

Forum

Poor School System Organization Will Lead to Further Educational Problems

In a new school assignment plan, we should be taking a good look at the major problems schools face and the way the system is organized. We are and have been faced with ever-increasing disrespect for authority in our schools. Many of the staffs in our schools are powerless because of disconnected and disruptive students. In many of our schools from 5% to 10% of the students reek havoc on teachers and especially principals or their assistants. The amount of time it takes in an average school to deal with problem students can be as much as 60% of their daily work.

It is time for the superintendent and the board to take a firm position on violence, drugs, and all the negative behaviors that disrupt the instructional process in schools. It is also time to put in place a sensible plan for training teachers about other cultures. In reorganizing, we need to look carefully at the placement of students in this country. When the system reorganized in 1984 nobody really cared about the proper placement and spread of students. In District 1 we find most BEH students, dropouts, single-family homes, public housing communities, and possibly the largest percentage of suspensions in the system.

Those who governed the schools in 1984 are responsible for much of the current disarray of our schools. In devising an assignment plan they literally destroyed the inner-city schools. They threw away the positive and cultural references blacks could relate to. This in effect made many black parents and black students distrust the system.

The busing of all young blacks out of their setting for all of 13 years is almost criminal. If the board had been truly concerned with the welfare of children, they would have divided the elementary schools equally in the county in 1984. Let us hope that this new plan will be one that addresses the need for inner-city schools rightly. There are still some on the board who were a part of the 1984 fiasco. Let us watch where their senses lie when the new plan unfolds.

Much of the violence in schools comes from those who feel no connection or respect for the system and to those who teach. Yes, many other factors play a part in the violence and disrespect for authority in our schools: unemployment, poor housing, failing family values and the like.

We need educators who will assure that all children are treated equally and demand that they will not tolerate disruptions and poor performance.

We also need parents who will be responsible and demand that their children be respectful and school-oriented. We cannot let Reeboks, gold chains, earrings in ears of our young black males, \$200 starter jackets, ragged and torn-up looking clothes be the norm for our children. We as adults have somehow let what children want and do get out of hand. When we let all this continue, the values of life become mis-directed, and our children begin to place their values on worldly things and not on education and good citizenship.



GENEVA SAYS

By GENEVA BROWN

Until this school system reorganizes with some sense, we can expect the same old things to be happening: violence, drug abuse, disrespect for authority, and a general non-caring attitude from the students who attend our schools. We need to look carefully at the schools in District 1; the student population from it and how they are placed throughout the system; the number of special education classes it has compared with District 1; the kind of resources these schools have that house most of the special education students; and where the assignment of minority principals are in the system.

As long as we have a school system run by three white males — and not a top minority administrator, male or female — to give input concerning almost 40% of the population, we as a thriving community will continue to have schools that are full of violence.

Parents want schools that are safe, educationally sound and user friendly. They want schools that show respect for all students, schools that give equal treatment in learning, and schools that they can understand and be proud of as they watch their children grow and mature.

Schools can be this way if, as a board and administrative staff, we pay attention to the real issues of educating children.

The author is a member of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board.

Clinton May Be Using Familiar Tactics

Never have two black justices sat on the U.S. Supreme Court at the same time. But with a liberal, pro-civil rights president in the White House and a black, conservative, anti-civil rights justice on the Supreme Court, don't be shocked if you learn that one of the first justices on the Supreme Court, don't be shocked if you learn that one of the first three nominees Bill Clinton designates for Supreme Court membership will be black.

Several factors indicate that Clinton would name a black person to serve concurrently with Clarence Thomas on the high court:

- Black people in 1992 gave Clinton 83 percent of their vote. White people and others, including non-black voters, split equally giving Clinton and Bush about 40 percent.



MINORITY REPORT

By JAMES E. ALSBROOK

- Clinton wants a friendly Supreme Court that would affirm liberal ideas and validate their legality.

- When opponents say blacks would be over-represented with two black justices and validate their legality.

- When opponents say blacks would be over-represented with two black justices, Clinton could respond that Clarence Thomas is beholden to Reagan, Bush, Strom Thurman and Jesse Helms, all far-right reactionaries who oppose blacks' interests.

- Jews, another recognizable minority, have had at least five men on the Supreme Court, two of them, sitting at the same time, 1932 to 1938. Jews constitute only 2.5 percent of the total U.S. population but blacks constitute more than 13 percent.

Clinton already may have adopted the same tactics that Lyndon Johnson used. First, Johnson found a pro-civil rights lawyer with a solid public service and NAACP background and nominated him to be a solicitor general, the government's top trial lawyer. His appointment was approved.

Being solicitor general gave Johnson's chosen man high public visibility and high status in legal and political circles. His name recognition became quite strong and his per-

formance was outstanding. Soon this man was appointed to a federal judgeship in which he served with distinction. When a vacancy on the Supreme Court occurred, Johnson appointed that man, Thurgood Marshall, to the U.S. Supreme Court.

A similar but shorter route of grooming was used to "set the stage" for Clarence Thomas. He dutifully performed his chores as a Reaganite and Bush hatchet man, making choices and rendering decisions contrary to the interest of the black, the aged and the poor. He kowtowed to far-right zealots, jettisoning whatever pride and integrity he may have had, and they supported his candidacy for a seat on

the Supreme Court.

Clinton already has a list of friendly Democrat, mainstream lawyers from whom to select a successor to Justice Byron White, who resigned.

But Clinton also has selected an outstanding black lawyer and has nominated him to be solicitor general. This job was the first stop on the route that Lyndon Johnson used to send Thurgood Marshall to the Supreme Court. The next stop Johnson used was appointment to a prestigious federal court with work loads, cases and other characteristics similar to those of the Supreme Court. The same "finishing" process seems to be afoot again for the present solicitor general nominee, Drew Sanders Days III, a black lawyer with excellent academic and professional credentials and excellent Democratic party connections.

Days is a professor of law at Yale. Among other things, he has been first assistant attorney general, U.S. Department of Justice; first assistant general counsel, NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund; and assistant professor of law at Temple U. Earlier, he was a Peace Corps volunteer and an A.C.L.U. volunteer. He has worked in private practice with strong mainstream legal firms.

Doonesbury

BY G.B. TRUDEAU

HELLO? MORNING. IT'S YOUR HUSBAND.

HEY, BABE! HOW'S THE REUNION GOING? YOU SOUND CELLULAR.

I AM. I'M STANDING OUT IN FRONT OF WALDEN.

THE SCENE OF YOUR YOUTHFUL DEBAUCHERY? HOW'S IT LOOK?

LITTLE CHURCH OF WALDEN. REAL DIFFERENT. WHAT'D YOU EXPECT, A SHRINE?

A CHURCH? WHEN DID YOU TURN WALDEN INTO A CHURCH, SCOT?

ABOUT A YEAR AGO...

I GOT TIRED OF TRYING TO CORRAL UNDERGRADUATES INTO THE CAMPUS CHAPEL. THEY JUST WEREN'T INTO IT. SO I DECIDED TO START FROM SCRATCH OUT HERE.

OF COURSE, THERE'S LOTS OF COMPETITION IN THE AREA — OVER 30 CHURCHES. SO THE FIRST THING I DID WAS RECRUIT A FOCUS GROUP.

A FOCUS GROUP? FOR A CHURCH?

HEY, WHAT DO YOU THINK THE APOSTLES WERE FOR? EVEN JESUS NEEDED FEEDBACK!

SO HOW'D YOUR NEW CHURCH GET STARTED, REV?

AERO-BICS.

I NEEDED SOMETHING TO ATTRACT ROLKS FROM THE COMMUNITY. THE FOCUS GROUP SUGGESTED AN AEROBICS CLASS.

IT WORKED, SO I ADDED YOGA AND BINGO, AND THEN A FEW 12-STEP PROGRAMS, AND THEN WE OPENED A SOUP KITCHEN, WHICH LED TO COOKING LESSONS.

BEFORE I KNEW IT, I HAD MY OWN DENOMINATION.

WOW... SO THAT'S HOW RELIGION SPREADS.

SO WHERE'D YOU GET THE COOL SPARE, REV?

I BUILT IT. THE CHIMNEY WAS CRUMBLING, SO I JUST COVERED IT UP!

HERE'S WHERE WE HAVE SERVICES — IN YOUR OLD LIVING ROOM. THE KITCHEN WE'VE CONVERTED INTO A PARENTING SKILLS CENTER.

SO HAVE YOU HAD TO GIVE UP WORKING WITH KIDS, SCOT?

NO, NO, I'M STILL IN THE PROJECTS EVERY DAY, AND I'M ALSO STILL DOING COUNSELING AT THE STATE PRISON.

HEY!... STAINED GLASS SKYLIGHTS!

PRETTY GREAT, HUH? THEY WERE A GIFT FROM A DRUG DEALER I'M MINISTERING TO.

IT'S AN INTERESTING CONGREGATION, MIKE. MEMBERS ARE FAR MORE CONSUMER-CONSCIOUS THAN THEY USED TO BE.

THE CHURCH HAS TO DELIVER FOR ITS MEMBERS! COUNSELING, SOCIAL EVENTS, RECOVERY PROGRAMS, TUTORING, FITNESS CENTER — WE HAVE TO OFFER IT ALL!

WHERE'S GOD FIT INTO ALL THIS?

GOD? WELL, GOD'S STILL THE DRAW FOR SURE. HE'S GOT THE BIG NAME.

BUT DO YOU EVER EVOKE IT ANYMORE?

UM... FRANKLY, MIKE, GOD COMES WITH A LOT OF BAGGAGE. THE WHOLE MALE, EURO-CENTRIC BUILT THING.

HELLO? THE WEST COAST CONTINGENT HAS ARRIVED!

ZONKER! IN THE KITCHEN!

HEY, DUDE! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? THE PLACE LOOKS DIFFERENT.

DIDN'T YOU SEE THE SIGN? IT'S A CHURCH NOW. "THE LITTLE CHURCH OF WALDEN."

A CHURCH? WELL, I GUESS THAT'S APPROPRIATE.

HOW SO, BIG GUY?

I HAD MY FIRST TRULY RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE RIGHT UP-STAIRS.

NO KIDDING? WHERE WAS I?

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