

CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT  
AND JUVENILE COURT  
FILED FOR RECORD

2015 NOV 13 PM 2:59

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF RICHMOND COUNTY**

CLARKE C. JOHNSON, CLERK  
RICHMOND COUNTY, GA

**STATE OF GEORGIA**

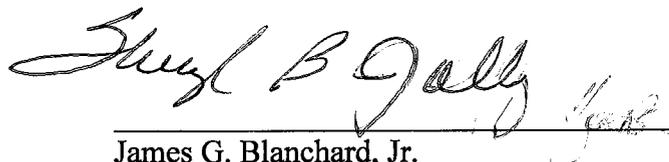
IN RE: GRAND JURY PRESENTMENT FOR THE SEPTEMBER TERM 2015

The Grand Jury having returned the attached general presentment for the September Term 2015, and the same having been reviewed and accepted by the Court on November 13, 2015, it is now,

ORDERED that the said presentment shall be filed in the Office of the Clerk of Superior Court for Richmond County, and that it shall be published once in the *Augusta Chronicle*, the legal gazette for said County; and

FURTHER ORDERED that the said general presentment shall be posted by the Director of Information Technology on the Augusta-Richmond County website for public access through the Internet (World Wide Web).

It is so ORDERED this 13th day of November 2015.



James G. Blanchard, Jr.  
Superior Court Judge  
Augusta Judicial Circuit

TO: The Honorable Sheryl B. Jolly  
Judge, Superior Court

FROM: Richmond County Grand Jury  
September Term 2015

DATE: November 13, 2015

RE: Grand Jury Presentment

We, the members of the Augusta-Richmond County Grand Jury for the September Term 2015, having been duly sworn by the Honorable James G. Blanchard on the 21st day of September 2015, submit our presentment on the 13th day of November 2015, our last day as an official body of the Grand Jury.

To discharge our sworn duties, as prescribed by the laws of the State of Georgia, we met on eight (8) dates during our term and acted upon Bills of Indictments presented to us by the District Attorney's Office.

Sub-Committees were formed to inspect the Board of Education and the Charles B. Webster Detention Center; reports are attached.

In addition to our assigned duties, this Grand Jury appointed one member to the Board of Equalization; the report is attached.

The Grand Jury respectfully submits this presentment on the 13th day of November 2015 and requests that it is published.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Owen Ben Pryor, Foreperson

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Gerard C. Bryant, Assistant Foreperson

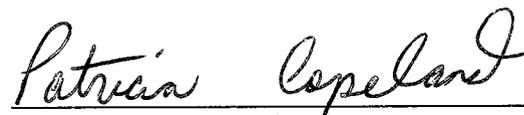
  
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Virginia B. Anthony Pierre, Secretary

  
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Christopher Michael Buck

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Lesly Booz

  
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Alexine D. Holmes

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Christopher Reynolds

  
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Patricia A. Copeland

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Vernon Dewayne Gay, Jr.

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Shirley Mickens Rouse

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George Pope, Jr.

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*Carl Derry Berrian*  
Carl Derry Berrian

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*Faye Allender Robeson*  
Faye Allender Robeson

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Alma James McCladdie

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*Kenya Monique Brown*  
Kenya Monique Brown

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*Elouise M. Carwell*  
Elouise M. Carwell

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*D. Michelle Thompson*  
D. Michelle Thompson

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*Cheryl Renee Devoe*  
Cheryl Renee Devoe

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Gwendolyn Ramos-Bracero

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*Jennifer Martin Splichal*  
Jennifer Martin Splichal

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*Shirley L. Dailey*  
Shirley L. Dailey

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*Jonelle Price Burgest*  
Jonelle Price Burgest

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Caldwell Thomas, Jr.

**SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE SEPTEMBER TERM 2015 GRAND JURY  
REPORT ON THE RICHMOND COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

On Tuesday, October 15, 2015, Sub-Committee Members from the September Term 2015 Grand Jury met with the individuals named below at the Board of Education Office located on Broad Street in Downtown Augusta:

Superintendent—Dr. Angela Pringle  
Attorney – Mr. Pete Fletcher  
Associate Superintendent – Dr. Debbie Alexander  
Chief Human Resources Officer – Ms. Kathryn Perrin  
Controller – Mr. C. Gene Spires

**Bus System:** The Richmond County Board of Education (RCBoE) added 30 new buses this fall with new routes and GPS on all buses. This facilitates getting children to school in the morning and home in the afternoon more efficiently. There are monitors on most buses to assist with discipline as well as video recording to tape children's activity on the buses. Some students were not staying at the homes where they were registered which caused delay in initial pick up, but once addresses were corrected, the new system has run fairly smoothly. Also, the bus drivers are better trained this year and have to have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

**Safety Issues:** An Emergency Preparedness Plan is in place where, upon entering a school, there are two tiers of security a visitor has to navigate through. You have to have a card to get into a building and check into the office before entering the school proper. Also, Mr. Fletcher, the School Board's attorney, put through legislation to have armed policemen on all Richmond County schools. Regarding fire safety, each school participates in a fire drill around the first of every month and the Fire Marshall inspects the facilities internally for safety issues.

**Drug Issues:** Canine patrol will provide random searches through the year to sniff out drugs in cars or in lockers. The RCBoE utilizes the C.H.A.M.P. S. Drug Awareness program (Choosing Healthy Activities and Methods Promoting Safety) which teaches character, promotes child participation in healthy activities that are drug and alcohol free, non-violent, and promotes safety.

**Discipline Concerns:** Richmond County Schools have a high rate of high school dropouts who are in prison. A 2013 survey revealed that 76% of Richmond County students come from single parent homes. Struggles at home have caused more discipline problems in the school. The administration has developed "wrap-around services" to assist in classroom management, behavioral specialists to meet with students and training in positive behavior intervention which includes conflict management. Dr. Debbie Alexander, Associate Superintendent, goes to schools to personally observe classes that have or need positive behavior intervention. There are also alternative schools for students in grades 6-12 who need exposure to programs and interventions to aid in developing social skills that will ensure their success. These schools meet four days a week from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. to assist students who are struggling academically and socially. The school system's partnering with Boys and Girls Clubs after school program has been

beneficial because it seeks to “help young people achieve academic success, build good character and citizenship and develop healthy lifestyles.”

**Teacher Effectiveness:** An evaluation system called Teacher Keys Effective System (TKES), developed by the Race to the Top Initiative (RT3), has been put in place for teacher evaluation and professional growth. In the spring of 2012, Race to the Top Districts participated in a pilot of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System. The new TKES consists of multiple components, including the Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) which surveys instructional practice and measures student growth and academic achievement. The overarching goal of TKES is to support continuous growth and development of each teacher.

**School Funding:** The RCBoE has major concerns because there has been a reduction of state funds over the recent past. In 2013, Richmond County received \$22,756,027.00. In 2015, RCBoE received \$13,915,190.00. In 2016, the projected amount is \$8,320,681.00. The funding received goes through a five-year plan organized by a policy committee and includes administrators and construction experts that review where the needs are and how best to allocate the funds. There is also a citizen’s committee which “watches over what is being done.”

**Teaching English as Second Language:** Specific plans are in place to improve literacy support and training for TESL. The Bayvale area has the most need for TESL.

**Food Provided:** Free breakfast and lunches are provided for those who have financial need. These are being offered because it is considered that better nutrition assists in better learning.

Sub-Committee Members:

Lesly Booz  
Faye Allender Robeson

**SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE SEPTEMBER TERM 2015 GRAND JURY  
REPORT ON THE CHARLES B. WEBSTER DETENTION CENTER**

The Detention Center opened in 1997 with 1,050 beds; it can now house over 1,200 inmates. It cost approximately \$80.00 per inmate, per day to operate the Detention Center. The Detention Center appears well maintained and adequately staffed.

The inmates are housed according to their arrest record. Inmates' housing is spacious and well lighted. Medical and dental services are provided, by appointment, if needed.

The Detention Center has video visitation that allows family and inmates to communicate. The inmates are allowed one 30-minute visit per visitor day and no more than three visits per week (only one visitor at a time). The family can also watch the trial of an inmate via monitor if the inmate is scheduled for a court appearance.

The Detention Center has options for inmates to bail themselves or a family can bail them out using credit cards. The inmates also have computers in which to make doctor appointments and purchases from the commissary, etc.

The Detention Center has a fingerprinting system to identify a person from using a false name or social security system and can tell if they have charges elsewhere. Before being discharged, the inmate has to be fingerprinted to ensure the correct inmate is being released. This is very important as to not release the wrong inmate.

Questions asked and answered during the tour included:

Does the Detention Center have a Quick Reaction Force Team (QRFT)? The warden responded yes.

What type of evacuation plan is in place for a major disaster, i.e. flooding or hurricane? The warden stated that arrangements are being made by local agency, such as the fire department, special type of buses and ambulances to secure all personnel and relocate them, if necessary.

How often are fire drills conducted and what is the process? Fire drills are conducted twice a year without evacuation of the facility.

How often are fire extinguishers inspected? They are inspected monthly.

Sub-Committee Members observed law enforcement and civilian personnel passing through the metal detector and proceeding through the main secured door leading into the facility without any intervention of human contact.

Having asked the procedure for employees to enter and exit the facility in the morning and when they returned from lunch, the warden stated all personnel must be screened in the morning by going through the metal detector. He also stated that ID verification is conducted and screened by multiple security cameras which are monitored in a central station located in the center of the facility. The warden stated after lunch there is no need to go through the ID verification system, only the metal detector which is constantly monitored by surveillance cameras. He also stated civilian personnel are restricted from any contact with inmates without the presence of law enforcement personnel.

Sub-Committee Members concluded the warden and staff at the Detention Center were professional and very knowledgeable regarding the facility. The overall visit was an educational and impressive experience. The facility and inmates are well secured. It appears the warden and his staff has the facility well maintained.

Sub-Committee Members:

Lesly Booz  
Kenya Monique Brown  
Christopher Michael Buck  
Elouise M. Carwell  
Patricia A. Copeland  
Cheryl Renee Devoe  
Alexine D. Holmes  
Virginia B. Anthony Pierre