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## Former Substitute Teacher Questions Hiring Practices

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK  
Editor

A former Madison High School substitute teacher wanted to know Monday why she has not been called on to work as a substitute at the high school in over two years when her neighbors, and others, "are hired all the time."

The Madison County Board of Education agreed that she had been recommended and approved as a substitute, but didn't have any readily available answers to her question. The board did consent to check with school principals at Madison High, Mars Hill and Marshall about the matter.

Mrs. Winnie E. McGee of Long Branch Road in Marshall appeared before the school board Monday and explained that beginning six years ago she taught as a substitute for two years at the high school, but after those two years, she was never called back to teach.

"I called the school at the beginning of each school year after that and was told I was on the substitute teacher list, but I never got called to

teach. Two years ago, I gave up," Mrs. McGee said.

Mrs. McGee, who has a bachelor's degree in Spanish and has held a North Carolina Class A teaching certificate, asked the members of the board pointedly, "Why am I not teaching in Madison County? I'm never called, why?"

School board member Ed Gentry said "principals have the sole responsibility for selecting substitutes. We have approved you. It's not a board matter after we have approved substitutes. It's up to the principals."

Mrs. McGee countered with, "I get two stories on this. The principal says it's up to the teachers to call substitutes."

She told board members she checked last week at the high school by phone and was told "We don't need you." But Mrs. McGee contends "My neighbors are hired all the time." She asked board members if there was any discrimination involved in this matter and said, "I'm not a Democrat."

Mrs. McGee said she has been working as a substitute this year in Buncombe County where

she has made "over \$1,000," but she would prefer to teach in Madison County because of the increasing cost of traveling to schools in Buncombe. She told the board she has substituted primarily at Red Oak and French Broad Elementary schools in Buncombe.

Mrs. McGee told The News-Record that in an effort to reestablish herself as a substitute in Madison County, she telephoned the high school last week and was told by a secretary the school had not used many substitutes this year and that she was still on the list.

In a telephone interview Monday, Madison High Principal David Wyatt said Mrs. McGee "is not on my list now." Asked why, Wyatt said, "I did not present her name (for approval) this year. The teachers here prefer not to have her."

Wyatt went on to say that the high school tries to use the "best qualified person possible" as a substitute teacher, but admitted that four out of the eight individuals on his substitute list hold no college degrees. "Four have a B.A. or B.S. or better," he said.

Wyatt indicated that since Mrs. McGee's

degree was in Spanish, a subject no longer offered at Madison High, he felt she was less useful as a substitute. But, when asked about hiring substitutes with no degree or teaching certificate, Wyatt responded with, "Some we call first because they do a good job."

He added that the high school has hired some substitutes who are not even on the list, but added that they have been approved by the board of education.

"They know the routine so well," Wyatt said. "Teachers want someone who will follow and carry out their plans."

Wyatt said Mrs. McGee's name remained on his substitute list "for a while," but was eventually dropped. "We have other substitutes we drop if they don't work out," he said.

Mrs. McGee told school board members, "I love children and teaching. I'm a good teacher."

Board chairman Bobby Ponder said, "We will check with the principals today," indicating the board's willingness to help Mrs. McGee find an answer to her question.

## School Budget Audit Reveals Additional Fiscal Carry-Over

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK  
Editor

An audit report to the Madison County Board of Education meeting Monday revealed that the local school board ended the 1979-80 fiscal year with \$154,572.92 carried as a fund balance in local current expense funds, some \$7,338 above the carry-over amount reported to The News-Record on Feb. 13 by school superintendent R.L. Edwards.

The audit report, given by Mr. Tom Smith of Green, Skidmore and Smith, Co. of Asheville, stated in summary, "The financial statement of the Madison County Board of Education represents fairly the financial positions of the various funds of the Madison County Board of Education as of June 30, 1980."

Some questions had arisen about a budget carry-over of \$147,234 in February when it was learned from Supt. Edwards that the school board had the amount but had not listed it on its budget for the 1979-80 school year. Edwards

had remarked that the carry-over was his "ace in the hole" to make up the local current expense fund deficit created when the board had requested \$677,969 from the county commissioners and only received \$525,000 from the local government.

Mr. Smith explained to spectators at the meeting that it was not uncommon for a board of education to have a carry-over from one year to the next in order to have operating expenses until local, state and federal funds for the new operating year were allocated.

Smith pointed out that of the \$154,572, the board had an excess of revenues over expenditures of \$110,293 for the year ending June 30, 1980. "The rest of that money was already in the fund balance to begin with," he said.

R.L. Edwards explained to The News-Record last Friday that a check for some \$100,000 was brought to the school board on June 13, 1980 by county finance officer David

Caldwell, money, he said, was due the school board from the county. Edwards then said the county gives the school system a number of CETA employees during the year, so consequently, "Why should we spend our money on employing people when they (the county commissioners) are going to give us money?" Edwards indicated that situation helped create the carry-over when the fiscal year ended on June 30.

In another money-related matter, The News-Record also discovered recently that what appears to be an error in bookkeeping led to the inclusion of some \$423,000 in federal School Food Service money in the board's local current expense fund on a report sent to Raleigh. Food Service money is supposed to be kept separate from other school expense funds.

Questioned Monday as to how the Food Service money got put into the local current expense fund, Supt. Edwards said, "You will have to call Raleigh; they're the ones that did it. I didn't."

However, The News-Record had called Raleigh on Feb. 13 and talked with Mr. Carlton Willis in the Division of Statistical Services who said that the error was discovered by his department on the report sent to them by Mr. Edwards. Mr. Willis' name and telephone number was given to The News-Record by Edwards on that date, and Ed-

wards had suggested that a call be made to Mr. Willis.

At Monday's board meeting, Edwards said Mr. J.A. Porter, state controller, was the person to talk to in such matters and denied knowing Carlton Willis. "In fact, I don't even know Mr. Willis," Edwards said.

### NEW SCHOOL

Concerning the proposed Marshall-Walnut school, board members listened to a financial architectural report from J. Bertram King who said once the plans had been sent to Raleigh for final approval, advertising for construction bids could probably begin around April 15. He said the building, consisting of eight classrooms and a media center for grades K-3, would be ready by the opening of school in the fall of 1982.

A motion was made and passed by the board to hold a special call meeting at 3 p.m. on April 15 for the opening of bids. The board also adopted a resolution to apply for a grant of \$154,651 from the 1973 state school bond money to be applied toward the construction of the new school. That money, if obtained, combined with \$127,000 in capital outlay funds from the county and the 1977 federal flood disaster funds of \$269,513 would give the board \$551,164 for the facility.

It was noted by R.L. Edwards that the flood disaster money would have to be returned to the federal

government if a contract for the new school was not secured by this September.

Opposition to the consolidation of the Marshall and Walnut grades K-3 was voiced at the meeting by several parents. Dr. Dewey Griffey, Jr. and Mrs. Lois Ramsey both stated publicly that the people of Madison County had voted against the school consolidation when the voters turned down a local school bond issue for some \$2 million in 1979.

Supt. Edwards pointed out to the gathering that the statement on the bond ballot said the money would be used for upgrading and renovations on the county's present school buildings, and made no mention of school consolidation. However, a source close to the county's school system has said that school officials, in presenting the bond issue to voters prior to the referendum, stated that approximately one-half of the monies raised from the bond issue would be used to build a new school on a site near Madison High School.

The board adopted the resolution to apply for the 1973 state bond money in spite of the vocal opposition to the idea of the new school. The board also went on record in support of a proposed \$600 statewide school bond issue, of which, if passed, Madison County will receive over \$2 million for school construction.



ARCHITECT J. Bertram King (right), shows members of the Madison County Board of Education the final plans for the proposed consolidated Marshall-Walnut Elementary School at the board's

Monday meeting. Advertising for construction bids are scheduled to begin in mid April, with plans calling for the opening of the K-3 school in the fall of 1982.

## Changes Made In School Lunch, Milk Programs

Madison County Board of Education announced Monday that, due to the passage of Public Law 96-449, the family size and income eligibility criteria for free milk for children served under the National School Lunch, School Breakfast, and/or Special Milk Programs have changed for the remainder of the school year.

The following income scale will be used for determining eligibility. Listed first are family size, per year, per month, per week for free meals, free milk.

- 1, \$5,700, 475, 110.
- 2, \$7,220, 602, 139.
- 3, \$8,750, 729, 168.
- 4, \$10,270, 856, 198.
- 5, \$11,800, 983, 227.
- 6, \$13,320, 1,110, 256.
- 7, \$14,850, 1,238, 286.
- 8, \$16,370, 1,364, 315.

Each additional family member: +\$1,530, 128, 29.

Children from families whose income is at or below the levels shown are eligible

for free milk, they said. However, the four special hardship conditions (usually high medical expenses, shelter costs in excess of 30 percent of income, special education expenses due to the mental or physical condition of a child, and disaster or casualty losses) have been eliminated.

They said a standard deduction for each household has been incorporated into the income scale instead. Application forms are being sent to all homes in a letter to parents, school officials said, with additional copies available at the office in each school.

They noted the information provided on the application is confidential and will be used only for the purpose of determining eligibility.

A simple statement of income and family size is required, plus a signed certification by an adult household member that the information provided is correct.

Families who have applications on file and do not wish to reapply will have their children's eligibility determined and will be notified of any change.

Families of children whose benefits are reduced or terminated will receive written notice of the change at least 10 days before the effective date of the change, school officials said.

In certain cases, foster

children are also eligible for these benefits, the officials said.

If a family has foster children living with them and wishes to apply for such meals and milk for them, it should contact the school.

If a parent is dissatisfied with the decision of the determining official, he or she may wish to discuss it with the official on an informal basis.

For such an informal discussion contact, orally or in writing, Joe Boone, Rt. 6, Box 190, Candler, or call 667-1351. The Asheville-Pisgah Church School's free milk policy contains an outline of the hearing procedure.

If a family member becomes unemployed or its family size or income changes, the family should contact the school to file a new application. Such changes may make the family children eligible for free milk if the family income falls at or below the levels shown.

School officials said all children are treated the same regardless of ability to pay and that, in the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, color or national origin.

According to records for the month of October, 1,300 Madison students were receiving free lunches at schools with the remaining 1,000 students paying reduced rates.

## Hendon Opposes SS Benefit Tax

MURPHY—U.S. Rep. Bill Hendon announced strong opposition to a proposed tax on Social Security benefit payments while speaking Saturday to senior citizens at the Senior Citizens Center.

Hendon's comments were in response to a report from the President's Commission on Pension Policy Issues, presented Thursday to the House Select Committee on Aging. Hendon is a member of that committee.

The presidential commission called for radical changes in the nation's retirement policies, including taxation of Social Security, raising the eligibility age for full benefits and mandatory pensions for all workers in the private sector.

Hendon said Saturday he believes a majority of the Aging committee and the majority of congressmen would oppose such a proposal.

"It's wrong to even suggest that the government should tax Social Security benefits, particularly at a time when President Reagan, with the support of many other members of Congress, like myself, is trying to cut taxes and get the government out of the pockets of working and retired Americans," Hendon said.

"I am totally committed to a strong Social Security system, but I'm very much opposed to the proposed taxes on benefits."

## Federal Cuts Hit Local WIC

President Ronald Reagan's federal cutbacks are already being felt in Madison County, according to a spokesman at the County Health Department. Marilyn Held said the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC Program) will change both its income eligibility criteria and nutritional risk criteria beginning Monday, March 9 because of cutbacks in federal funds.

Approximately 230 WIC Program participants in the county must be dropped by the end of March, she said. Nearly 10,000 participants statewide will be dropped, Ms. Held noted.

According to Ms. Held, the county health department received a "fairly sudden notice" — only two weeks ago

— about the changes in the program. She said funding has been "stabilized" on the state level, and with the continuing inflation in food prices, the changes are being brought about in order to serve those people of highest risk, only those who are at nutritional risk because of a medical reason will be eligible.

No longer eligible for the program are post partum women who are bottlefeeding, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, infants and children who have an inadequate diet.

The income requirements will be lowered to 100 percent of the poverty level instead of the current 195 percent.

These changes will affect new applicants and current participants at their six month certification visit. Those

changes will affect new applicants and current participants at their six month certification visit. Those participants who have been certified as being eligible for WIC cannot be terminated from the program until they are found to be ineligible at their six month certification visit, Ms. Held said.

### On the Inside . . .

Peter Gott Writes About The Art Of Log Cabin Building.

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