



Bill Proctor
Commissioner • District 1

March 1, 2018

Honorable Joy Bowen
Honorable Maggie Lewis-Butler
Honorable DeeDee Rasmussen
Honorable Alva Striplin
Honorable Rosanne Wood
Leon County School Board
2757 West Pensacola Street
Tallahassee, FL 32304

Dear School Board Members:

Please open an investigation into the conditions of black boys' graduation rates, suspension rates, punishment rates, and the overall success-failure of black children in the hands of our local school district.

As the majority of the County's school population, this population group needs a special look at why and how the Leon County schools are not serving black children with the same success as it serves its minority white student population.

The extraordinary disparity in suspension rates between black and white students in the Leon County School District, reported in the *Tallahassee Democrat* newspaper Monday, February 26, suggests black school children are victims of racial bias and discrimination at the hands of Leon County School District.

Is it fear of black children by white teachers that translates as a high and disproportionate rate of school suspensions of black school children? Fearful teachers who are afraid of and who dislike black boys is a formula for disaster as we tragically witness a disproportionate number of black children being suspended from our local public schools.

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People Focused. Performance Driven

It appears that Leon County's teachers and education leaders carry immunity and are not held accountable for the incredible rates of suspension and punishment executed against black children in Leon County. The public deserves to hear your voices and answers to this disproportionate state of affairs.

Black student failure along with disproportionate punishment rates of black students in Leon County schools is unacceptable. I am beginning to think about the State operated Dozier Boys School in Marianna where many bad things happened to children is trending in a different sense here in Leon County. This school had its own graveyard to coincide with its punishment of children at that site. But nobody is talking about what is happening to black children at the hands of Leon County School District. Silence along with indifference is insufficient non action. Will you please do something about this situation? You must not be out of touch with the true blue feelings of your constituents.

Parents of black children are highly frustrated with multiple outcomes, services and attitudes of the Leon County School System. The Chiles High School Confederate flag incident and School Board tolerance of such flagrant acts of inflammatory acts to intimidate black children on the outside of the school building speaks volumes to many.

However, it is the flag waving disproportionate punishments of black children which impacts their learning and their performance that you should be even more alarmed by.

Confederate flags are waving on the outside of school buildings by students! Flags against black students are waving inside of school buildings in various places across Leon County School District by teachers and administrators in various capacities of power and authority.

Please get in touch with the community and the feelings and perspectives of our parents. You can transform this mundane reality by taking leadership to hire an independent consultant team to investigate, interview and to review with competent analysis why the majority black students are not fairing as well as other children in your care.

Leon County taxpayers are owed an explanation for the disparate punishment, drop out and non-graduation rates of black children under the auspices of the Leon County School Board. The higher rates of suspension of black children mean black taxpayers' children are not receiving the same access to classroom time and information.

On behalf of my constituents, I request the Leon County School Board investigate the data reported from the Florida Department of Education by the *Tallahassee Democrat*. This should be done expeditiously by an independent team.

Thank you for your concern and forthcoming actions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Proctor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "B".

Bill Proctor