

One of the comments made at the meeting with the Attorney General still troubles us. We were reminded that U.S. District Judge W.R. "Bill" Wilson's 2003 ruling was the "*Law of the Case*" and that the Sherwood Public Education Foundation was not at the '*right starting place*' implying to us that since Pulaski County School District has not obtained unitary status there was no ability for detachment. Therefore, it was time to re-read Judge Wilson's ruling; specifically Pages 53-56 which discuss the attorney general's advisory opinion on June 4, 2003:

"...attempting to carve out and create a new school district from the Pulaski County Special School District is in direct violation of the language in Section II (J) of the 1989 settlement which guarantees the sovereignty and independence of the Pulaski County School District, until at least such time as it has fully discharged all of its desegregation obligations and obtained unitary status."

This section was referring directly to the State Board of Education's vote to create a new school district in Northeast Pulaski County (the Jacksonville School District).

This begs the question: "If Sherwood is not at the '*Right Starting Place*' then is Jacksonville?" To interpret Judge Wilson's 2003 ruling favorable for one area of North Pulaski County, i.e. Jacksonville, and not a neighboring community, Sherwood, seems discriminatory by its very nature.

The Sherwood Public Education Foundation is diligently following Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-13-1500 et seq. which outlines the procedures for detachment. There are numerous educators and community leaders on the foundation who recognize the importance of unitary status and the impact the proceedings of this Court have on our ability to have a Sherwood School District.

At this time, it seems important to share some facts with the Court regarding the proposed Sherwood School District and reasons why the last sentence in Paragraph E is discriminatory to our efforts:

1. According to the 2010 Census for Arkansas, Sherwood is the 14th largest city in the state. (Jacksonville is the 15th largest city.)
2. According to current Arkansas school data, there are over 230 school districts in Arkansas. The proposed Sherwood School District would be the 17th largest school district in the state.
3. The estimated student population of the proposed Sherwood School District would be over 4600 students. Arkansas has a law allowing school districts to operate if they maintain over 350 students. The Sherwood School District would exceed that minimum ten times.

4. The demographics of the proposed Sherwood School District is a microcosm of PCSSD with regard to ethnic groups, free/reduced lunch programs, and student status in various categorical funding strings such as migrant, special education, gifted and talented, Limited English Proficiency, and Title I. All of which are outlined in the chart below:

Current Student Data 2013 - 2014

	PCSSD		Sherwood	
Ethic Groups				
White	7571	44.38%	2119	45.58%
Black	7414	43.46%	2042	43.92%
Hispanic	1118	6.55%	271	5.83%
Asian	345	2.02%	41	0.88%
Native Am/Alaska	83	0.49%	19	0.41%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	19	0.11%	3	0.07%
Two or More	510	2.99%	154	3.31%
Total Student Population	17,060	100.00%	4649	100.00%
Child Nutrition				
Free	8146	47.75%	2284	49.13%
Reduced	1343	7.87%	416	8.95%
Full Pay	7571	44.38%	1949	41.92%
TOTAL	17,060		4649	
Student Status				
Gifted and Talented	2244	13.15%	570	12.26%
Special Education	2008	11.77%	562	12.09%
Handicapped	441	2.58%	139	2.99%
Migrant	2	0.01%	0	0.00%
Foster Children	50	0.29%	6	0.13%
Limited English Proficiency	531	3.11%	122	2.63%
Title I	6996	41.01%	2533	54.45%

The Sherwood Public Education Foundation appreciates the work by the parties in drafting a settlement agreement for this historical case. While in the Honorable D. Price Marshall Jr.'s courtroom on November 22, 2013, members of our foundation heard Judge Marshall state that the court favored settlements over trials. He also stated that he would not narrow the scope of those individuals allowed to submit an objection; that he would welcome all comments and objections from the public and then he would make the decision with regard to those with merit.

We trust that the Foundation's objection has merit. While the Sherwood Public Education Foundation supports the spirit of the settlement, it does not support the unfair language in the last sentence of paragraph E. The Foundation does not wish to derail the efforts of this proposed settlement but merely wishes to be treated fairly.

The Foundation would be willing and available to address the Court, if it is the pleasure of the Court. The Court may contact either one of us at the contact information listed below our individual names.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this objection.

Sincerely,



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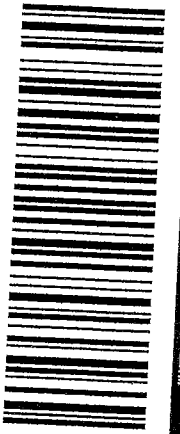
Sherwood Public Education Foundation Co-Chairpersons



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