

## BAC 8 Oct. 13 Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

Baucom Elementary

Minutes taken by BAC8 Secretary Beth Shugg

Nancy welcomes BAC representatives to a new year school and runs down the list of Board-assigned topics for 2008-2009. All of the representatives introduce themselves.

**Ron Margiotta's comments:** Information about the banking crises and how it relates to WCPSS: the County Commissioners met today during the work session. Due to the current banking crises, they are unwilling to borrow much money. Building projects will now be put on hold. Current construction projects are being done with money from previous bonds. This will impact planned Community Engagement Meetings and reassignment plans and so many other issues. That's why there's not much to talk about. Stay tuned and we'll see how things work out.

**Curt Stangler posed a question about school resource officers in schools:** He explained that he has been doing some investigating and preparing report about school resource officers. During his investigation he came up with a startling fact: full time resource officers are currently assigned to every high school. In middle school there is a full-time resource officer assigned to every middle school with **three exceptions: Salem, Apex and Lufkin.** Why? Why do they need to share one resource office when every other middle school has its own?

Patty Dressen offered that there is usually a joint agreement between WCPSS and town management pertaining to school resource officer assignment.

Curt also pointed out that of the schools that have their own resource officer, most are in downtown Raleigh.

Apex Middle Principal Locklear said that he understood that grants were initially used to provide fulltime officers at Apex Middle School, but that grant had run out We have a very safe school currently but would I want one? Yes. They are great tools to have on campus as a preventative measure to help keep our school safe.

Lufkin Year-Round Middle Principal Parry Graham agreed: I would never turn down the resources if offered. Our resource officer is always there when we need him but we would never turn down the opportunity to have our own.

Curt made a motion to formally ask WCPSS's Board of Education, County Commissioners and the Town of Apex why there are not full time resource officers at Salem, Apex and Lufkin Road Middle schools. Carla Tiller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE STATUS REPORT:**

Shannondoah Deaver, our BAC rep on the Transportation Committee, addressed BAC8. She explained that she has learned a lot about school transportation in WCPSS. Being on the committee gives you an appreciation for what they have to do. She says the committee has encouraged all of the schools to use the same identification process for kindergartners and 1<sup>st</sup> graders.

Question: If someone has a transportation problem what do they do?

SD: Every school has a designated transportation contact (usually it's the Assistant Principal). From there, you would figure out what district that bus belongs to then contact that office directly. After that you would go up the scale. If the school transportation contact isn't receptive for some reason, then you can always contact me. We can at least make sure you're in touch with the right people to voice your concerns. The WCPSS transportation website is very educational in terms of routes, laws, expectations for students and school and parents, distances for bus stops, etc.

Question: any talk regarding the price of fuel in terms of the amount of busing we do?

SD: Not that I've heard. They're also under a tremendous amount of pressure to make sure the bus stops are as close to students as possible. There 134,000 kids in our school system so this is a difficult task.

Question: When bus routes are changed, it seems like parents are never notified. Can they get the word out better?

SD: We are truly working with them on this regarding communication between actual people at the transportation districts and parents. They are aware they need to improve on that. They're not where they want it to be, but we are working on that.

Question: If I call with a transportation concern, I usually get a message saying I should receive a response within 24 hours. That doesn't help if I need to know why my child's bus is late at that very moment.

SD: A lot of times the people you need to talk to are out driving routes, and they're not allowed to be on the phone while on a route. Between the run time in the morning and afternoon, after the 3-tier schedule is done, you can usually reach them.

SD: I'm more than happy to take back your concerns to the committee. But first check website to see if that answers questions. Shannondoah Deaver's email is [baskethabit@aol.com](mailto:baskethabit@aol.com)

### **E-NEWSLETTER NOTIFICATION SERVICE**

Nancy brought up the new e-newsletter notification service. If you haven't signed up for this or updated your account, go to [www.wcpss.net](http://www.wcpss.net) to do so.

## CURRICULUM AUDIT UPDATE

Dr. Donna Hargens, Chief Academic Officer, and David Holdzkom, Assistant Superintendent of Evaluation and Research

Dr. Hargens gave us a “whirlwind tour of last 1.5 years” since the Curriculum Audit was requested in Jan. 2007. All of the auditors have said it took a lot of courage for a board in a school district with high achievement to go through a rigorous process like an audit. If I had to summarize: the auditors looked for tightness among three things (missed this; need a copy of the presentation).

**Executive Summary:** a lot has changed because each of 117 items from the audit have been dealt with or put in a plan.

Mapped out next 4 years into quarters for implementation into 17 quarters. We just completed the 5<sup>th</sup> quarter. After every quarter, there’s a quarterly report to BOE. *Curriculum Matters* newsletter shows exactly where we are. Shows highlights of what’s been going on during those three months. On back shows steps completed, what’s underway and what’s next to be addressed. This is also online at [www.wcpss.net/audit](http://www.wcpss.net/audit). Seemed overwhelming until we mapped it out into 17 quarters. We used a Gant chart: we put every action into a Gant chart so we know when it would begin and when it would be estimated to be completed by.

The other thing we’ve been doing in last year is training in delivery, assessment and design of curriculum. The purpose of this training is how to make our learning and teaching guides/curriculum documents better and more inline with the cognitive level we want our students to master.

RECOMMENDATIONS (partial list of those covered in Dr. Hargens’ presentation):

- Opportunity: data regarding equitable distribution of resources. Involves a Board discussion on equity vs. equality.
- Budgeting: budget timeline/learning priorities.
- Consistency: planning framework
- Governance: policy review
- Organization: job description template.
- Instruction: comprehensive professional development plan
- Curriculum management: user-friendly single source site. (2 policies: curriculum and assessment decisions; curriculum management)
- Evaluation: program evaluation.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION

David Holdzkom

School board supports, through budget appropriations, an excellent evaluation and research program. In terms of school accountability we try to link data sets to help schools understand and act on data.

Program accountability:

- choose projects based on prioritization of requests
- formative assessments (implementation of programs)
- summative assessments (student outcomes, staff outcomes)

There's no way we can evaluate all programs in one year. So we prioritize based on when it is ready to be evaluated, funding, students, etc.

Evaluation Designs:

- Pre-post or longer for students served vs. a comparison or control group
- Pre-post or longitudinal with system context
- Information to staff for management purposes (survey or other feedback on implementation of an initiative)

School Accountability Team

- reports of outcomes by school on system-wide tests (end-of Data for schools)
- calculation of a Wake County "effectiveness index"
- reports on outcomes of state and federal school accountability programs (ABC and AYP)
- desegregation of information for schools to aid in school improvement planning

**Testing Team**

Grants Administration

- seek grant-funding
- work with staff to develop grant applications
- collect compliance for grants at schools

Curriculum Audit Recommendations

- evaluate all programs including cost/benefit analysis (helps to look at trends and results of programs, etc.)
- provide training for teachers and principals in data use (more efficient ways to provide training to positions like new principals)

Major E&R Activities

- data analysis and reporting (work to build training agenda and modules teachers and principals can use to analyze the data/reports we give them)
- dissemination (looking at how to build an inventory of programs; part of problem of decentralization is no repository of info so we don't know what people are spending their time doing; adapting findings for other audiences or purposes)
- program evaluation
- research: we do a lot of evaluation and less research; over last 4 years however we've completed an agenda of effective teaching practices in high schools; trying

to discover common effective practices and identify what they are; also focus on high schools in next 4 years due to implementation of state board policy requiring kids graduating in 2010 to have passed 5 EOC tests.)

View reports at [www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research](http://www.wcpss.net/evaluation-research)

Dr. Hargens says BOE has really focused on learning and teaching. It has been a catalyst for conversations about what is fair, equal and equitable. Auditor after auditor says how courageous it was for our BOE to take this on. We're not unclear at all about our path.

## Q&A

Question: are you dissecting the audit to look at each piece (subject) or looking at it as a whole. My concern would be music. When you pull it out of elementary there's not enough interest in middle school, or music's connection to helping students do well in other subjects.

Dr. Holdzkom: what we're not envisioning at the moment is starting with A and going to Z. If we found all kids who were taking AP classes successfully had band in grade 4 we would see that correlation and start investigating that further. We're open to seeing the whole curriculum. Typically we don't start that way: we go from the premise to the promise. If a program has goals, we measure if the goals have been met. We start from the specific and what it can deliver.

Question: Regarding F&R status in terms of bussed students being on the bus for long periods of time. Board says research supports that busing improves those students' academic performance. Do you track this or follow these kids to see if they are performing better than students not being bused?

Dr. Holdzkom: There isn't a way for the bussed kid to *have and not have* the experience to see what the difference would be. So we look at the performance of schools at the end of the year and look for change and improvement. We can see which kids are having a positive experience. We use a variety of analysis to see if the schools are successful—then backing out we do logical inferences, and if we don't see problems we assume the school is meeting goals.

Question: It seems like Wake County wants to bus rather than allow a low-performing school to succeed—i.e. everyone to the middle instead of some highs and lows. Is this helping those students or is the school population as whole just making those students look better?

Dr. Holdzkom: we would see that when we look at the desegregated data. Do we see a correlation between poverty and achievement: yes. But what's interesting is how narrow the range is in achievement, which supports that more bussed kids are being successful.

Lib mentioned that she has plotted this and the F&R kids don't perform better than other kids.

Dr. Holdzkom: that is challenge I accept and I'll go back and look over it.

Question: Is there talk of a nationalized test for WCPSS?

Dr. Holdzkom: There are international tests (PIZA and TIMS). What we've seen is Singapore students perform ahead of U.S. students. Problem is a small percentage of students here take this test. It's useful if you want to generalize one test for international comparison, but not for what we want to know here.

In NC we can't compare our students performance with those in other states except in one test: the SAT is the only nationally normed test we administer. What we do know is when we desegregate our African Americans and Hispanic students, NC outperforms other states and has for 20 years.

National assessment is not helpful for us at the school and district level. Because we outperform as a state, it's hard to know how to extrapolate for our district.

Question? What about using the IOWA Test for everyone?

Dr. Holdzkom: Cogat screening is given to every 3<sup>rd</sup> grader. From there, those students who score above 75% take the IOWA Test, so it isn't given to every 3<sup>rd</sup> grader. If we want to give the Iowa test to every 3<sup>rd</sup> grader, we have to decide, is it worth spending time during school day, paying for it to do it every year or more often?

Question: What is the reason for this busing?

Dr. Holdzkom: The reason we bus is due to the implementation of the BOE's policy where the primary driver is to keep the concentration of poverty as low as possible. The primary driver has to do with minimizing the negative impact of concentration of poverty. One of the positive impacts of it is higher achievement for those bussed students.