

5. I was told by a white School Board member that the only way to win a seat on the School Board was by calling the ward leaders to gain their approval of my candidacy.

6. As a black male seeking a School Board seat, I have felt the continuing effects of discrimination during my campaigning, even after 20 years of campaigning in the city of Albany. Even when I campaigned with another candidate, who was white, we received poorer reception from the ward-controlled white communities, and I noticed that there was a higher expectation of educational experience and credentialing directed towards me.

7. During my campaigns, I have had the opportunity to speak with voters about what they want to change in the school system. Parents of color often complained that they felt disrespected by teachers, ignored by the School Board, and therefore disconnected from the education process. On the other hand, many of the parents in the white communities to whom I spoke were concerned only with lowering school taxes, evidencing that the concerns of persons of color are diametrically opposed to that of whites in the community.

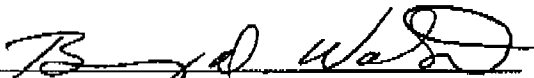
8. Upon information and belief, Albany High School has 100 teachers, only three of whom are black. However, the student population is over 80% students of color. Likewise, the representation of blacks on the School Board does not match the population of students in the district.

9. Presently and in the past, students of color are sent to alternative schools, where dropout rates increase significantly because the school district chooses to exclude them in order to maintain “high achievement.” During my time as a probation officer, I witnessed firsthand this “warehousing” of troubled students of color. Instead of creating programs or other proactive disciplinary measures to address the problems of troubled students, the school district simply sent these students off to an alternative school without a clear plan for reintegration. And

because these students did not have the support of a representative body of teachers or even School Board members who knew how to interact with the cultural norms of colored students, they were not given a fair opportunity to succeed in the school system, and as a consequence, in their lives.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: July 15, 2011


Barry D. Walston