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LOCAL & STATE

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Secretary Of Ed. After 3 Months**

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ARTS & CULTURE

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SEAN MURPHY
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JULIE YOUNG holds a photo of her daughter Michele Mayes, who was fatally shot by her ex-boyfriend in 2017. Mayes' sister, Melissa Lindgren, right, and family friend Paula Cox, left, joined Young at a domestic violence awareness month event hosted by the YWCA in October. PHOTO **WHITNEY BRYEN/OKLAHOMA WATCH**

The Oklahoma nonprofit trained advocates who cared for victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse

NONPROFIT DISSOLVES *from AI*

The Oklahoma nonprofit that trains advocates who care for victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse, lobbies for legislation to protect them and garners millions in federal funds to support them will cease operations next month.

The Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault's grant funds were frozen this month by federal auditors who uncovered misspending by the nonprofit's former director Candida Manion, leaving the nonprofit with \$125,000 — enough to make it through August.

Board members who were brought in to work with auditors to fix the 40-year-old coalition voted unanimously to dissolve it at a special meeting Wednesday.

The coalition certifies advocates who help victims escape their abusers, find housing, apply for jobs, file protective orders and report to police. It employs a lobbyist who assists in writing laws to protect victims and warns legislators if a bill could be harmful to victims. It helps rural shelters find the nearest available bed when their facility is full and provides technical support to crisis centers whose budgets don't afford it.

Without a coalition, Oklahoma will miss out on federal money that supports victim services through grants designed specifically for state coalitions.

Nearly 25,000 incidents of domestic abuse were reported to Oklahoma law enforcement in 2021, the State Bureau of Investigation's most recent crime report shows. Oklahoma has the nation's second-highest rate of women murdered by men, which is twice the national average, according to the Violence Policy Center. A state fatality review board found that 118 Oklahomans were killed in domestic violence incidents in 2021, the same year Manion was fired for misspending the coalition's money.

When the Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault closes its doors, Oklahoma will become the only state without a coalition to support its shelters, crisis centers and victim service programs.

More than 50 programs across the state pay an annual fee of \$1,000 for the coalition's support. Program directors said rural centers with small budgets will be most affected when the coalition shutters.

Coalition staff sent invoices to its

members last week seeking annual dues. On Tuesday, program directors learned of the coalition's demise in an email notifying them of the meeting. The next day, the votes were cast. Three program directors sit on the coalition's board. Two of them were not present for the vote.

Jeri Holmes, an attorney who was hired to restructure the coalition and ensure compliance throughout the audit, said programs were intentionally left out of the loop to diminish liability and deter auditors from trying to recover some of the misspent funds from the victim service providers that the coalition supports. And it wouldn't be the first time that happened.

The coalition misspent \$30,000 from grants awarded in 2009 under the watch of director Marcia Smith. Six years later, the coalition settled its debt by splitting the repayment evenly among 30 member programs, according to a letter from the coalition that accompanied the check provided to federal agents.

"The funds came from donations, which are used to benefit victims of domestic violence and sexual assault," the letter states. "Adding interest to the debt will create additional burden to all our programs and their victim services."

The letter is signed by Manion, who was hired to replace Smith and fired in 2021 after federal auditors found more than \$900,000 improper and irresponsible spending including staff and board member vacations, an Oklahoma Watch investigation revealed. Receipts, invoices, employee reports and other documents discovered in the disorganized paperwork Manion left behind reduced the unallowed costs to \$585,000. This time, the price of reconciliation is too high, Holmes said.

Neither Smith nor Manion nor any of the former board members responsible for their oversight were prosecuted as a result of the misspending.

Since June of 2021, new staff and board members have been working toward a solution with auditors and the federal Office on Violence Against Women, which awarded the misspent grants. Since then, federal agencies have awarded the coalition more than \$2 million. Coalition staff and board members learned Monday that money was frozen by the Office of the

Federal auditors who uncovered misspending by the nonprofit's former director Candida Manion, leaving the nonprofit with \$125,000 — enough to make it through August.

Inspector General, which is conducting the audit, draining the coalition's coffers.

No one on Monday's call knew when the money would be released or when the audit would be finalized, Holmes said.

"You've got to have money to continue and we don't," Holmes said. "So by silence, they kind of starved us."

Holmes said she did not know where the dissolution leaves the audit and many questions linger about how the coalition's closure will affect victim services.

Rural program directors said they are frustrated about the secretive and quick decision to dissolve the coalition without their input.

Ninety miles southeast of Oklahoma City, the Family Crisis Center in Ada answered nearly 700 crisis calls last year and housed 167 victims in its shelter, Director Shelley Battles-Reichle said. She said she was blindsided when she learned that the coalition was dissolving.

The implications plagued Tara Tyler Thursday at the Survivor Resource Network in Ponca City, which served 600 victims and housed 70 women and children in its shelter last year. Tyler is the director and said it will likely be six months before programs like hers feel the effects, but they are coming.

State program directors meet monthly and the topic is already decided for their Aug. 9 meeting. Finding new hosts and funding for advocate training and the lobbyist are priorities.

Directors are preparing for cuts to their state funding this year too, adding to the strain on rural programs. But directors said as long as they can keep their doors open, they'll continue to support victims in their communities.

"We have a few months to figure some things out before this really starts to impact our work on the ground," Tyler said. "But we're going to keep serving clients here and I know the other programs will too no matter what happens."



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

TRIBAL GAMBLING AGREEMENTS AT RISKS

TRIBAL GAMBLING AGREEMENTS *from AI*

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) – Oklahoma's new Republican attorney general accused Gov. Kevin Stitt on Tuesday of failing to follow state law and said he's stepping into a long running legal dispute over tribal gambling agreements Stitt signed in 2020.

In a letter and personal phone call to the fellow Republican, Attorney General Gentner Drummond said he notified Stitt that he's joining the lawsuit to represent the state's interest at the request of House Speaker Charles McCall and Senate President Pro Tempore Greg Treat.

"As you should fully understand, this long running and costly litigation is a direct result of your refusal to follow Oklahoma law," Drummond wrote. "The four tribal gaming compacts you signed were invalid from the start because you did not have the approval or authorization from the Oklahoma Legislature to enter the gaming compacts."

Stitt's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Drummond's action.

The Cherokee, Chickasaw, Citizen Potawatomi and Choctaw nations filed a federal lawsuit in federal district court in Washington over the governor's gambling compacts with four other tribes: the Comanche Nation, the Otoe-Missouria, the Kialegee Tribal Town and the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians. Private law firms hired by Stitt to defend the compacts have already racked up nearly \$600,000 in legal fees, Drummond said.

Stitt entered into those agreements after his failed attempt in 2019 to renegotiate the gambling compacts with all of the Oklahoma-based tribes, seeking a greater share of revenue for the state and arguing that the compacts approved by voters in 2004 had expired. A federal judge ultimately sided with the tribes and said the compacts automatically renewed.

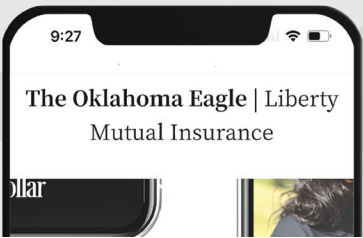
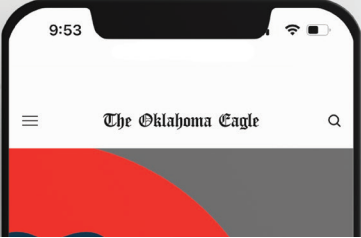
Since then, Stitt's relationship with tribal leaders has continued to worsen, prompting criticism from fellow Republicans about his hostile approach to tribal negotiations. Treat, the Republican leader of the state Senate, said this week lawmakers may consider taking control of negotiating tribal compacts away from the governor.

Casino gambling is a booming industry in Oklahoma, with more than 130 casinos dotting the state, ranging from gas station annexes to resort-style hotel casinos, many of them in border communities, since voters approved a gambling expansion in 2004. The fees the tribes paid to the state for the exclusive right to casino-style gambling totaled nearly \$200 million last year, most of which was earmarked for public schools.

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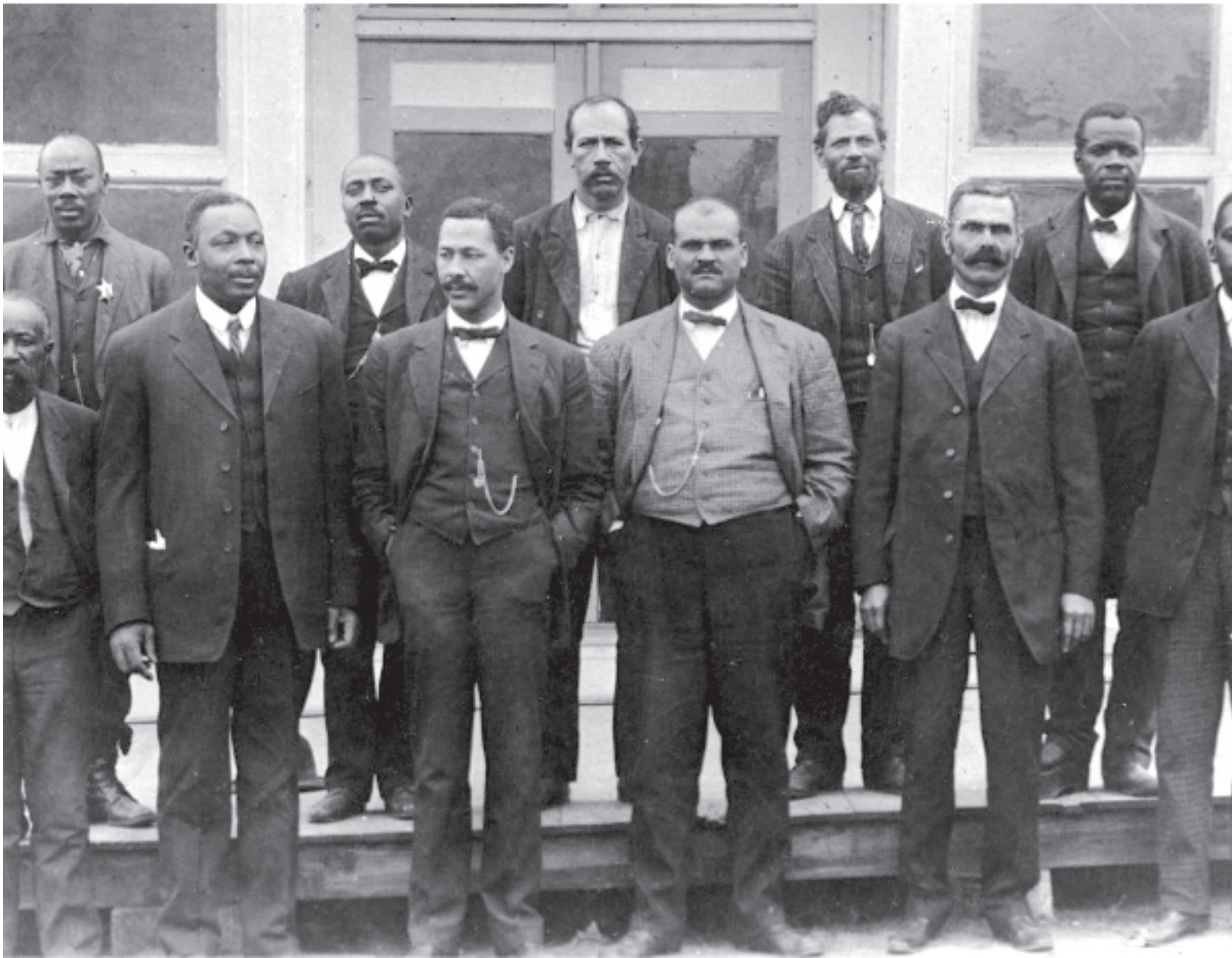
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Boley: An Historic Oklahoma All-Black Town

By LARRY O'DELL, THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF OKLAHOMA HISTORY AND CULTURE

Boley is the largest and most well-known of the more than fifty All-Black towns of Oklahoma and one of only thirteen still existing.



Located halfway between Paden and Castle in Okfuskee County, Boley is the largest and most well-known of the more than fifty All-Black towns of Oklahoma and one of only thirteen still existing. The town, established on land allotted to Creek freedman James Barnett's daughter Abigail, was named after J. B. Boley, a railroad official of the Fort Smith and Western Railway. Founded in 1903 and incorporated in 1905, Boley and the African Americans living in the area prospered for many years. The Boley Progress, a weekly newspaper, began in 1905. The paper and various advertising campaigns circulated through the South and lured many former slaves to the new town. At 1907 statehood Boley sheltered 824 individuals.

By 1911 Boley boasted more than four thousand citizens and many businesses, including two banks and three cotton gins. Booker T. Washington, founder of the National Negro Business League and the Tuskegee Institute, in Alabama, visited the town in 1905 and proclaimed it "the most enterprising and in many ways the most interesting of the Negro towns in the United States." The town supported two colleges: Creek-Seminole College and Methodist Episcopal College. Boley also had its own electrical generating plant, water system, and ice plant. The Masonic Grand Lodge completed a majestic Masonic Temple around 1912. At the time, it was said to be the tallest building between Okmulgee and Oklahoma City.

Like many rural towns, Boley suffered through hard times in the 1920s and 1930s, its population dropping to 1,154 in 1920 and 874 in 1930. By World War II the population stood at 942, and it declined to 573 in 1960 and to 423 in 1980. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, with a population of 1,126, the town was experiencing economic rejuvenation. The number of residents was 1,184 in 2010. Boley still hosts the nation's oldest African American community-based rodeo every Memorial Day weekend. The downtown business district is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR 75001568) and has been designated a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service.

THE OKLAHOMA HISTORICAL SOCIETY is an agency of the government of Oklahoma dedicated to promotion and preservation of Oklahoma's history and its people by collecting, interpreting, and disseminating knowledge and artifacts of Oklahoma.

BOLEY TOWN COUNCIL, 3377.D.2, Oklahoma Historical Society Photograph Collection, OHS.

Featured Last Week



Will Justice Prevail
For Race Massacre Survivors?



Treat Formally Requests
Drummond Intervention



FL ED., Our Ancestors Benefitted
From Being Enslaved

The Oklahoma Eagle

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BEATRICE MITCHELL, a social studies teacher at F.D. Moon Middle School in Oklahoma City, is testing a new curriculum built on encouraging students to engage in civil discourse and celebrate American ideals while also examining darker chapters of history. PHOTO WHITNEY BRYEN/OKLAHOMA WATCH

Based on **Average Daily Attendance**, *Oklahoma was ranked 45th in the nation for per-student expenditures at \$11,852*

TEACHER & PUPIL EXPENDITURES from A2

This fall, public school teachers in Oklahoma will receive pay raises between \$3,000 to \$6,000, depending on how long they have been teaching. These raises will account for \$286 million of Oklahoma’s \$785 million education funding package, agreed on in May.

With the package being the latest in Oklahoma’s education funding, here is a look into how the state’s teacher pay and per-pupil spending has changed over the past few years.

According to the National Education Association’s ‘Ranking of the States 2022 and Estimates of School Statistics 2023’ released in April, Oklahoma ranked 38th nationally for average public school teacher salary at \$54,804. The national average public school teacher salary for 2021-22 was \$66,745.

Final data is not in yet for the 2022-23 school year, but the report estimates that the average Oklahoma teacher will earn \$55,541 in pay and benefits. This would mean a 23% increase in teacher pay over the last 6 years.

However, Oklahoma’s average pay is still over \$10,000 less than the estimate for the national average classroom teacher salary at \$68,469.

Per-pupil expenditures are another area

Oklahoma ranked 38th nationally for average public school teacher salary at \$54,804.



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

in which Oklahoma has consistently ranked low in education. These expenditures are calculated by taking the amount of money a district spends on students during the school year and dividing it by the number of students in the district. This can be calculated using either the number of students counted at enrollment or the average number of students attending school daily, which is often lower.

More spending per student correlates with higher test scores and graduation rates, according to research done by the National Bureau of Economic Research.

In 2021-22, Oklahoma’s per-student spending by fall enrollment was \$10,951, ranking the state 46th nationally. In comparison, the average per-pupil spending nationally was \$15,368. The national average is projected to increase by 4.6 percent to \$16,080 for the 2022-23 school year.

Based on average daily attendance, Oklahoma was ranked 45th in the nation for per-student expenditures at \$11,852 in 2021-22. While the overall ranking was low, this spending showed a 9.5% increase in expenditures from the 2020-21 school year.

As the funding through the new education package is implemented, we will continue tracking the changes in teacher salary and per-pupil expenditures. Any questions or comments on the topic? Reach out via email or direct message.

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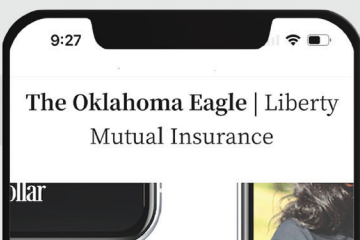
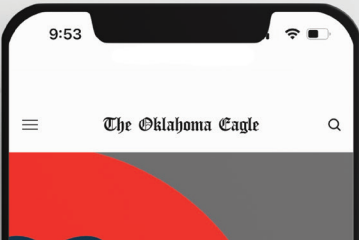




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TPS ACCREDITATION from A2

Please do not make a decision today based on what the accreditation director is saying because there is evidence behind the things that he’s not giving you all, and I would like the opportunity to be able to provide that.

GINA DARBY, president, Infinity Generation Generals

WITH HALF OF TODAY’S

four-hour State Board of Education meeting devoted to 33 speakers during the public comment period, members voted to accept the Oklahoma State Department of Education’s recommendations on a slew of accreditation actions. But the board tabled proposed accreditation votes for Tulsa Public Schools and Infinity Generation Generals, a northwest Oklahoma City private school that held a truncated spring semester amid concerns about its operations.

The state board renews school district and site accreditations each July. Following today’s meeting, nine districts and 18 sites will be accredited with warning for the next year, and three districts and three sites will be placed on probation for the next academic year. (A full list is available at the bottom of this article.)

OSDE also recommended two schools not be accredited. In January, the state board voted to revoke the charter school authorization for Sovereign Community School. On Thursday, the board voted not to accredit the struggling school, which had been created to serve Indigenous children living in the Oklahoma City metro. While OSDE also recommended against accrediting Infinity Generation Generals Preparatory School, a vote on that item was tabled until next month.

Infinity’s president, Gina Darby, appeared before the state board with her attorney on speaker phone to plead with members for a delay in removing her school’s accreditation. At one point, Darby’s attorney called OSDE rules “pathetic.”

“Please do not make a decision today based on what the accreditation director is saying because there is evidence behind the things that he’s not giving you all, and I would like the opportunity to be able to provide that,” said Darby, who cried at times while she spoke to board members. “Just as you tabled Tulsa — I’m not saying that we can’t revisit this, but at least hear our side with our evidence.”

OSDE accreditation standards division program director Ryan Pieper presented the non-accreditation recommendation for Infinity, and he referenced a multitude of compliance issues, including a failure to submit reports to the department in a timely manner and a lack of an accreditation audit for the year.

Pieper said the school did not communicate with its regional accreditation officer from January until June, and he confirmed that the school shut down in January and told its students to go somewhere else. The OKC private school has been located at 5517 NW 23rd St. in a building that formerly housed Windsor Hills Baptist Church.

Board members ultimately tabled votes on Infinity’s and TPS’ accreditations.

Uncertainty lingers for Tulsa Public Schools’ Accreditation

At their meeting in July 2022, Oklahoma State Board of Education members downgraded Tulsa Public Schools’ accreditation to “accredited with warning” following HB 1775 complaints.

The district’s accreditation had come into question after a teacher in the district submitted a complaint to OSDE regarding HB 1775, which banned the teaching of certain concepts about race and gender in Oklahoma public schools.

The complaint, which was obtained by Public Radio Tulsa, stated the teacher was forced to take a professional development training course that included statements the staff member said “shame white people for past offenses.” The training took place in August 2021 and was supplied through a third-party vendor.

Gov. Kevin Stitt and Walters, the one-time secretary of education whom Stitt supported during his run for state superintendent, have been vocal critics of TPS, which stayed closed for an extended period of time during the COVID-19 pandemic and has been the subject of an investigation related to potential embezzlement.

On Thursday, Walters suggested that TPS has a variety of issues that need further consideration before the board votes on

the district’s accreditation. Walters emphasized that all options are being considered for TPS, including removal of accreditation.

“All possible actions are on the table with Tulsa Public Schools. What we have seen is a district that has failed the students, they failed the parents and they failed the teachers there,” Walters told reporters after the meeting. “We are looking at all possible actions with this district to ensure that all state laws or rules are being upheld by that district in a way that benefits those kids. The performance of the school speaks for itself. We are going to take a serious look.”

While he did not go into detail on TPS’ issues, Walters did mention a few broad problems, including the embezzlement investigation and alleged misreporting of finances. Walters called problems with the district “severe” and said TPS is “plagued with scandal.”

Walters’ comments about TPS have sat poorly with district parent Ashley Daly, who regularly drives to Oklahoma City to attend state board meetings and speak during the public comment portion.

“I don’t think Ryan Walters has any room to talk about corruption and stealing money when he is under investigation for the mismanagement of millions of dollars that should have gone to our school students,” Daly said after Thursday’s meeting. “I think it’s unethical and cruel and unprecedented that he is considering trying to remove our accreditation at the beginning of a school year. I don’t think he has any understanding of how that would work for our large community.

“TPS is one of Tulsa’s largest employers, and school is supposed to start in two weeks. To threaten this in this way further risks our children’s capacity to be in school.”

Walters, who has met privately with Daly in the past to hear her concerns, said additional issues with TPS are “open-ended,” he said his department will perform a “deep” dive on the district.

“We also have the issues of some other things that we’ll be bringing up as well that our team has found,” Walters said. “We take accreditation very seriously. We want to ensure that we have turned over every stone.”

The board’s decision to delay the TPS vote comes after Walters held a press conference Friday to advocate for TPS board member E’lena Ashley, who said she was chastised by Superintendent Deborah Gist and board President Stacey Woolley after she said a public prayer during a graduation ceremony.

At that press conference, Walters said Ashley’s religious freedom was violated and mentioned TPS’ accreditation. Gist pushed back on Walters’ TPS criticisms in her own press conference Wednesday, calling the state’s accreditation process “wildly bureaucratic and completely un-transparent” and expressing displeasure with Walters’ rhetoric.

“I see these behaviors, and I feel disappointed. I feel frustrated. I feel sometimes angry, because this is not what kids deserve,” Gist said.

State Board of Education meetings becoming a spectacle

Thursday marked the Oklahoma State Board of Education’s first gathering since physical and verbal confrontations at last month’s meeting resulted in criminal charges being filed. The widely publicized brouhaha between pro-Walters and anti-Walters activists seemed to draw even more members of the public to Thursday’s meeting, which featured a strict capacity limit and “legal observers” with the National Lawyers Guild.

A large crowd of Ryan Walters supporters gathered outside the Oliver Hodge Building sporting signs bearing Walters’ name. Some called for Attorney General Gentner Drummond’s resignation.

As Daly prepared to leave the building Thursday, she received an unexpected escort from security personnel. A regular attendee of state board meetings who has tried to engage with officials — she gifted board members lettuce seeds in the spring — Daly called

TPS ACCREDITATION cont. A7



“What we’ve noticed from preliminary reports that we’ve already received is some districts were failing to comply with the spirit of your order.”

ANDY FERGUSON, OSDE deputy general counsel

TPS ACCREDITATION *from A6*

Thursday’s experience “scary” and “upsetting.”

“There were legal observers from the National Lawyers Guild, and I guess because of things they heard from the crowd, they felt it was important for me to walk out with security for my safety,” Daly said. “It doesn’t seem fair that I was there to see if my child’s school was going to be open, and people were following me. That doesn’t seem fair.”

Beyond the accreditation votes, board members amended their request from an April meeting for a report of district’s diversity, equity and inclusion programs to include more specific language and ensure compliance from districts.

Walters said some districts, including Tulsa, had complied with the letter, but not the spirit, of the request.

“What we’ve noticed from preliminary reports that we’ve already received is some districts were failing to comply with the spirit of your order,” OSDE deputy general counsel Andy Ferguson told board members.

The board also approved new alternate standards for social studies, career readiness and life skills that will align to a new alternate diploma that special education students can receive upon graduation.

Each of these actions took place in the second half of the four-hour meeting. The first two hours almost entirely consisted of members of the public making comments to the board.

In total, 33 people spoke to board members, and their comments ranged from supporting Walters to protesting him to speaking about matters unrelated to Thursday’s meeting.

List of school districts and schools receiving accreditation actions

The following school districts and specific schools received an accreditation action Thursday. The list includes entire districts and specific schools, as designated.

Action: Accredited with warning

- Cherokee Public Schools (elementary, middle and high schools)
- Little Axe High School
- Leach Public Schools
- Kenwood Public Schools
- Moseley Public Schools
- Oaks-Mission High School
- Chickasha’s Lincoln Elementary School
- Terral Public Schools
- Tonkawa Elementary School
- Bokeshe Public schools
- Billings Public Schools (elementary and high schools)
- Morrison Public Schools (elementary, middle and high schools)
- Carlton Landing Academy (charter school)
- Pittsburg Public Schools (elementary and high schools)
- Wanette Public Schools
- Optima Public Schools
- Hardesty Public Schools
- Tulsa PS’ Memorial Middle School
- Tulsa PS’ Monroe Demonstration Middle School
- Tulsa PS’ Daniel Webster High School

Action: On probation

- Hulbert Public Schools
- Western Heights Public Schools
- Straight Public Schools
- KIPP Tulsa (charter school)
- Deborah Brown Charter School
- Sankofa Charter School

OKLAHOMA SCHOOLS

KIPP OKLAHOMA

KIPP Oklahoma is part of the nationally-recognized KIPP network of public schools. All KIPP schools are tuition-free public schools with no admissions requirements.

In 2022, KIPP OKC and KIPP Tulsa joined forces to become KIPP Oklahoma. We are united around a shared commitment: a future without limits.

TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Tulsa Public Schools is an independent school district serving the Tulsa, Oklahoma area in Northeastern Oklahoma. As of 2022, it is the largest school district in Oklahoma, surpassing Oklahoma City Public Schools for the first time since 2013.

BENNETT BRINKMAN became NonDoc’s education reporter in August 2022 after completing a reporting internship. He holds a bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Oklahoma and is originally from Edmond.

Citing ‘Political Environment,’ Katherine Curry Resigns As Secretary Of Education After 3 Months

KATHERINE CURRY RESIGNS *from A1*



KATHERINE CURRY resigned as Oklahoma secretary of education Monday, July 24, 2023. PHOTO NONDOC

FOR THE SECOND TIME THIS YEAR, Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt is looking for a new state secretary of education.

Just three months after Stitt appointed Oklahoma State University professor Katherine Curry to succeed Superintendent of Public Instruction Ryan Walters as the education liaison in his Cabinet, Curry submitted her resignation Monday.

In a press release today, Stitt thanked Curry for her work. “I deeply appreciated Dr. Curry’s service to Oklahoma and its students and families,” Stitt said. “The insight she brought as an educator was invaluable. I wish her all the best as she departs this position and returns to the classroom at Oklahoma State University.”

In the same press release, Curry cited the “political environment” as reason for her return to her former position as an OSU assistant professor.

“It was an honor to be asked by Gov. Stitt to serve Oklahoma,” Curry said in the release. “I valued my time working alongside him and the rest of his Cabinet, but the complexity and political environment have led me to the conclusion that I can better serve Oklahoma’s students and future teachers by dedicating my time and energy to the classroom. I thank Gov. Stitt for this honor and I trust that he will continue to fight for what’s best for students across Oklahoma.”

Reached by phone Tuesday afternoon, Curry reiterated her praise for Stitt and his work on education, but she declined to provide more details about the “political environment” referenced in her statement.

“I am so appreciative of Gov. Stitt for the resources, the time, the energy he’s put into education, and I fully support his goals for making Oklahoma a top-10 state,” Curry said. “And I’ll continue to work toward those goals through my position at Oklahoma State.”

Curry also said she plans to resume teaching at OSU for the fall 2023 semester. She had been on sabbatical while serving as secretary of education.

Curry sent her resignation email (embedded below) to Stitt Monday morning. In it, she acknowledged her short time in office.

“Please accept my sincere apologies for the shortness of my tenure in this role,” Curry wrote. “I recognize that being selected from among the many talented educators in the state was a tremendous honor.”

Stitt had appointed Curry to replace Walters on April 11. Walters had held the position since Sept. 10, 2020, but questions arose about the legality of holding two public positions after he won election to the state superintendent job.

On March 7, Attorney General Gentner Drummond had sent a letter to Treat advising that Walters simultaneously holding the secretary and superintendent positions likely violates a state law prohibiting a person from holding dual offices. The letter, while non-binding, cited multiple state statutes and prior court cases.

“It is my conclusion that Mr. Walters cannot simultaneously serve as secretary of education and state superintendent,” Drummond wrote.

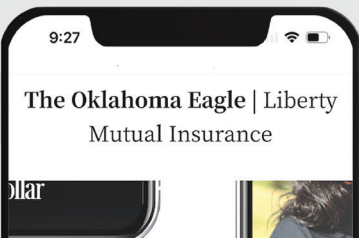
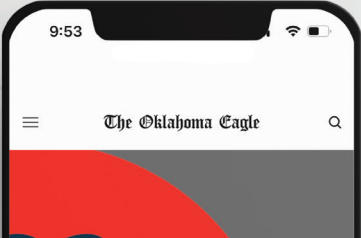
Treat did not release the letter until after Stitt removed Walters as secretary, more than a month later.

The education secretary position draws a maximum salary of \$65,000 and acts as a liaison between the governor’s office and 40 executive entities, including the State Department of Education and the State Regents for Higher Education.

In the press release, Stitt said he will begin the search for a new secretary of education immediately. All Cabinet appointments must ultimately be confirmed by the State Senate.

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Celebrating 50 Years of HIP-HOP

RESHONDA TATE,
Word In Black

HIP HOP *from AI*

*Houston Is Joining The Country In
Celebrating 50 Years Of Hip-Hop.*

It has been five decades since Bronx DJ Kool Here introduced the world to a unique sound of spinning the same record on twin turntables to extend the song’s percussion breaks. It’s an art form that became known as hip-hop.

Over the years, hip-hop has grown to a culture-defining superpower that has seeped into almost every facet of culture, from runway fashion to professional sports.

Celebrations are being held all around the world to uplift and honor every aspect of hip-hop culture. From concerts and tours to battles, competitions, and exhibitions, all of your favorite DJs, MCs, Breakdancers, Beatboxers, Graffiti artists, and more are working to make this golden anniversary year of hip-hop extraordinary.

Fight the Power

The earliest days of hip-hop set the tone for not only the sound but an image, texture, and appeal that have transcended the genre. A party in the Bronx on August 11th, 1973 is widely considered to be the birthplace of hip-hop. That’s when 18-year-old Clive Campbell and his younger sister Cindy hosted a dance party, billed as a back-to-school jam, in the rec room of an apartment complex at 1520 Sedgwick Ave. in the Bronx, New York.

Clive, who spun records under the moniker DJ Kool Here, had previously noticed that dancers responded to the instrumental breaks in songs, especially those heavy with bass and drums. So he set up two turntables and artfully switched between them to isolate and extend the “breakbeats,” never losing the rhythm. Hip-hop was born.

Many said it would be a fad, like so many pop-cultural trends before and after. But in the 50 years since that fateful event, hip-hop has entrenched itself in our society. The art form has since touched every corner of our world and evolved into one of the most significant cultural forces today.

H-town Sound

While much was made about hip-hop’s east coast and west coast sounds, Houston left its own mark on it, most famously through “chopped and screwed” music developed by artists like DJ Screw and Bun B, among others. From the legendary Scarface, whose poignant storytelling and raw lyricism have made him not just the best rapper from Houston, but one of the greatest rappers of all time, to artists like Fat Pat, Mike Jones, and Slim Thug, Trae the Truth and others, who each in their own way have personified the essence of the Houston rap game. These rappers, through their unique voices and distinctive styles, have embodied the soul of H-Town and subsequently impacted the culture far beyond the city limits, influencing entire generation of MCs across the globe.

Among those recognizing the importance of hip-hop on Black culture is The Houston Museum of African American Culture. The museum, in conjunction with the Emancipation Park Conservancy, put together a series of events called “Beats on Screen: A Celebration of Hip-Hop Cinema,” which featured three film screenings in the month of July to celebrate 50 years since the creation of hip-hop.

“I really wanted to do something to commemorate the 50th anniversary of hip-hop,” says HMAAC film curator Jasmine Jones. “So, that was really exciting for me. Hip-hop is, like, the soundtrack to my childhood. And, so, one of the things I wanted to focus on was hip-hop cinema — hip-hop films and classic hip-hop films. This just seemed like a perfect opportunity to celebrate the music, as well as the culture, and the way that culture has infused other mediums.”

While the screens have wrapped, HMAAC is considering extending the series and have more hip-hop movies in August, when hip-hop’s 50th anniversary celebration will take place in New York on Aug. 11.

Hating on Hip-Hop

Over the decades, detractors have come after hip-hop. Everyone from civic groups to women groups to politicians have assailed the “rawness” and “rudeness” of the industry. But the attacks reaffirmed the value to its fans. While critics disdained its language, there was an unrestrained honesty that spoke to younger people. And hip-hop was an underdog, fighting for respect from the makers of rock, jazz and country. But as the genre became more popular than any other, it eventually influenced all those styles that came before it.

Just as significant: Hip-hop sells movies, TV series, clothing, alcohol, sneakers, perfume, hair products and brands of every description — and has made billionaires of its sharpest entrepreneurs. (Jay-Z, Rihanna and Sean “Diddy” Combs are among the richest people in the world, from business ventures encompassing more than just songcraft.)

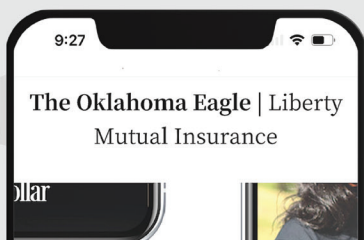
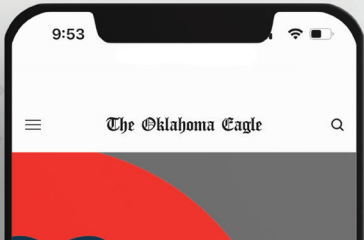
And with a new breed of artists coming up like Megan Thee Stallion, Travis Scott and others, don’t look for the genre to fizzle out any time soon.



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HARVARD LEGACY INVESTIGATION
Probe follows complaint from advocacy groups, citing the consideration of legacy status. **A10**

BUY FROM A BLACK WOMAN
Platform champions the economic success and visibility of Black women-owned businesses. **A11**



WESLEY HAMILTON *Wants You to Know He's Disabled But Not Really*

Its central argument is that legacy admissions at Harvard place applicants of color at a significant disadvantage, contradicting the university's purported commitment to promoting campus diversity.

By **BRIA OVERS**, WORD IN BLACK
WESLEY HAMILTON



We're all likely to experience some form of disability in our lifetimes, whether temporary, progressive, or permanent. It could happen because of age or an accident. It could be mobile, cognitive, or affect the senses, like hearing or vision loss.

"We should approach disability with an open mind, and we should approach [it] with an empathetic heart," Wesley Hamilton, founder and executive director of Disabled But Not Really, says.

Disabled But Not Really is a Kansas City-based nonprofit "bringing adaptive training and other lifestyle enhancements to people living with a disability." Their goal is to help others, but the influence behind its founding is one man's journey to help himself.

"The biggest thing that is defeating within the disabled community is the mindset of the rest of society — how we view disability," Hamilton says.

One in four adults in the United States has a disability. As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention puts it, "Disability impacts all of us."

Hamilton says becoming disabled won't be an "if," but "when."

The Man Behind The Vision
Hamilton, 35, knows a lot about what it's like to become disabled — the ups, the downs, and the in-between. In 2012, at 24 years old, he became paralyzed from the waist down due to gun violence. He's used a wheelchair ever since.

While that experience was foundational, it wasn't

life-defining for Hamilton. He says it was merely the beginning of a journey.

Born and raised on the east side of Kansas City, Missouri, Hamilton is a single father to his 13-year-old daughter Naveah. When he's not being "Superman," as his daughter calls him, he's running DBNR.

His accomplishments don't stop there. He's also a proud award-winning bodybuilder, adaptive CrossFitter, and presented TED Talks in 2019 and 2021. But Hamilton is probably most known for his episode on season 4 of Netflix's hit show Queer Eye and served as a mentor in its most recent season.

He also has a love for travel. He's been to Israel, Los Angeles, and Chicago so far this year to share his story and influence how people view disability.

In reflection, Hamilton tells Word In Black, he was a product of his environment, similar to many young Black American boys and men. In young adulthood, he felt his options for life were to die or be in jail by 21.

But Hamilton knows first-hand that life doesn't always turn out how you think it will.

Disabilities Are Empowering
At the time of the incident that left him paralyzed, he weighed 250 pounds, he says. His weight, along with his new disability, caused health complications. Through several surgeries and transitioning into a new life, doctors recommended bed rest, which lasted for two years.

Despite the challenges and hurdles, his daughter saw his wheelchair and disability as a superpower. While

WESLEY HAMILTON cont. A10



Education Department Launches Investigation into Harvard University’s Legacy Admissions

STACY M. BROWN
Word In Black

HARVARD from A9



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

Following a complaint from advocacy groups that Harvard University was breaking federal law by using legacy admissions, the U.S. Department of Education has taken action. This week, the department formally notified Lawyers for Civil Rights, the organization that filed the complaint against Harvard, that it has initiated a probe into the university’s admissions process.

The Office for Civil Rights within the Education Department is investigating.

While confirming the investigation, an Education Department spokesperson refrained from providing further comments.

The complaint, a comprehensive 31-page document, was filed by the Greater Boston Latino Network and other advocacy groups.

Its central argument is that legacy admissions at Harvard place applicants of color at a significant disadvantage, contradicting the university’s purported commitment to promoting campus diversity.

According to the complaint, Harvard College grants special preferences to many predominantly white students yearly because of their familial ties to the university.

Applicants with relatives who are wealthy donors or Harvard alumni receive preferential treatment from the outset of the admissions process, receiving extra “tips” throughout.

As a result of this practice, known as “Donor and Legacy Preferences,” these students enjoy significantly higher acceptance rates than other applicants, making up as much as 15% of Harvard’s admitted students.

“The students who receive this preferential treatment – based solely on familial ties – are overwhelmingly white,” the complaint stated.

“Nearly 70% of donor-related applicants are white, and nearly 70% of legacy applicants are white. The results of this preferential treatment are substantial.”

For example, over the period 2014–2019, the complaint notes that donor-related applicants were nearly seven times more likely to be admitted than non-donor-related applicants.

Additionally, legacy applicants were almost six times more likely to be admitted than nonlegacy applicants.

The complaint asserts that donor and legacy preferences

disproportionately favor white applicants and systematically disadvantage students of color, including Black, Latinx, and Asian Americans.

“A benefit provided to some applicants but not to others necessarily advantages the former group at the expense of the latter,” the complainants wrote, quoting the U.S. Supreme Court, which struck down affirmative action-based admissions in higher education.

The advocacy groups behind the complaint have urged the Education Department to intervene, calling on the institution to declare that Harvard must discontinue the use of legacy admissions if it intends to continue receiving federal funds.

The complaint maintains that legacy admissions lack educational justification and are awarded without considering the applicants’ credentials or merits. Instead, it solely benefits individuals born into specific families.

Legacy admissions practices at Harvard and other universities have faced increased scrutiny, particularly after a court ruling and comments from President Joe Biden.

The President stated that legacy admissions contribute to expanding privilege rather than promoting equal opportunities.

Moreover, the NAACP has joined in calling for an end to this practice, asserting that it disproportionately favors white applicants.

The complaint concludes that granting a spot to a legacy or donor-related applicant essentially denies that opportunity to another candidate who meets the admissions criteria solely based on their merit.

The advocates argue that removing legacy and donor preferences would result in more students of color being admitted to Harvard.

“This preferential treatment violates federal law,” the complaint stated. “Specifically, because Harvard receives substantial federal funds, it is bound by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its implementing regulations, which forbid practices that have an unjustified disparate impact on the basis of race.”

DBNR is focused on serving survivors of gun violence and their support systems

WESLEY HAMILTON from A9

Hamilton struggled to see things her way, he says his perspective shifted after his daughter told him, “Daddy, you’re getting in your Superman chair.”

“I always use that moment because, my whole life, nobody ever spoke life into me,” Hamilton says. “For me, being so weak and basically having somebody put a cape over me, I was like, ‘Wow, I have to be Superman.’ I literally got up the next day and realized I had to take control of my life.”

In making his life anew, Hamilton attended courses at Johnson County Community College to learn more about nutritional diets and making healthier life and eating choices.

Hamilton says when doctors recommended eating more protein and other dietary changes, he didn’t know what they meant or where to start. Black communities are often located in food deserts, “communities that lack access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables.”

Making a change was worth the effort. After Hamilton’s final surgery, three years after becoming paralyzed, he was 135 pounds. The weight loss, he says, was achieved through mental wellness and nutrition.

Hamilton’s weight loss surprised everyone around him because of common stereotypes of people living with disabilities being unhealthy, weak, and incapable.

“I’m disabled based on society’s perception,” he says. The lack of faith or belief in his ability to make a change is part of the inspiration for starting Disabled But Not Really.

“We can all be disabled and own that based on society’s perceptions, but at the same time, we can be

“The biggest thing that is defeating within the disabled community is the mindset of the rest of society — how we view disability.”

WESLEY HAMILTON, founder and executive director of Disabled But Not Really (DBNR)

so much more.”

Disabled But Not Really

DBNR, while open to everyone, is focused on serving survivors of gun violence and their support systems. Hamilton’s experience is part of the decision to work with this group.

While mental and emotional wellness is vital for this community, physical fitness is just as necessary. Programs like #HelpMeFit, a 12-week class, tackle all of it and more for participants.

The DBNR Wellness Center is a fully accessible gym with adaptive equipment and physical and occupational therapists. Hamilton says the goal is to get folks into a space that compliments their abilities and challenges them.

For him, impacting his community is the most crucial part.

In the future, Hamilton wants to create a state-of-the-art facility that provides physical, mental, and emotional assistance for people with disabilities. In his plans, it will also serve as an educational center for newly disabled people and their support systems.

“We focus on things in a holistic way to help people actually live a longer life and find other ways of healing their body from the inside out,” he says.

Buy From A BLACK WOMAN

H&M Join Forces On Inspire Tour. The platform champions the economic success and visibility of Black women-owned businesses across the nation. LAURA ONYENEHO, Word In Black



NIKKI PORCHER, founder of Buy from a Black Woman PHOTO COURTESY OF NIKKI PORCHER

BUY FROM A BLACK WOMAN *from A9*

NIKKI PORCHER...

a visionary entrepreneur and advocate, is making waves in the business world with her unwavering commitment to empowering Black women entrepreneurs. As the founder of Buy from a Black Woman, Porcher has created a platform that champions the economic success and visibility of Black women-owned businesses across the nation.

Porcher's journey began in 2016 when she recognized the challenges faced by Black women entrepreneurs and their businesses. Driven by a deep passion for economic empowerment and equality, she launched Buy from a Black Woman to address the unique barriers these women face and provide them with the support and recognition they deserve.

Through her organization, Porcher aims to create a thriving ecosystem where Black women-owned businesses can flourish. By offering resources, networking opportunities, and a dedicated platform, she empowers these entrepreneurs to thrive and grow their ventures.

Buy From a Black Woman provides a space for these businesses to showcase their products and services, connect with consumers and build a strong support network within the community.

Porcher's unwavering commitment to her cause has garnered recognition and support from individuals, organizations, and media outlets. Her efforts have been featured in interviews, podcasts, and articles, where she shares her experiences and insights into the challenges and triumphs of Black women entrepreneurs.

In her tireless pursuit of economic equality, Porcher continues to inspire and uplift aspiring and established Black women entrepreneurs alike. Through Buy from a Black Woman, she strives to dismantle systemic barriers, foster economic growth, and create lasting change in the business landscape.

Buy from a Black Woman recently brought its third cross country Inspire Tour in partnership with H&M to Houston's H&M location at the Galleria

Buy from a Black Woman recently brought its third cross country Inspire Tour in partnership with H&M to Houston's H&M location at the Galleria Mall.

Mall, creating a networking hub for local business owners while encouraging the community to support Black women-owned businesses.

The Defender spoke with Porcher to learn more about this partnership and what resources the non-profit has to help Black women business owners.

Defender: Tell us about the person behind the brand and what eventually led to the launch of Buy from a Black Woman.

Nikki Porcher: I'm a Black woman, I'm a friend, a mom, a mentor, a mentee. I also run half marathons as well. Before I started Buy from a Black Woman, I was on my way to do a half marathon in a different state. I actually missed my flight. I was very sad, so I cheered myself up by going shopping. I went to this place, but there were no other Black people there selling anything. It was just me. There were no Black consumers in the space. I thought that was odd. Everything happens for a reason. I asked myself "What is my reason for being here?" Maybe I should tell people about the Black businesses that I know about, because obviously they're not here. I started finding businesses owned by Black women and once a week I would about blog them. I called it the "Buy from a Black Woman" challenge to encourage other people to buy from them. And then it took off! I received so many requests to be featured on it. People were sending money to donate because it was needed and the support was organic.

Defender: What are some of the common challenges Black women in business face that this organization addresses?

Porcher: Funding for sure. That's why the Black Woman Business Grant was created. There were no resources at the time. It was a very radical thing for me in 2016 to be vocal about supporting Black women businesses. Now we see the increase in financial assistance and programming.

Defender: Recently, the Buy from a Black Woman + H&M Tour stopped in Houston. How does it feel to be working with a major partner?

Porcher: This is the third year we are working with H&M. The tour has been happening since 2018. The first two years, the tour was independent. We didn't have a sponsor. It was literally me and my car doing it by myself. I was going up and down the east coast doing events with other Black women business owners. In 2021, H&M came on as a partner and were able to add the in-store popups. It has been amazing. They really stand behind the vision.

Defender: What was your vision behind such a major partnership like this? And why was Houston one of the locations of choice?

Porcher: We go where our community is. When we're looking for places to go in the summer as far as stores and events, we go where we see a strong number when it comes to Black women business owners, where we can spread awareness, recruit, encourage and inspire people to support them. I want to make sure that we are utilizing resources, creating partnerships, and working with those who won't take away from the community we are trying to build. I knew I wasn't going

to work from my car for long, but in order for people to see the vision, I had to put myself out there.

Defender: What is one of your proudest achievements walking in your purpose?

Porcher: Being able to create sustainable income and jobs for Black women business owners. I get to wake up every day and have this as my job full-time. I'm able to hire a team to help me spread the word for Black women. How much of a flex is it to say I work for Black women daily?

Defender: Can you highlight any upcoming initiatives or projects?

Porcher: We are preparing for the Black Women Business Award, which is our award ceremony in November. That's our next biggest thing before we go into holiday season.

Since partnering with H&M in 2021, Porcher and H&M have:

- Hosted 100+ workshops and trainings for Black Women entrepreneurs
- Awarded 45 business grants.
- Helped over 20 business owners through hardship with the Relief Fund stipend.
- Assisted more than 30 Black Women elevate their businesses through accelerator programs.
- Helped over 15 founders receive their MBE certification.

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1559 E Reading St. Tulsa OK
(918) 584-3206

Minister RJ Smith

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Sunday Worship - 10:45am
Monday Worship - 6:00pm
Wednesday Bible Study - 5:00pm

CAPERNAUM MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

1962 N. Sheridan Rd.
(918) 834-4747
Pastor Ruthie I. Howard
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GTOMi

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Elder Julius W. Bland
Sr., Pastor
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Bible Study Wednesday 7 p.m.
Rev. Emanuel L. Collier, Sr. Pastor

Gethsemane Baptist Church

727 East 56th St. North
(918) 425-6613

Dr. W. T. Lauderdale

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Church Services 11:00 a.m.

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Rudisill Regional Library
1520 N Hartford Ave.
Tulsa OK 74106
(918) 409-4899
Pastor Richard and Cher Lyons
Sunday Worship: 1pm
Wed- Healing School: 6:30p - 8p
"The Righteous Are As Bold As A Lion." - Prov.28:1a

SOLID ROCK 7th DAY BAPTIST CHURCH

123 E. 59th St. North
Ph: (918) 425-2077
Pastor Rick Bruner
Sabbath School (Saturday) 9:30-10:45 a.m.
Praise & Worship 11:00 a.m.
Choir Rehearsal Wednesday 6:00 p.m.
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Northside Christ Gospel Church

3101 N. M.L King Jr. Blvd.
Tulsa OK
(918) 625-2374
Sunday School - 10 am
Sunday Morning Worship - 10:45
Sunday Evening Prayer - 7 pm
Sunday Worship - 7:30 pm
Wednesday Prayer - 7:30 pm
Wednesday worship - 8pm
Rev. John W. Anderson

VERNON AME CHURCH

307-311 N. Greenwood Ave.
P: 918-587-1428
F: 918-587-0642
vernonamechurch@sbcglobal.net

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Worship Service 10:00 am
Wednesday Bible Study 6:00 pm
Rev. Dr. Robert R. Allen Turner

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Sunday School 9:40 a.m.
Sunday TV Worship 11:00 a.m.
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2247 N. Peoria
Tulsa, Okla. 74106
(918) 425-1071
Warren Blakney, Minister
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Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.
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"Have Faith In God." Mark 11:22



Pastor Bukky and Wunmi Alabi

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Fax: 918-584-1958
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Worship 11:00 a.m.

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Rev. Sharyn Cosby-Willis,

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5909 N. MORNING DOVE LN, EDMOND: Luxury Home located in Oak Tree on the 12th fairway of the renowned Oak Tree Nation Golf Course. Approx. 3,907 SF 2-Story Home w/3 Bedrooms & 4 Baths. This beautiful home is nestled in the back of The Oaks at Oak Tree which provides a Private Clubhouse, Pool & Tennis Courts. HOA Dues cover yard maintenance, exterior painting, common facilities and around the clock security. Spacious Living Area w/high ceilings, Generous Kitchen w/Granite Countertops & Large Island. Primary Suite located downstairs w/Fireplace, Sitting Area, Golf Course View, En Suite w/Double Vanities, Walk-In Shower, Whirlpool Bathtub & Large Closet. Wood Panelled Office w/Full Bath. Patio has Multiple Sitting Areas, Circular Gas Fire Pit, Built-In Grill & Water Feature. Gift Wrapping/Hobby Room, Above Ground Storm Shelter in Garage, Mosquito Mistling System and New Roof.

3 BEAUTIFUL RESIDENTIAL LOTS

- 4313 ST. AUGUSTINE, YUKON: Located in Canterbury Neighborhood off S. Morgan Rd. Cul-de-Sac Lot.
- 1761 PORTER ST, GUTHRIE: Located off S. Pine St. between E. Industrial Rd & E. Prairie Grove Rd. Approx. 0.83 Acres MOL.
- 1530 SAFARI DR, GUTHRIE: Located off S. Pine St. between E. Industrial Rd & E. Prairie Grove Rd. Approx. 0.47 Acres MOL.

CHOCTAW

14711 SE 23RD ST, CHOCTAW: Approx. 2,477 SF Earth Sheltered Home w/3 Bedrooms, 3 Baths & Approx. 592 SF Attached Garage.

TERMS: 5% down, 30 days to close. Closing cost and title insurance split 50/50. 10% Buyers Premium.

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The Oklahoma Eagle

NOTICE

Published in The Oklahoma Eagle:
July 28 and August 4, 2023.

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
SEALED BIDS FOR
TULSA METROPOLITAN UTILITY AUTHORITY
PROJECT NO. ES 2019-10

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to an order by the Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority, a Public Trust, sealed bids will be received in Room 260 of the Office of the City Clerk, City of Tulsa, 175 E. 2nd Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103 until 8:30 a.m., 25th day of August 2023 for furnishing all tools, materials and labor and performing the work necessary to be done in the construction of the following:

PROJECT NO. ES 2019-10 HENSON ADDITION UN-SEWERED AREA EXTEND SANITARY SEWER

The entire cost of the improvement shall be paid from Account No. 233150016.SewerLines. Sewer.7500.75003122-541101

A MANDATORY Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for Tuesday February 7, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. and will be held through video conferencing with Microsoft Teams, invitation presented on the City of Tulsa's website at this link: <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/engineering-services/construction-bids/>

Attendance at the Pre-Bid Conference is MANDATORY. Bids will not be received from contractors who did not attend the Pre-Bid Conference.

Bids will be accepted by the City Clerk from the holder of valid pre-qualification certificates from the City of Tulsa in one or more of the following classifications: A or D

Drawings, specifications and contract documents for construction of said public improvements of the said project have been adopted by the Mayor of said City.
Copies of same may be obtained at the Office of the Director of Engineering Services for the City of Tulsa, 2317 South Jackson, Room 103, North Building, for a non-refundable fee in the amount of \$50.00 made payable to the Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority by check or money order.

Contract requirements shall include compliance as required by law pertaining to the practice of non-discrimination in employment.

Attention is called to Resolution No. 18145 of August 23, 1988, requiring bidders to commit to the goal of employing on the project at least fifty percent bona fide residents of the City of Tulsa and/or MSA in each employment classification.

Attention is called to Resolution 7404 of November 8, 2006, requiring bidders, their subcontractors and their lower-tier subcontractors to hire only citizens of the United States.

The Authority, acting on behalf of the City of Tulsa, is exempt from the payment of any sales or use taxes, and pursuant to Title 68 O.S. Section 1356(10), direct vendors to the Authority are also exempt from those taxes. A bidder may exclude from his bid appropriate sales taxes which he will not have to pay while acting for and on behalf of the Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority. See Contract Article IIB.

A Certified or Cashier's Check or Bidder's Surety Bond, in the sum of 5% of the amount of the bid will be required from each bidder to be retained as liquidated damages in the event the successful bidder fails, neglects or refuses to enter into said contract for the construction of said public improvements for said project and furnish the necessary bonds within thirty days from and after the date the award is made.

The bidder to whom a contract is awarded will be required to furnish public liability and workmen's compensation insurance; Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds acceptable to the Authority, in conformity with the requirements of the proposed contract documents. The Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds shall be for one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

All bids will be opened and considered by the Bid Committee of said City at a meeting of said Committee to be held in the City Council Room of City Hall, 175 E. 2nd Street, in said City at 9:00 a.m. on the 25th day of August 2023.

Dated at Tulsa, Oklahoma, this 28th day of July 2023.

(SEAL)
Rick Hudson, Chairperson
Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority

NOTICE

Published in The Oklahoma Eagle:
July 28 and August 4, 2023.

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
SEALED BIDS FOR
PROJECT NO. 2037B0232A

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to an order by the Mayor of the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, sealed bids will be received in Room 260 of the Office of the City Clerk, City of Tulsa, 175 E. 2nd Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103 until 8:30 a.m. the 25th day of August, 2023 for furnishing all tools, materials and labor and performing the work necessary to be done in the construction of the following:

PROJECT NO. 2037B0232A – Arterial Bridge Rehabilitation for Bridge 232A over Berryhill Creek

The entire cost of the improvement shall be paid from Account No. 2037B0232A.Bridges. BridgMR.4282.42823122-541107 2037B0232A. Bridges.BridgMR.4281.42813122

A MANDATORY Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for Monday, August 7, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. and will be held through video conferencing with Microsoft Teams, invitation presented on the City of Tulsa's website at this link: <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/engineering-services/construction-bids/>

Attendance at the Pre-Bid Conference is MANDATORY. Bids will not be received from contractors who did not attend the Pre-Bid Conference.

Bids will be accepted by the City Clerk from the holders of valid pre-qualifications certificates from the City of Tulsa in one or more of the following classifications: A or C.

Drawings, specifications and contract documents for construction of said public improvements of the said project have been adopted by the Mayor of said City. Copies of same may be obtained at the Office of the Director of Engineering Services at the City of Tulsa Engineering Services, 2317 South Jackson, Room 103, North Building, for a non-refundable fee in the amount of \$50.00 made payable to the City of Tulsa by check or money order.

Contract requirements shall include compliance as required by law pertaining to the practice of non-discrimination in employment.

The overall aspirational Small Business Enterprise utilization goal for this project is ten (10) percent.

Attention is called to Resolution No. 18145 of August 23, 1988, requiring bidders to commit to the goal of employing on the project at least fifty percent bona fide residents of the City of Tulsa and/or MSA in each employment classification.

Attention is called to Resolution 7404 of November 8, 2006, requiring bidders, their subcontractors and their lower-tier subcontractors to hire only citizens of the United States.

The City of Tulsa itself is exempt from the payment of any sales or use taxes, and pursuant to Title 68 O.S. Section 1356(10), direct vendors to the City are also exempt from those taxes. A bidder may exclude from his bid appropriate sales taxes, which he will not have to pay while acting for and on behalf of the City of Tulsa.

A Certified or Cashier's Check or Bidders Surety Bond, in the sum of 5% of the amount of the bid will be required from each bidder to be retained as liquidated damages in the event the successful bidder fails, neglects or refuses to enter into said contract for the construction of said public improvements for said project and furnish the necessary bonds within thirty days from and after the date the award is made.

The bidder to whom a contract is awarded will be required to furnish public liability and workmen's compensation insurance; Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds acceptable to the City of Tulsa, in conformity with the requirements of the proposed contract documents. The Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds shall be for one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

All bids will be opened and considered by the Bid Committee of said City at a meeting of said Committee to be held in the City Council Room of City Hall in said City at 9:00 a.m. on the 25th day of August 2023.

Dated at Tulsa, Oklahoma, this 21st day of July 2023.

(SEAL)
Christina Chappell
City Clerk

NOTICE

Published in The Oklahoma Eagle:
July 28 and August 4, 2023.

NOTICE TO BIDDERS
SEALED BIDS FOR
PROJECT NO. 2036N6035Z & 2037B0322Z

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to an order by the Mayor of the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, sealed bids will be received in Room 260 of the Office of the City Clerk, City of Tulsa, 175 E. 2nd Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103 until 8:30 a.m. the 25th day of August, 2023 for furnishing all tools, materials and labor and performing the work necessary to be done in the construction of the following:

PROJECT NO. 2036N6035Z & 2037B0322Z NON-ARTERIAL STREET REHABILITATION MAINTENANCE ZONE 6035

The entire cost of the improvement shall be paid from Account No. 2036N6035Z.Streets. NArtRhb.4282.42823122-541106 2036N6035Z.Streets. NArtRhb.4283.42833122-541106

A MANDATORY Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled for Monday, August 7th, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. and will be held through video conferencing with Microsoft Teams, invitation presented on the City of Tulsa's website at this link: <https://www.cityoftulsa.org/government/departments/engineering-services/construction-bids/>

Attendance at the Pre-Bid Conference is MANDATORY. Bids will not be received from contractors who did not attend the Pre-Bid Conference.

Bids will be accepted by the City Clerk from the holders of valid pre-qualifications certificates from the City of Tulsa in one or more of the following classifications: A or C.

Drawings, specifications and contract documents for construction of said public improvements of the said project have been adopted by the Mayor of said City. Copies of same may be obtained at the Office of the Director of Engineering Services at the City of Tulsa Engineering Services, 2317 South Jackson, Room 103, North Building, for a non-refundable fee in the amount of \$50.00 made payable to the City of Tulsa by check or money order.

Contract requirements shall include compliance as required by law pertaining to the practice of non-discrimination in employment.

The overall aspirational Small Business Enterprise utilization goal for this project is ten (10) percent.

Attention is called to Resolution No. 18145 of August 23, 1988, requiring bidders to commit to the goal of employing on the project at least fifty percent bona fide residents of the City of Tulsa and/or MSA in each employment classification.

Attention is called to Resolution 7404 of November 8, 2006, requiring bidders, their subcontractors and their lower-tier subcontractors to hire only citizens of the United States.

The City of Tulsa itself is exempt from the payment of any sales or use taxes, and pursuant to Title 68 O.S. Section 1356(10), direct vendors to the City are also exempt from those taxes. A bidder may exclude from his bid appropriate sales taxes, which he will not have to pay while acting for and on behalf of the City of Tulsa.

A Certified or Cashier's Check or Bidders Surety Bond, in the sum of 5% of the amount of the bid will be required from each bidder to be retained as liquidated damages in the event the successful bidder fails, neglects or refuses to enter into said contract for the construction of said public improvements for said project and furnish the necessary bonds within thirty days from and after the date the award is made.

The bidder to whom a contract is awarded will be required to furnish public liability and workmen's compensation insurance; Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds acceptable to the City of Tulsa, in conformity with the requirements of the proposed contract documents. The Performance, Statutory, and Maintenance bonds shall be for one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

All bids will be opened and considered by the Bid Committee of said City at a meeting of said Committee to be held in the City Council Room of City Hall in said City at 9:00 a.m. on the 25th day of August 2023.

Dated at Tulsa, Oklahoma, this 19th day of July 2023.

(SEAL)
Christina Chappell
City Clerk

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