

CCSD

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inappropriate." Dr. Herchel Williams, a Deputy Superintendent, according to Ms. Doe, also was very helpful in assisting her.

"Armond wore a brace for over three weeks and the busdriver is still driving for the district...Someone called and asked would I send the medical report as proof that it happened. They must think I'm a fool! At this point I really don't want to talk to Wallace or Vern Burks (Deputy Superintendent of the Facilities Department); they had a chance to call me and didn't..."

When asked why she thought there was a cover-up, she said that she had filed a suit against the CCSD and McCain. She said McCain told the busdriver about the pending law suit and since then her grandson has been a target of harassment by the busdriver and others within the department.

"I was shocked to learn that my attorney had sent a copy of the suit to the district..." she said. However, she added that she was informed that that is standard legal procedure.

The Sentinel-Voice interviewed Dr. Brian Cram, Superintendent of CCSD, who was not aware of the incident. Dr. Cram said that he was happy to be apprised of the situation and that he would look into it. (Dr. Cram will be our subject personality in a Sentinel-Voice exclusive interview in several weeks.) He referred me to Burks, who was very candid about the way things were being handled.

When asked what he knew about the incident Burks responded that because Ms. Doe has refused to come forward, no action had been taken. He emphasized that at this point there is no proof that the alleged action took place.

"As far as this incident is concerned, I think that it is inappropriate to take any further action...Ms. Doe has produced no conclusive evidence that her child was attacked...She refused to come forward to talk to me or Mr. Wallace...So as far as I am concerned, the matter warrants no further action," he said.

"If the allegations are true, why don't she bring some proof...She was not

there, I did not see it, the School Police did not see it, the principal did not see it...If it happened, certainly the busdriver should receive stiffer action."

When asked if this was a common problem with the students in so-called West Las Vegas, he said 'no.'

When you transport over 32,000 students, you are going to run into a few problems from time to time."

The Sentinel-Voice also found out that there had been a prior busdriver on the same route that was removed for bad-mouthing the students. That means that there have been three new busdrivers within the area in the last two years.

Dr. Wondrash was asked what type of student Lewis was in general. He said that Lewis is very talkative and sometimes has to be reprimanded about his homework, but in general, he was not a bad child.

Some of the parents interviewed knew about the complaints of the students, but they told their children to let Ms. Doe know because she had been instrumental in getting the first busdriver replaced.

After speaking with Burks, I met briefly with Dr. Williams who informed me that he was arranging a meeting with Ms. Doe, the busdriver and the transportation supervisor to see if they can iron out some of the problems.

Ms. Doe was considering taking Lewis out of the school because she felt that he was being unusually harassed while riding the bus since the incident. The principal, however, encouraged her not to withdraw Lewis because it might hurt his grades. She said she decided not to let him ride the bus at all and she now transports him herself.

This past Thursday, April 19, 1990, Lewis and a friend had a fight on the bus and it is alleged that the safety patrol officer on the scene cursed Lewis out in the process of stopping the fight.

Finally, I was able to interview about twelve of the students, between the ages of 7 and 11 years, who rode the bus, about what happened. In general, most of the students said that Mr. B fell asleep at the wheel a couple of times, drove on the curb and constantly complained about not having enough sleep. Several of the students said that if he had not hit a speed bump on one pick-up run, he would have remained asleep. They said they had to yell at him to get him to wake up.

It is inconceivable that this alleged incident did not receive more press. The CCSD certainly has its share of growing pains being one of the largest and fastest growing districts in the country. However, the public needs to be aware of any incident that might harm the safety of our children.

There was, however, among the children I interviewed, a degree of calm,

knowing that this story was going to the press, because many of them believed that their parents, teachers and most adults in general, don't take children seriously.

We hope that when the litigation process is complete, that at least we as parents, educators and adults in general become more aware of what is or may be going on in our community, and listen more closely to our children and then take steps to ascertain the truth.

We will keep you posted.

A SENTINEL-VOICE UPDATE

Parents Picket The CCSD Annex in NLV

Our readers should remember the Sentinel-Voice story titled "Busdriver Leaves Children Stranded in NLV." Well, here is an update.

About six angry parents got up at 5 o'clock in the morning to protest against the CCSD, to have it remove the busdriver accused of leaving 28 children stranded. The parents carried picket signs and chanted slogans of protest in front of the transportation complex on West Cheyenne Avenue on Friday, April 20, 1990 to demonstrate their dissatisfaction.

Michelle Bardlett, President of the Community Improvement Association (CIA) and spokes person for the group, said that they were not being taken seriously. She said that the busdriver "had to go" or the protests would continue. She made sure that the N.L.V. Police Department was notified prior to the picket demonstration. The demonstration took place without incident or any arrests.

Dr. Brian Cram, Superintendent of CCSD, Vern Burks, Deputy Superintendent of Facilities Department, Ray Willis, Communications Director, Matt Wallace, Director of Transportation, Dennis Kostermerscholk, the alleged busdriver in question and Ernest Diggs met after the protest to exchange dialogue and to iron out differences.

After the meeting the parents felt appeased that Kostermerscholk would be assigned to another route. However, Bardlett said that they would have a general meeting to vote to reconsider the action of returning him if the consensus was favorable. Bardlett said that someone made a racist statement about black people being reactionary and that they will quickly forget what happened. "We, (the CIA) and other concerned parents have made a statement today that we will not rest until we receive justice. Some people are looking for media exposure...We are not. We felt that our complaints were legitimate and we were prepared to go to the Supreme Court if we had to...Some people may just let things happen and watch things happen...We want to make things happen...And we will work with any individuals or group regardless of race that wants to see progress," she said.

Kostermerscholk pleaded with the parents to let him stay on the route. Bardlett said that she would take his request up at the CIA's next meeting and would contact the CCSD with their decision within thirty working days.

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Bryan and Reid Rated On Hunger Votes

Washington, D.C.--The voting records of Senators Richard Bryan and Harry Reid on hunger issues were released recently by Bread for the World, a grassroots Christian citizens' movement working to end hunger.

Senator Bryan voted favorably on six of eight key votes during 1989 which the organization cited as significant for relieving hunger in the United States and overseas. Senator Reid also voted favorably on six anti-hunger initiatives. Both Senators opposed initiatives to end military aid to El Salvador, where ongoing civil war has lead to widespread malnutrition.

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