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Tata, board hope to put drama in past

Superintendent apologizes

By THOMAS GOLDSMITH AND T. KEUNG HUI
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Wake County schools superintendent Tony Tata apologized Friday to school board members Susan Evans and Christine Kushner for suggesting that they had violated ethical principles, according to a joint statement they released Friday afternoon.

The statement came after a week of controversy in which Tata scolded Evans and Kushner for their membership in the Great Schools in Wake Coalition community organization. The group has opposed much of the new student assignment plan that Tata has backed.

In publicly available emails, Tata called the members' ties "potential serious ethics violations."

Tata, Evans, Kushner, school board Chairman Kevin Hill and board attorney Ann Majestic



Tony Tata had criticized membership in the Great Schools in Wake Coalition. CHUCK LIDDY - cliddy@newsobserver.com

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Wake Ed blog: Find more news about Wake County schools at blogs.newsobserver.com/wakeed.

met Friday to craft the statement, which they called "a serious, frank, and constructive conversation to discuss events of the past week."

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Cline sticks to claims against Judge Hudson



Suspended Durham District Attorney Tracey Cline examines documents with her attorney, James Van Camp of Pinehurst, as he questions a witness Friday during a hearing on removing Cline from office.

PHOTOS BY CHUCK LIDDY - cliddy@newsobserver.com

SUSPENDED DA REGRETS HOW SHE SAID IT, NOT WHAT SHE SAID

By J. ANDREW CURLISS AND MANDY LOCKE
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DURHAM - Suspended District Attorney Tracey Cline, testifying in a hearing Friday that could lead to her permanent removal from office, did not back away from her fundamental accusation that Superior Court Judge Orlando Hudson is a biased, unfair judge who cannot administer justice in Durham based on the law or facts.

Speaking carefully and in a measured tone in more than three hours of testimony, Cline conceded only that the

words she has used to challenge Hudson and attempt to remove him from cases should have been different in some instances.

"What I recorded in those motions was absolutely true," Cline said. "How I said it should have been better."

Cline often looked directly at Superior Court Judge Robert H. Hobgood, who under state law will determine whether Cline's allegations against Hudson in motions and courtroom arguments since November require her removal from office under a rare law. The hearing continues Monday.

The law says a DA who engages in conduct, among other things, that is "prejudicial to the administration of justice which brings the office into disrepute" shall be removed. Hobgood has found probable cause that Cline's writings and actions meet that standard, and he suspended her from office last month. He is hearing evidence before making a final decision.

Cline testified Friday that she has not crossed that line and that she thinks she has done the "right thing," direct-

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Attorney Kerry Sutton listens to testimony Friday. Sutton instigated the case against Cline.

LEARN MORE

Pictures, series: View photos from Friday's hearing at newsobserver.com/localpics, and read more at newsobserver.com/twistedtruth.

'Friends of Syria' to tighten sanctions

By KAREN DEYOUNG
Washington Post

TUNIS, Tunisia - International leaders agreed Friday on a unified plan for pressure they hope will stop Syrian President Bashar Assad's bloody crackdown on civilian opponents and drive him from power. But they stopped well short of approving military assistance to the Syrian opposition.

The "Friends of Syria" gathering in Tunisia's capital agreed to tighten sanctions against Assad and his government. They called on the United Nations to ready a peacekeeping force for deployment along with international re-

construction assistance once the violence ceases and, presumably, Assad has stepped down.

The session came as President Barack Obama said in Washington that the United States and its allies would consider "every tool available" to halt the killing in Syria, some of the strongest language he has used during the year-long crisis.

Obama did not give specifics about what the U.S. or other countries would do to help.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told the gathering in Tunis that "we cannot wait for

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MOORE WON'T JOIN GOVERNOR'S RACE

Former state Treasurer Richard Moore declines gubernatorial run. That leaves Walter Dalton, Bob Etheridge and Bill Faison seeking the Democratic nomination. **1B**

PROSECUTION RESTS IN YOUNG CASE

Starting Monday, the defense will get its turn in the second trial of Jason Young, who is charged with killing his wife. Jurors deadlocked 8-4 in Young's first trial last year. **1B**

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WEATHER

Today: Watch for falling temps. High 54; low 27.
Sunday: Sunny and crisp end to the weekend. High 49; low 31. **8B**

Farmers: Keep tobacco in trade deal

Health groups want it out

By FRANCO ORDOÑEZ
Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON - North Carolina tobacco farmers fear they could lose a significant portion of their export business if health advocates win a battle to carve tobacco out of a major trade agreement being negotiated with eight countries on the Pacific Rim.

The American Medical Association and several other health groups are insisting the Obama administration put public health priorities ahead of commercial interests. But with the majority of their crop now being sold overseas, tobacco growers in



Tobacco farmer John Ashe of Reidsville checks tobacco planted in nearly 1,500 trays in a greenhouse.

TED RICHARDSON - MCT

North Carolina and across the Southeast see that pressure as an effort to eliminate their ability to make a living on a commodity sold legally in the United States and around the world.

President Obama hopes the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, along with other recent trade agreements, eventually will help double exports. The United States does more than

\$200 billion in trade with the partnership countries: Australia, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam.

The trade agreement goal is to boost trade by eliminating taxes and tariffs on exports and imports between the countries. The growers worry they'll be left out of the special deal, making it more difficult for them to compete with developing nations that already sell tobacco cheaper to overseas markets.

The next round of negotiations is set for Thursday in Australia. On Friday, U.S. Trade representatives and several of the partners' ambassadors attended a Washington reception that pro-

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