

Responsibility for the Waste at Cleveland County Schools!! And Elsewhere in Cleveland County Agencies!!! Citizens can make sure this never happens again! Report and commentary by Robert A. Williams

Editor's Note: This is a follow-up on the 500 plus school chairs that were ruined when stored outside at the CCS Plant Operations during long term exposure to inclement weather.

Since my original article was released a few days ago, the number of chairs that were ruined has been better estimated at over 500. At an estimated salvage value of \$20 apiece, that amounts to \$10,000.

If you take the mindset of School Board members Roger Harris, Phillip Glover, Jo Boggs, Richard Hooker, Shearra Miller, Jeff Jones and others that "cost doesn't matter" as they responded to \$millions of waste during the planning and construction of the new North Shelby School Project, the \$millions wasted in the school credit card scandal and in the enormous cost overruns in every recent school construction program, etc., in relation to "responsibility," especially "fiscal responsibility" it is totally obvious that COST DOES NOT MATTER at Cleveland County Schools; therefore, it is also totally obvious, that nobody is, was or was ever responsible for fiscal responsibility. Except for School Board Member Danny Blanton and the taxpayers of Cleveland County. And the School

Board doesn't care for either Danny Blanton or the taxpayers as they have often clearly shown. And will again at the January 28, 2019 school board meeting.

So, before we explore the obvious need to change out School Board members Shearra Miller, Richard Hooker, Jo Boggs, Jeff Jones and Roger Harris at the 2020 School Board Elections, let's look at the concept of "responsibility" and "fiscal responsibility" so we can recruit and elect citizens who will be responsible in the wise use of financial resources in the educational process at Cleveland County Schools.

First, what is "Responsibility?"

When I googled "What is Responsibility?" this is what I got:

Responsibility

noun

1. the state or fact of having a duty to deal with something or of having control over someone. "a true leader takes responsibility for their team and helps them achieve goals"

synonyms: authority, control, power, leadership, management, influence; duty

"we train those staff who show an aptitude for managerial responsibility"

2. the state or fact of being accountable or to blame for something. "the group has claimed responsibility for a string of murders"

synonyms: blame, fault, guilt, culpability, blame worthiness, liability

"the organization denied responsibility for the bomb attack at the airport"

a. the opportunity or ability to act independently and make decisions without authorization.

"we would expect individuals lower down the organization to take on more responsibility"

US Navy Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, the father of the nuclear

Navy and champion for better education systems in the USA, had this to say about responsibility:

“Responsibility is a unique concept... You may share it with others, but your portion is not diminished. You may delegate it, but it is still with you... If responsibility is rightfully yours, no evasion, or ignorance or passing the blame can shift the burden to someone else. Unless you can point your finger at the man who is responsible when something goes wrong, then you have never had anyone really responsible”...Hyman G. Rickover

So, considering CCS's so-called leadership doesn't give a whit about responsibility or fiscal responsibility (minimizing waste) you have to consider it a waste of time trying to fix the blame on the \$10,000 wasted because 500+ chairs were not stored properly. Also, why were there 500+ useable chairs replaced in the first place? At \$75 a pop, another \$37,500 wasted. Chicken feed in comparison with the credit card fraud, much less the financial debacle with the New North Shelby School Project. But, just because we can't get a dime back from all this waste in the past, it doesn't mean that we have to keep on accepting such shoddy word from CCS and the School Board. It is time for the citizens of Cleveland County to make a change.

Now, let's consider the responsibility of citizens and voters:

Citizens, in this context, are a pool of qualified persons whose responsibility is: for some, to come forward as candidates for the School Board in 2020. The rest of us are responsible for becoming informed, selecting the most competent and responsible candidates and show up on election day and vote for them. 2020 is a Presidential Election year and the voter turnout is expected to be record breaking.

So, who do we recommend and will support?? I can think of several right off the bat.

1. Robert Queen: A professional Civil Engineer from NC State and well versed on responsibility principles and an exceptional insight in Cleveland County Schools lack of fiscal responsibility. Also, presently a Cleveland Community College Board of Trustee member; which would improve the help synchronize workforce development programs between CCS and CCC and the workplace in Cleveland County in regard to global competition.

2. Kevin Whisnant: A well trained professional and expert in quality control. Well versed in the scrupulous search for problems and fixing them in machines as well as personnel being properly trained and well-motivated. Also, with an exceptional insight of the problems and issues at CCS. I would recommend Kevin s the next Chairman of the School Board as he is well versed in setting up organizations along functional responsibility lines.

3. Rodney Fitch: A Sheriff Department Officer well versed in personnel training, the need for Christian values as expressed in the US Constitution and especially in security needs for county schools.

4. Dr. Jason Hurst: President of Cleveland Community College. An expert in workforce development and organizing a professional and responsible organization. Would also be instrumental in identifying and fixing discontinuities in workforce development programs for students graduating from CCS and attending CCC.

5. Former Senator Debbie A. Clary: Former NC Senator Debbie Clary was the main driving force in the formation of Pinnacle Classical Academy, the first Charter School in Cleveland County that has screamed upon the scene with breathtaking educational performance from the git-go. As well as building a new school that was on budget and on schedule. Such innovational thinking as fiscal responsibility and performance based educational programs are desperately needed as CCS is "failing" and the present school board refuses to do anything about it.

This represents a "Dream Team" slate of candidates who would be significantly diversified in educational and institutional organization attributes but aligned in the concept of responsibility, especially fiscal responsibility.

Of course, There are others such as Register of Deeds Betsy Harnage, who is also serving on the Pinnacle Classical Academy Board, but is barred from holding two elected offices. Dr. Dale Guffey, a former CCC employee who is well versed in identifying deficiencies in organizational responsibilities. Ginger Bullock, another CCC employee well versed in problems and issues regarding dual enrollment programs at CCS and CCC. Craig DeBrew. And the list goes on.

The key objective here is identifying those who are qualified and willing to run for the five 2020 School Board's open seats, get the public involved to assist recruiting and supporting (with campaign cash as well as campaign workers) candidates and then vote them into office.

Hopefully, after that. I will never again have to write an article about failing schools and wasteful spending at CCS. But it is now 2019 and the school board elections are in 2020. Lots of work to do between now and then. But, Hey!, this is the education of our children at stake here as it relates to their future. No effort is to be spared to turn CCS around and produce well educated citizens who can read, write and do arithmetic sufficient to thrive in a 21st Century work environment. Either here in Cleveland County or somewhere else.