

STATE & LOCAL

Wake County School Board Passes Final Resolution for Neighborhood Schools

Caitlin Griffin, Staff Writer

On Tuesday March 2, the Wake County Board of Education faced the uproar of many angry protests when it passed the first resolution to move towards community-based school assignments. Supporters of the resolution cited practical issues with the current socio-economic "diversity" policy, such as the fact that many re-districted students had to take hour-long bus rides across the city just to go to the school they were assigned when there was a perfectly good school in their own neighborhood. The supporters of the resolution stated that this bussing policy was inconvenient and uneconomical. In opposition were the parents and students who stated the importance of the socio-economic diversity in the public school systems that could only be achieved by bussing. Members of the NAACP openly accused the Board of trying to re-segregate Wake County public schools by student race.

Despite the controversy, on Tuesday March 23, the Board of Education passed the second and final resolution to change the decade-old "diversity" school assignment policy and return to the

policy of community-based school assignment. Tensions ran high outside the district administration building where hoards of students wore black shirts to protest the resolution and chanted "Hey hey, ho ho. Resegregation has got to go!" According to WRAL news, about 80 people spoke at the heated public hearing before the board voted 5-to-4 in favor of an assignment model in which students go to schools within a certain community zone. With the resolution passed, the Board of Education claims that the student assignment committee's creating a concrete plan for community assignment zones could take up to 15 months.

Newly-elected board member John Tedesco states that "the majority's vision for a new model of neighborhood schools is to give parents choices." Mr. Tedesco also claims that bussing students to force diversity in the public schools "has only ended up promoting low expectations, [a] model of education [that] has not served [Wake County] very well." Many affected parents and students within Wake County remain disappointed with the final vote, but since the com-

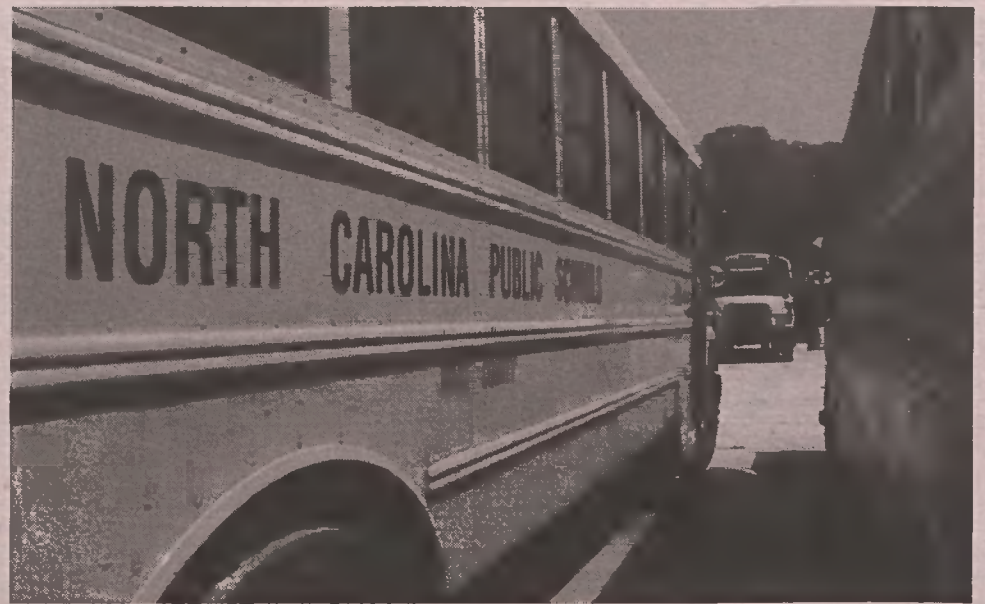


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munity-based assignment plan was a key point in last year's election, in which voters elected four candidates who said they supported

moving away from the diversity policy, it appears that Wake County voters got what they wanted.

Going Local

Aleigha Page, Staff Writer

It is almost that time of year when farmers and other veggie vendors sell their fresh produce at stands along roads and highways. Raleigh is fortunate enough to also have a large farmer's market facility to allow residents to buy fruits and vegetables nearby. The beauty in buying produce locally is that we know exactly where the tasty produce came from – and that it did not endure a trip of thousands of miles in a cramped truck or in a boat from South America or Mexico. This also means that shopping locally for produce is environmentally sound because it prevents the use of semi-trucks and other modes of gas guzzling transportation. Another benefit to buying produce that was planted and cultivated by someone in a local community is that the fruits of their labor (no pun intended) will come back to them.

Liz Osterman, a Meredith student from Maryland, lives on a farm and works in a plant nursery during the summer. She believes that it is important to buy locally because it supports the farmers

who work diligently to grow their crops. She notes that food is much fresher when purchased locally, which adds to its tastiness.

The Raleigh Farmer's Market is located off Lake Wheeler Road; signs along the road point shoppers in the direction of the market. The farmer's market is open year-round and provides an assortment of in-season, locally grown crops. All of the food is native to North Carolina, and most of it comes from Raleigh and surrounding areas. Just a short drive away from Raleigh is the Carrboro Farmer's Market, which is known for its tight-knit community of vendors and frequent shoppers. The market offers a fresh array of veggies, fruit, cheese, honey, meats, baked goods, and crafts. Those over 21 years old can enjoy a bottle of one of many kinds of locally-made wine available, ranging from muscadine to blackberry to traditional red. Kerri McFalls, a frequenter of the market, especially during the spring, enjoys going to market for the afternoon and simply observing all there is to see.

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