

# The News - Journal

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## One High School For County

# Board Of Education Wipes Out 'Dual School System' In Hoke

BY JIM TAYLOR

Hoke County Board of Education in a historic decision this week abolished the "dual school system" in grades six through 12 and provided for total integration by the fall of 1969.

The board moved calmly and swiftly to implement a federal edict which threatened action leading to withdrawal of federal funds. In the Hoke school system, that could amount to almost \$750,000 a year.

However, if that was the motivation behind Monday night's action, it was well concealed. The board acted as if the time had come for the action to be taken, and took it, without a single dissenting vote or argu-

ment.

The sweeping overhaul of the school system established a single high school for the entire county. It will encompass the present Hoke High School and W.T. Gibson School plants, which are separated only by Bethel Road. The high school will accommodate grades nine through twelve.

The Upchurch plant will be used for all students in grades six, seven and eight, with the Upchurch grades one through five being absorbed by other elementary schools in the system.

That portion of the plan will be put into effect immediately. Phase three--the total integration of grades one through five--will be accomplished by the beginning of the 1969-70 school

term.

Donald D. Abernethy, superintendent of schools, praised the board for its decisiveness and sound judgment.

"I don't believe a better or more equitable solution to the dilemma" could have been found Abernethy said.

He referred to the recent federal edict, received only a week ago by the school board, informing it that administrative action already had been initiated against the Hoke County system. Ultimately, that action would have resulted in a hearing and almost certain loss of federal assistance until the order was implemented.

Abernethy said the new Hoke High School will have a student body of some 1200 students. Several mobile or temporary

classrooms will be required to accommodate the amalgamation, Abernethy said.

The Upchurch student body will be about 1300 in size. Facilities at the previously all-Negro school will be adequate for the time being, Abernethy surmised, since the present Upchurch grades one through five will be moved to other schools.

Five other schools in the system will be used by grades one through five. They are Raeford Elementary, J.W. McLaughlin Elementary, Curlock, West Hoke, and Hawk Eye. Burlington Elementary School will be closed.

Facilities of the new Hoke High School and Upchurch School will be totally integrated. In effect, the classroom

teachers of the various shifting grades will be transferred, along with the students, to their new campuses.

Also eliminated will be the dual bus system. At present, white and Negro students are transported separately, with both buses sometimes covering the same routes.

Following is a resume of the board's action, as presented to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare:

"The Hoke County Board of Education in a regular meeting on June 3, 1968 voted to implement a program to eliminate the dual school system with definite actions to be taken in two stages, the first to be at the beginning of the 1968-69 school term, the second and final to be implemented at the beginning of

the 1969-70 school term. The course of action follows:

1968 -- (1) Consolidate the present three high schools into one. The consolidated high school will be located on the campuses of the present Hoke High School and the new W.T. Gibson School (adjoining). All Hoke County children in grades 9-12 will attend this school. (2) Form a consolidated school in the Upchurch plant to house all of Hoke County's school children in grades 6 - 8. (3) Close the Burlington Elementary School (presently grades 1-5, all Negro). Most of these students will be assigned to the South Hoke School (formerly the Hawk Eye School, predominantly Indian).

"The above actions will totally eliminate the dual system

(Actually, we have had a 'triple' system, due to the presence of an Indian school).

1969--Details of our course of action are to be worked out, but we will totally integrate grades 1-5, probably by pairing of schools. We assure that the plan will be fair to all parties and will be in keeping with the policies of HEW. The plan was unanimously adopted by D.R. Huff Jr., chairman; Dr. R.M. Jordan, vice chairman; R.L. (Bobby) Gibson Jr., W.L. Howell Jr., and A.W. Wood Jr. It was strongly endorsed by Abernethy.

Actually, the first indication that the action would be necessary came in January when the civil rights division of See SCHOOLS, Page 9

## Hoke Schools Graduate 200

More than 200 high school seniors were awarded diplomas in commencement exercises at Hoke County's three high schools this week.

At Hoke High School, largest of the three, 123 seniors were graduated before a capacity crowd in sweltering Hoke High gym. Raz Autry, principal, presented diplomas.

Eddie Green, president of his class at UNC School of Law, was principal speaker. He is a former student of Autry's.

At Upchurch High School, 80 seniors were graduated Monday night after hearing Dr. Frank Weaver of Raleigh, education consultant for the Department of Community Colleges, make the graduation address. Diplomas were awarded by J. D. McAllister, principal.

Hawk Eye High School, a class of 19 seniors received diplomas Tuesday night from Earl Oxendine, principal. Graduation speaker was Dr.

English Jones, president of Pembroke State College.

Baccalaureate exercises were held at each of the three schools Sunday.

Tuesday night's exercises at Hoke High School were perhaps the most impressive ever held at the school. The gym was crowded with parents, students and friends of the graduating seniors, and the high school faculty, in academic robes, shared the platform with Autry and other participants.

Dozens of awards were handed out Tuesday morning when Awards Day was held at Hoke High School. Announcement of the scholarship awards also was made at Commencement.

Many citations were presented in the way of scholarships by a member of the sponsoring organization. Others were presented by a teacher or the principal. They are as follows:

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GIBSON SCHOLARS--Receiving the first W.T. Gibson Scholarship are John McNeill and Helen Parks. Robert Gatlin, officer of Hoke NCEA, sponsor of the scholarship, makes the presentation.

## Commissioners OK Hiring Helper

Hoke County Board of Commissioners appropriated funds, granted requests of some agencies, and made a number of appointments Monday at a half-day June session.

A resolution was passed approving the hiring of a sub-professional person for the

agricultural extension office here. According to W.S. Young, county agricultural director, and Miss Josephine Hall, county home agent, the helper would be paid entirely from funds of the Department of Labor the first year. If his or her services are retained the second year, the federal government will pay one-half the salary, while the other half must be paid locally.

A \$200 fund was approved for the Hoke County Soil and Water Conservation Commission. This was a \$50 hike over last year's contribution.

A resolution was passed approving the purchase of a duplicating machine for the welfare department and an air conditioner for the courthouse office of the parole officer.

Another appeal for additional funds came from the Sandhills Mental Health Agency which wanted \$500 more than the established \$4,500 appropriated by Hoke heretofore.

A welcomed letter read by County Manager T.B. Lester advised that Hoke had been re-surveyed and that this year the county would be required to pay only 30 per cent of the cost of operating local forest fire control, rather than the previous 33 per cent.

At the request of Jim Fout, Phil Diehl was re-appointed to a five-year term on the Hoke

Planning Board. Fout was presented to bring the board up to date on a number of federally sponsored projects about to be or already established in Hoke County.

Three men re-appointed to the planning board were Gilbert Ray, Jake Austin and Alfred Leach.

Charlie Morrison, Harold

Gillis and Mrs. Sam Homewood were named to represent Hoke County on the board of directors of Sandhills Community Action Program.

Mrs. S.L. Williams has been appointed to the Hoke County Welfare Board bringing the total number on the board to four. A fifth member will be appointed by the state welfare department.

## Town Board Sets Budget At \$377,421

Raeford town board this week approved a budget of \$377,421 for the 1968-69 year, a slight increase over the current budget.

The anticipated expenditures involve \$176,471 in general fund expenditure estimates and \$200,950 in water-sewer expenses.

No increase in the tax rate is forthcoming, commissioners said. Estimates include an increase of approximately \$59,000 in water-sewer revenues over current receipts.

"This increase will result from an increase in the industrial and/or other large water user rates, beginning in July, 1968," the board said. "This rate increase was authorized in a bond referendum when voters approved plans to enlarge the sewage treatment plant and to install a new outfall line."

The budget provides for a blanket raise for town employees of about 5 per cent of their

present salaries and wages.

Following is a breakdown of budget estimates:

Revenue -- General fund, \$176,471; water and sewer, \$200,950; total, \$377,421. Expenditures -- General government, \$44,771; general purpose (town hall maintenance, etc.), \$2,550; police department, \$27,601; fire department, \$14,375; street department, \$58,235; sanitation department, \$23,500; other (cemetery), \$5,439; total general fund, \$176,471.

Water - Sewer -- General operations (debt service, etc.), \$128,597; water supply, pumping and filtering, \$14,150; line maintenance and repair, \$31,405; sewer plant operation, \$26,798; total water - sewer, \$200,950.

The 1968 - 69 budget estimates (general fund) show a revenue increase of approximately \$9,000 above the 1967-68 budget," the report declared. "This revenue is a result of added property valuation and, of course, property taxes. The expenditure of this increased revenue will be for salary increases amounting to approximately a 5 per cent average; and also an item of \$2,000 to update the zoning and planning program."

Meanwhile, commissioners Monday night appointed Franklin Teal, commissioner, to serve as town treasurer.

The appointment was necessary, board members said, to give someone authority to sign payroll and other checks, since the town no longer has a town manager.

Ed Williams, who had served in that post some five years, left here June 1 to become town manager at Erwin.

### Silver City

#### Singing Set

The Silver City Community Club will celebrate its 14th anniversary by sponsoring a musical program in the manner of a community sing Sunday, June 9.

All choirs in the area are invited to participate. The program will be held at Silver Grove Baptist Church beginning at 7 p. m.

Proceeds will go toward a clean-up and beautification program at Silver City Community Cemetery.



CLINIC--Raeford Lions Club sponsored a glaucoma clinic here Tuesday, attracting almost 500 local residents to the examinations, held at Raeford Methodist Church. Here, a visitor to the clinic takes a basic eye test for visual acuity. The examinations also included one for detection of diabetes. There was no charge for the services, sponsored by Lions as part of their program to help the blind and visually handicapped.

### Summer School

Summer school classes scheduled to begin June 10 have been postponed until June 17, according to Ernest Surton, assistant superintendent of schools.

The course, held for remedial and makeup purposes, will continue six weeks from their beginning date.

## President, No Less, Arranges Anniversary Date For Couple

BY LUCY GRAY PEEBLES

A phone call from the White House can be an exciting thing, especially when it tells you that you can spend a whole day with your soldier husband.

To have a whole day with her spouse was a privilege Mrs. George Phillips (the former Nita Parker) wasn't expecting to happen for some time, but a little ingenuity turned the trick.

Since Phillips was inducted a few weeks ago, she has only been allowed to talk to him 10 or 15 minutes on Sunday when she would visit him. The last visit she made was not able to talk to him at all.

Plans of long standing for celebrating their first wedding anniversary in a big way were squelched on the day he was inducted. Chatting with him on one of the visits, she wistfully expressed a yearning for a miracle to happen which would give them that special day together. "I doubt if anybody short of the president, himself, could do that," her husband had remarked.

Sunday before last George's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Felix Phillips of Green Street, and Nita came home disappointed. They had made the trip to Fort Bragg and had not been able to visit with the trainee. Nita made up her mind to try something.

If the president was the only one who could get her access to her husband, then she would

write to the president. This she did and on the following Tuesday when the phone rang and the Washington, D.C. voice answered, she nearly fainted. Her young husband had been working with hand grenades and she just knew something had happened. But that wasn't it at all.

The voice at the other end was the president's secretary and before she knew what was really happening, he told her that she would be allowed to spend a day with her husband. Orders had been forwarded to George's commanding officer, the voice said, and everything would be all set when she arrived at the base early Sunday morning.

Private Phillips was able to call his wife Friday night to tell her that he could meet her after 10 o'clock Sunday morning. They could spend the day together, but it must be spent on the post.

The young wife took a picnic lunch and they sat in the shade on the grass and enjoyed it. The day was over all too quickly. It was a pleasant one, weatherwise, and a happy one for the young couple. Although it came two days before the June 7 anniversary date, it will always be remembered as an anniversary celebration.

Mrs. Phillips is a daughter of Mrs. Leo Parker of Raeford and a granddaughter of Mrs. Henry Terrell of West Fifth Street, where she will live while her husband is in service.