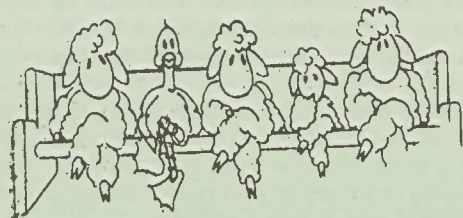


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**Results Raise Questions about State
School Board's Request for School
Transfer Waiver**

**Citizens Urge Local School Systems to
Allow Student Transfers at Failing Schools**

RALEIGH, NC (July 22, 2008) – On July 2, less than three weeks before the release of testing results statewide, the North Carolina State Board of Education requested a waiver of the transfer option under No Child Left Behind.

Under the law, if a school receives Title I federal funds and fails to meet assessment goals, then it must offer parents the option to transfer to another school before providing paid tutoring services if standards are not met for a second consecutive year.

If the state's request is granted, North Carolina school systems could limit parents' options by offering students tutoring at low-performing K-12 schools before allowing them to transfer from the failing schools.

In light of preliminary testing results released Monday, which revealed that more than half of Triangle schools failed to meet targets for student performance, parents are expressing concern.

"We are hearing from our network of parents in the Triangle and beyond, and they are appalled by the State Board's apparent lack of accountability in this regard," said Darrell Allison, President of Parents for Educational Freedom in North Carolina, a statewide nonprofit that supports greater educational options through parental school choice. "The declining results show that school systems no longer have the luxury to pick and choose which option under No Child Left Behind to offer, but that they need to provide parents in those failing schools every available option."

Deanna Boothe, a Durham County parent, feels fortunate that her child's school is not among those failing to meet standards this year. "Thankfully, I am not in the same situation as many other parents," she said. Expressing concern about the broader impact of the state's request to waive transfer options, she asked, "But what about those families who are not so lucky?"

As the state pushes to offer increased tutoring services in lieu of transfer options, some educational resource workers are left to wonder how needs will be met. Shelia Jones owns and operates the J.T. Locke Resource Center, which provides supplemental educational services to underprivileged public school students in Southwest Raleigh. "Most of our children are sent to us on referral from area public schools, and demand from those schools continues to grow," said Jones.

"We already have 217 children on our waiting list for the beginning of the next school year, and that was before test results were released," she said. "I simply can't imagine how the state expects schools to offer enough tutoring services to realistically meet the needs of every student affected. Parents deserve more options."

About PEFNC:

Founded on July 5, 2005, Parents for Educational Freedom in North Carolina (PEFNC), a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to finding ways to effectively better an educational system for all children in North Carolina. PEFNC supports all programs that provide parents and children with greater educational options and builds awareness of the need for even more educational options in North Carolina, including an option not currently available to families in our state: the opportunity for families to educate their child privately and/or non-traditionally through a tax credit or equal opportunity scholarship programs. For more information, please visit www.pefnc.org

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