

ADE DAILY NEWS CLIPS

May 25, 2013

Mom Spearheads Protest for More Security at Middle School in NLR (KARK, Channel 4)

Video available at http://arkansasmatters.com/fulltext?nxd_id=666482

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR -- The mom of a middle school student is protesting for more security in her daughter's school.

A group of parents and children carried signs outside Ridge Road Middle School in North Little Rock on Friday.

Aimee Bland-Phillips says her daughter was sexually assaulted by a male student who is still at school, and she doesn't feel like it would be safe for her daughter to attend.

"I thought she was safe," Phillips says. "I felt like it was the school's business to make it safe and it hurts me to think I sent her somewhere this could happen."

According to a spokesperson, the North Little Rock School District has determined the allegations are false based on surveillance footage.

The girl's mom has filed a report with police and claims she hasn't been allowed to see the video.

Detectives are currently investigating.

District cuts compliance chief (Arkansas Democrat-Gazette)

Brenda Bowles, the Pulaski County Special School District's long-time assistant superintendent for equity and pupil services, was removed this week from that job by Superintendent Jerry Guess, who will champion the district's desegregation efforts in federal court.

In a message to principals, Guess said Janice Warren, the district's director of elementary education, will serve as the interim director of the office of equity and pupil services, taking on the day-to-day operations of the office. Warren also will continue to serve in her role as elementary education director.

Guess said that relieving Bowles her of the job, which includes overseeing the district's efforts to comply with its desegregation Plan 2000, was a difficult decision for him to make. But he said that over the past 12 years the district has failed to achieve a court order declaring the district fully unitary, or desegregated.

The 18,000-student district is a party in a 30-year-old federal school desegregation lawsuit. The North Little Rock and Little Rock districts, also parties in the lawsuit, have achieved unitary status.

“With new unitary hearings scheduled to begin this coming August, it became apparent that the challenges of proving unitary status in the four areas set for hearings would be less difficult if a change in personnel was made,” Guess said in a prepared statement released Friday.

U.S. District Judge D. Price Marshall Jr. has set hearing dates to consider the district’s compliance in the areas of special education, addressing single-race classrooms, personnel, and gifted education. The district is out of compliance in a total of nine areas of its operations.

“I have determined that the most efficient way to approach the hearings and the next two years or so of efforts to attain unitary status, once and for all, is for me to assume the role as the chief leader in this important quest,” Guess said.

Bowles has been employed in different roles in the district since 1985. Her annual salary as an assistant superintendent was \$119,537.

Deborah Roush, a spokesman for the district, said Friday that she did not know whether Bowles would assume another job within the school district.

Bowles said Friday night that she didn’t have any comment about the job action but that she was looking at her options.

“You know, people have to do what they feel is best for them,” Bowles said.

Southside Principal Haver Nets National Honor (Southwest Times Record)

The longtime principal at Southside High School in Fort Smith ended the school year with a national honor bestowed upon only one other Arkansan.

The National Association of Educational Office Professionals recently named Wayne Haver as Administrator of the Year.

He is only the second Arkansas educator to receive the award. Superintendent Benny Gooden was the first, in 1999-2000.

“They couldn’t pick anybody who is a more consummate school administrator than Wayne Haver,” Gooden said. “The man is Mr. Southside High School. He takes everything seriously, to do it right and get it done the way it should be.”

Haver said he was surprised to learn of the honor.

"I just said, 'Wow,'" he said. "It's a tremendous honor. I think it's a very positive thing for the school district and certainly for Southside and Arkansas."

Southside High School is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Haver, 70, has been at the high school for 43 of those years — 31 as principal.

"He started out in 1970 as a teacher," said Connie Bergeson, secretary to the assistant superintendent. "In 1974, he was assistant principal, then in 1982 he started at Southside as the principal."

The high school houses grades 10-12; student enrollment this year was 1,573. Thousands of students have graduated under Haver's watch.

"I was checking the other day," Haver said. "We've had 18,500 graduates since the school opened."

The awards ceremony will be held July 25 in Alexandria, Va.

"He's won a number of different awards, but I'm excited about this one," Bergeson said.

Haver was named Administrator of the Year by both the local and state chapters of the same association in 2011-2012. The Fort Smith Association of Educational Office Professionals nominated him for the national award.

Arkansas Student Receives "First" Package (KNWA, Fayetteville)

Video available at http://nwahomepage.com/fulltextfox?nxd_id=432532

LITTLE ROCK -- One young Arkansas student is learning what a difference persuasive writing can make.

When given an assignment to write someone famous a letter, eStem seventh grader Jade Crosby got quite a response.

Crosby loves ice cream, so she decided to let First Lady Michelle Obama know why.

"I wrote why I thought it was healthy if you could eat it in moderation," Crosby explains.

A sweet thought that received a big response.

"I saw 'The White House' in big bold letters right here and I was so excited," Crosby explains, referring to a large envelope bearing her name.

"Dear Jade," she reads. "Thank you for writing me in The White House. Your letter was so thoughtful and the issues you raised very important. "

Along with the letter, the envelope was filled with photos of Mrs. Obama and even Bo, the First Dog.

The response even surprised Jade's teacher.

"I kind of figured they might send back a little bit, maybe a brochure or something, but they sent a letter and photos and that absolutely made Jade's day," English teacher Denies Matlock recalls.

The package also helped Jade learn a lesson beyond writing.

"You can achieve any goal. I achieved mine," she says.