

School Superintendent Deceives School Board at January 28, 2019 Meeting!!! Star Article Proves it!!! Report by Robert A. Williams

The lack of a competent workforce development program at Cleveland County Schools has been identified by local industry and communicated to County leaders. Especially the County Commissioners. Which was one of the many reasons Commissioner Chairman Eddie Holbrook was shamefully disgraced and defeated for re-election in the 2018 Elections. And probably one of the main reasons newly elected and top vote "getter" Commissioner Doug Bridges attended the January 28th Commissioner's meeting and took lots of notes.

If you go back and re-read my previous article you realize that the January 28, 2019 school board meeting video is lost for all time. Probably on purpose. But people were there, besides the school board and Commissioner Doug Bridges and the story of what transpired at that meeting is getting out.

Some background.

School Board Member Danny Blanton has been appointed by the Cleveland County Commissioners to serve on the "Region C Workforce Development Team" based at Isothermal Community College to study ways to enhance, guess what? Workforce Development!! The Commissioners made the logical choice to appoint Danny Blanton to this assignment as Blanton is the only School Board member with experience in actually and personally working with various vocational trades. As well as showing any interest in discussing and resolving the present

issues and problems at CCS with their failing vocational education program. The other board members and administrative staff appear to just not care for students who will eventually end up working with their hands, as well as with their minds.

One of Blanton's best ideas is a "Trade School" located at the just vacated North Shelby School property. This Trade School would include training in Carpentry, Machine Shop, HVAC, Electrical, Electronics and Plumbing. All on CCS property and at a high school level to give all CCS students the opportunity to learn the basics of these "trades" and as a precursor to advanced training that would become available at Cleveland Community College under their Advanced Manufacturing and other programs which have already been funded with \$Millions. Blanton's "Trade School" would fill the "gap" between the few programs that are presently available at CCS at the lowest possible cost until specific needs and strategic plans to clean up CCS's act in vocational education can be drafted, identified and implemented. Is that common sense or what???

Also, School Board Member Danny Blanton has been talking, "collaborating," with just about everybody about this obvious good idea. So, what does Cleveland County Schools do? They start stripping HVAC equipment out of the old North Shelby School to install in the new North Shelby School. Besides being a planned scheme to jack up the cost of any Trade School sponsored by Danny Blanton, CCS has exposed another clear indication of their total incompetence. The new North Shelby School is supposed to be NEW. Starting from an initial budget of \$10 Million to build a school for 175 special needs children, the cost has ballooned to about \$16 million to serve the 50 children that now attend North Shelby School. Even with installing used equipment such as the old HVAC units as noted as well as hiding costs by charging many items made necessary by the new North Shelby School to James Love School accounts. It's an old trick that was also used to hide \$millions of

renovation costs for the Central Office restoration project several years back to maintenance accounts. About \$5 million I was told.

It is no wonder the \$tens of thousands wasted in ruining 500+ lunchroom chairs doesn't bother CCS. They are used to wasting money in the \$millions without blinking an eye. They surely don't want an "upstart" like Danny Blanton coming along and actually do more with less. That is unpatriotic to the other school board members and staff. Treasonous maybe?

And that is just the start of it.

At the January 28th school board meeting Danny Blanton presented a motion to amend the meeting agenda to allow discussion of three items. One item was the waste of the ruined chairs and another was an update of his workforce development involvement, including the Trade School concept. Roger Harris seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Then School Board Chairman Shearra Miller decided that one motion could not cover the three items Blanton specified, so there would have to be a vote on each item-separately, although she would allow the motion that had just passed to count for the chairs. All this parliamentary maneuvering was totally against the rules of Parliamentary Procedures the board meetings are supposed to follow. No other board member would support Blanton's update of the Regional Workforce Team or Blanton's Trade School idea.

But then, just a few days later on Friday-February 1, 2019 the Shelby Star runs this front-page article titled New Classes Available-Cleveland County Schools offers more choices for high schoolers. Star reporter Dustin George, the new Star Sports and Schools Reporter, has his name on the article although it was obviously a "feel good" Press Release planted by CCS Superintendent, Dr. Stephen Fisher. The Star article quotes the Superintendent regarding these so-called new

classes from CCS. Only thing is the classes will not be taught at CCS, but at Cleveland Community College.

It's the old Cleveland County Schools "Bait and Switch" fraud. CCS provides nothing for students. CCC "dumbs-down" some college vocational courses for just a few students and both call this a "dual enrollment" which allows both to get additional funding from the state. Students get nothing extra. Taxpayers pay for something extra that the students don't get. Like an open and honest school administration with a legitimate educational program.

To add insult to injury, CCS's Fisher says free bus transportation will be available. Like there will be large numbers enrolled in the program. That is doubtful since, unless State law changes, the state mandated calendar for CCS and the Schedule for classes at CCC do not match. Therefore, thirty days or so will be lost per school year due to the difference in schedules. (Hmmm, I wonder if this applies to all the dual enrollment courses??? That's a question for another day.)

One thing about the Star article that offers some hope is the new CCC President is not quoted or even mentioned in the article. That indicates CCC President Dr. Jason Hurst will do what he can to best accommodate the needs of Cleveland County students with the facilities that are available right now, but he is bound to realize this half-baked deceptive CCS publicity stunt is not something he wants to put his name to in the long term. Maybe, even the silly CCC Board of Trustees can understand that CCS school programs are supposed to provide students with the opportunity of a basic education, including a basic vocational education and CCC is supposed to provide advanced training.

Also, where is the CCS School Board in all this. Remember, they were not interested enough to want to hear a word about Workforce Development from Danny Blanton. And, this new

deception by Superintendent Fisher has not been discussed at school board meetings in open session as required by state law.

You just have to wonder why voters have been so dumb for so long to elect the other school board members in the first place. Of course, you don't have to wonder why CCS is failing to properly educate the children of Cleveland County. That is obvious.

Another thing is, I wonder what Commissioner Doug Bridges thinks about the deception going on at the January 28, 2019 School Board meeting? Perhaps I will ask him in the near future. Maybe you citizens and readers who are interested in fixing a failing CCS will ask him too. And expect the commissioners to do something about all the games going on at CCS that result in failing schools, improperly educated students and so many \$millions in wasted assets.