

## TO THE PUBLIC

We now have an almost intolerable situation here in the Pulaski County Special School District (PCSSD). Two weeks ago, after quite lengthy interviews, study, discussions, and voting, the District firmly settled on two "finalists" for the position of Superintendent. They were both excellent choices. I myself voted for Dr. Washington as 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Again, the Board publicly agreed that these were the two best candidates.

Now, though, there is only one of those two choices remaining; so it seems obvious to most objective people in my own zone that the choice of Rob McGill is now natural. The Board agreed on a method and process, and followed it diligently. However, now some Board members say that agreed upon process needs to be scrapped because they have a personal agenda against Mr. McGill. It's not supposed to work that way.

For example, after demands by the NAACP, we paid for an impartial investigation regarding the alleged racial statements by Mr. McGill. That investigation cleared Mr. McGill of all charges. In fact, it is clear that Mr. McGill not only did nothing wrong but in fact scolded an employee who did make mild statements about race.\* Thus, perhaps Mr. McGill ought to be applauded for correcting that employee. Nevertheless, it seems to me that the NAACP still "wants his head on a platter". Why? You do the math. The facts are that after the public interviews of the final four candidates, the NAACP gave the two African Americans very high scores and harshly criticized the two white candidates. Coincidence?

\*Let's also talk about that alleged racial statement that in fact another employee has admitted making, completely clearing Mr. McGill. After the District lost our charter school application, that employee said something like: "Maybe we should have had a black presenting our case?" Again, Mr. McGill himself immediately took issue with that suggestion of bias or prejudice; but even that employee wasn't intending to make a racist comment. Instead, it was a (not too wise) strategic suggestion.

This racist charge has been "much ado about nothing". In my opinion, it has been **a disgraceful attempt to undermine the reputation of a good, honest, and hard working man just to insure the hiring of a favored candidate**. He has certainly not deserved this unfair treatment.

I understand that now some say that the impartial investigator cannot be trusted because he is white; and they want a new black investigator. So the impartial attorney is not to be trusted because he is white? That in itself sounds like a quite racist charge. We need to focus on education.

Mr. McGill has done some very good things as Acting Superintendent. He has helped to uncover financial corruption in our District that has existed for a long time; and state audit officials give him high marks for

both cooperation and instigating new processes that will prevent future abuse. That alone ought to get high marks from the whole Board; but maybe some do not believe that this attack on corruption is especially worthy of praise? Well, the past Board and past superintendents DID seem to ignore these things for years and years and years. Why?

In the past, some Board members had (in my opinion) excessive expense accounts. One Board member charged over \$900 in one month for a cell phone bill; yet the District administration in those days allowed it.

Other accomplishments include the following: Under Mr. McGill the books and accounting codes have been radically changed to make our finances more clear and understandable. He has begun to insist upon better/tighter evaluations of both teachers and administrators; and dismissed some who were not performing. Of course, disciplining an employee who is a friend of a Board member earns more animosity.

Part of this partisan politics stems from the recent action to decertify the teacher's union. For years, Ms. Williams told us that IF the Board dared such a thing, there would be a massive work stoppage. Well, that just didn't happen, did it? Why not? Part of the reason was that Mr. McGill relied upon his no nonsense military training to take firm decisive action to keep teachers on the job. Mr. McGill did not initiate the union's decertification; but when the Board voted to do it, he made sure that our decision would be implemented effectively. That's a strong leader!

Thus, he has earned the **very strong opposition of the union**. Since we have at least one Board member whom I can never recall voting against the union's position even one time in four years, Mr. McGill has lost that vote for sure. It is a corrupt system that badly needs fixing.

In my opinion, some Board members are against Mr. McGill because they fully understand that **he will not play favorites and cannot be wrongly controlled**. It takes four Board members to issue an order, not one. In my opinion, I do not think that Dr. Washington could be improperly "controlled", either; but she did not yet have the decided disadvantage of having already made several Board members angry. In contrast, they already knew that Mr. McGill could not be improperly influenced.

Honesty and integrity is not always rewarded. That is our problem.

Charlie Wood  
Vice President  
Board of Education  
Pulaski County Special School District