

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10 July 1992

COALITION FOR EDUCATIONAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE
KCMSD PROPOSED "RESOLUTION"
INSULTINGLY NON-RESPONSIVE

I. Based upon the oral communications and reports we've received from the superintendent and others, we have grave concerns about the district's positions. It seems that they have chosen not to hear and respond to our community's cry for equity, dignity, and justice. It is clear that this superintendent and this board of education have no respect for either the intelligence or educational interests of African-Americans.

II. Based upon our understanding of what the district purports to be its new position, there are several problems, all of which are indicative of the superintendent's lack of respect and disregard for our people:

1. The "if it works" caveat is untenable. As far as we know, it is not being placed on any other new themes where it would be more appropriate, such as his misnamed and misleading gifted and talented programs or his vacuous futures programs.

If the primary criterion is academic achievement, the data from Chick are clear, "it does work" and "it is successful."

To put this restriction on the African studies programs dilutes, diminishes, and devalues the essence of our culture, our history, and our contributions and is indicative of the Superintendent's lack of confidence in and commitment to the African Studies magnet theme.

It should also be noted that irrespective of the successes achieved at Chick to date (with inadequate and insufficient resources), its inequitable and unconscionable for the Superintendent to expect Chick to accomplish within two years what magnet schools have not achieved in seven.

2. We are not asking for duplication of the Chick International Studies theme. Our D.A. Holmes proposal, in keeping with the philosophy of the LRMP, calls for a distinctive mentor instructional model with an African and African-American Studies curricular focus.

3. Based upon their public protestations in opposition to our plan, this Superintendent and his all white team of minions lack sufficient credibility, sincerity, commitment, believability, and cogency to persuasively present African and African-American Studies themes to the DMC and the Court. The Superintendent, Pendarry Clark, and Art Rainwater have all made public comments questioning the desegregative attractiveness of an African Studies theme, which could easily be used to impeach

any testimony to the contrary. There is no doubt that this was an intentional effort on their parts to sabotage our efforts for more culturally relevant and educationally effective magnet programs.

4. Our concerns for K-12 continuity, similar to that provided for the Classical Greek, Foreign Language and Ancient Cultures programs, are not adequately addressed.

III. Finally, this Superintendent's proposal is not responsive to our concerns in any meaningful or substantive manner. In effect, all he's saying is that they will proceed with Chick as some sort of pilot project or demonstration school and if it meets some special undefined standards of "success" or "desegregating," they will duplicate that program two to three years later (on the back end of the desegregation plan) at D.A. Holmes. His posture is an arrogant, condescending, and offensive insult to our intelligence, our dignity, and our essence that makes it conclusively clear that this guy is ill-suited to be Superintendent of our schools.

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