

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI  
GREENVILLE DIVISION

REBECCA E. HENRY, ET AL

PLAINTIFFS

VERSUS

CIVIL ACTION NO. 6428-D

THE CLARKSDALE MUNICIPAL SEPARATE  
SCHOOL DISTRICT, ET AL

**MOTION TO AMEND PRIOR ORDERS RELATED TO THE DESEGREGATION OF THE  
CLARKSDALE MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT,  
TO ALLOW THE IMPLEMENTATION OF "MAGNET SCHOOLS"**

COMES NOW the Defendant in the above referenced litigation and moves the Court for permission to further restructure the elementary and middle schools and high school in the particular respects as outlined on Exhibit "A", and would show unto the Court that the remaining vestiges of Bi-Racial Committee previously established by this Court has voiced its approval of the implementation of "Magnet Schools" (see Exhibit "B") and would further show that none of the original Plaintiffs in the action are living or in contact with the School District, but the Plaintiff has presented this proposal to the local NAACP which has evidenced its approval by the letter attached hereto as Exhibit "C". The School District has applied for an additional magnet school grant which requires the district to obtain prior Court approval.

A summary of the proposal is attached hereto as Exhibit "A", which describes the current "Magnet Schools" arrangement and the manner in which the limited changes will be implemented in this School District. As a result of this plan, the students will still be allowed to select schools to which they are assigned according to their preferences as to the points of emphasis of any particular "Magnet School." The proposal will have no effect upon the racial balance in the current schools as exhibited by Exhibit "D" attached hereto. As the Court can

see, the racial make up at all of the schools in the Clarksdale Municipal School District are almost exactly the same as they have been before the implementation of the magnet plan.

The Defendant Clarksdale Municipal School District would show that the proposed implementation of the "Magnet School" plan would not have a deleterious effect upon the desegregation of the School District and is simply being accomplished in order to offer better programs for the children of the School District and to improve the quality of education in the School District.

Accordingly, the Defendant moves the Court to approve the plan as outlined in Exhibit "A", should the School District receive a grant being applied for or should the School District otherwise deem it feasible to proceed with this plan.

Respectfully submitted,

MERKEL & COCKE, P.A.  
Post Office Box 1388  
30 Delta Avenue  
Clarksdale, MS 38614  
Tele: 662-627-9641  
Fax: 662-627-3592  
Attorneys for Defendant

By:   
JOHN H. COCKE (MSB#6326)



## Magnet Schools

Clarksdale Municipal School District (CMSD) is in the process of revising magnet schools throughout the district. Magnet schools came into existence in the 1960's founded by the late Dr. Donald Waldrip as a way of ending the racial isolation so many of our students face. Magnet schools also promote increased achievement outcomes for our students.

CMSD began working with Dr. Waldrip to design a program using the magnet school approach which will promote excellence in education, increase achievement by our students, and end racial isolation. Even today, after nearly forty years of court ordered desegregation, our school district is more segregated than ever, with the majority of white children being educated in private or parochial schools, or home schooled. Those white students who remain in the CMSD tend to cluster in two schools.

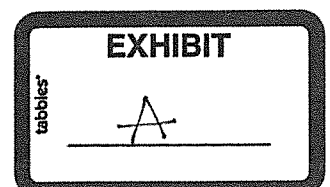
Through the magnet school lottery, students who wish to change schools or to register in our district are randomly assigned to schools within the district. It is the hope of magnet schools that through the excellence of our program, more white children will be attracted to attend schools they would not normally have attended, thus increasing diversity in all schools. Over the past three years, we have seen some small movement as White children have registered at some of our traditionally "Black" schools.

Our six elementary schools have each taken a different theme. They are as follows:

George H. Oliver	Visual and Performing Arts
Myrtle Hall 4	Language Immersion (Spanish)
Heidelberg	Math and Science
Kirkpatrick	Health and Medical Sciences
J.W. Stampley	Aerospace and Environmental Studies
Booker T. Washington	International Studies

Our two middle schools are magnet themed schools as follows:

Higgins Middle School	International Studies with Visual and Performing Arts
Oakhurst Middle School	Language Immersion School of Math and Science



However, due to decreasing enrollment and the ability of students to enroll into the schools of their choice, we have seen some schools flourish and other decline. We have also conducted research into the most effective way to reach our children, both socially and academically. The new grade structure proposed for CMSD is as follows:

<b>School/Grade Span</b>	<b>Theme/Academic Focus</b>
Myrtle Hall 4 (Pre-K-4 <sup>th</sup> )	Language Immersion (Spanish)
Heidelberg (Pre-K-4 <sup>th</sup> )	Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM)
Kirkpatrick (Pre-K-4 <sup>th</sup> )	Health and Medical Sciences with STEM Features
Booker T. Washington (Pre-K-4 <sup>th</sup> )	International Studies
George H. Oliver (Pre-K-4 <sup>th</sup> )	Visual & Performing Arts
Oakhurst Middle School(5 <sup>th</sup> &6 <sup>th</sup> )	Language Immersion, International Studies, STEM, Visual & Performing Arts
W.A. Higgins Middle School (7 <sup>th</sup> &8 <sup>th</sup> )	Language Immersion, International Studies, STEM, Visual & Performing Arts
J. W. Stampley (9 <sup>th</sup> Grade Academy)	Excellence for All Program
Clarksdale High School (10 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> )	Excellence for All Program, Cambridge

The Clarksdale Municipal School District uses a lottery system to assign students to schools at the elementary level. This lottery is conducted during the last Saturday of Saturday School at W.A. Higgins and is open to the public. Any student who does not get assigned to the school of his or her choice has the option of being placed on a waiting list for future openings at that school. Our lottery last resulted in over 99% of students receiving their first choice of school in the first round of the lottery. Late applicants are placed where there are seats available.

Clarksdale Municipal School District is applying for a Magnet School Assistance Grant to enable the district to implement world class programs to enable our students to compete academically with the nation. The application process requires the presentation of a tentative plan for school change.



*NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE*  
**Coahoma County Branch**

Post Office Box 2133  
Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614

December 4, 2012

Mr. Dennis J. Dupree  
Superintendent of Education  
Clarksdale Municipal School District  
P. O. Box 1088  
Clarksdale, MS 38614

Dear Mr. Dupree:

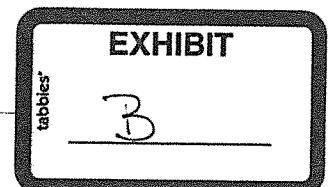
I am a member of the original Biracial Committee that was appointed at the time the Clarksdale Municipal School District was put under a desegregation order. Since the time the committee was formed, many members of the committee have passed away. As such, I am one of only a few surviving members. My purpose in writing this letter is to acknowledge that this committee has been contacted and consulted by you regarding the changes the school district needs to make to affect school choice for parents and to implement magnets schools.

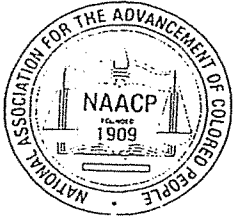
I have observed the many positive changes that have already occurred in the district and believe that this next phase of change is an important step which I support. If additional information is required, you may contact me at the address listed above.

Respectfully,

Jimmy Wiley  
President

Clarksdale/Coahoma County Chapter of the NAACP





NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE  
Coahoma County Branch

Post Office Box 2133  
Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614

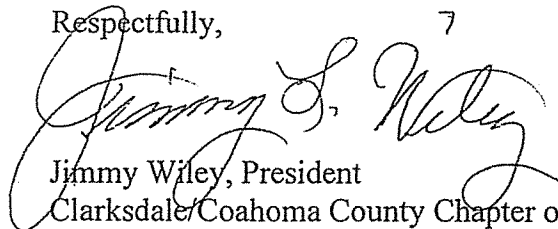
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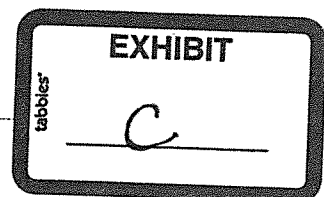
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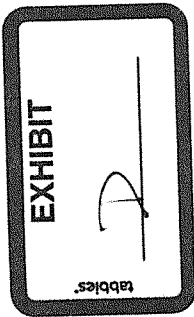
My name is Jimmy Wiley. I am a member of the Clarksdale-Coahoma County Chapter of the NAACP. I am pleased to write this letter of support for the Clarksdale Municipal School District's efforts to make positive changes in the schools with the implementation of magnet schools and parental choice. My specific purpose in writing this letter is to acknowledge that the NAACP has contacted and consulted with you, regarding changes the school district needs to make, to create improved programs and services. I wholeheartedly support this effort on behalf of the NAACP and me. I have observed the many positive changes that have already occurred in the district and believe that this next phase of change is an important step which I support. If additional information is required, you may contact me at the address listed above.

Respectfully,

  
Jimmy Wiley, President  
Clarksdale/Coahoma County Chapter of the NAACP



**CLARKSDALE MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Breakdown by Ethnicity**  
 Compiled 11/30/12



School	Total Enrollment 2008-2009	Total Enrollment 2009-2010	# Black 08-09	# Black 09-10	# White 08-09	# White 09-10	# Hispanic 08-09	# Hispanic 09-10	# Asian 08-09	# Asian 09-10
Booker T. Washington	287	289	285	285	2	4	0	0	0	0
Clarksdale High	847	824	839	814	5	7	1	0	2	3
George H. Oliver Elementary	314	294	313	294	1	0	0	0	0	0
Heidelberg Elementary	243	282	215	255	16	13	5	6	7	8
J.W. Stampley Elementary	226	177 *Other - 2	224	173	0	0	0	1	1	2
Kirkpatrick Elementary	268	287	249	267	15	16	3	1	1	3
Myrtle Hall #IV Elementary	300	281	299	280	0	0	0	0	1	1
Oakhurst Middle	423	384	407	372	12	7	2	2	2	3
W.A. Higgins Middle	362	362	360	359	2	1	0	1	0	1
District	3270	3182	3191	3099	53	48	11	11	13	21

<b>Racial Breakdown of the Clarksdale Municipal School District</b>									
<b>By Number</b>									
<b>Compiled 11/30/12</b>									
<b>Classifications</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>#</b>		<b>#</b>		<b>#</b>		<b>#</b>	
	<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Black</b>		<b>White</b>		<b>Asian</b>		<b>Hispanic</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>
Teachers	216	36	92	17	68	3	6	2	1
Administrators	26	7	12	1	4	0	0	0	0
Clerical	19	0	15	0	4	0		0	0
Non-certified Instructional Support	55	5	47	0	3	0	0	0	0
Other Professional	58	12	30	3	10	0	0	0	0
Technicians & Service Workers	128	19	50	0	1	0	0	0	0
Skilled Crafts	9	7	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Laborers, Unskilled	33	30	3	0	0	0	0	0	0