

# Bill for School Board district elections introduced by legislators

By RUDY ANDERSON  
Chronicle Managing Editor

The African-American contingent to the Forsyth legislative delegation has introduced a bill in the House of Representatives of the state General Assembly calling for district elections for the city-county school board.

If passed, that plan could stop



Chronicle file photo  
**Annie Brown Kennedy**

what would probably be a long and expensive court battle between the NAACP and the city-county school board.

The NAACP has filed suit against the all-white city-county school board to force a district election plan to ensure African-American representation on the school board.

Representatives Annie Brown Kennedy and Warren "Pete" Oldham, both Democrats, introduced the bill a week ago on the last day a bill could be brought before the House.

Their action followed the passage of a resolution introduced by County Commissioner Earline Parmon at the Forsyth County Democratic Party Convention April 6, that the local delegation promote a district election plan. Both legislators say that they await some specifics from the party in order to amend the initial bill.

Reaction to the legislators move has been greeted with a degree of caution.

"If the legislators can come up with a plan that can assure three majority black voting districts that would be something to consider," said Rev. J.T. McMillan, head of public relations for the Winston-Salem NAACP. He said if a satisfactory plan is produced, the NAACP lawyers say they would have no problems withdrawing the suit.

But McMillan said there are too many unknowns to be hasty. "While we are waiting to see what the state legislature is going to come up with, we will be moving

forward with our plans just in case the legislative option proves unsuccessful," McMillan said.

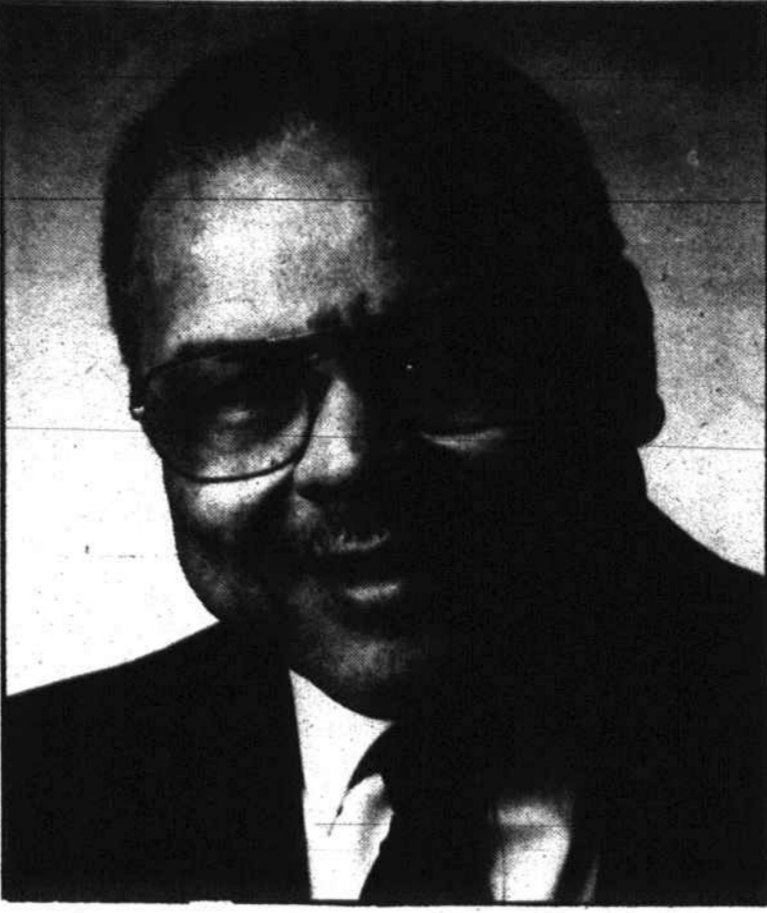
Both Kennedy and Oldham are not sure what to expect. "I don't think anybody will produce a plan that is going to satisfy everybody," said Oldham. "This is an attempt to get something settled before this thing reaches the courts."

Oldham said he really doesn't expect much cooperation from the Republican contingent of the delegation. Both Reps. Frank Rhodes and Michael Decker have gone on record opposing the district elections plan bill.

"I've seen district election plans penned with the mindset, 'I want the best for the schools in my district,'" said Decker. "It's a 'protect my turf' mentality. The people elected in this manner tend to oppose things in other districts until they get what they want for their districts instead of doing what's best for the entire county. This is divisive."

And Decker is hoping that legislative procedure will follow its traditional pattern and kill bills in committee that don't have the unanimous backing of the local delegation sponsoring the bill. "It's hard to predict what will happen. But bills

that don't have unanimous backing from the outset usually don't pass," Decker said.



Chronicle file photo  
**Pete Oldham**

Kennedy said she has asked the research staff of the General Assembly to prepare several plans based on the state's research. The current bill does not specify the form a district plan will take, only that some or all school board members should be elected by district.

"I don't know how long the process will take, perhaps two or three weeks," said Kennedy. "But we will be getting the assistance of state resources so we can look at something that will be in our best interests."

Kennedy said she didn't know what the reaction the school board might have to legislators' actions.

But she pointed out that the school board had ample opportunity to come up with a plan but chose not to. "We have a community here which is broken and needs to be fixed," Kennedy said. "I don't know if this will avert a lawsuit, but whatever we come up with will be discussed."

Garlene Grogan, chair of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board, called the legislators move surprising. "I thought the filing date had passed, so I was a little surprised when I heard they had filed the bill," Grogan said.

She said at this point there wasn't much to discuss. "I can't change my position. The board has already voted and that's where I stand,"

Grogan said. She said she had not had an opportunity to discuss the legislators' action concerning district elections with any other board member. But she said she'd be surprised if the legislature came up with a plan that suited everybody.

McMillan said that is the main reason why the NAACP must press ahead with its original course of action. "The courts are where we have always had to go to get done what we needed to have done," he said. "That's been the only way we've been able to get validation."

The local NAACP will hold a general membership meeting at Union Chapel Baptist Church at the corner of 25th and Collins Streets, Tuesday, April 23, at 7 p.m.

## School system gets New Century's grant

Chronicle Staff Report

The RJR/Nabisco Foundation has awarded a three-year grant totaling \$750,000 to the Integrated Learning Center, formerly referred to as the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Elementary School, to implement a bold initiative that will increase parent and business involvement in learning. Funds will be made available in the amount of \$250,000 annually over the three-year period.

The grant was made through the Next Century Schools program, a \$30 million, five-year commitment to recognizing, rewarding, and replicating radical change in education. The program was launched in 1989 to support fundamental change in the failing public school system nationwide. The Next Century Schools program is open to all elementary, middle, and secondary public schools throughout the United States.

"Real educational reform will only come about through the vision of schools like Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Elementary. This pioneering spirit reflects the traditional American search for excellence," said Louis V. Gerstner Jr., chairman and CEO of RJR/Nabisco, Inc. He continued, "Discarding the comfortable, but outmoded educational techniques that produce nearly 700,000 school dropouts each year, puts this school in the vanguard of a movement that will mean fundamentally new and better schools in the 21st century."

The winning proposal was selected from a nationwide pool of over 1,600 applicants (35 from North Carolina) and approved by an advisory board of notable education, public policy, and business leaders. The Integrated Learning Center proposal was developed and written by Jane M. Pfeifferkom, Program Specialist for Cultural Arts and Thinking Skills for the Winston-

Salem/Forsyth County School System.

The Integrated Learning Center is designed for a third-year total of 360 students. It will grow from 120 students its first year, ages 5-8, to an additional 60 students equally divided among ages 6-9, along with 45 five-year olds and 45 four-year olds the second year. With the admission of 45 four-year olds and 45 three-year olds in the third year, the school will reach its maximum size of 360 students.

Students will be grouped according to age, not grade, according to Sue Carson, the city-county school system's Program Manager for Public Information. Each class will have a ratio of 15 students to one teacher with no extra teachers provided.

The location of the school is not definite but being strongly considered is the old R. J. Reynolds factory building #256-9, which was sold to the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners when Reynolds closed the plant. Carson said that the school will be located downtown. The principal will be announced either on April 25 or May 6, she added.

What makes the concept of the Integrated Learning Center so unique is the nature of the school/business partnership involved and the integrated approach to the school curriculum. It will have a strong relationship with its business partner, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company which will provide coaches who will serve as mentors for each class. The mentors will spend an hour each week either in the classroom, on field trips, providing learning incentives, and other activities designed to make the connection between the classroom and the real world experiences.

The educational focus will be on the development of higher-order thinking skills and physical, social, and emotional, as well as cognitive, development. Emphasis will be on the integra-

tion of the various disciplines, cooperative learning, and interdisciplinary teaching — how one subject relates to another being taught and its correlation with the world outside of school. The method will provide first-hand and "hands-on" experiences, with practical application of information and concepts. Parents will be an integral part of the program.

Students at the Integrated Learning Center will experience an extended day and extended year. The Center will be open 11 hours each day (7 a.m.-6 p.m.) and 11 months each year (August 26, 1991-July 17, 1992). Students aged 6-11 will be required to attend seven hours each day (8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) and ten months each year (August 26, 1991-June 12, 1992). When students aged 3-5 are admitted, they will be required to attend 3-1/2 hours each day (8:30 a.m.-12 noon) and 10 months each year. Students in both groups may stay each day until the Center closes and may attend all 11 months.

The Integrated Learning Center will begin its first year of operation August 26 with 120 students. The racial mix will be 40 percent minority and 60 percent white. Sixty percent of the initial enrollment of five- through eight-year olds will be children of the business partner's, Reynolds', employees and will be selected by lottery from applications submitted. The remaining spaces will be offered to students on the waiting lists for the other two alternative elementary schools — Kimberly Park and Moore. A maximum of 40 percent of the students will be chosen by lottery from those applications.

Carson said that details are currently being worked out to provide the information parents will need to make decisions about applying to enroll their children in the Integrated Learning Center. She expects most of process to be in place within the next few weeks.

## Area high school scholars named Teaching Fellows

Chronicle Staff Report

Twenty-five area high school seniors are among four hundred 1991 recipients of the North Carolina Teaching Fellows scholarships.

Each Teaching Fellow will receive a \$5,000 annual scholarship loan which will be forgiven after teaching at least four years in a North Carolina public school. In addition, the Teaching Fellows will take part in unique academic and summer programs during their college careers.

In four years, the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program has become one of the top teacher recruiting programs in the entire country.

The program was created by the General Assembly in 1985, upon the recommendation of the Public School Forum of North Carolina.

"The Teaching Fellows was developed in response to an

alarming trend among the best students who were avoiding the teaching profession," said Teena Little, Chairman of the Teaching Fellows Commission. "The primary purpose of the program is to attract top high school seniors to become education majors and ultimately, public school teachers," she added.

This year, 1844 high school seniors competed for the 400 scholarships. Recipients rank in the upper 10 percent of their class, have a grade point average of 3.7, and scored an average 1103 on the SAT, or 262 points above the state average. Among the recipients are 25 percent males and 21 percent minorities.

"Each Teaching Fellows class has exceeded the expectations set for this program," said Jo Ann Norris, Associate Director of the Public School Forum and Administrator of the Teaching Fellows Program. "I believe that these bright young people will make a

real difference to our schools when they graduate and take their place in North Carolina classrooms.

"Through the Teaching Fellows, we have found a way to recruit the brightest and most talented students to the teaching profession," Ms. Norris added.

Area recipients of the Teaching Fellows scholarships are:

- Carver High School**
  - Edward Francis Hanes
- East Forsyth Senior High School**
  - Mary Courtney Flynt
  - Ashley Paige Hendrix
  - Tonya Elyse Keene
  - Rebecca Lynn Richmond
  - Kenya Trenethia Rocker
  - Tracy Lynn Savell
  - Cristen Melody Smith
  - Kondra Tijuana Stowe
  - Amy Denise Whitt
- Glenn High School**
  - Adriane Leigh Cromer

- Sherry Layne Newsome
- North Forsyth High School**
  - Beverly Beatrice Lawson
- Parkland Senior High School**
  - Kimberly Shea Jenkins
  - Gary Michael Sanders
- R. J. Reynolds High School**
  - Brian Dwight Ammons
  - Mamie Elizabeth Broadhurst
  - Tarra Denise Hairston
  - Donyell Lakishka Phillips
- West Forsyth High School**
  - Melanie Lynette Dalton
  - Catherine Miller Griffith
  - Matthew Patrick Murray
  - Kathryn Chi Phan
- Private School**
  - Meredith Jane Combs
- School of Math and Science**
  - Benjamin Stuart Huneycutt

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