

Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees Flunks Test!!! Report by Robert A. Williams

All you many tens of thousands of readers know that I have been critical of the CCC Board of Trustees and how they have operated and their slow response during this past year of intense scandal. You also know that I have often offered much constructive criticism as well as helpful suggestions on how the BoTs could win back the trust of the people. What you and the Board of Trustees did not know was that I was testing the Board of Trustees and they have failed. And failed miserably.

My tests were simple. My criteria was even more simple. So simple that any school aged child could pass with flying colors. Which leads me to believe that they failed on purpose. Trying to cover up the messes they have created for themselves, taxpayers and citizens of Cleveland County.

Here is my test criteria: Some test items overlap.

Citizenship: F (Failed)

About a year ago I noticed the BoTs do not have an American Flag in their meeting rooms and do not recite the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag. They are the only governmental agency in Cleveland County that does not recite the Pledge. So, I spoke up during Citizens Participation at one meeting many months ago and suggested that the BoTs add a Pledge of Allegiance to their Meeting agenda. The BoTs paid me no attention. Over the past months I have regularly reminded the BoTs in my articles (every one of which refers to CCC is forwarded to every BoT member) at least three times over this period of time. Still they pay no attention to me or the Oath

of Office that they all swore to. So what happened at the last Board meeting held March 13, 2018? Still no Pledge of Allegiance. Now it is report card time for the CCC Board of Trustees. For Citizenship I give them a big ole F. F as in Failure. How can I support the actions of the BoT when they won't Pledge Allegiance to the laws of the Bible as well as the laws of North Carolina and the USA.

Respect: F (Failed)

Using the BoT Meeting agenda Citizens Participation section for a prime example, it is noted that North Carolina Law requires every governmental agency to include a minimum of 15 minutes per meeting and a minimum allowed 3 minutes per person for Citizens Participation. When myself and others started attending CCC BoT Meetings the BoTs added the Citizens Participation section to their agenda, not because the BoTs had respect for the citizens of Cleveland County but because it was the law. Also they showed their true colors by adopting the state law's MINIMUM standards as MAXIMUM restriction on the Citizens that want to participate. And when citizens did participate and Dr. Aiken came on board as Interim President and Secretary to the BoTs, the minutes of the meetings scrubbed out of the minutes what the citizens actually said to the BoTs. Several of my articles were severely critical of this illegal action to hide the fair and accurate accounting of what transpired in the BoT meetings forced the BoTs to add some minimum description of what citizens actually stated to the BoT. But not one investigation, action or fair reply was ever given to the person who was speaking to the BoT. Actually information was withheld from the public. Which has resulted in several unnecessary lawsuits and legal actions lodged against the BoT and CCC. As for me and my own personal experience, I have vowed never again to waste my time speaking to a Board that will not listen and take action to the obvious problems and issues that have been brought before them. I will of course make my statements right here for the BoTs and the whole wide world to read and comprehend what is actually goes

on at CCC BoT meetings. This item is graded as an F (failed).

Trustworthiness: F (Failed)

Consideration of the Trustworthiness of the CCC BoT has to include items that also relate to other character traits. Ask yourself, how can you trust a board that refuses to Pledge Allegiance to the American Flag and the Republic over which it flies? You can't is the simple answer. They can't say it was an oversight because they were advised so many times that citizens were watching them. You have to conclude that the BoT is just too elitist to listen to us common citizens who pay the bills and expect action from the CCC BoTs when issues are raised. They just have to show us one more time that they are better than us, therefore they can just not pay us any attention. Another example is the multiple lawsuits against the CCC BoTs. But, not even seeing their names on lawsuits seems to matter to this crowd. They were fairly warned multiple times that severe violations of Federal Law had occurred and were not trustworthy enough with their legal duty to properly operate CCC and they didn't do anything about it. Now the BoTs are withholding evidence (The Caylor Report) in the legal actions causing an obstruction of justice. Such overt acts define the Board of Trustees as not being trustworthy. And then there are all the failures to take the proper action at the earliest possible moments regarding the Presidential scandals that came to light in the past year or so that they didn't do anything about in a timely manner, instead letting the problems grow and bringing ridicule and scorn to Cleveland Community college. Their Grade on this character trait is another F (Failed). Probably the most egregious example is their withholding evidence (obstruction of Justice) i.e. The Caylor Report, in a lawsuit in which the BoTs are accused of Civil Rights violations.

Transparency: F (Failed)

Transparency is the term used to describe governmental actions and public business such that the business is properly

conducted and carried out in open meetings and well documented in public records and documents sufficient that any citizen wishing to access those public records can read the records and ascertain for themselves how the business and actions transpired and that they business was carried out properly and in accordance with NC law and with Board policy. The CCC BoT has made statements many times about how they are trying to be transparent, yet their actions are anything but transparent. Examples are the previously mentioned minutes of meetings that left out fair and accurate descriptions of what was said during the Public Participation. Other examples are the many closed sessions that have been called without stating the purpose of the closed session. One of the most egregious acts of lack of transparency was the 40 minute closed session held at their March 13, 2018 meeting regarding a legal matter where they failed to include the case number and parties as required by North Carolina Law NCGS 143-318.11(c). Now (today), CCC has teamed up with the Shelby Star to step up their phony propaganda in a Project titled "Sunshine Week-Your Right to Know." In today's episode titled "College Employees Get Pay Raises" they tout an old story I wrote about some time ago about dividing up a State fund for employee bonus's. Scroll on back for those articles. One of the statements in the Star's propaganda piece stated "The study found that nearly all of the instructors and support staff made less than their peers at other colleges." What the Star and CCC BoTs left out was the reason that instructors and support staff made less was because the top 10 highly paid administrators at CCC made a lot more. Commissioner Eddie Holbrook and his wife both were in that top ten knocking down about \$200,000 plus perks. So much for Transparency at CCC. Again, another F (Failed) for the CCC BoT.

Honesty: F (Failed)

The last few sentences of the Transparency Trait noted above shows a high level of dishonesty by the CCC BoT without further ado. But, alas, there is much more. The continuous

violations of open meetings laws, many deceptions when the truth is left out of BoT provided information and statements at meetings, stating CCC has a Continuous Improvement Program when they don't, purposeful "dumbing-down" Dual Education classes so more will pass (along with generating more revenue-a fraud), malicious and retaliatory firing of employees, refusing to provide public records that have been requested by citizens, and now a propaganda program including the Shelby Star. Another F (Failed) for the CCC BoT.

Integrity: F (Failed)

When you talk about character traits, Honesty and Integrity are usually talked about together. (In fact the CCS Character Trait of the Month of March is Honesty and Integrity.) If you are honest, you usually have integrity. Well, if you flunk honesty, you flunk integrity too. 'Nuff said here. Another F (Failed) for the CCC BoT.

Truthfulness: F (Failed)

'Nuff said above that affects Truthfulness too. What you get from the CCC, if not flat out lies are deceptions and half truths. And the BoTs are in charge. Either way you look at it, a half of F score is still an F. Therefore, Another F (Failed) for the CCC BoT.

As I said previously, my reports, evaluations and articles regarding CCC have had an element of testing the BoTs in their purpose. My articles accurately describe where the BoTs are telling lies or half truths which are the same as a lie. My articles accurately describe where the BoTs are in violation of State laws. I directly send every member of the CCC BoT an advanced copy of every article about CCC and articles that mention CCC. Every time I ask the BoT for comments or questions. Only rarely do I get a response from a BoT. Thus I assume the BoTs are not disputing the truth of my articles and waive every right to later claim anything is false in my articles about them and what they do.

What I don't completely understand or comprehend is why the CCC BoTs don't just realize they are being advised of unethical or illegal actions and make corrections to the way they do business so as to operate within the law and standard ethical practices. Flying a US Flag and Pledging Allegiance at their meetings, for example, is totally obvious as the right thing to do. Yet they refuse. And continue to refuse. As for me, refusing to do this obviously right thing is total stupidity bordering on traitorous behavior. Most citizens of Cleveland County should and do share that conclusion.

As I know several of the BoT members away from their CCC BoT roles and have found them to otherwise be good and decent people. Responsible people. What causes them to forget about all of that once they arrive at CCC BoT meetings? If it is the usual CCC bull-ony that the only purpose of the BoTs is to "support" CCC instead of providing CCC oversight, well, seeing their names on Federal Lawsuits should have cured them of that phony belief. Yet, they continue to operate on the dark side.

I can only assume they continue to operate on the dark side to protect themselves from their part of any collusion on their watch with the other BoTs operating on the dark side. Which is certainly not a noble approach to anything.

So, the final conclusion is the CCC BoT members have each and every one flunked the test they have been given by the people. And flunked by wide margins.

Now they have finally did something right by appointing Dr. Jason Hurst as the Third President of Cleveland Community College. I don't know why it took them so long to do this one right thing as I realized Dr. Hurst was the best choice the very instant I saw the list of finalists and their credentials. Also, I have to wonder why they did not make this announcement Tuesday at their Board Meeting as the next Board meeting is in May.

Also, I don't want to hear from the BoTs any statements that say the problems and scandals at CCC are now over and "Happy days are here again." That is a lie. There are still related scandalous problems and issues that are still not rectified. Or resolved. There are still Federal Lawsuits and the CCC employees that caused them to be dealt with. All that has transpired at CCC for the past year are only baby steps in resolving those issues.

But hey BoTs, thank me in advance. I am still in the business of testing you. You totally flunked all the previous tests as well as started that new propaganda campaign with the Shelby Star. I will be watching you close and reporting everything you do to the citizens of Cleveland County, And, BTW, my readership is larger than the Shelby Star 's.