

School Matters - July 12, 2013

[Campaign Preview](#)[HTML Source](#)[Plain-Text Email](#)[Details](#)

This is the official Davie County School District newsletter.

Email not displaying correctly?
View it in your browser.

School Matters

Friday, July 12, 2013

SB236 School Building Ownership Bill Failed, And Then Revived

I have had a number of inquiries about the turn of events yesterday and wanted to provide a summary. I had an opportunity to speak in opposition to this bill to the Committee on Government during public comment, along with representatives from Lee, Moore, and Wake Counties. I want to thank Barbara Owens and Carol Livengood, of the Davie County Board of Education, for joining me at this meeting. Robert Wisecarver, Chairman of the Davie County Board of Commissioners, spoke to the committee in favor of the bill. Chairman Wisecarver was accompanied by Commissioner Carl Humphrey, and six citizens from Davie County.

The way this bill was handled yesterday was strange and extremely uncommon. SB236, a bill that would allow the transfer of school building ownership and management authority from several school boards to county commissioners, was revised and ultimately

In This Issue

[SB 236](#)

[Budget Update](#)

defeated in a House committee Thursday morning and then revived at 7:30 p.m. the same day, when the full House voted to re-refer it to the House Rules Committee. The bill's fate in that committee is uncertain, although based on the controversy surrounding Thursday's late day actions on the bill, several representatives from both parties have indicated that they believe the issue has reached a final resting place.

A rewritten version of Senate Bill 236 was presented to the House Government Committee Thursday morning by Sen. Neal Hunt, R-Wake, and the main bill sponsor. The bill had gained full Senate approval in May, but had remained dormant in the House until earlier this week. The bill originally applied to counties statewide, however, the bill was revised in the Senate to only apply to Beaufort, Dare, Davie, Guilford, Harnett, Lee, Rockingham, Rowan and Wake counties. Republican lawmakers in the Senate were successful in proposing amendments to remove Iredell County Schools, Mooresville Graded Schools, and Kannapolis City Schools from the bill, while Democratic attempts to remove Wake County and Guilford County from the legislation were unsuccessful.

When the House Government Committee took up the bill Thursday morning, the bill had again changed and proposed applying to the following counties: Dare, Guilford, Harnett, Lee, Moore, Nash, Rockingham, Rowan and Wake, and a specific exclusion for Kannapolis City Schools remained in the bill. (Davie and Beaufort Counties had been removed, Moore and Nash added.)

Contentious debate occurred over whether the bill would create further strife between boards of education and county commissioners in the affected counties and if it ultimately would be broadened to all counties, and thereby eroding one of the main functions that local board of education members are elected to oversee.

Rep. Larry Pittman, R-Cabarrus, then ran an amendment to add Cabarrus County to the bill, and the amendment was approved.

Following that, Rep. Rosa Gill, D-Wake, then ran an amendment to remove Wake County from the bill, and her amendment succeeded on a 17-10 vote, with several Republicans voting with Democrats on the committee to support Wake's removal.

More debate followed, and then a voice vote on a motion to approve (give the bill a favorable report) occurred. Rep. Harry Warren, R-Rowan, who was the presiding chairman, then ruled that the motion had failed. He also ruled that a call for a show of hands on the vote was too late, leaving the bill as failed and the meeting adjourned.

Several House members who supported the legislation then worked through the day to find a way to revive the bill. Ultimately House Rules Chairman Tim Moore, R-Cleveland, made a motion on the House floor late in the evening to re-refer the bill to the Rules Committee, where it would be eligible for further action or it could fail to move forward from there.

The motion drew another round of contentious debate that lasted almost 30 minutes. During the discussion House Speaker Thom Tillis told the chamber that the Principal Clerk had checked the rules and determined that if the motion to re-refer was approved, the bill would revert to the version that gained full Senate approval, and none of the amendments that had occurred in the Government Committee would stand. That means that the bill now applies only to Beaufort, Dare, Davie, Guilford, Harnett, Lee, Rockingham, Rowan and Wake counties.

As you can see, this was an unusual chain of events. Stranger things have happened during the middle of budget negotiations and this one ranks pretty

High on the strangeness scale.

nign on the strangescale.

While Davie County is back in the bill as it sits in the Rules Committee, it is unlikely that this bill would ever make it through the House with so much controversy and concern expressed from legislators in both parties. We are hopeful the bill will not see additional action this session, but will monitor it closely. If it comes back up, we will share that in a future edition of ***School Matters***.

I want to thank everyone who contacted legislators about this bill; your calls and emails do make a difference. Calls and emails on both sides of this issue raise concerns over whether or not it would make good law. Thursday's events indicate that a likely majority of House members have concerns about its impact on the ability of school systems to retain control over locating, owning, building, maintaining and renovating schools.

Budget Update

It is reported that House and Senate leaders are making progress in their negotiations over tax reform and the state budget, and meetings were planned for today that were described as formal budget negotiations. Some have indicated that negotiations could lead to some agreement next week.

If you support public education and are in contact with legislators, these are a few of the key issues we have with the state budget.

- House Bill 944 is part of negotiations, which would create an expansive voucher program that would shift millions in taxpayer dollars from public schools to private schools not subject to the same standards of accountability or accessibility. These dollars could be used instead to support teachers and teacher assistants in the public schools.

- A \$376 million LEA Discretionary Reduction requires school districts to identify cuts in personnel and services and return those funds to the state. Davie County will be required to identify a projected \$1.6 million to return to the state. This means fewer adults working with our children.
- Also being discussed are numerous line item cuts to school personnel, including teachers, teacher assistants, instructional support and others. We do not need fewer teachers, teacher assistants or other support staff!
- Neither the House or Senate have proposed salaries increases for teachers or other staff.

Again, thank you to everyone who continues to support Davie County Schools and public education. Public education is a foundation of our democracy and is a gateway to a better future for our children and community. I am blessed to have the opportunity to serve as your superintendent. There are great days ahead!

(A portion of this summary was provided by the North Carolina Association of School Administrators.)

Sincerely,



Darrin L. Hartness, Ed. D.
Superintendent

[Friend on Facebook](#) | [Forward to Friend](#)

Copyright © 2013 Davie County Schools, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email because you opted in through our website or have chosen to be on our alert or newsletter list.

Our mailing address is:
Davie County Schools
220 Cherrv St

[Add us to your address book](#)

Powered By



[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [update subscription preferences](#)