

D E C R E E

It is ORDERED, ADJUDGED and DECREED that the Alabama State Board of Education, Mrs. Lurleen Burns Wallace, Governor of the State of Alabama and President of the Alabama State Board of Education, James D. Nettles, Ed Dannelly, Mrs. Carl Strang, Fred L. Merrell, W. M. Beck, Victor P. Poole, W. C. Davis, Cecil Word, and Rev. Harold C. Martin, members of the Alabama State Board of Education, and Ernest Stone, Executive Officer and Secretary of the Alabama State Board of Education, and Alabama State Superintendent of Education, together with their agents, servants, employees, successors in office, and all those in active concert or participation with them who receive actual notice of this decree or any of them, shall be and hereby are permanently enjoined from discriminating on the basis of race in the operation or the conduct of the public schools of Alabama or in any manner pertaining to the public schools of Alabama. As set out more particularly in the body of this decree, said defendants shall take affirmative action to disestablish all state enforced or encouraged public school segregation and to eliminate the effects of past state enforced or encouraged racial discrimination in their activities and their operation of the public school systems throughout the State.

It is further ORDERED, ADJUDGED and DECREED that:

I

School Construction and Consolidation

A. The State Superintendent of Education shall require all local school systems that have been the subject of a survey conducted by or under the auspices of the State Department of Education to submit to him, prior to the commencement of the 1967-68 school year, all plans that have been formulated or adopted for the consolidation of any schools in their systems that had at the time of the survey, or now have, fewer students than required under the minimum-student standards of the State Department

of Education.

B. The State Superintendent of Education shall continue to conduct surveys of the local school systems throughout the State, and require that those conducting the surveys shall:

1. Continue to collect and report data regarding the residence of students and the attendance at schools by race;

2. Not fail to recommend consolidation because desegregation would result;

3. Recommend, to the extent consistent with the proper operation of the school system as a whole, that consolidation shall be achieved in a manner to effect desegregation of the schools of the system;

4. Recommend, to the extent consistent with the proper operation of the school system as a whole, that the location, grades and capacity of new schools and expansions of existing school plants be such as to effect desegregation of the schools of the system.

C. Approval by the State Superintendent of Education of all sites upon which schools are to be constructed or existing facilities expanded shall not be based on any survey conducted prior to the entry of this decree, or any survey that does not accord with the standards set forth above in paragraph B.

D. Approval by the State Superintendent of Education of all sites upon which schools are to be constructed or existing facilities expanded shall be withheld if, judged in light of the capacity of existing facilities, the residence of the students, and the alternative sites available, the construction will not, to the extent consistent with the proper operation of the school system as a whole, further the disestablishment of state enforced or encouraged public school segregation and eliminate the effects of past state enforced or encouraged racial discrimination in the State's public school system.

II

Teachers

A. The State Superintendent of Education shall develop a detailed program for assisting and encouraging faculty desegregation in the local school systems throughout the State for implementation prior to the 1967-68 school year and shall submit this program to the Court and all parties within 60 days after the entry of this Court's decree. The program should, at a minimum, establish ways in which the State Department of Education will assist local systems in recruiting, and in planning for the placing of new teachers and reassigning of old teachers on a desegregated basis so that by the fall of 1967, insofar as it is administratively feasible, no school located in a school district where students of both races are in attendance listed in Section IV of this decree will have teachers of only one race. The program should also provide for assistance in providing training which may be necessary to upgrade the qualifications of some teachers in order to facilitate desegregation of faculty. The program should provide for further progress after 1967-68 to help said local school systems stay in compliance with constitutional requirements in the area of public school desegregation.

B. Any services made available by the State Superintendent of Education to assist local school boards to locate and employ suitable teachers, or to assist teachers to find suitable positions, shall be provided in a manner to effect faculty desegregation in the public schools throughout the State.

C. The State Superintendent of Education shall not give force or effect to that provision of Section 339 of Title 52 of the Alabama Code which requires that separate teacher institutes be held for Negro and white teachers; and he shall direct that a single, system-wide teacher institute be held in each local school system for the 1967-68 school year, and for each school year thereafter, and that such institutes be conducted in a nondiscriminatory manner.

D. The State Superintendent of Education shall conduct all in-service training programs on a desegregated basis.

E. The State Superintendent of Education shall apply certification requirements without discrimination on the basis of race, and shall not apply certification requirements, or grant provisional certificates, in a manner to perpetuate faculty segregation or to avoid faculty desegregation.

F. The State Superintendent of Education shall inform all applicants for certification that the school systems throughout the State are obliged to desegregate their faculties, and that teachers are subject to assignment in accordance with that obligation.

III

School Transportation

A. The defendant state officials shall require all local school boards listed in Section IV of this decree, prior to the commencement of the 1967-68 school year, to eliminate race as a basis for assigning students to school buses and to eliminate overlapping and duplicative bus routes based on race.

B. The defendant state officials shall require all of said local school boards, prior to the commencement of the 1967-68 school year, to establish nondiscriminatory criteria governing the availability of bus transportation to students within the school district. These criteria, at a minimum, should entitle each student to be transported to the school he attends if that school is the one nearest his residence and if that school is at least two miles from his residence.

C. The State Superintendent of Education shall require all local school boards listed in Section IV of this decree to submit to him for approval within 60 days after the entry of this decree their proposed bus routes and criteria governing the

eligibility for bus transportation. The State Superintendent shall approve or disapprove the proposed routes and criteria, within 30 days of receiving them, according to the standards set forth in the preceding paragraphs A and B of this section, and, to the extent that he disapproves them, he shall notify the local systems of their deficiencies.

D. The State Superintendent of Education shall require all of said local school boards to communicate those routes and criteria he has approved to students and parents of the school districts in a readily understandable manner and substantially before the opening of the 1967-68 school year. The local school authorities shall notify parents and children, prior to the choice period, that the bus routes and criteria governing the eligibility for bus transportation are being revised and will be established on a nondiscriminatory basis.

E. Whatever technical assistance is made available by the State Superintendent for assisting said local school boards in meeting school transportation problems shall be provided in a manner to assist the local school boards to eliminate overlapping and duplicative bus routes based on race and to formulate non-discriminatory criteria regarding eligibility of students for transportation.

IV

Desegregation Plans for Local School Systems

The State Superintendent of Education shall notify the following school systems that they are required to adopt a desegregation plan for all grades commencing with the 1967-68 school year that meets the standards embodied in the plan attached to this decree and designated as Exhibit "A":

Alexander City	Auburn
Andalusia	Autauga County
Anniston	Baldwin County
Athens	Bibb County
Attalla	

Blount County	Fort Payne
Brewton	Franklin County
Butler County	Geneva County
Calhoun County	Greene County
Carbon Hill	Henry County
Chambers County	Houston County
Cherokee County	Jackson County
Chilton County	Jacksonville
Clarke County	Jasper
Clay County	Lamar County
Cleburne County	Lanett
Coffee County	Lauderdale County
Colbert County	Lee County
Conecuh County	Limestone County
Coosa County	Linden
Covington County	Marengo County
Cullman	Marion
Cullman County	Marion County
Dale County	Marshall County
Daleville	Monroe County
Dallas County	Morgan County
Decatur	Mountain Brook
DeKalb County	Muscle Shoals
Demopolis	Oneonta
Dothan	Opelika
Elba	Opp
Elmore County	Ozark
Enterprise	Phenix City
Escambia County	Pickens County
Etowah County	Piedmont
Eufaula	Pike County
Fayette County	Randolph County
Florala	Roanoke
Florence	Russell County

Russellville	Tallassee
St. Clair County	Tarrant
Scottsboro	Thomasville
Selma	Troy
Sheffield	Tuscaloosa
Shelby County	Tuscaloosa County
Sumter County	Tuscumbia
Sylacauga	Walker County
Talladega	Washington County
Talladega County	Winfield
Tallapoosa County	Winston County

The State Superintendent of Education shall inform these local school systems that the desegregation plan is to be adopted within 20 days from the entry of this decree; and within 25 days from the entry of this decree the State Superintendent shall submit a report to this Court and to all parties informing them of the action taken by him to discharge this obligation and the results of that action.

V

Institutions Under State Board of Education Control

No person shall be denied admission to any trade school, junior college, or state college^{1/} administered by the Alabama State Board of Education upon the ground of race, nor shall he be subjected to racial discrimination in connection with his application for enrollment in or his attendance at any such trade school, junior college, or state college. Dual attendance zones based on race for such trade schools, junior colleges, and state colleges shall be abolished. The State Department of Education shall direct such trade schools, junior colleges, and state colleges to recruit, hire, and assign teachers so as to desegregate faculty and to accomplish some faculty desegregation in each such trade school, junior college, and state college by September 1967.

^{1/} The term "state college," as used herein, includes all state colleges or universities except the University of Alabama, Auburn University, University of South Alabama at Mobile, and Alabama College at Montevallo, which institutions have separate boards of trustees and are not administered by the Alabama State Board of Education.

VI

Equalization of Facilities

The State Superintendent of Education shall develop, and submit to this Court and all the parties within 120 days after the entry of this decree, a detailed program for bringing the quality of the physical facilities, equipment, services, courses of instruction, and instructional materials of schools previously maintained for Negro students up to the level in schools previously maintained for white students. This program shall eliminate those disparities reflected in different pupil-teacher ratios, survey classifications of buildings and sites, per pupil expenditures, valuation of school property, library books per pupil, course offerings, accreditation, and transportation. In connection with applications for teacher units for vocational teachers or teachers of exceptional children, the State Superintendent of Education shall consider and grant those applications that satisfy educational requirements and had been submitted before the entry of this decree on behalf of schools traditionally maintained for Negro students, prior to acting upon other applications for such units.

VII

Information and Reports

A. The State Superintendent of Education shall make, at reasonable times and places, and upon reasonable notice, the following available to all parties:

1. All consolidation plans submitted to him by local school boards pursuant to the requirements of paragraph A of Section I of this decree.

2. All survey reports hereafter conducted pursuant to paragraph B of Section I of this decree.

3. All applications and records of action by the State Superintendent of Education regarding the approval or disapproval of school construction or expansion, together with all information relating to the sites,

including the pertinent survey reports.

4. All documents relating to teacher institutes and to in-service training programs, including a report giving the number of teachers that attended each institute, the schools the teachers were from, and the race of the teachers.

5. All proposals of the local school boards relating to the routing of school buses and the criteria governing eligibility for bus transportation that are submitted to the State Superintendent for his approval under paragraph C of Section III of this decree, together with a report indicating which proposals have been approved and when and how students and parents in the various school systems throughout the State were informed of these routes and criteria.

6. All records pertaining to action taken by the State Superintendent of Education with respect to applications for teacher units for teachers of exceptional children and vocational education teachers.

7. Records indicating the State Superintendent's action with respect to provisional teaching certificates, and a report indicating how applicants for certification were informed of the obligation of the local systems regarding faculty desegregation.

8. Records showing the attendance zones, bus routes, racial composition of faculty, and racial composition of student body for each trade school, junior college, and state college.

B. The State Superintendent of Education shall submit to the Clerk of this Court and serve upon all parties:

1. Within 60 days after the entry of this decree the detailed program regarding faculty desegregation required by paragraph A of Section II of this decree.

2. Within 120 days after the entry of this decree

the detailed program regarding school equalization required by Section VI of this decree.

3. Within 25 days after entry of this decree, a report on the action taken by the State Superintendent of Education respecting the 99 school districts listed in Section IV of this decree, and the results of that action.

4. A report, which must be submitted by October 5 each year, setting forth the following information with respect to the local school systems listed in Section IV of this decree:

(a) The number of students by race, in each grade of each school for the current school year;

(b) The number of faculty members of each race assigned to each school for the current school year, together with the number of faculty vacancies or new positions, by school, that have arisen or have been filled by the school board since the last report; and

(c) The number of students that have requested to transfer from the schools they were assigned to, together with a description of the action taken by the local school board on such requests and the reasons therefor.

5. A report, which must be submitted on or before June 15 of each year, setting forth the following information with respect to each school system listed in Section IV of this decree:

The number of choice applications received for each grade, the number of choices granted and denied, and the reasons for all denials.

IX

Interference

The defendant state officials shall not interfere with,

prevent or obstruct by any means the elimination of racial discrimination by local school officials in any school system in the State of Alabama.

X

The 1965-1966 Tuition Grant Statute

Title 52, Section 61(8), Code of Alabama (Tuition Grant Statute, No. 687, approved September 1, 1965), is hereby declared unconstitutional. The defendant state officials, their agents, employees, and successors in office shall not approve or permit the approval or the payment of any tuition grants or grants-in-aid under the authority of this law.

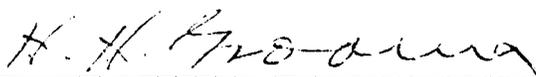
It is further ORDERED that the United States submit to this Court within 30 days, and serve upon all parties, a report informing the Court whether any of the school systems listed in Section IV of this decree have failed, following the entry of this Court's decree, to adopt a satisfactory desegregation plan.

It is further ORDERED that the costs of this action be and they are hereby taxed against the defendant state officials.

It is further ORDERED that jurisdiction of this cause be and it is hereby retained.

Done, this the 22nd day of March, 1967.


UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE


UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE


UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

DESEGREGATION PLAN

The _____ Board of Education will take the following affirmative action to disestablish all state enforced or encouraged public school segregation and to eliminate the effects of past state enforced or encouraged racial discrimination in the operation of the school system:

I

EXERCISE OF CHOICE

The following provisions will apply to all grades commencing with the 1967-68 school year:

A. Who May Exercise Choice. A choice of schools may be exercised by a parent or other adult person serving as the student's parent. A student may exercise his own choice if he (1) is exercising a choice for the ninth or a higher grade, or (2) has reached the age of fifteen at the time of the exercise of choice. Such a choice by a student is controlling unless a different choice is exercised for him by his parent or other adult person serving as his parent during the choice period or at such later time as the student exercises a choice. Each reference in this plan to a student's exercising a choice means the exercise of the choice, as appropriate, by a parent or such other adult, or by the student himself.

B. Annual Exercise of Choice. All students, both white and Negro, will be required to exercise a free choice of schools annually.

C. Choice Period. The period for exercising choice will commence May 1, 1967, and end June 1, 1967, and in subsequent years will commence March 1 and end March 31 preceding the school year for which the choice is to be exercised. No student or prospective student who exercises his choice within the choice period will be given any preference because of the time within the period when such choice was exercised.

D. Mandatory Exercise of Choice. A failure to exercise a choice within the choice period will not preclude any student from exercising a choice at any time before he commences school for the year with respect to which the choice applies, but such choice may be subordinated to the choices of students who exercised choice before the expiration of the choice period. Any student who has not exercised his choice of school within a week after school opens will be assigned to the school nearest his home where space is available under standards for determining available space which will be applied uniformly throughout the system.

E. Public Notice. On or within a week before the date the choice period opens, the school board will arrange for the conspicuous publication of a notice describing the provisions of this plan in the newspaper most generally circulated in the community. The text of the notice will be substantially similar to the text of the explanatory letter sent home to parents. Publication as a legal notice will not be sufficient. Copies of this notice will also be given at that time to all radio and television stations serving the community. Copies of this plan will be posted in each school in the school system and at the office of the Superintendent of Education.

F. Mailing of Explanatory Letters and Choice Forms. On the first day of the choice period there will be distributed an explanatory letter and a choice form to the parent (or other adult person acting as parent, if known to the school board) of each student, together with a return envelope addressed to the Superintendent. The text for the explanatory letter and choice form will essentially conform to the sample letter and choice form appended to this plan.

G. Extra Copies of the Explanatory Letter and Choice Form. Extra copies of the explanatory letter and choice form will be freely available to parents, students, prospective students, and the general public at each school in the system and at the

office of the Superintendent of Education during the times of the year when such schools are usually open.

H. Content of Choice Form. Each choice form will set forth the name and location of and grades offered at each school and may require of the person exercising the choice the name, address, age of student, school and grade currently or most recently attended by the student, the school chosen, the signature of one parent or other adult person serving as parent, or where appropriate the signature of the student, and the identity of the person signing. No statement of reasons for a particular choice, or any other information, or any witness or other authentication, will be required or requested.

I. Return of Choice Form. At the option of the person completing the choice form, the choice may be returned by mail, in person, or by messenger to any school in the school system or to the office of the Superintendent.

J. Choices Not on Official Form. The exercise of choice may also be made by the submission in like manner of any other writing which contains information sufficient to identify the student and indicates that he has made a choice of school.

K. Choice Forms Binding. When a choice form has once been submitted and the choice period has expired, the choice is binding for the entire school year and may not be changed except in cases of parents making different choices for their children under the conditions set forth in paragraph I-A of this plan and in exceptional cases where, absent the consideration of race, a change is educationally called for or where compelling hardship is shown by the student.

L. Preference in Assignment. In assigning students to schools, no preference will be given to any student for prior attendance at a school and except with the approval of the State Superintendent of Education in extraordinary circumstances, no choice will be denied for any reason other than overcrowding. In case of overcrowding at any school, preference will be given on

the basis of proximity of the school to the homes of the students choosing it, without regard to race or color. Standards for determining overcrowding will be applied uniformly throughout the system.

M. Second Choice Where First Choice Is Denied. Any student whose choice is denied will be promptly notified in writing and given his choice of any school in the school system serving his grade level where space is available. The student will have seven days from the receipt of notice of a denial of first choice in which to exercise a second choice.

N. Transportation. Where transportation is generally provided, buses will be routed to the maximum extent feasible in light of the geographic distribution of students, so as to serve each student choosing any school in the system. Every student choosing the school nearest his residence must be transported to the school to which he is assigned under these provisions, whether or not it is his first choice, if that school is at least two miles from his residence. The school system will adopt non-discriminatory bus routes and criteria governing the availability of bus transportation to students, so that race will not be a basis for assigning students to school buses and overlapping and duplicative bus routes based on race will be eliminated. Prior to the choice period, parents and children will be advised that such routes and criteria will be adopted, and substantially prior to the opening of the 1967-68 school year the parents and children will be notified of the routes and criteria, in a readily understandable manner.

O. Officials Not to Influence Choice. At no time shall any official, teacher, or employee of the school system influence any parent, or other adult person serving as a parent, or any student, in the exercise of a choice or favor or penalize any persons because of a choice made. If the school board employs professional guidance counselors, such persons will base their

guidance and counseling on the individual student's particular personal, academic, and vocational needs. Such guidance and counseling by teachers as well as professional guidance counselors will be available to all students without regard to race or color.

P. Protection of Persons Exercising Choice. Within their authority, school officials are responsible for the protection of persons exercising rights under or otherwise affected by this plan. They will, without delay, take appropriate action with regard to any student or staff member who interferes with the successful operation of the plan. Such interference will include harassment, intimidation, threats, hostile words or acts, and similar behavior. The school board will not publish, allow, or cause to be published, the names or addresses of pupils exercising rights or otherwise affected by this plan. If officials of the school system are not able to provide sufficient protection, they will seek whatever assistance is necessary from other appropriate officials.

II

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Each prospective new student will be required to exercise a choice of schools before or at the time of enrollment. Each such student known to the school system will be furnished a copy of the prescribed letter to parents, and choice form, by mail or in person, on the date the choice period opens or as soon thereafter as the school system learns that he plans to enroll. Where there is no preregistration procedure for newly entering students, copies of the choice forms will be available at the office of the Superintendent and at each school during the time the school is usually open.

III

SERVICES, FACILITIES, ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

No student will be segregated or discriminated against on account of race or color in any service, facility, activity, or program (including transportation, athletics, or other extra-curricular activity) that may be conducted or sponsored by or

affiliated with the school in which he is enrolled. A student attending school for the first time on a desegregated basis will not be subject to any disqualification or waiting period for participation in activities and programs, including athletics, which might otherwise apply because he is a transfer or newly assigned student except that such transferees shall be subject to longstanding, nonracially based rules of city, county, or state athletic associations dealing with the eligibility of transfer students for athletic contests. All school use or school sponsored use of athletic fields, meeting rooms, and all other school related services, facilities, activities, and programs such as commencement exercises and parent-teacher meetings which are open to persons other than enrolled students, will be open to all persons without regard to race or color. All special educational programs conducted by the school system will be conducted without regard to race or color.

IV

SCHOOL EQUALIZATION

A. Inferior Schools. In schools heretofore maintained for Negro students, the school system will take prompt steps necessary to provide physical facilities, equipment, courses of instruction, and instructional materials of quality equal to that provided in schools previously maintained for white persons. Conditions of overcrowding, as determined by pupil-teacher ratios and pupil-classroom ratios will, to the extent feasible, be distributed evenly between schools formerly maintained for Negro students and those formerly maintained for white students. If for any reason it is not feasible to improve sufficiently any school formerly maintained for Negro students, where such improvement would otherwise be required by this subparagraph, such school will be closed as soon as possible, and students enrolled in the school will be reassigned on the basis of freedom of choice. By October of each year, the school board will report to the State Superintendent of Education pupil-teacher ratios, pupil-classroom ratios, and per-pupil expenditures both as to operating and capital improvement

costs, and will outline the steps to be taken and the time within which they will accomplish the equalization of such schools.

B. Remedial Programs. The school system will provide remedial education programs which permit students attending or who have previously attended all-Negro schools to overcome past inadequacies in their education.

V

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AND CONSOLIDATION

To the extent consistent with the proper operation of the school system as a whole, the school board will, in locating and designing new schools, in expanding existing facilities, and in consolidating schools, do so with the object of eradicating past discrimination and of effecting desegregation. The school board will not build, consolidate or expand schools based on recommendations of any state survey conducted prior to March 1967 unless the state reapproves such building, consolidation or expansion. The school board will not fail to consolidate schools because desegregation would result.

VI

FACULTY AND STAFF

A. Faculty Employment and Assignment. Race or color will not be a factor in the hiring, assignment, reassignment, promotion, demotion, or dismissal of teachers and other professional staff members, including student teachers, except that race will be taken into account for the purpose of correcting the effect of the past segregated assignment of teachers in the dual system. Teachers, principals, and staff members will be assigned to schools so that the faculty and staff is not composed exclusively of members of one race. Wherever possible, teachers will be assigned so that more than one teacher of the minority race (white or Negro) will be on a desegregated faculty. The school board will take affirmative steps to accomplish the desegregation of its school faculties, including substantial desegregation of faculties in as many of the schools as possible for the 1967-68 school year. The objective of

the school system is that the pattern of teacher assignment to any particular school shall not be identifiable as tailored for a heavy concentration of either Negro or white pupils in the school. The school system will accomplish faculty desegregation in a manner whereby the abilities, experience, specialties, and other qualifications of both white and Negro teachers in the system will be, insofar as administratively feasible, distributed evenly among the various schools of the system.

B. Dismissals. Teachers and other professional staff members will not be discriminatorily assigned, dismissed, demoted, or passed over for retention, promotion, or rehiring, on the ground of race or color. In any instance where one or more teachers or other professional staff members are to be displaced as a result of desegregation, no staff vacancy in the school system will be filled through recruitment from outside the system unless no such displaced staff member is qualified to fill the vacancy. If, as a result of desegregation, there is to be a reduction in the total professional staff of the school system, the qualifications of all staff members in the system will be evaluated in selecting the staff member to be released without consideration of race or color. A report containing any such proposed dismissals, and the reasons therefor, shall be filed with the State Superintendent of Education.

VII

REPORTS

A. Report on Choice Period. The school system will file with the State Superintendent of Education on or before June 10 of each year a report tabulating by race the number of choice applications and transfer applications received for enrollment in each grade in each school in the system, and the number of choices and transfers granted and the number of denials in each grade of each school. The report will also state any reasons relied upon in denying choice and shall tabulate, by school and by race of student, the number of choices and transfers denied for each such reason.

B. Report After School Opening. The system will file with the State Superintendent of Education within 15 days after the opening of schools for the fall semester of each year a report setting forth the following information:

(1) The name, address, grade, school of choice and school of present attendance of each student who has withdrawn or requested withdrawal of his choice of school or who has transferred after the start of the school year, together with a description of any action taken on his request and the reasons therefor.

(2) The number of faculty vacancies, by school, that have occurred or been filled since the adoption of this plan or the latest report submitted pursuant to this subparagraph. This report shall state the race of the teacher employed to fill each such vacancy and indicate whether such teacher is newly employed or was transferred from within the system. The tabulation of the number of transfers within the system shall indicate the schools from which and to which the transfers were made. The report shall also set forth the number of faculty members of each race assigned to each school for the current year.

(3) The number of students by race, in each grade of each school.

EXPLANATORY LETTER

(School System Name and Office Address)

(Date Sent)

Dear Parent:

All grades in our school system will be desegregated next school year. Any student who will be entering one of these grades next year may choose to attend any school in our system, regardless of whether that school was formerly all white or all Negro. It does not matter which school your child is attending this year. You and your child may select any school you wish.

Every student, white and Negro, must make a choice of schools. If a child is entering the ninth or higher grade, or if the child is fifteen years old or older, he may make the choice himself. Otherwise a parent or other adult serving as parent must sign the choice form. A child enrolling in the school system for the first time must make a choice of schools before or at the time of his enrollment.

The form on which the choice should be made is attached to this letter. It should be completed and returned by June 1, 1967.* You may mail it in the enclosed envelope, or deliver it by messenger or by hand to any school principal or to the office of the Superintendent at any time between May 1 and June 1. No one may require you to return your choice form before June 1 and no preference is given for returning the choice form early.

No principal, teacher or other school official is permitted to influence anyone in making a choice or to require early return of the choice form. No one is permitted to favor or penalize any student or other person because of a choice made. A choice once made cannot be changed except for serious hardship.

* In subsequent years the dates in both the explanatory letter and the choice form should be changed to conform to the choice period.

No child will be denied his choice unless for reasons of overcrowding at the school chosen, in which case children living nearest the school will have preference.

Transportation will be provided, if reasonably possible, no matter what school is chosen. The school board is rerouting buses and writing new rules for assigning students to buses, so that there will be no more overlapping bus routes and students will be assigned to buses without regard to race. (Delete if the school system does not provide transportation.)

Your school board and the school staff will do everything we can to see to it that the rights of all students are protected and that desegregation of our schools is carried out successfully.

Sincerely,

Superintendent

