

State

DISD may appeal in minority issue

United Press International
DALLAS — The Dallas Independent School District likely will appeal the findings of a federal investigation that threatens \$2.7 million in desegregation funds because the system has a disproportionate amount of minority teachers in minority schools.

with their (staffing) guidelines would seriously disrupt the school system."

The only way to bring the system into compliance would be through massive transfers of white teachers to minority schools and minority teachers to predominantly white schools he said.

The school system was given 14 days to appeal or submit a plan to correct the inequities.

A 1976 desegregation order by

U.S. District Judge William M. Taylor Jr. requires DISD to have a teaching staff at least 31 percent black and 8 percent Hispanic. Each school also must be close to the percentages. The school district will be in Taylor's court again on March 16 in another phase of the ongoing desegregation story.

"In 42 (95 percent) of 44 elementary schools enrolling a disproportionate number of black students, there is a higher percentage of black elementary teachers

than in the district average," said the letter from Shirley D. McCune, deputy assistant secretary for equal educational opportunities.

In 23 of 28 disproportionate Hispanic elementary schools, the percentage of Hispanic teachers is more than double the districtwide average, McCune reported. The number of white teachers in 17 of the 37 disproportionate white elementary schools also is higher than the average.

However, DISD spokesman Rodney Davis said Thursday the high number of Mexican-American teachers in predominantly Mexican-American schools is caused by other federal orders requiring bilingual education.

Taylor's order gave DISD the discretion to assign minority teachers in disproportionate numbers if special circumstances exist at a given school.

"It is up to Judge Taylor and not the education department to decide whether we are in compliance with teacher staffing requirements," Wright said.

However, the superintendent admitted it had been pointed out before that the system was in violation.

Wright said he has tried to correct the problem through assignments of new teachers rather than mass transfers of teachers already employed.

Texas House amends job measure

United Press International
AUSTIN — The House gave final approval to a bill that would prevent workers who are fired for misconduct, or leave their jobs voluntarily, from receiving unemployment compensation benefits until they have worked at least six weeks in another job.

The bill, which passed 101-28, was amended to exempt military personnel who finish out their tours of duty and people who move to another city to follow their spouses.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Bill Messer, D-Belton, must be sent back to the Senate, where it was previously passed, for concurrence on the House amendments.

Messer indicated that the Senate sponsor, Sen. Roy Blake, D-Nacogdoches, would agree with the amendments and a conference committee will not be needed to iron out the differences between the two chambers.

Speaker Bill Clayton, who had wanted the bill "toned down" from the Senate version, said he was satisfied with the House version. He said a reasonable compromise had been reached between Messer and opponents of the bill.

The opponents had argued that the bill was unfair in requiring the claimants to secure another job before they got their unemployment benefits.

"This bill is almost ridiculous, it's almost funny," said Rep. Gonzalo Barrientos, D-Austin, one of the opponents.

The House also passed a bill authorizing the state to appropriate \$818,000 to Texas A&M University to cover losses from eight campus fires. About \$600,00 of the appropriation will be for the former Board of Regents Building that burned.

The Senate also approved a bill that would allow citizens to serve out fines at a rate of \$5 per day credit.

Senators also approved a bill by Rep. Carl Parker, D-Port Arthur, giving state employees time off from their jobs to attend precinct,

district and state political conventions.

The Senate had refused to consider the bill Wednesday, but approved it without opposition Thursday after Parker amended it to give the time off only to persons who are duly elected delegates to the conventions.

Sen. John Traeger, D-Seguin, won unanimous Senate approval for his proposal allowing cities to keep records on an accrual basis rather than a cash basis. Traeger said the requirement for cities to keep records on a cash basis damaged their chances of selling municipal bonds, and forced them to pay higher interest rates on the bonds sold.

Student lobby says higher fees a burden

United Press International
AUSTIN — The Texas Student Lobby, backed by a handful of representatives and senators, said today the Legislature should abandon its plans to increase college tuition because of the Reagan administration's cuts in student aid and steadily rising fees at the state schools.

"We are not irresponsible and reactionary students who aren't willing to hand another penny over to the state. We do believe, however, that before Texas taxes its students more, it needs to first prove that money is needed, and it needs to show it has exhausted other options before coming to the students," said Amy Johnson of Commerce, president of the student lobby group which includes members from most state college and university campuses.

Johnson said a Senate study showed higher tuition costs could result in a 5 percent decline in college enrollments, and said such a drop could cause \$40 million in economic losses to cities where state colleges are located.

"Philosophically, we must ask why we would do anything which could lead to a decrease in the number of college-educated Texans," she said. "We believe that Texas should be proud to offer affordable education to its citizens. With increasing fees, housing prices, food costs, and energy prices, an added incentive for Texas students is low tuition."

Inmates to comment on prison reforms

United Press International
HOUSTON — The judge handing a lawsuit for major reforms in the Texas prison system Thursday had an order inviting inmates to comment on a proposed consent decree settling some issues in the case.

U.S. District Judge William Wayne Justice last December found the Texas prison system violated inmate constitutional rights through overcrowding, poor health care, inadequate security, brutality and other problems.

He ordered lawyers for plaintiff inmates, the State of Texas and the Justice Department, which intervened on the side of the inmates, to try to agree on an order detailing the remedies required.

The lawyers agreed on an order covering about one-third of Justice's required reforms and, under rules governing class actions, Justice moved to notify all members of the class of plaintiff inmates, about 30,000 of them.

He directed prison officials to publish the proposed partial de-

creed in prison newspapers read by inmates and also directed them to post the proposed agreed order in legal resource rooms — called "writ rooms" — used by prisoners.

Justice scheduled a hearing April 20 in Houston for lawyers to discuss the proposed partial decree before it becomes final.

In the notice to inmates, the judge cautioned that the proposed consent decree being publicized covered only a portion of the issues in the case and that inmates should not complain about issues not covered.

He said inmates should comment only on the specific issues covered in the partial decree posted.

Justice said the lawyers could not agree on those other issues — a lawyer said about two thirds of the case remained in dispute — and that he will fashion a final decree from opposing proposals submitted by the lawyers.

That decree will be discussed by the parties later.

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