

THE WARREN COUNTY BRANCH OF THE
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF COLORED PEOPLE

February 11, 1964

Warren County Board of Education
Warrenton
North Carolina

Gentlemen:

The foundation of democracy is based on the ability of each citizen to exercise intelligence and understanding of the American society. The public schools of our county hold the responsibility to each citizen to provide the facilities and program to adequately fill this vital need.

We feel that, under the existing conditions, the schools of this county are not fulfilling their obligation to the citizenry and that certain conditions should be corrected.

We, therefore, make the following recommendations for immediate changes which, we feel, are necessary for the forward progress of our schools:

- I. Removal of the present principal of John R. Hawkins, J. E. Byers, for the following reasons:
 1. He manifests an arrogant and authoritative assertion of undemocratic principles over teachers, parents, and/or students, and abuses his position to further his own motives
 - a. in embarrassing students publicly when their parents have disagreed with him.
 - b. in asserting authoritative leadership over the Parent-Teachers Association and giving no room for free exercise of opinions by teachers and parents.

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- c. in instructing teachers in their social associations.
 - d. in firing teachers without just and obvious cause.
 - 2. The principal and wife hold three positions; that of principal, supervisor of lunch room, and teacher. This in itself render them incapable of doing an effective job.
 - 3. He does not maintain the cooperation or respect of the majority of the parents and students as his position should warrant.
 - 4. The principal does not participate actively in many civic organizations for the improvement of the general community, nor does he encourage his teachers to do so.
- II. We request that the following conditions be immediately corrected or changed:
- 1. Negro members should be appointed to the various school committees.
 - 2. A grievance committee should be created to hear complaints of parents and teachers; this committee to be composed, among others, of the parents of the school system.
 - 3. Steps should be taken to bring school plants and curriculum into focus with present accreditation standards in regard to the following:
 - a. Adequate vocational training
 - b. Physical plants and equipment
 - c. Athletics
 - d. Adult Education Program
 - 4. A Negro supervisor should be appointed for the schools in the county.

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5. Teachers should be given reason for discharge from the school system. We suggest that unjustifiable discharges of teachers be discontinued.

In the interest of continually improving our county and school system we ask that each of these recommendations be given prompt and considerate action.

Respectfully submitted,

WARREN COUNTY NAACP CHAPTER

The Executive Committee



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

RALEIGH

TERRY SANFORD
GOVERNOR

Box 584
April 6, 1964

Mr. Dallas Herring, Chairman
State Board of Education
Rose Hill, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Herring:

Attached is a copy of a letter from the Executive Committee of the Warren County NAACP Chapter addressed to the Warren County Board of Education, dated February 11, 1964, setting forth numerous complaints relative to the Warren County Public Schools.

I have no idea as to the solution of this Warren County problem. However, I cannot but wonder that if and when the principal of a school has become a controversial figure to the extent that Byers has, has he not lost a good portion of his usefulness to the community he serves.

There is no question but that the majority of the Negroes are against Byers and that they are out for a new deal.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. S. Coltrane".

D. S. Coltrane, Chairman
N. C. Good Neighbor Council

DSC:mkt
Attachment

BLIND COPY TO:

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dr. Charles F. Carroll

RALEIGH

Box 127
Rose Hill, N. C.

April 7, 1964

Mr. D. S. Coltrane
The Governor's Office
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Coltrane:

Thank you for your letter about the situation in Warren County. While I appreciate the problem, I hardly know how to advise anyone about a solution, since under the law it seems to be entirely a matter for local determination.

Sincerely yours,

W. D. Herring
Chairman

WDH:wjt