

A green chalkboard with two pieces of pink chalk and some white chalk markings. The chalkboard is the background for the text. The chalk is positioned on the left side of the board, and there are some white chalk markings scattered across the surface.

# **Charting a course from Good to Great**

***A vision for a new model of  
Student Assignment and  
Growth Management in  
Wake County Public Schools***

***April 23<sup>th</sup>, 2010***



# Challenges & Opportunities

- Why we are here today
- Process along the way
- Moving Forward
- THIS IS NOT THE PLAN
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- This conceptualized vision is a starting point for dialogue.

**Let's take this opportunity to move from contentious to cooperative to visionary.**



## A Quote by Jim Collins on decisions and leadership

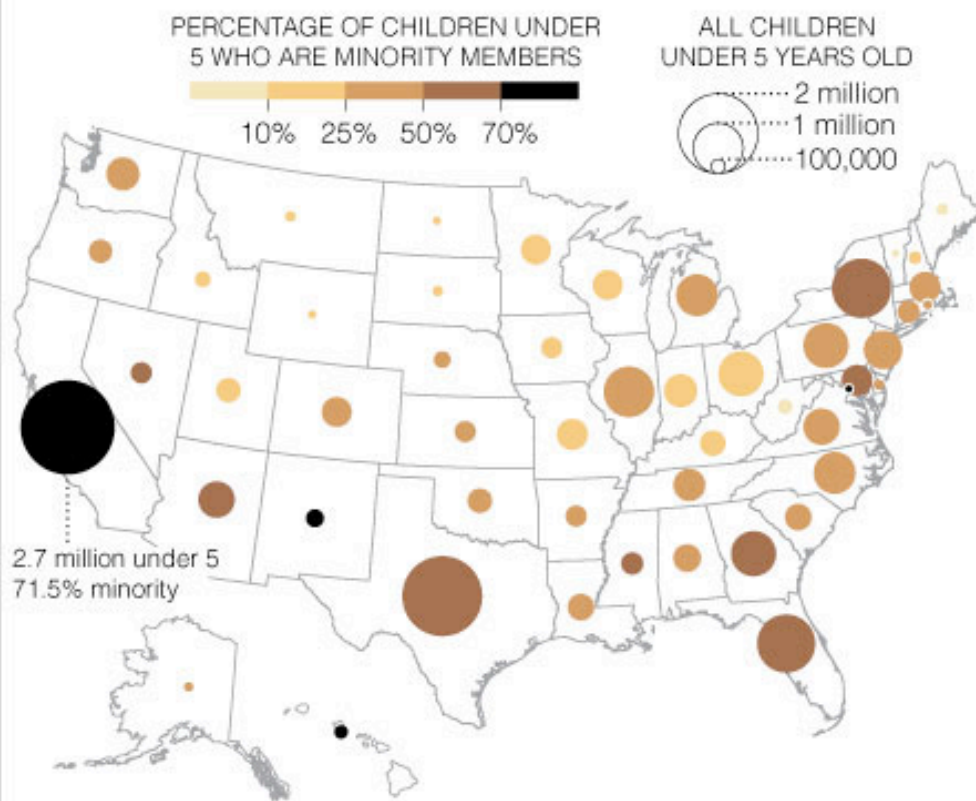
“I've never found an important decision made by a great organization that was made at a point of unanimity. Significant decisions carry risks and inevitably some will oppose it. In these settings, the great legislative leader must be artful in handling uncomfortable decisions, and this requires rigor.”

Jim Collins – Author of *Good to Great*

# We DO NOT have a “Diversity” Problem – We have a Growth Problem

## Minorities in the Majority

In 2007 New York became the 12th state where the majority of children under 5 years old are from minority groups.



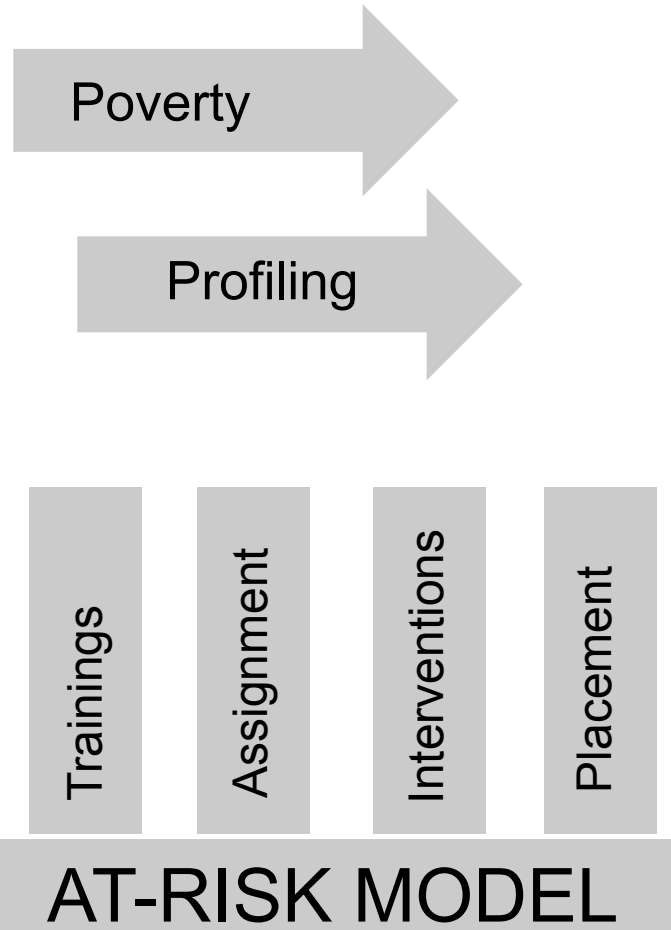
Sources: Population Reference Bureau analysis of census estimates

THE NEW YORK TIMES

- 51% / 49% Majority - minority ratio of our students.
- One of the most culturally diverse counties in NC
- Decade by decade we have gone from 60,000 students to 95,000 to today with 140,000 students.
- Slowed projections take us to 185,000 in the next decade.

# What We Know

Research, Data, Trends, History, & Community Values

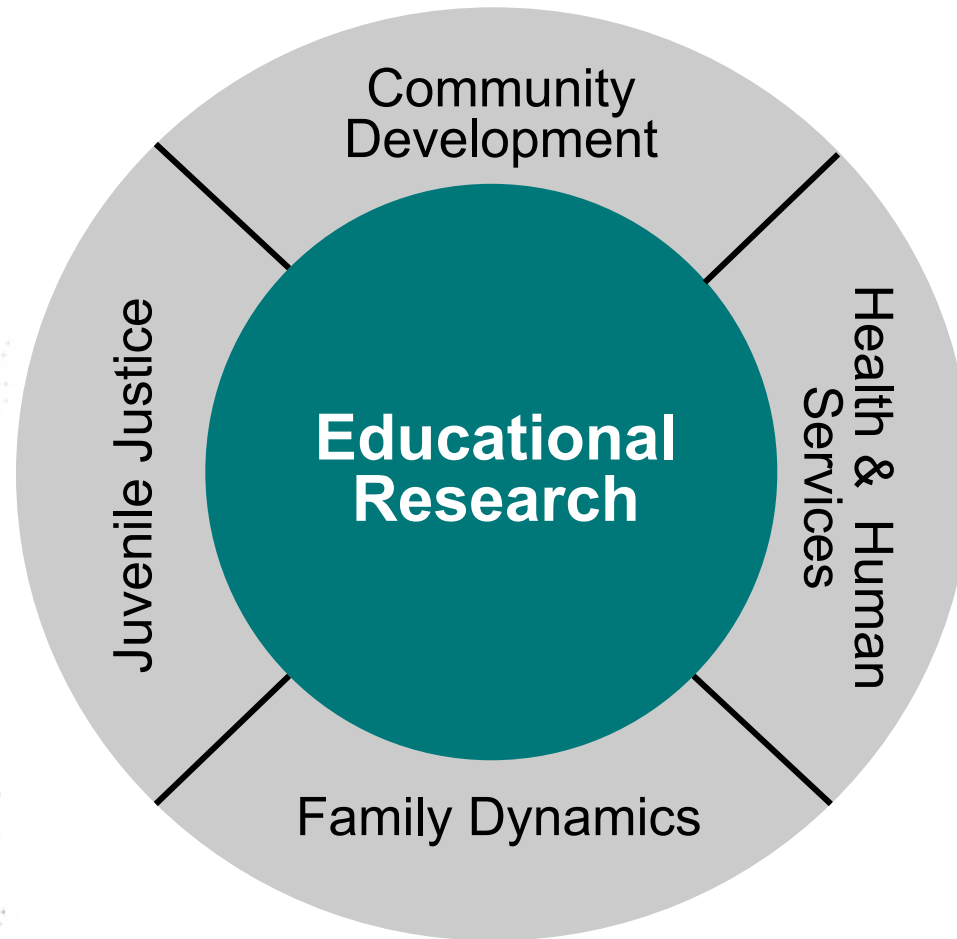


Mountains of research exist detailing the significant challenges associated with high poverty schools.

Large bodies of research emerging more and more in the last 20 years detail the problems associated with profiling students as a whole sub-group by race or income.

While many factors contribute to the challenges these students face, embedding those particular profiles in institutional design can reinforce pre-established biases for low-expectations of these students and create “false positives” in our systems.

# Children do not grow in the bubble



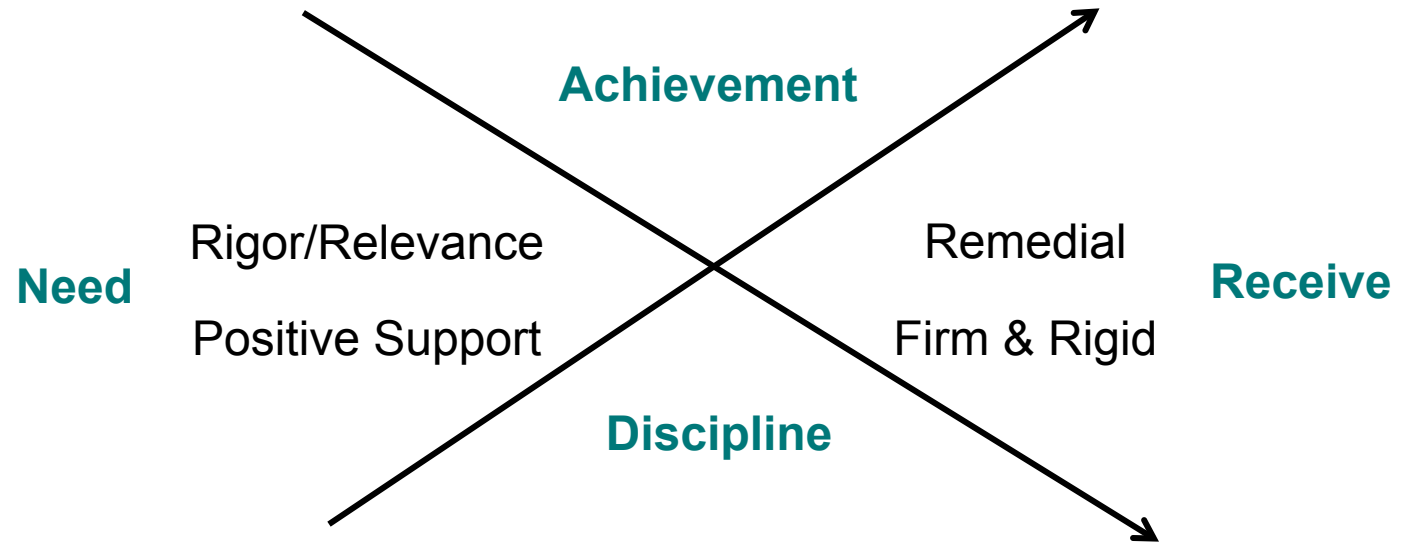
Our Systems do not talk very well to one another

Contributing factors that play into a child's life have to be understood differently if we are to end the School to prison pipeline and increase parental engagement.

Schools and Education can be the centerpiece to strengthen the entire community.



# Crossing an Axis of Thinking for At-Risk Youth



**Among the 5 largest districts in the State, Wake has a significantly smaller percentage of economically disadvantaged children at 32% - all others exceed 50%.**

**However with this sub-group we maintain one of the lowest graduation rates and highest suspension rates.**



## A Quote by Jim Collins

**“GOOD IS THE ENEMY OF GREAT.** And that is one of the key reasons why we have so little that becomes great. We don't have great schools, principally because we have good schools. We don't have great government, principally because we have good government. Few people attain great lives, in large part because it is just so easy to settle for a good life. The vast majority of organizations never become great, precisely because the vast majority become quite good-and that is the main problem.

Those who built the good-to-great companies, however, made as much use of ““stop doing”” lists as ““to do”” lists. They displayed a remarkable discipline to unplug all sorts of extraneous junk.”

Jim Collins – Author of *Good to Great*



# The Path to Here

## Student Assignment Modeling - Techniques

Forced Busing

Choice

Proximity

### *Shared Values*

Cultural Integration

Empowerment

Stability

Equity

Individualized

Community

### *Potential for Failure*

Racial Resentment

Privileged Class

Racial Isolation

### *Shared Values*

*Growth Then - Growth Now – Growth Tomorrow*

832 Sq Miles

140,000 Children

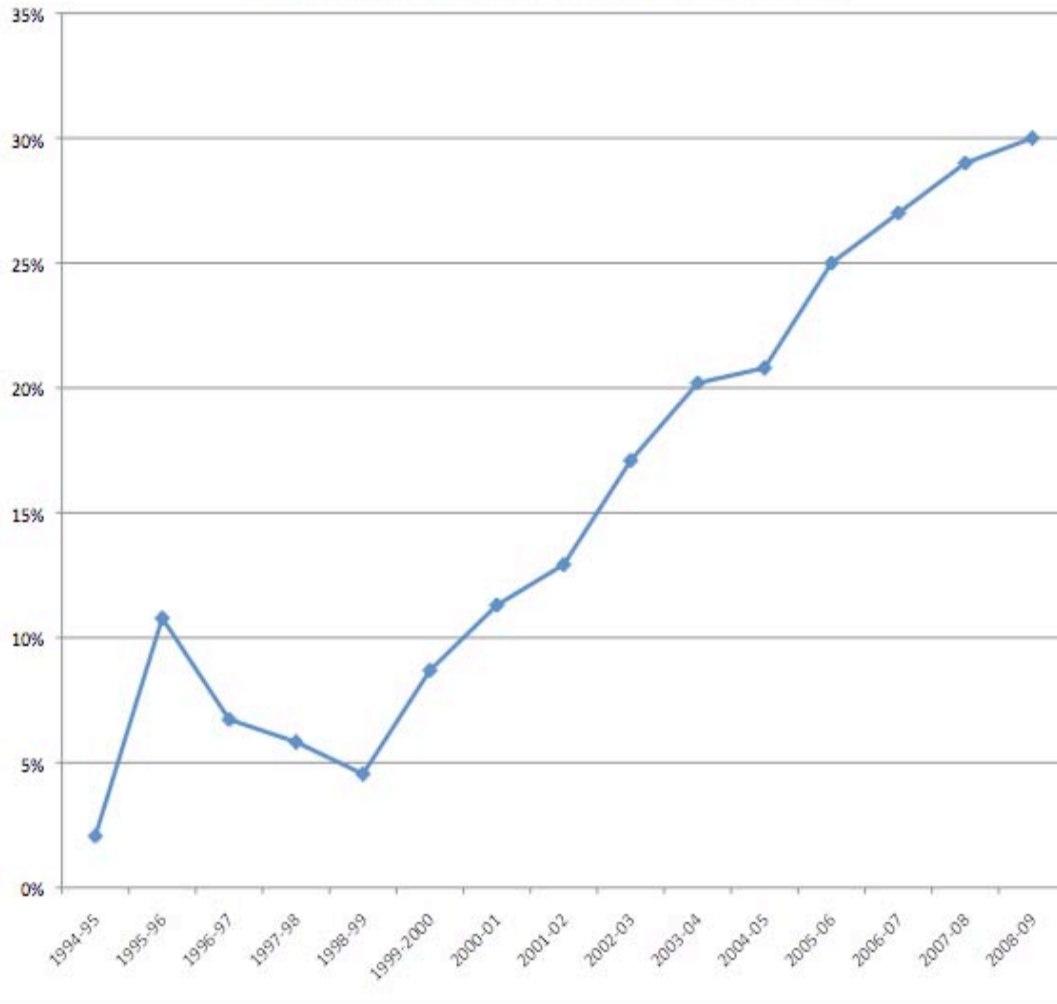
160 Schools

1<sup>st</sup> in NC

18<sup>th</sup> in USA

# The Path to Here

Percentage of WCPSS Greater than 40% F&R



5% of our schools exceeded the 40% high poverty threshold in 1999

Today over 30% of our schools exceed the high poverty threshold.

Many exceed 50% and some 60% and 70% rate of poverty in the individual schools

On the current trajectory under the current model 50% of our schools will cross that threshold and many will exceed a rate of 80%-90%

*The Time to act is NOW*



***We only have blunt tools – change the school  
or move a whole node.***

Loss of market share – an additional 7% of school aged children left public schools this decade in Wake County. 17.5% of school aged children in the district do not choose our public schools – that is nearly double the national average.

Extreme Overcrowding in many schools

%15 Under-Utilization in our network of 53 Year Round Schools

Denial of more than 2-1 into Y-R Schools

Diversity Goals not met

Under-enrolled RIM Schools

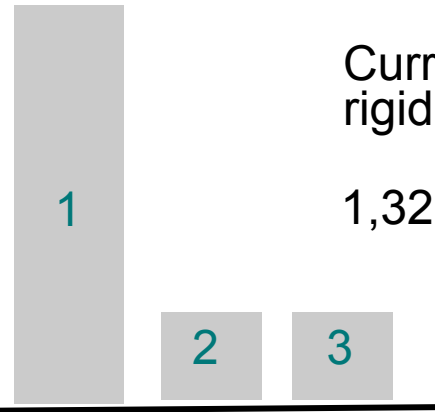
Disparity of School Perceptions

***We need fine tuning instruments to better manage our  
schools for stability, balance, and parental satisfaction.***

# The Path to Here

## Student Assignment Modeling - Tools

1. Geo Areas
2. Selective Algorithm
3. Parental Choice



Current Wake Model is too heavily weighted on rigid geographic boundaries.

1,320 Nodes are set-up like dominos in a mine field

Node Civil War – Red Shirts vs Green Shirts

Wake

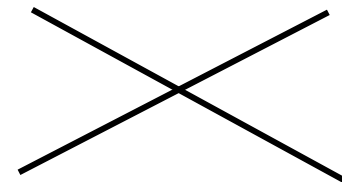
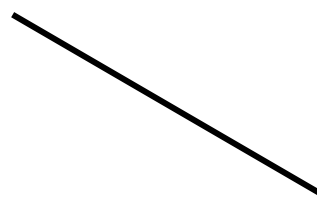
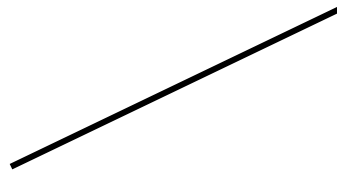
CMS

WSF

Diversity

Proximity

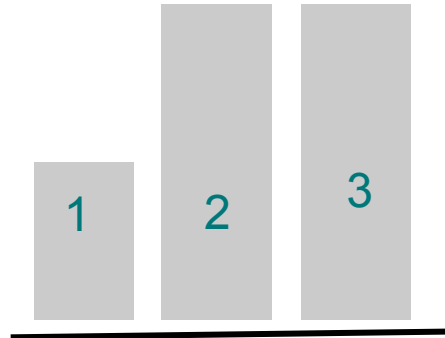
Combo w/Choice



# Moving Forward Together

## Student Assignment Modeling - Tools

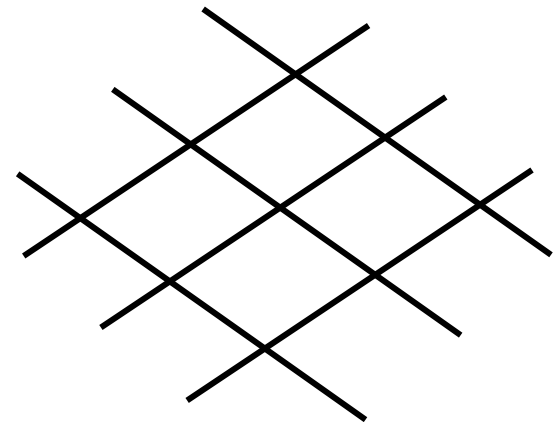
1. Geo Areas
2. Selective Algorithm
3. Parental Choice



## Community Assignment Zones *w/ Smart Choice*

A re-tooling of the model can provide us with an enhanced safety net and a fine tuned instrument to make softer adjustments as needed.

We **can** maintain our shared values while providing for greater parental choice and stability.





## **We determine our values as a community and plan together**

- Geographic areas are less ridged and choice is encouraged and promoted and carefully managed in line with our values
- We can weight the selection priorities – we can set aside seats by percentage and set preferences.
- We can better measure for equity with factors such as median housing values per geo-area, parental education levels, or engagement by stakeholders.



## Geo Areas

### Zones

- Base Neighborhood Assignment
- Elem YR

### Regions

- Middle YR
- 1 Magnet Feeder Track
- CTE

### County

- Magnets
- Alternative
- CTE
- Academies
- Promise Zone

## Selective Algorithm

### Weighted Selection

*Capacity*

*Proximity*

*Stability*

*Equity Opportunities*

*Siblings/Family*

*Achievement*

*Logical Feeders*

## Parental Choice

Traditional

Year-Round

Magnet

CTE –  
(Vocational)

Themed  
Academies

Alternative

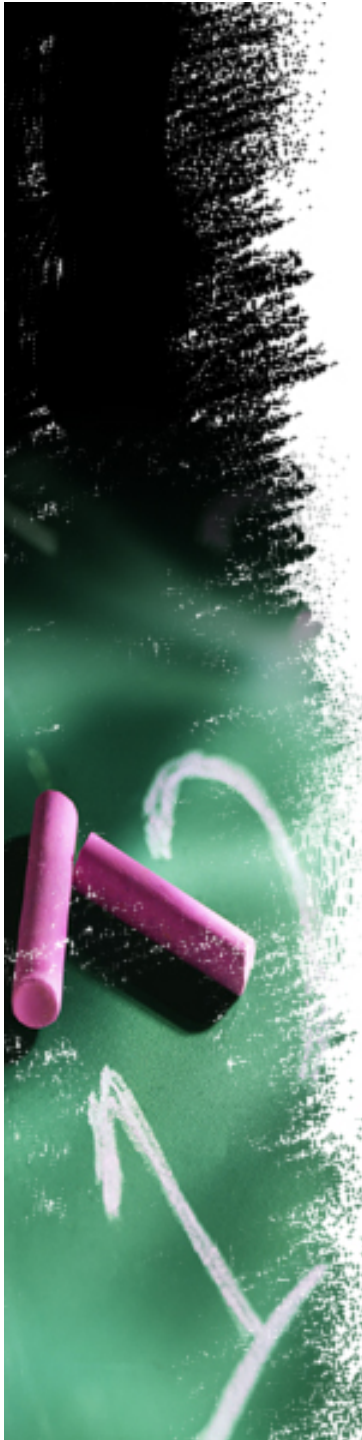
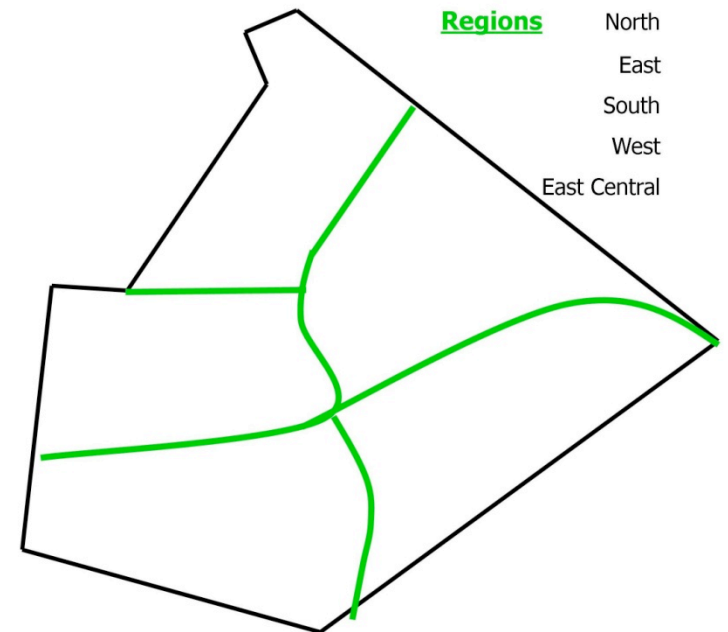
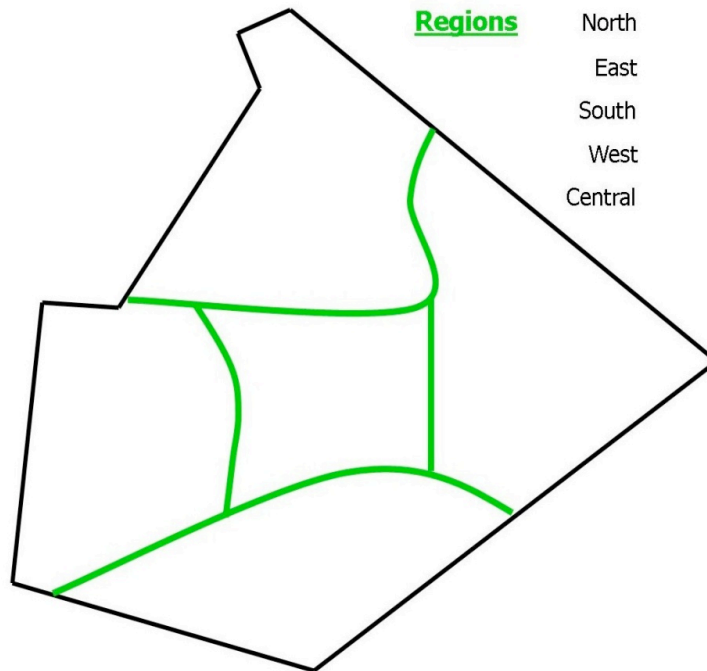
FS Community

Virtual

**Community Assignment Zones** w/ Smart Choice

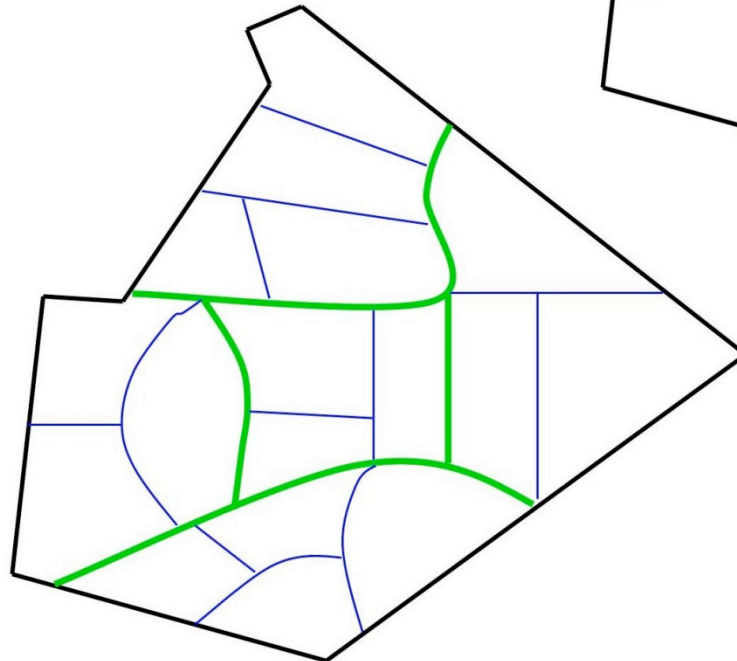
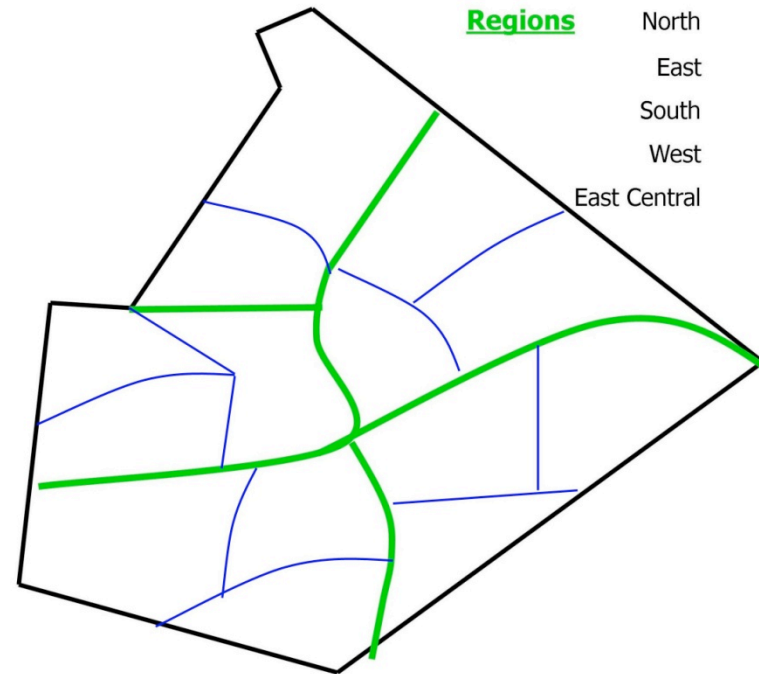
# Samples for Discussion purposes only

In a choice model how we draw our lines will be an important part, but how we set our values and algorithm will be of greater importance.



# Samples for Discussion purposes only

Multiple Zones within Regions can build structural elements like a pyramid within the algorithm. It can be aligned with our internal systems better and provide more stability for families.



We can better Align with our existing operational Zones in Transportation, Facilities Operations, Leadership, and more.





# Maximizing Opportunities

## Limiting Impact

### Target Objectives

Better align internal systems for effective and efficient delivery of services

Set policy and planning efforts in agreement with internal and external community goals

95% of existing Schools stay as they are and where they are  
Magnet – Year Round – Traditional

5% may be able to be considered for change. Use the buildings to make a 6<sup>th</sup> grade center, a magnet, a middle school an alternative school

85% - 90% of students NOT be impacted by forced reassignment  
Others transitioned over multiple years

# Balancing for Growth and Poverty

## Regions

North

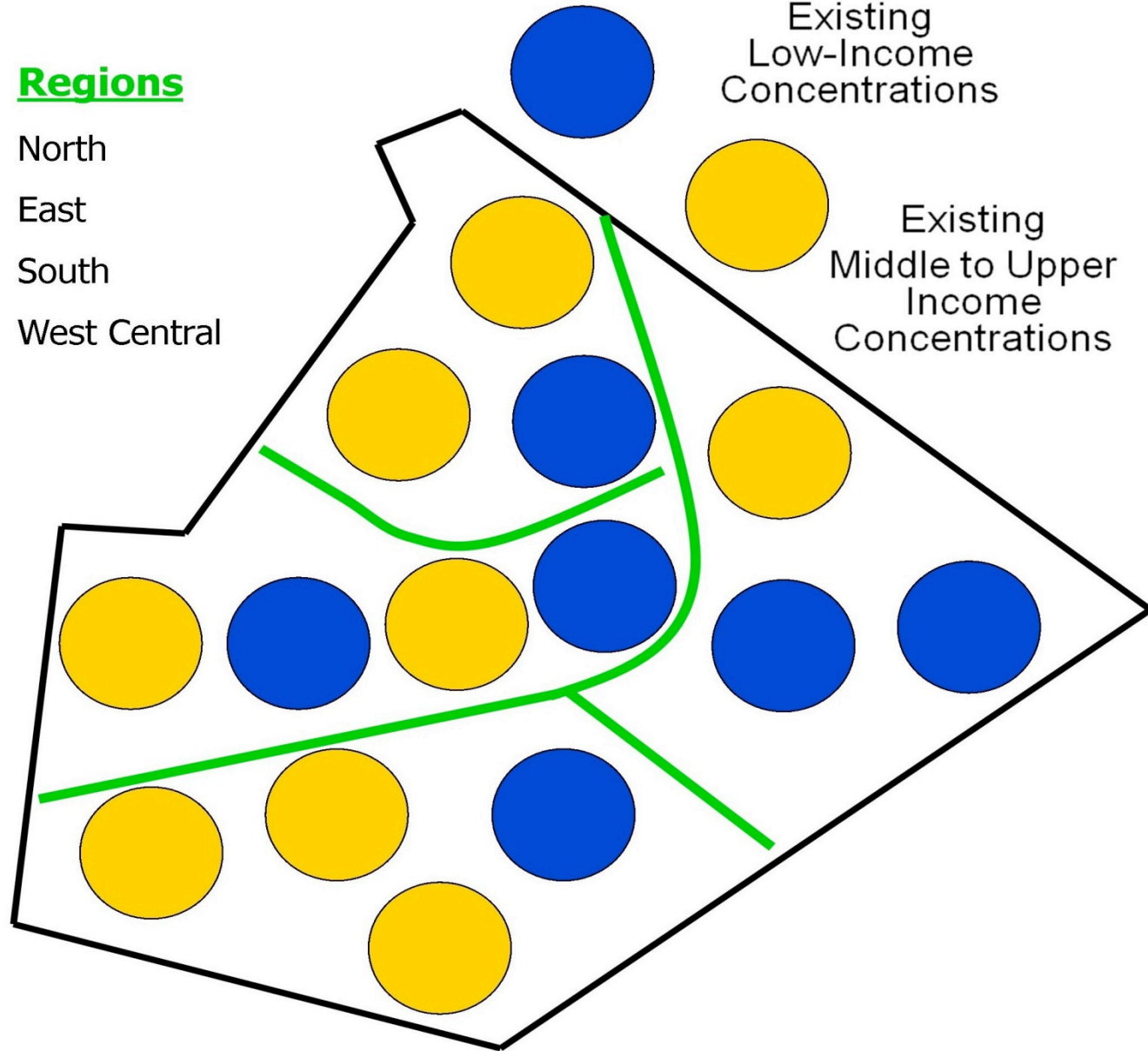
East

South

West Central

Existing  
Low-Income  
Concentrations

Existing  
Middle to Upper  
Income  
Concentrations



# Balancing for Growth and Poverty

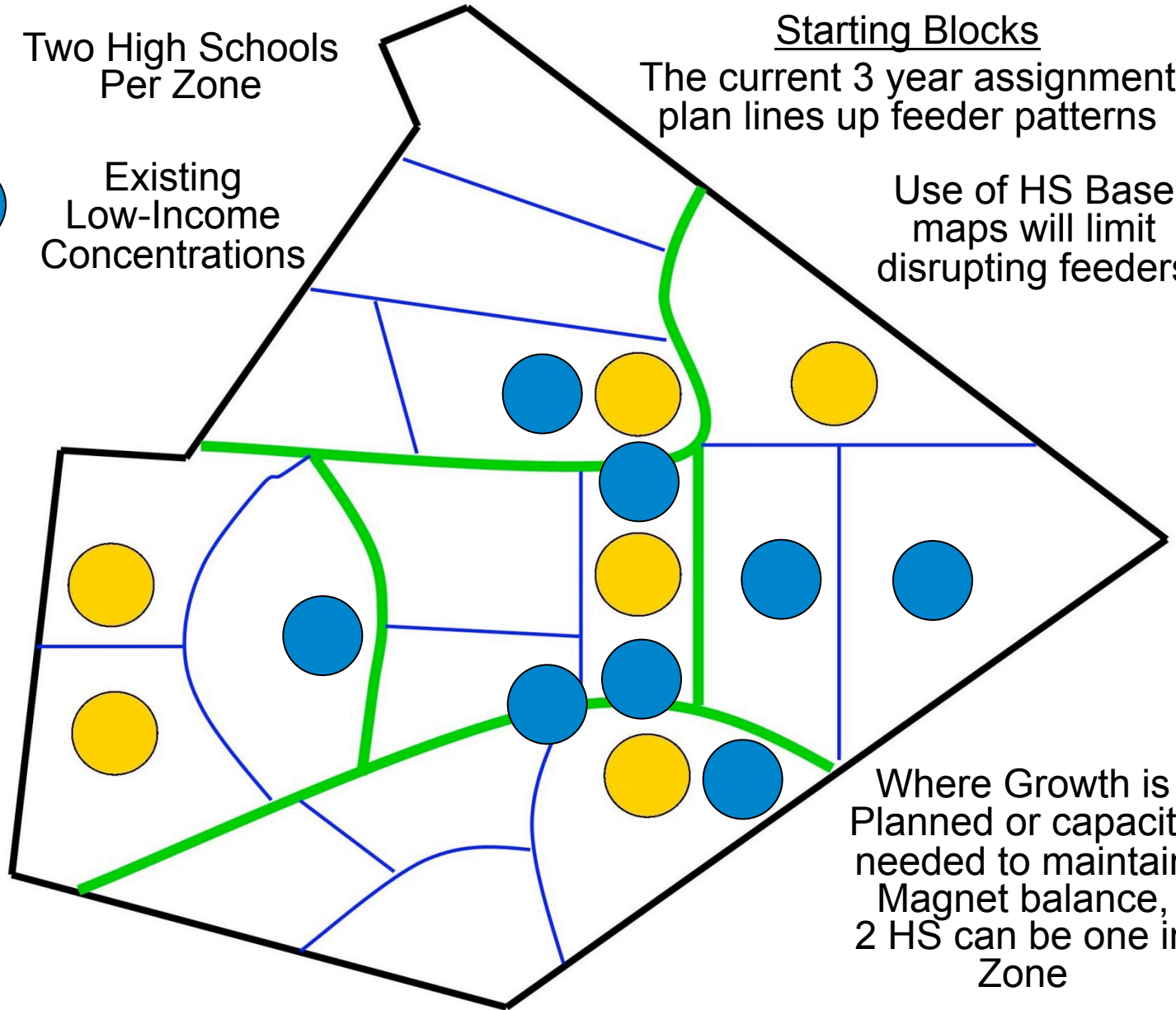
● Two High Schools Per Zone

● Existing Low-Income Concentrations

## Starting Blocks

The current 3 year assignment plan lines up feeder patterns

Use of HS Base maps will limit disrupting feeders



Where Growth is Planned or capacity needed to maintain Magnet balance, 2 HS can be one in Zone



# Academic Impact in a Choice Model

**Program Equity** – Avoid extremes in student demographics & under-enrollment that strongly influences course offerings, leading to curriculum disparity between our schools and parent perception problems that we currently have (mention rim schools!)

**Academic Achievement** – Removal of class-based mindset and low expectations for ED children ... enhanced engagement in education when children are working at or above their personal capacity – direct evidence that this leads to a substantial decrease in suspensions.

**Spring Board for Innovation:** Themed academies offer exciting opportunity for integrating curriculum around theme, enhance opportunities to create ACTIVE (as opposed to passive) learning opportunities (such as reading a script and acting out a play in a school of the arts) Learning becomes multi-sensorial and thus more effective. Second – enhances the likelihood that we will identify a child's trigger point where they become engaged in learning



# Moving even further

Aligned Organizational Departments for greater efficiency and effectiveness

A National Promise Zone

Academic Achievement & Program Equity

Spring Board for Innovation

Community Development



## Developing the Plan

- 60 Days – Student Assignment Committee (SAC) will have 3-4 educational meetings with outside presenters on assignment modeling.
- The following 90 Days – SAC will craft the plan details - geo areas, recommended algorithm components, parental choice factors, potential budget impacts, and recommendations for aligning policies.
- Recommend the full plan to the Board for consideration
- Then 3 months of public engagement meetings from all community stakeholders. Initially, envision 7-9 large CEMs with a couple being targeted (teachers & staff – business & government leaders)
- 2 - 4 months of SAC factoring Public Recommendations into the plan and transition planning
- Recommend the full plan to the Board for approval

**One Piece of the bigger Vision our children and community deserve.**

## **Goal 2015 & Beyond**



**Let's build a comprehensive vision that has similar detail for Academic Achievement, Partnering with our Community, Organizational Alignment for increased effectiveness, and more.**

# Together We Can Dare Mighty Things for our Children and our Community

