Cleveland County is Broke, Now CC School Board is Broke too???!!!

Report, facts, calculations, Conclusions, eritas and informed opinions by ***Robert A***

Folks, the entire Cleveland County School Board will hear some bad news at their next School Board Meeting, this evening. At 6:00PM January 13, 2025. The CCS Finance Committee Report will contain information that Cleveland County has been reclassified by the State of North Carolina as being a **Tier 1 County**, For YOUR convenience the particular paragraph of that report says:

"Dr. Fisher shared that the Cleveland County tier status has changed to move us back to a *Tier I county*. This annual designation is based on the economic well-being of each county with the 40 most distressed counties being designated Tier 1.

Tier status is determined by four factors:

- **average unemployment rate,**
- **median household income,**
- **percentage growth in populationand**
- **adjusted property tax baseper capita.**

As a result, *Cleveland County is designated a Tier 1 county for 2025."*

Folks, If you don't understand these words above, think of it as this:

The State of North Carolina has decided to select the economically WORST 40 Counties in North Carolina *and Cleveland County is one of them*. In other words, despite what the CCS School Board and the Cleveland County Commissioners tell us, Cleveland County is on the **BOTTOM 40** of the 100 counties in North Carolina**. The only question that remains is: ARE we on the bottom of the bottom 40? Or, are WE *near the top* of the bottom??? Either way, if we are not on the bottom, we are near enough to the bottom to see it from here.**

Also, it is clear that at least 60 Counties in North Carolina are much better off and much better led than Cleveland County. Economically!! And Education wise too. If YOU are a business looking to settle in North Carolina, where would YOU Choose to Go??? Certainly NOT to Cleveland County.

Also, Part 2. There was nothing else in the Report that will be read tomorrow night related to Cleveland County's FAILING Education System as related to where Cleveland County Stands economically! WE ALL know the two things are directly related. The better the education, the better we are economically!

We also ALL KNOW that the Superintendent of a School District is responsible for providing the students of Cleveland County the opportunity of a "sound basic education."

We also know that the District's SCHOOL BOARD is responsible for seeing to it that the Superintendent, Stephen Fisher, has NOT been able to keep Cleveland County Schools OFF the BOTTOM

of all of these bad lists.

When this "Report" from the Finance Committee is read off tomorrow night, *Robert A* recommends the School Board to immediately remove Dr. Stephen Fisher from his position as CCS Superintendent and appoint another as the Interim Superintendent.

Then, School Board members: Joel Shores, Ron Humphries, Walter Scott Spurling, Gloria Sherman and Aaron Bridges should all RESIGN IMMEDIAELY.

Then, Kenneth Ledford, Danny Blanton, Ronnie Grigg and David Fisher should immediately reorganize the School Board into a FIVE Member Board, in accordance with North Carolina LAW. Then form a Committee among themselves to:

1. **Select a "Fifth" person as an interim School Board Member. Sheila Canipe, Samantha Davis and Mathew Canipe immediately come to mind as a Candidate for that fifth school board member.**
2. **Select a "Search" Committee of half School Board members and half concerned citizens to form a Search Committee to find and recruit a new CCS Superintendent.**

Folks, do not expect School Board Members Joel Shores, Ron Humphries, Walter Scott Spurling, Gloria Sherman and Aaron Bridges to do the right thing here. Not immediately anyway. They ALL will expect the citizens of Cleveland County to stay home tomorrow night and NOT pay any attention to the Failures of CCS and the County Commissioner's leadership. The things that have destroyed Cleveland County. Economically and leadership wise. Old habits are hard to break. Therefore, NEW BLOOD has to be located.

But *Robert A* has this "informed feeling" that this CCS Finance Committee Report has been "watered-down" and "covered-up" by Superintendent Stephen Fisher and those Finance Committee so-called "leaders."

For one thing, the average age of Cleveland County School buildings and structures are around 60 years old. Note that *Robert A* had always wondered why CCS was building brand new $30 Million$ auditoriums located at almost 60-year-old high schools?

Also note that *Robert A* has read the engineering study "report" for all of CCS Schools that have "Guiding Principle" that DIRECT A FINDING that no new School Construction should be considered in the Engineering Study and Final Report. Which basically "decreed" that ALL of the CCS facilities would remain as is and only be "Fixed-Up" for the next 50-60 years.

Also Note that when *Robert A* first began attending CCS School Board meetings around 13 years ago, CCS had only one school, James Love" that was close to "FAILING." Now, there are *13 or more CCS Schools that are failing* or within one point of failing.

It remains to be seen tomorrow night whether any school board member will "question" what Dr. Fisher "Left out" of this Finance Committee Report?? What "things" that Joel Shores, Aaron Bridges, Ron Humphries, Gloria Sherman, and Walter Scott Spurling don't want to talk about. Or, the PUBLIC to hear!!!???

Editor's Note*: In preparation for this article, *Robert A* "googled" *North Carolina's Best Counties to live in? What

pulled up is very interesting!!

A list of 30 counties that were ranked as the top counties to live in in North Carolina. CLEVELAND COUNTY was NOT on that list. But guess who WAS on that list as Number 24???

Lincoln County. Right Next Door to Cleveland County, was Number 24!!

According to the BEST 30 Report, Lincoln County has:

- **life expectancy at birth: 77.0 years**
- **Poverty rate: 3%**
- **Adults with a bachelor's degree:1%**
- **Median household income:$75,672**
- **Population:87,933**

Note that the Lincoln County Median Household income is almost twice that of Cleveland County. That is about all that you need to know about why Lincoln County is WAY so much better than Cleveland County.

Also Note that Lincoln County has no Indian *Casinos*, no American Legion World Series Baseball Games, no Earl Scruggs Center that stands empty most of the time, no two brand new School Auditoriums that have held any major events like Plays that are open to the public, etc. Isn't it totally obvious that the Leadership in Cleveland County is just like the Tier Grades, Cleveland County is on or near the BOTTOM, while *Lincoln County* is on or near the TOP!!! It's the same with Economic ratings and Educational ratings too. *Why is Lincoln County so smart and Cleveland County is so dumb??? Again folks, go and look at yourself in the Mirror!!!*

So, Folks, why have YOU, the Citizens and Voters in Cleveland County allowed yourselves to be led by a bottom feeding leadership that puts YOU on the Bottom of the BAD List while Next Door Lincoln County is on the GOOD LIST????

Robert A **has the answer to that Question!!! Go Look in the MIRROR!! The face that you see is a LOSER!!! If YOU want to become a winner, get off your ass and start attending School Board and County Commissioner meetings. If you are reading this article, and paying attention, YOU are well on your way to finally becoming a winner!!**