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February 18, 2010

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Along with the other school districts in the country, the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) keeps account of our students' and staff's racial and ethnic backgrounds to meet federal and state reporting requirements. The federal government recently expanded the number of options individuals can use to identify their backgrounds in order to provide a more accurate picture of our nation.

This spring, students and staff will be able to identify themselves in more than one racial or ethnic category. For example, students who were previously identified only as "multi-racial" will be able to more clearly state their heritage by choosing more than one option.

Going forward, we are changing the forms that new students and employees complete upon joining WCPSS. However, *current students and staff must also update their information this year. Parents of pre-kindergarten to 7th grade students will receive a paper form, while 8th to 11th grade students' information will be collected during the registration process for the 2010-2011 school year.*

Reporting race and ethnicity data to the United States Department of Education is required as a part of accountability reports and allows states to request federal funding. There will be no change in how the information is used.

If you have any questions regarding the process of collection or review of race and ethnicity, please visit the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's website at <http://dpi.state.nc.us/data/management/raceethnicity/faqs>, and our own website's Demographics Resource Center at www.wcpss.net/demographics.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Del Burns".

Del Burns, Ed.D.