraising events (being part of a skit for color battle), and they even serve as role models for some students. By removing these officers, you are also sending out an "open invitation" for kids to bring prohibited items or engage in misconduct (as simple as skipping class by leaving the building) because they know teachers are already stretched with duties, especially with upcoming changes that will be required by COVID guidelines. Removing these officers will be a HUGE mistake and just another reason for families to look outside of WCPSS for educational opportunities. I grew up in NC public schools -- and I love and support our public schools, but removing these officers is uncalled for.

Kimberly Koonts
SRO

I just want to say I am glad we have our SRO's. I think they are important to helping the students feel safe and parents feel secure about sending their children to school. If there are SRO's that people have concern about, then individual SRO's should be held accountable for their actions certainly. But it should be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Heather Mary Edwards
Mental Health Assistance for Students

Dear Board Members:

Thank you for permitting public comment. Mental health is developed early in life and educators play a significant role in ensuring that students' experiences throughout their school careers contribute to their positive mental health. Access to school-based mental health services and supports directly improves students' physical and psychological safety, academic performance, and social-emotional learning. "Empathy is the ability to understand and share someone else's feelings, to the extent of imagining what the other person is thinking or feeling and responding with care." We need kindness and acceptance in our schools. We need teachers to help guide the way.

Thank you
Heather Mary Edwards

Fernando Martinez
Action Items - MOU

Education Justice Alliance (EJA) public testimony for the WCPSS school board meeting

Re: SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

EJA is writing to voice its disappointment about WCPSS's renewal of the SRO MOU without community input. In June 2017, this very same board went through the same process. The community spoke, complained about the SROs' abuse of force and power, provided feedback and recommendations to limit the role of police, and requested a complaint form, board members spoke about the community concerns and the harm being done to students and absolutely nothing happened. On the June 20, 2017 video notes of the board meeting, Mr. Sutton on minute 1:22:45 asked, "Is there a form, complaint box, or what have you...what can we do as the system to make it easy for any member of the community, a student to log or register that complaint if they've had an interaction or encounter that they feel made them uncomfortable. For them to have to sort of go to the principal and then depend on that, that sort of creates a layer for them that they don't already trust."

"That is certainly something we can look at." Russ Smith.

..and then Mr. Sutton goes ahead and asks about defining the use of force.

Three years later, nothing happened.

Ms. Johnson-Hostler quoted Mr. Martin and herself in speaking about "more needs to be done" and "exploring other options so there's not a period at the end of the MOU" it is June 2020 and now the WCPSS is rushing one more time to approve this MOU with no meaningful changes.

In the meantime, SROs continue to intimidate and harm WCPSS students, including Black and brown students. During 2014-2015, Wake County SROs filed 850 referrals against students, nearly half of which were to adult criminal court. Three years later, the numbers went down to 511 students referred to courts with about 30% of students in the juvenile justice system coming from WCPSS. Black students represented only 22% of WCPSS student enrollment in 2018-19 but were 73% of school-related delinquency complaints.

Most referrals by WCPSS SROs during this period were to juvenile and criminal court, potentially resulting in juvenile and criminal records for hundreds of Black and Brown students.

Enloe high school students, Jasmin Loraine Benas, Srivani Edupuganti, Teya Franks, and Reagan Reason are circulating an online petition that was signed by more 3,000 people claiming that the same Raleigh police officers who " use violent force against peaceful protesters shouldn't be in our schools ". This is referring to tactics used by law enforcement officials in the North Carolina capital to suppress marches in protest against the murder of George Floyd. Will the WCPSS Board of Education listen to its own students and parents and make significant changes to the SRO program? EJA wants to be hopeful. EJA would love to engage in a conversation about what could work within our public schools to make the whole school community feel safe and at the same time to assure families that abuse of power and violent force will not be tolerated anymore.

Fernando Martinez, Organizing Director

Bley

Secondary Math Programs

6/16/2020

WCPSS Board Meeting

Carrie Bley Comments

Secondary Math Curriculums

(RESOURCES NEEDED)

Open up Resources and Mathematics Vision Project (MVP) do not work in a remote learning environment.

We have watched our public school system invest millions of dollars over the past 3 years into the research, development, adoption and professional teacher development while implementing these new math and english curriculums. Educators have been asked to embrace the role of “facilitators” in higher math classrooms. Where the math content delivery system switches from teacher and visual textbook content ...to “peer led discovery” discussions of complex algebra and geometry skills. While we understand the benefits of peer engagement in learning math skills...these new curriculums rely too heavily on the classroom environment to deliver that basic math content. Both of these curriculum resources were rendered obsolete as soon as the schools closed due to covid-19.

We need curricular resources in Wake County Public Schools that can address the delivery of knowledge to all types of students. This is the simplest theme that we keep trying to reinforce as we have asked for better math programs in wcpss for 2 years.

During the covid-19 remote learning my child used IXL math and Kahn Academy assignments from the school to deliver math content. We should not have to delegate the core learning of higher Algebra and Geometry concepts in Wake County Public Schools to a phone app. We won't deny that these digital app resources can be helpful, however it does not inspire confidence when the primary learning curriculum of my school system crumbles and phone apps are our only recourse for the delivery of knowledge to our students.

We saw our teachers working non-stop, on the fly breaking their back to help our kids. It was hard to watch. We are beyond grateful to them for doing whatever they needed to to help. But they shouldn't have had to work that hard...if we had had more comprehensive curriculums for them to use as a foundation piece in these math classrooms.

From the 2016-2017 school year to the 2018-2019 school year the state of North Carolina has given Wake County \$19,780, 657 in textbook funding.

In those same years Wake county appears to have reallocated more than 13 million dollars of that textbook funding to pay for the “professional teacher development” of the MVP and Open up Resources math curriculums. As well as PD for the EL English curriculum.

As an “old person” here, I interpret “textbook funding” as something that should be used for textbook resources. I understand the definition has changed in the digital age. However, it would still imply to the community that “textbook funding” should be directly used for resources given to students to reinforce curriculum and learning needs.

To reallocate these funds from supporting “tangible” resources to funding “intangible” teacher professional development” has left us with very few options for how knowledge can be delivered to the students in Wake County.

We, as parents, wholeheartedly believe in continuing professional development for educators. However, that professional development should never be funded at the expense of removing tangible resources from the desks of the students in our school district.

There are success stories across the country from school districts that have made that leap from paper textbooks to similar digital resources. They have done so successfully, only because they made no assumptions about student access to digital technology. They have chosen digital math textbook resources that can also be bound and delivered in textbook format for students that will never be able to have reasonable access to online learning platforms, No matter how hard we try to accomplish a 1:1 student to device ratio.

Equality in education should begin with equal access to the knowledge. We hope that WCPSS will begin it's search for math curriculums in middle and high school's that are appropriate, understandable and above all Accessible to all students, parents and teachers.

Pete and Carrie Bley

Kristina Quinn
SROs are needed in WCPSS.

SROs need to stay in the WCPSS. They are needed to provide protection to staff and students. Teachers and students will leave the school system if their contract is not renewed. The SROs are necessary and vital to the safety of our students and staff. The discussion to remove them shouldn't even be considered! Keep our SROs!

Gayla Putnam
SRO Contracts

As a parent of 2 WCPSS high school students, PLEASE maintain the presence of SROs on the campuses of our schools. It is critical for the safety of our children as well as for the safety of the faculty and staff.

Cat Lewis
The Necessity of School Resource Officers

School Resources Officers ensure schools are safe places for students to learn. SRO's provide a highly visible presence to deter or identify trespassers on campus, thus keeping guard over the safety of our children at school. They are responsible for working in tandem with school administrators, staff and faculty to develop and enact comprehensive safety plans to abate all threats.

SRO's cultivate and maintain relationships with the students. They are role models and leaders, mentoring students with whom they interact.

SRO's have the training, knowledge and experience to handle a vast assortment of situations both inside and outside the school building. Without their valuable presence on campus, our children will be at risk. We must prevent that, and keep SRO's on our children's campuses!
