



## **Statement on the Release of the Riverview Gardens School District Audit**

Over the past year much has been written about the unquestionable failures of Dr. Henry Williams, superintendent of the Riverview Gardens School District and during this week even more will be written on the deplorably sad state of affairs that arose from his absolute ineptitude.

It is high time for the Riverview Gardens Board of Education members to adopt a previous position and terminate Dr. Henry Williams' employment. Why the Board did not decisively act last year only confirms, beyond a shadow of any reasonable doubt, the abundant failure of Marlene Terry, former board president and current board member.

The shameful, selfish and possibly illegal actions of Dr. Williams and Marlene Terry are inexcusable—they put their personal self interest before the welfare of the children, parents and teachers of the Riverview Gardens School District.

The board failed to perform due diligence prior to hiring Dr. Williams. Williams has been removed from some larger school districts before, including Kansas City's. He was superintendent of the Syracuse, N.Y., public schools for almost five years until the early 1990s. When he left, according to news accounts, board members said he spent money without board approval, which he is alleged of doing the same at Riverview with the written permission of Marlene Terry. In 1993, he was hired to run schools in Little Rock, Ark. Two years later, the board voted not to extend his \$115,000 contract.

He was hired by the Kansas City School Board in 1996 for \$164,500. Former Kansas City School Board President Ed Newsome said questions arose about Williams' hiring of companies with which he had personal ties, which Williams has been suspected of doing at Riverview too. In 1998, the board voted to buy out Williams' contract for \$165,000. These serious and persisting concerns were well known publicly at the time of Dr. Williams hiring.

We have worked closely with U.S. Senator Claire McCaskill, former Missouri State Auditor, and Governor Blunt to initiate an audit of the financial mismanagement occurring in the district. Current State Auditor Susan Montee has prudently and thoroughly examined the financial books. What was found will surely become known as an appalling situation, and we urge the parents, educators, administrators and board members to take into account the profound seriousness of the possible criminal actions of Dr. Henry Williams and Marlene Terry. Enough is enough. Dr. Williams should immediately return all payments that he may have received illegally and promptly resign.

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The teachers and administrators will then have to pick up the shattered pieces, encourage better financial practices and promote accountability amongst the members of the board of education. We are optimistic, that with the departure of Dr. Williams, the future of Riverview Gardens will be in the hands of engaged parents, capable administrators, skilled teachers and intelligent young students eager to return to the work of learning.

Sincerely,

/s/

**Gina Walsh**  
State Representative, 69<sup>th</sup> District

/s/

**Timothy P. Green**  
State Senator, 13<sup>th</sup> District