



Charlie Van Zant
Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF CLAY COUNTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

STUDDARD CALLS FOR OUTSIDE INVESTIGATORS TO HANDLE INVESTIGATION

Clay County, Florida – Following a statement from Clay County School Board Chairman Johnna McKinnon cancelling the Special Meeting she previously called to investigate the recent allegations made against Superintendent Charlie Van Zant, veteran School Board Member Carol Studdard is calling for outside investigators to intervene. “Attempting to deal with this issue by allowing the Superintendent to investigate himself gives the perception of a possible cover-up attempt,” said Studdard.

Studdard is referencing the recent allegations raised in an open letter sent to the School Board Members by Dr. Susan Sailor, former Keystone Heights High School Principal. Sailor, a longtime supporter of Van Zant, has accused him of instructing staff to write papers for his Master’s Degree as well as falsely labeling students as ESE students in an attempt to gain additional funds from the State and Federal governments. Mislabeling students as ESE also boosts the District’s graduation rate.

“The School Board was scheduled to take up this issue at our next Regular Meeting on August 18 before Johnna McKinnon removed the Action Item from the Agenda in violation of School Board policy,” said Studdard. “I feel this issue needs to be investigated by State officials, not by our Superintendent and District staff. Under Florida law, School Boards have no authority over elected superintendents. This issue needs to be handled by the Florida Commission on Ethics and the Florida Department of Education. A fair, unbiased investigation by outside sources is critical in order to obtain the truth concerning these allegations.”

For further information please contact Carol Studdard, District 2 School Board Member, at (904) 705-6077.

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