

“Crisis” in Cleveland County Education!! Representative Tim Moore to the Rescue!!??

Report and analyses by Robert A. Williams

First, some of the facts:

1. 46% of students graduating from Cleveland County Schools cannot read, write, comprehend and do math at grade level.
2. CCS graduates are 80% looking for jobs and 20% starting college. CCS curriculum targets 80% plus resources toward college preparatory classes and less than 20% on vocational courses.
3. The achievement gap between black and white students at CCS has not closed despite \$Millions spent and all kinds of programs that have not and will not ever meet the desired goals.
4. CCS pats themselves on the back for barely passing state standards, but never makes the attempt to correct the problems that hold them back.
5. CCS stands accused of “dumbing down” classes so more will pass.
6. CCS has a long history of misuse fraudulent use of taxpayer funds and refuses to discipline offenders properly.
7. The CCS School Board refuses to acknowledge problems and issues and continuously stay in the cover-up mode.
8. Local businesses report that CCS does not produce graduates that are ready for the workplace.
9. Census reports show that the overall population of Cleveland County is declining due to the best craftsmen, college graduates and their families leaving the County for better paying jobs elsewhere.

10. The Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees have engulfed themselves in scandal due to their failure to provide the proper leadership, oversight and accountability over the College Administration.

11. The CCC BoT appointments have been made by Commissioners, the School Board and the Governor for political and self serving purposes instead of leadership, oversight and accountability purposes.

12. The CCC BoT plans on spending \$millions on an Advanced Manufacturing Training Center without knowing what type of so called advanced manufacturing they will be training for.

13. The North Carolina General Assembly under the leadership of Speaker of the House Tim Moore has seen to the passing of House Bill 12 which gives the Cleveland County Commissioners eight appointments to the CCC Board of Trustees and the General Assembly will make four appointments.

Now the Shelby Star reports that the CCS School Board and County Commissioners were blindsided by the passing of HB12. They say they did not ask for it and never saw it coming. This shows one of two things. The School Board and Commissioners are either incompetent or just plain out lying. Some, like me calculate they are both incompetent AND Lying.

In particular The Star reports:

School Board Chairman Shearra Miller said:

"We were very disappointed with the legislation that removed the opportunity for our Board of Education to appoint members to the Cleveland Community College board of trustees," Miller said. "This had been a practice for many, many years and in fact, is the law in almost all other counties in the state. We did not have any prior knowledge that the General Assembly was considering this change."

Cleveland County Schools and the college have worked together for many years, she said.

"For the first 12 years, (Cleveland County Schools) teaches them and then many of our students head to the community college," Miller said. "Cleveland County Schools and Cleveland Community College have many partnerships that benefit our students. We have always appointed a trustee that we felt had the best interest of our students and the college's students in mind. While we are disappointed the change has occurred, we are hopeful that our longstanding positive relationship with Cleveland Community College will continue to grow."

Apparently CCS Board Chairman Shearra Miller has been asleep at the wheel for all the many years she was on the Kings Mountain and then the merged Cleveland County School Board to not recognize the many facts noted at the beginning of this article. And that is just 13 of many. It is also telling that the Star reporter only talked to Shearra Miller. What about the rest of the School Board" I know for a fact that School Board Member Danny Blanton has brought up many of the fact items noted above for almost seven years. But Miller and the others on the School Board refused to listen. Now, with Miller as Chairman, she even refuses to allow Blanton to speak at school board meetings.

But, most incredible were the comments the Star attributed to Commissioner Chairman Eddie Holbrook and Vice-Chair Susan Allen.

"The commissioners did not know the school board appointments were coming to us. We did not request the appointments. However, now that we have them, it will not be a problem since we already make appointments for other boards throughout the county," she said.

Commissioner Eddie Holbrook wanted it to be known that no one on the county commission board advocated for the change.

"We weren't attempting to pull authority or anything, mostly because we didn't know anything about it," he said. "We are

disappointed they (the school board) won't have input into the board of trustees anymore."

About the only thing you can conclude from the Allen and Holbrook statements is that Commissioner Eddie Holbrook is a much, much better liar than Commissioner Allen. A more flagrant liar too. Probably because Holbrook is up for re-election this year and barely squeaked through the Democrat Primary with his "Plantation Politics" campaign strategy for the "Black vote" and his wife calling on white Democrats and Unaffiliated to single shot vote for Eddie Holbrook.

Another thing you can bet on is Commissioner Eddie Holbrook, with his CCC \$162,500 pay as a Senior Dean of Development and Governmental Relations, would never want a majority of CCC BoTs to "retire" him from that position at CCC which has no visible attributes in leadership, oversight and accountability. Or anything else positive that I can find.

Another set of facts about Eddie Holbrook and his do-nothing job at CCC is how he got the job to start with. Many speculate it is because Eddie married into "Old" Shelby money and long time CCC BoT Chairman Hoyt Bailey liked him. I think that is true on both accounts. But now Holbrook is 82 with 12 years on the County Commissioner Board. Those twelve years have been good for Eddie Holbrook's bank account but mostly bad for Cleveland County residents and students. High taxes, higher than average unemployment rates, a total distrust in county government, etc. But mostly a disaster for Cleveland County Education. Go back and read the start of this article again, just in case you have forgotten.

OK Williams!!! you must be saying by now. We know Holbrook is bad and Speaker Tim Moore just handed Holbrook more job security at CCC, more control and more power. How can you say Tim Moore has rescued us from anything?

The answer is simple and long term. For the few months and

days between now and the 2018 Election Day, Yes, Holbrook has power and influence. But, that is what Elections are all about. Three Commissioners are up for election this year. A majority. Three Commissioners will again be up for election in 2020. Three Commissioners. a majority, are up for election two times in a row. Holbrook is vulnerable this year as the Democrat Primary Election shows.

Tim Moore and HB 12 will allow the voters in Cleveland County to have two major opportunities to clean house on the Board of Commissioners. The new elected commissioners will have the opportunity to run off the bad CCC BoTs and appoint good ones. The "good" CCC BoTs will then have the opportunity to clean house at CCC once and for all.

But more than cleaning house is necessary. The Commissioners raise taxes to pay for education in Cleveland County. Allowing the Commissioners to appoint the majority of CCC BoT puts them in a much better position to require leadership, oversight and accountability at CCS as well as CCC and other county agencies.

But, Hey, Rome was not built in a day. HB 12 basically puts the power back into the hands of the people. Right where it belongs. Tim Moore has provided Cleveland County voters the opportunity to take command of education in Cleveland County as well as "fix" other problems too. No matter what the real reasons, if they are different ones, for passing HB 12 the results are the same. Voters can make the changes on the Commissioner's offices that are necessary to fix our educational facilities if they will. If they won't, Well, we just get what we deserve. And Tim Moore has wasted his time.