

David Barnes response:

Qualifications: I was a system analyst for 17 years. During that time, I managed teams of technicians, customer service personnel, system analysts and computer technicians.

For eight of those years, I was a facility manager responsible for a two hundred person computer facility, including construction projects, mainframe computer installations/moves and large purchasing contracts.

For the past twelve years, I have owned my own print services company.

I have been active in the public schools for nine years - substitute teaching, serving with various PTOs, Parent Advisory Council, County Education Advisory Committee, and have served on the Fayette County School Board for the past four years.

I have attended numerous professional training sessions conducted by the Tennessee School Boards Association.

2-3 issues:

#1 – Fiscal reform is the most urgent thing facing the school system today. Fayette County spends roughly \$9400 per year to educate each child in the system. Surrounding counties spend less than \$7500. The difference must be accounted for, and moved into the classroom – in terms of teacher salaries, technology & offering a broader curriculum.

#2 – Continue to “open” the school system to public scrutiny. For too long, the school system has operated as if it were only accountable to itself. Citizens need to be informed as to *what* is going on, and *why*. Parents must be more involved and welcomed into the education process.

Busing: Busing, or rezoning, based upon race is just wrong. Doing anything based upon race is wrong. What makes even less sense is that based upon a decades old lawsuit, the school system is *mandated* to make decisions based upon race.

Laws have since been passed making it illegal to make decisions based upon race, which means there is a lawsuit in Fayette County that says the Federal Court must force Fayette County to ignore more recent law in order to abide by a decree issued 40 years ago! Its just crazy!

There are only three possible actions in this suit – the Plaintiffs have to drop it, the Judge has to dismiss it, or the Defendants have to comply with it. Since A and B don't seem to be happening, we are left with the craziness of complying.

Trying to come up with a plan to keep the Judge and the citizens both happy is a tricky proposition.

Federal Involvement: Having Federal oversight in our schools is a two-edged sword. You get the luxury of an education that attempts to be “equal” to every other student in the nation, but you have to answer to the Government. In other words, if we take their money, we have to take their rules.

As it relates to the existing civil-rights lawsuit, they're going to control us as long as that lawsuit exists.

Ranking problems:

1. Financing
2. Lack of Accountability
3. Regulation
4. Lack of Parental Choice
5. Lack of Focus on Core Subjects