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U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

## 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre: AN ORGANIZED ASSAULT

GARY LEE, The Oklahoma Eagle **A2**



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### DOJ Report Analysis

JOHN NEAL, The Oklahoma Eagle

The Cold Case Unit of the U.S. Department of Justice has released its report on the Tulsa Race Massacre more than one hundred years after the event.

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## Second ethics probe examines Ryan Walters for social media, political activity

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# 1921



African American people amongst ruins of houses and destroyed property in Tulsa, Oklahoma, after the Tulsa Race Massacre, also called Tulsa Race Riot, when a white mob attacked the predominantly African American Greenwood neighborhood of Tulsa, Oklahoma. PHOTO LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

DOJ Report

## US Justice Department: 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre was an organized assault

GARY LEE  
The Oklahoma Eagle

*The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre was a coordinated military style attack that white Tulsans launched against Tulsa's Black Greenwood community. The Tulsa Police Department was instrumental in helping organize the widescale destruction of the city's Black community and the bloody assault on Black citizens. Those were the key findings of a comprehensive U.S. Department of Justice Report released on January 10, 2025.*

Cont. A3, DOJ Report



PHOTO LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Rustic structure with wood sides and canvas roof built to house people displaced by the Tulsa Race Massacre, also called Tulsa Race Riot, when a white mob attacked the predominantly African American Greenwood neighborhood of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

## DOJ Report

# An organized blood assault on Tulsa's Greenwood District

From A2

The 124-page report, unveiled in releases to news outlets across the country on January 10 and at a press conference by DOJ officials at Vernon AME church on January 11, was the first time that the U.S. government has provided a through detailed accounting and assessment of the bloody events of the late May and early June 1921 in Tulsa.

The DOJ's report was powerful in its detail and its condemnation of the perpetrators.

"The Tulsa Race Massacre stands out as a civil rights crime unique in its magnitude, barbarity, racist hostility and its utter annihilation of a thriving Black community," Kristen Clarke, assistant attorney general for civil rights, said in a statement. "In 1921, white Tulsans murdered hundreds of residents of Greenwood, burned their homes and churches, looted their belongings and locked the survivors in internment camps."

While sweeping in scope, the report provided few new insights or information about the massacre beyond the coverage in other material, documents, research and books published over the years.

Although it confirmed the involvement of

“

**The Tulsa Race Massacre stands out as a civil rights crime unique in its magnitude, barbarity, racist hostility, and its utter annihilation of a thriving Black community.**

**Kristen Clarke**, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division, United States Department of Justice

Tulsa police and thousands of white Tulsans in organizing and executing the blood assault on Tulsa's Greenwood District, the report concluded that no one could be held criminally responsible today for the violent acts.

The reason that prosecutions are not possible, the report said, is that the statute of limitations on prosecutions had expired, and no perpetrators involved in the massacre are still living.

"From the beginning of that effort, it has been clear that no avenue of prosecution now exists for these crimes—the youngest potential defendants would today be more than 115 years old, and the relevant statutes of limitations have long since expired," the report said. "Nevertheless, as the federal government's first thorough reckoning with this devastating event, our resulting review officially acknowledges, illuminates, and preserves for history the horrible ordeals of the massacre's victims."

### Evidence of Hate Crimes

However, if contemporary civil rights laws were in effect in 1921, the report said, federal prosecutors could have pursued hate crime charges against public officials and private citizens.

During the review of materials related to the massacre, the DOJ discovered a report of the events documented by a federal official shortly after the events of the massacre. In that report, the official dramatically underplayed the massacre. Clarke stated that "The historical reckoning for the massacre continues."

In the fall of 2024, Tulsa attorney Demario Solomon Simmons petitioned the U.S. Justice Department to investigate the massacre. Solomon-Simmon's request came after the Oklahoma Supreme Court ruled that under existing statutes no remuneration could be given to the survivors or descendants of victims of the race massacre. Solomon-Simmons has long represented the survivors and descendants of the massacre.

The Justice Department launched its investigation under the Emmitt Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act. That statute allows the agency to probe crimes that result in death that occurred before 1980. In pursuing their research, DOJ investigators spoke with survivors and their descendants and reviewed firsthand accounts of the massacre.

The DOJ also found in its files an informal review by the Justice Department's Bureau of

Cont. A5, DOJ Report

## DOJ Report Analysis

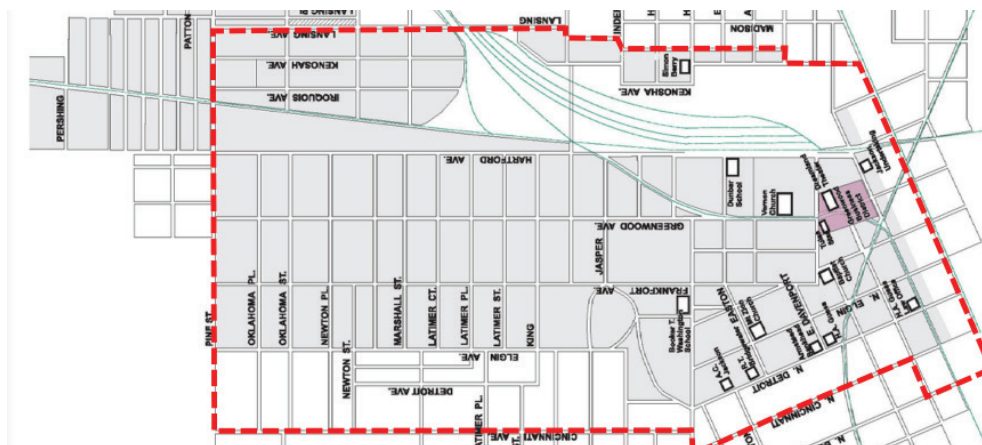
# Tulsa Race Massacre Report: "Painful and Dissatisfying"

**JOHN NEAL**  
The Oklahoma Eagle

The report, presented in January 2025 at a press conference in Tulsa, rehashes much of what historians have documented and what Greenwood residents already knew about the bloody events that occurred in late May and early June in Tulsa. At the same time, it vividly reveals how law enforcement and other government officials actively participated in the destruction and obstructed reconstruction of Greenwood. The department described the report, as yielding "a painful and dissatisfying outcome."

For the first time, the report makes public note of the Department of Justice's 1921 investigative document that DOJ officials said was "discovered" in their own files. The document that the agent wrote the time claimed racial animus did not cause the event, that Black men were responsible, and its white "perpetrators had not violated any federal laws."

The new report self-congratulates itself



**African American Sections of Tulsa, 1921** (Oklahoma Historical Society) Shaded sections of this map, produced by the Oklahoma Historical Society for the 2001 Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot, identify the extent of African American sections in Tulsa by 1921. Greenwood was bounded roughly by Pine Street (north), Lansing Avenue (east), Archer Street (south) and Detroit and Elgin avenues (west). Boundaries of the current study are indicated in red. SOURCE MAP DERIVED FROM A REPORT BY THE OKLAHOMA COMMISSION TO STUDY THE TULSA RACE RIOT OF 1921, 2001, PAGE 89

as the "federal government's first thorough reckoning of the event." Still, it concludes that no legal remedies exist to prosecute the assailants or provide relief to victims or their descendants.

However, the report lays to rest the often-

made claim that the race massacre was the result of spontaneous mob violence, and that government officials and law enforcement acted in good faith to quell the "riot", fairly treat the victims, and hold the perpetrators accountable.

### Law Enforcement

The report speculates the original goal of law enforcement may have been to establish "a defensive bulwark against the anticipated incursion by Black men." To accomplish this, law enforcement sought to "cordon off Greenwood" and began patrolling streets in the white portion of the community.

In the process, the local police deputized hundreds of men, "many of whom had been advocating for a lynching and had been drinking." Some were likely from out of town. Greenwood residents reported men wearing law enforcement badges doing the arson and murders.

Later, with the assistance of these special deputies, "the police actively coordinated the invasion of Greenwood," destroying 35 city blocks and killing hundreds. In the aftermath, they disarmed Black resident victims and herded many into detention encampments under armed guard.

The report adds, "As fires consumed Greenwood, many Black families fled for their lives. White residents chased them

Cont. A7, DOJ Report Analysis

# Taft: An Historic Oklahoma All-Black Town

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



The All-Black town known as Taft started as the community of Twine, which had a post office by 1902. Taft, located eight miles west of Muskogee, in Muskogee County is one of more than fifty All-Black towns of Oklahoma and one of only thirteen still existing. The town name honored William H. Twine, a resident who moved away and edited the Muskogee Cimeter. In 1904 citizens named the town Taft in honor of then Secretary of War (later President) William Howard Taft. The settlement developed in the Creek Nation on land allotted to Creek Freedmen.

Early in the town's history the citizens promoted their new community throughout the South. The Reaves Realty Company advertised Taft as the "fastest growing Colored community in Oklahoma." Taft had two newspapers, the Enterprise and the Tribune. The first mayor,

Charlie Ford, owned Ford's Cotton Gin, and W. R. Grimmitt operated a sawmill northwest of town. Before 1910 the community supported three general stores, one drugstore, a brickyard, a soda pop factory, a livery stable, a gristmill, a lumberyard, two hotels, a restaurant, a bank, and a funeral home.

Educational and state-agency facilities have always been important economic activities. Halochee Institute, founded in 1906, was the first of several educational institutes to locate there: W. T. Vernon School (1908), the Industrial Institute for the Deaf, Blind, and Orphans of the Colored Race (1909), Moton High School, and the State Training School for Negro Girls followed Halochee. In 1934 the Taft State Hospital for the Negro Insane was established. The state later placed two state penitentiaries in Taft: Dr. Eddie Warrior Correctional Center, for women, and Jess Dunn Correctional Center, for

men.

From a population of 250 in 1907 Taft grew to 690 by 1937 and then slowly declined; by 1990 the population was four hundred. Taft City Hall is listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR 84003330). The Reeder Walker House and St. Paul Baptist Church are listed in the Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory. In 1973 the town elected Lelia Foley-Davis as mayor, making her the nation's first female African American mayor. Davis stepped down in 1989 but was reelected in 1999. Taft reached its peak of population at 772 in 1940 but dropped to a low of 386 in 1960. After rebounding to 525 in 1970, it declined to 400 in 1990. At the approach of the twenty-first century Taft exhibited a strong economy. The 2000 census counted 349 residents, and the 2010 census counted 250. In April 2020 the census counted 173 residents.

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.

Taft Industrial School (4071, Frederick S. Barde Collection, OHS).

## Featured Last Week



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Trump Administration Has Started The Campaign Against Immigrants



For Some Oklahomans, Eviction is a Death Sentence

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## A pursuit of justice and truth



◀ Furniture in street during race massacre Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1921  
PHOTO ALVIN C. KRUPNICK CO., TULSA, OKLA.  
RETRIEVED FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Food distribution after Tulsa, Oklahoma, race massacre  
PHOTO ALVIN C. KRUPNICK CO., TULSA, OKLA.  
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### DOJ Report

From A3

Investigation, the precursor to the F.B.I. In that report, made within days after the 1921 events, the agency asserted that the riot was not the result of “racial feeling,” and suggested that Black men were responsible for the massacre.

“The events of May 31 and June 1, 1921, were horrific,” Clarke said. “If they happened today, the federal government would have authority to investigate all participants (those employed by the city and those who were private residents of Tulsa) and to charge anyone who committed or conspired to commit any of the offenses described above. But no federal hate crime laws existed then, and the existing civil rights laws were narrowly construed and rarely charged.”

However, Clarke said, “the historical reckoning for the massacre continues”

“This report reflects our commitment to the pursuit of justice and truth, even in the face of insurmountable obstacles. We issue this report with recognition of the courageous survivors who continue to share their testimonies, acknowledgement of those who tragically lost their lives, and appreciation for other impacted individuals and advocates who collectively push for us to never forget this tragic chapter of America’s history.”

The report repeatedly underscored how well white Tulsans organized the attack.

“It was not a wild and disorderly mob,” the report said, “but an organized force that invaded Greenwood.”

“When police and guardsmen initially divided men into companies, unidentified officials may have believed they were defending white Tulsa from the “Negro uprising” that whites mistakenly believed was underway. In other words, the original goal may have been to have companies patrol streets and serve as a defensive bulwark against the anticipated incursion by Black men,” the report continued.

“However, at some point in the early hours of June 1, a different plan

evolved. The companies did not merely stand guard to prevent Black men from coming into the white

section of Tulsa; instead, they made plans to invade Greenwood.”

“Bureau of Investigation records corroborate the theory that law enforcement participated in planning a raid on Greenwood and that the invasion into the city was not an out-of-control attack of a lawless mob,” the report found.

The survivors’ reaction was broadly shared

### Tulsans expressed widespread disappointment with the DOJ’s report.

**The last two living survivors of the massacre,** Lessie Benningfield Randle and Viola Fletcher, both 110, praised the DOJ’s efforts to expose the truth. But in a joint statement, they expressed disappointment in the report’s failure to hold institutions accountable.

“While it hasn’t been easy for us to relive the pain, we are relieved to see one of the biggest cover-ups in American history come crashing down,” Randle and Fletcher said in a joint release.

“Still, after meeting with us during the probe, DOJ investigators released a report that falls heartbreakingly short,” they continued. “The DOJ confirms the government’s role in the slaughter of our Greenwood neighbors but refuses to hold the institutions accountable under federal law. Justice is not saying to survivors that the entities that ran us out of town, hindered our rebuilding efforts, and erased us from history are absolved of their crimes. Justice is holding guilty parties to account so that the community can heal.”

among many Tulsans. Members of Tulsa’s Black community, including descendants of the victims of the race massacre, expressed particular disappointment. Many had looked to the DOJ to provide a ray of hope following The Oklahoma Supreme Court’s June 2024 rejection of an appeal by the race massacre survivors for reparations. The Court ruled that the plaintiff’s grievances about the destruction of the Greenwood district, although legitimate, did not fall within the scope of the state’s public nuisance statute.

Researchers for the DOJ report conducted a detailed probe of the role that Tulsa police played in the massacre. “We have found no evidence that, after deputizing the white men, the police took steps to ensure the newly minted deputies acted responsibly. Unabated by police, one of the first things these special deputies did was to break into hardware stores and pawnshops in a search for weapons, setting an example of lawless conduct from the start.

“Moreover, instead of instructing everyone to take steps to preserve life and safety, evidence suggests that at least some (unidentified) members of law enforcement told the newly commissioned deputies to use their guns” to shoot Blacks, the report said.

“Later, the police actively coordinated the invasion of Greenwood,” the report concluded. “The papers named Police Commissioner Adkison and Inspector Daley as the officials primarily responsible for organizing white men into companies.”

The report also pinpoints the role that the National Guard played in further destabilizing the massacre. “The primary role of the National Guard in the massacre was to subdue and capture Black men and take them into custody,” the report said. “This had the effect, intended or not, of facilitating the burning and looting of unprotected Black homes.

The report examined the options for federal prosecution and found that, at this stage, none are available.

However, the report added, “that conclusion in no way negates the horror, the depravity, or the bigotry reflected in the massacre. Nor does it impugn the reality and intensity of the trauma that has reverberated across generations or the other enduring effects of extinguishing a thriving community.

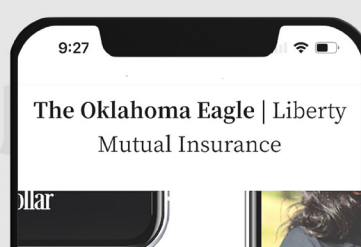
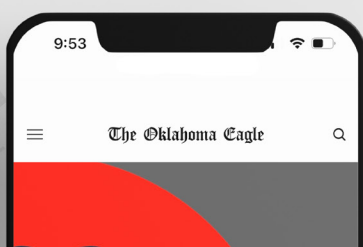
“That is why, outside the narrow confines of federal criminal law enforcement, the reckoning for this atrocity continues. We hope that this report is useful in that process.”

**1921 Tulsa Race Massacre**  
The Tulsa race massacre, also known as the Tulsa race riot or the Black Wall Street massacre, was a two-day-long white supremacist terrorist massacre that took place between May 31 and June 1, 1921, when mobs of white residents, some of whom had been appointed as deputies and armed by city government officials, attacked black residents and destroyed homes and businesses of the Greenwood District in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The event is considered one of the worst incidents of racial violence in American history. The attackers burned and destroyed more than 35 square blocks of the neighborhood—at the time, one of the wealthiest black communities in the United States, colloquially known as “Black Wall Street.”

**Gary Lee** is the managing editor and a key contributor for The Oklahoma Eagle, a stout advocate for the African American community and those that champion equity.

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## Greenwood Project

# Tulsa Attorney Unveils Plan To Honor Race Massacre, Survivors, Victims

KIMBERLY MARSH  
The Oklahoma Eagle

**T**ulsa attorney Damario Solomon-Simmons has released a new set of requests to bring justice for the survivors and descendants of victims of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre. Solomon-Simmons, a high-profile advocate for Greenwood, has represented the interests of victims of the massacre for over two decades.

The details of the requests are outlined in The Greenwood Project, a plan Solomon-Simmons created and announced on Jan. 17 in a regular meeting of the City of Tulsa's Beyond Apology Commission.

Solomon-Simmons presentation of The Greenwood Project came one week after the U.S. Department of Justice concluded a review and evaluation of thousands of documents related to the massacre. The report found that the "barbaric annihilation" of a thriving Black Greenwood was orchestrated by city law enforcement and public officials rather than an uncontrolled mob. Despite the findings, the DOJ declined to pursue prosecution. The decision was based on several factors, including the expiration of the statute of limitations for such cases, the absence of civil rights laws in place at the time to charge a crime, and the fact that there are no perpetrators still alive.

Simmons petitioned the DOJ to seek a federal investigation in July 2024. He was acting as the representative of the two living survivors of the race massacre, Lessie Benningfield Randle, 109, and Viola Ford Fletcher, 110, and of the descendants of massacre victims. Solomon-Simmons urged the DOJ to undertake prosecution pursuant to the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crimes Act.

The DOJ prosecutor who received Simon's request downgraded the DOJ's response to Simon's petition from an investigation to a review and evaluation of thousands of documents.

"We've been failed now by the Tulsa County courts," Solomon-Simmons told the Beyond Apology Commissioners.

"We've been failed by the Oklahoma Supreme Court...the 10th Circuit federal court, the U. S. Supreme Court, the state legislature, the U. S. Congress, the governor's office, and now we're still standing in front of the city saying that you have to make this right, because in the day, City you did this."

Solomon-Simmons said six types of reparations are available to victims and families. He is requesting 13 separate actions of the City of Tulsa as the entity responsible for the massacre 105 years ago, the destruction of 1,500 properties, the cause of 300 deaths, and leading 3,000 residents to flee their community in terror. Simmons provided the list of possible reparations to Tulsa Mayor Monroe Nichols. He then publicly presented The Greenwood Project to the Beyond Apology Commission.

The list of reparations Solomon-Simmons requested is as follows:

- Immediate cash payments to the two living survivors, Lessie Benningfield Randle and Viola Ford Fletcher.
- Establish a Victims Compensation Fund for verified massacre descendants. "We know the names and addresses and what they lost."
- Establish a grant program for surviving entities, such as Vernon AME Church and Booker T. Washington High School.
- Establish a verified descendants small

**We've been failed by the Oklahoma Supreme Court... the 10th Circuit federal court, the U. S. Supreme Court, the state legislature, the U. S. Congress, the governor's office, and now we're still standing in front of the city saying that you have to make this right, because in the day, City you did this.**

### 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre

The Tulsa race massacre, also known as the Tulsa race riot or the Black Wall Street massacre, was a two-day-long white supremacist terrorist massacre that took place between May 31 and June 1, 1921, when mobs of white residents, some of whom had been appointed as deputies and armed by city government officials, attacked black residents and destroyed homes and businesses of the Greenwood District in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The event is considered one of the worst incidents of racial violence in American history. The attackers burned and destroyed more than 35 square blocks of the neighborhood—at the time, one of the wealthiest black communities in the United States, colloquially known as "Black Wall Street."



Damario Solomon-Simmons, attorney, founder and executive director, Justice for Greenwood.

PHOTO JUSTICE FOR GREENWOOD

- business support fund.
- Return Stolen Land. Simmons called for a land audit to determine how the City came to own property. If it was taken over after the massacre, it should be returned to the family or families that owned it or pay them the fair market value, he said.
- Establish a Scholarship Program for verified massacre descendants, both in-state residents and verified descendants who live outside of Oklahoma but want to attend school in Tulsa.
- Facilitate the building of a level one trauma center hospital in north Tulsa. "Right now, people cannot get proper medical care in Greenwood and north Tulsa because there is no hospital to provide the services that this community needs," Solomon-Simmons said. The city could include a hospital in an upcoming public improvement funding package to build the Dr. A.C. Jackson Memorial Hospital, like the funding provided for other buildings, such as the BOK Center.
- Establish employment preference for verified massacre descendants seeking employment within the City of Tulsa.
- Establish a contracting preference for verified massacre descendants bidding on any City of Tulsa contract.
- Grant verified massacre descendants' immunity from all City of Tulsa taxes, fees, assessments, and/or utility expenses. "If you are a descendant, you've been owed millions and millions and millions of dollars for the last 103 years, yet you've been paying city taxes, fees, utilities to an entity that owes you money," Solomon-Simmons said. "You should be immune for some period of time for those fees, utilities, and expenses. It's the law. We call it equitable relief," he added.
- Declare June 1 an official city holiday for appropriate Massacre commemoration activities.
- Release all records related to the massacre. "We've been fighting for five years to get access to legal records related to the massacre. Just give us the records. It's more than legal. It helps us complete a clear picture about the massacre," Simmons said.
- Conduct a formal and transparent criminal investigation of the Massacre with special emphasis on the known murder victims. Solomon-Simmons referenced legal precedent in Palm Springs, Calif., which created a \$27 million reparations package for individuals, known as Section 14 victims, whose homes were razed and

burned in a brutal urban renewal project in the 1950s and 1960s. The package includes nearly \$6 million in direct payments to victims. There is a victim compensation fund in Oklahoma for the survivors of the 1995 terrorist bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah building in Oklahoma City.

All these requests are consistent with providing reparations to compensate for public harm, not acts of racism. Simmons pointed out that several City of Tulsa projects already underway - such as the Greenwood/Kirkpatrick Heights Revitalization Plan and the Evans FinTube industrial development site - that could legally provide reparations for massacre survivors and descendants.

According to the Brookings Institute, a 2018 article in the American Journal of Economics and Sociology estimates the direct financial impact of the 1921 massacre to be around \$150 million. "The additional loss of other assets, including cash, personal belongings, and commercial property, might bring the total to over \$200 million (based on the dollar's value in 2018)."

In a Jan. 11 news conference announcing the U.S. Department of Justice findings, Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke said, "The Tulsa Race Massacre stands out as a civil rights crime unique in its magnitude, barbarity, racist hostility and its utter annihilation of a thriving Black community."

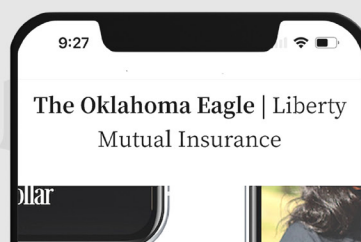
She continued, "In 1921, white Tulsans murdered hundreds of residents of Greenwood, burned their homes and churches, looted their belongings, and locked the survivors in internment camps. Until this day, the Justice Department has not spoken publicly about this race massacre or officially accounted for the horrific events that transpired in Tulsa. This report breaks that silence by rigorous examination and a full accounting of one of the darkest episodes of our nation's past. But the historical reckoning for the massacre continues. This report reflects our commitment to the pursuit of justice and truth, even in the face of insurmountable obstacles. We issue this report with recognition of the courageous survivors who continue to share their testimonies, acknowledgement of those who tragically lost their lives and appreciation for other impacted individuals and advocates who collectively push for us to never forget this tragic chapter of America's history."

Kimberly Marsh, who reported and wrote this story, is a senior contributor to The Oklahoma Eagle. She has devoted a big part of her career to chronicling the policies of Tulsa's city leaders.

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Greenwood District, circa 1923

PHOTO 21516-91.8, MARY E. JONES PARRISH COLLECTION, OHS

## DOJ Report Analysis

# For Tulsans, many questions remain unanswered

From A3

across and beyond the city, taking men, women, children, the elderly, and the infirm into custody. The destruction was total. The survivors were left with nothing.”

### Who To Believe

The Cold Case Unit of the Civil Rights Division interviewed survivors and descendants as sources for the report. However, throughout the document, the testimonies of the individuals closest to the event was often discounted or dismissed.

For example, “many in the Greenwood community” believed the massacre and destruction was preplanned. The department dismisses these assertions as anecdotal and “conspiracy theories.” Instead, it embraces a journalist’s reasoning that “if the massacre was the result of longstanding planning, it would likely...avoided such danger and destruction.” Greenwood residents may be left wondering what a safe massacre would have looked like.

The report concedes that men with property interests may have been involved in the last-minute planning of the invasion. It also notes that they and city leaders moved quickly to seize the property for industrial use in the aftermath.

Despite multiple credible reports

of incendiary devices being dropped from airplanes, investigators thought this unlikely. The report acknowledges airplanes flying over the area during the destruction but speculates that using such incendiary devices would have been too dangerous for those manning the airplanes. It offered no motive for the planes’ use but reported that it “could not draw firm conclusions” about their use.

### Surprise Finding

With the passage of more than a century since the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, the Department of Justice “discovered” one of its agent’s investigative write-ups, which was filed in the days following the event. “We discovered these reports through ProQuest,” the DOJ report says. It is unclear why the department used a public platform to find their reports and why their discovery took so long.

Agent Weiss claimed he spoke with over a hundred witnesses in researching the report. Yet, he summarized the testimony of only five white men. Weiss reported the event was not the “result of racial feeling, or agitators” and not a “race riot” at all. Instead, the incident began as a “small” and half-hearted” attempt at lynching, which spontaneously grew out of control, he said.

The eight-page report was filed on June 6th, 1921 – just days after the massacre. Weiss blamed the sheriff for inviting Black men of Greenwood to the

courthouse to prevent a lynching. His report also indicates the local Deputy U.S. Marshall did little to stop the riot. The Department of Justice’s civil rights section stated, “It is unclear whether Agent Weiss’s report was considered by federal prosecutors.”

The federal investigative agency dismissed most of the agent’s earlier report as “flawed” and rejected conclusions and opinions inconsistent with other sources. The current report notes that no federal or congressional investigation was seriously pursued but that President Warren Harding “condemned the massacre” in a speech given at an HBCU.

### Aftermath

In the weeks following the massacre, while Black citizens in large numbers were being interned or housed in tents, city leaders and businessmen “immediately attempted to capitalize on the destruction,” according to the report. Only one week after the massacre, the City of Tulsa enacted a Fire Ordinance, making rebuilding of Greenwood nearly impossible. All buildings were to be made of concrete, brick, or steel and at least two stories high. Greenwood attorneys fought back and ultimately had the ordinance invalidated, but not before “many people in Greenwood were arrested during early efforts to rebuild.” The intent was to drive Black people out

and secure the land.

Meanwhile, the city was trying to disguise its actions with the promise of reparations. It began a public relations campaign accepting responsibility for the destruction while fighting tort claims for restitution. An all-white Public Welfare Board overseeing the process refused outside financial assistance. When that board was replaced with a Reconstruction Committee, no reparations were provided, and the committee moved to industrialize the land.

Insurance companies routinely denied claims invoking the “riot clause” in policies, which precluded compensation for any damage during a riot. In 1926, the Oklahoma State Supreme Court further insulated the insurance companies, precluding lawsuits for claims.

In the end, the report goes to great lengths to show how victims and descendants have no recourse under the laws at the time and how legal efforts for reparations have failed. The Department of Justice offered no opinion on current reparations efforts. The Executive Summary merely remarks: “The passage of time did not clear the path to justice.”

**John Neal**, the author, is a former resident of Sand Springs. He is well versed in urban renewal, its uses and abuse, as a former city manager in Oklahoma and departmental consultant for the city of El Paso, Texas. In 2008, he was that city’s planning director when the city won multiple awards for its planning accomplishments. He is now retired and resides in Austin, Texas.

## Imprisonment

# OK Maintains Nation’s Fourth-Highest Imprisonment Rate

KEATON ROSS  
Oklahoma Watch

Oklahoma is past its former title of top incarcerator in the world, though progress moving down the national rankings has plateaued.

The state reduced its prison population by 2.9% in 2023, according to data released Dec. 31 by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, with the number of male and female prisoners declining. The national imprisonment rate increased 2% in 2023, with just 12 states seeing a population decline.

Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas ranked above Oklahoma, each incarcerating more than 600 people per 100,000 residents in state-run facilities. Oklahoma’s rate of 550 prisoners per 100,000 residents is the lowest reported by the federal agency in decades.

Oklahoma had the nation’s highest imprisonment rate as recently as 2018 when more than 27,000 people were housed in state prisons or awaiting transfer from county jails. At the height of the population boom, more than 1% of the state’s male population was serving a state sentence and the overall system capacity exceeded 105%.

The Department of Corrections reported a systemwide population of



Prisoners walk the yard at the Joseph Harp Correctional Center in Lexington.

PHOTO BRENT FUCHS/OKLAHOMA WATCH

23,008 on Jan. 6, including prisoners in state custody and county jail inmates awaiting transfer to the state, representing a slight uptick from the Bureau of Justice Statistics numbers.

A successful voter-led effort to reclassify several drug and property crimes from felonies to misdemeanors, and subsequent legislation to make that law retroactive, has helped the state chip away at its prison population since the late 2010s.

After years of modest reforms, lawmakers passed House Bill 1792 last May, requiring courts statewide to use a

felony classification system beginning in 2026. Criminal justice reform advocates are hopeful the enhanced structure could lead to lighter sentences for some nonviolent offenders, though the measure is not retroactive.

“We look forward to working with state policymakers next session to ensure that this policy actually decreases prison beds and lowers unnecessarily high and ineffective prison sentences in accordance with the Reclassification Council’s mandated duties,” Oklahomans for Criminal Justice Reform Executive Director Damion Shade said in a

written statement after the bill passed. “Oklahoma is still a top incarcerator of individuals per capita overall, with many sentences being the longest in the country and fines and fees which keep individuals in the system.”

The deadline for lawmakers to introduce bills and joint resolutions is Jan. 16 at 4 p.m. The 2025 legislative session commences Feb. 3..

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**Keaton Ross** covers democracy and criminal justice for Oklahoma Watch. Contact him at (405) 831-9753 or [Kross@Oklahomawatch.org](mailto:Kross@Oklahomawatch.org). Follow him on Twitter at [@KeatonRoss](https://twitter.com/KeatonRoss).

State Guard

# Oklahoma State Guard Plan Unveiled

**KEATON ROSS**  
Oklahoma Watch



The Oklahoma Capitol with a Christmas tree in front, is shown in this Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024.

PHOTO PAUL MONIES/OKLAHOMA WATCH

Oklahoma Gov. Kevin Stitt wants to re-establish the Oklahoma State Guard and has directed the state's Military Department to devise a plan for the civil defense force that would be under the governor's sole authority.

Unlike the Oklahoma National Guard, which shares authority and funding with the federal government, the Oklahoma State Guard would be deployable only within the state's borders. Oklahoma has a state guard law on the books, but the effort hasn't been funded or organized since the 1970s.

The state's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Thomas Mancino, told senators this week it could take \$2.4 million to re-establish the Oklahoma State Guard. Mancino said he is studying state guard structures in states such as Texas, Florida and California. If the Legislature agrees, the state appropriation would go toward equipment, training and personnel.

"Governor Stitt came to me this year after looking at what he saw occurring on the border in Texas, where they routinely use their State Guard, and asked me to take a look at reinstating that," Mancino said in a budget hearing on Tuesday.

In August 2023, Stitt answered a call from Texas Gov. Greg Abbott for fellow Republican governors to send voluntary forces drawn from their state National Guard contingents to help police the Texas-Mexico border. About 50 volunteers from the Oklahoma National Guard spent a month in Texas on the deployment. The money came from state emergency response funds.

Mancino said he envisioned pulling on the expertise of recently retired soldiers and airmen to build out the ranks of the Oklahoma State Guard.

"Although we have it within the statute, I think the most important things are the administrative rules and policies that we put forward to actually implement a program that's beneficial to the Guard," Mancino said. "In a broad-scale (National Guard) mobilization, you would still have a state force to do tornadoes, fires and other civil defense actions that are required in the state."

Sen. Regina Goodwin, D-Tulsa, the lone Democrat on the appropriations subcommittee on general government and transportation, said she had reservations about re-establishing the Oklahoma State Guard. She said there were standoffs in Texas between the Texas State Guard and the National Guard over immigration enforcement, a development she called despicable.

Goodwin was referring to a standoff between the Texas National Guard and the federal government last year in Texas over

barriers in the Rio Grande River to deter immigrants. The federal Border Patrol and the Biden administration maintained the state didn't have that authority over an international border.

"I would have more than great and grave reservations about talking about \$2.4 million for an unregulated militia state guard because I do not see it being the best use of funds," Goodwin said. "I am almost appalled that it's even in this budget."

The subcommittee's chairman, Sen. Tom Woods, R-Westville, said he supported such an effort. Woods, who joined the Oklahoma Air National Guard in June 2023, said he faces deployment later this year.

"As a member of the enlisted force structure, this could be a very valuable tool in Oklahoma's defense," Woods said. "It could be a very valuable asset for Oklahoma security moving forward."

Sen. Darrell Weaver, R-Moore, said he thought an Oklahoma State Guard could be a force multiplier to help out during emergencies in the state.

Mancino said his initial estimates call for

about 250 people for the Oklahoma State Guard.

"The real key here is the establishment of this entity," Mancino said. "What do they do? How do they mesh with law enforcement in the state? How do they mesh with emergency management? How do they mesh with the National Guard? It behooves me to say we have not yet presented our complete plan to the governor or to the Legislature. This is just a mark on the wall to say, if I'm asked to execute this mission, I will need additional funds to do so."

Reviving the Oklahoma State Guard has been the focus of legislation in the past several years. Former Sen. Nathan Dahm introduced the Oklahoma State Guard and Militia Revitalization Act in 2023 and again in 2024, but the proposals didn't get any committee hearings in the Senate. A fiscal analysis of Dahm's 2024 bill said it could cost between \$10 million and \$96.6 million, depending on how many units were organized.

It's unclear if Stitt plans to use a re-establishment of the Oklahoma State Guard to assist the incoming Trump administration on

immigration enforcement. The governor's office did not address that question in a written statement to Oklahoma Watch.

"Gov. Stitt and Gen. Mancino are constantly exchanging ideas on how the state can keep Oklahomans safe," Stitt spokesman Meyer Siegfried said in an email. "While there's been no official budget request at this time, this is one option being explored to bolster our security posture."

The 2023 deployment of the Oklahoma National Guard to the Texas border was carried out under Stitt's authority to activate the National Guard on state active-duty status. Texas did not reimburse Oklahoma for the costs, which were more than \$500,000. Unlike federal deployments, whether domestic or international, National Guard members serving under state active duty are not eligible for federal Veterans Administration care if they sustain injuries.

Paul Monies has been a reporter with Oklahoma Watch since 2017 and covers state agencies and public health. Contact him at (571) 319-3289 or pmonies@oklahomawatch.org. Follow him on Twitter @pmonies.



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**Superintendent Ryan Walters** ✓

@RyanWaltersSupt

trump and @jdvance.  
my, our kids, and our

I just cast my ballot for President Trump. The country was safer, the states were stronger, and schools were better under @realDonaldTrump. Let's get President Trump back in the White House and get this country back on the right track!



oms, and we have  
Harris border invasion  
need @realDonaldTrump  
m once and for all.



(ABOVE) The Oklahoma Ethics Commission identified several tweets posted by Superintendent of Public Instruction Ryan Walters that allegedly violated ethics rules. Three of the tweets, above, were posted from Oct. 30 to Nov. 5, 2024.  
PHOTO NONDOC

(LEFT) Oklahoma State Superintendent of Public Instruction Ryan Walters speaks to reporters during a press conference in the rotunda of the state Capitol on Friday, Aug. 16, 2024.  
PHOTO BENNETT BRINKMAN

## Ethics, Walters

# Second ethics probe examines Ryan Walters for social media, political activity

MICHAEL MCNUTT, SASHA NDISABIYE  
NonDoc

With his handling of 2022 campaign funds already being questioned, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Ryan Walters is also being investigated over whether certain posts on social media and certain comments on issues mostly concerning President-elect Donald Trump violate ethics rules about the use of state money, property or time.

The Oklahoma Ethics Commission disclosed its latest investigation of Walters on Thursday when members voted 5-0 to authorize Ethics Commission executive director Lee Anne Bruce Boone to "pursue prosecution in district court."

Commissioner Adam Weintraub then made a rare motion to make public the identity of the person being investigated. Matters taken up by the Ethics Commission are usually confidential, with investigations and complaints identified only through case numbers. Identification of those being investigated usually occurs only after a settlement agreement is reached or court action is taken, however, commissioners determined it was in the public's interest to reveal Walters' identity.

"In regard to cases 2024-37 and 2023-27, I fully move to make certain

limited information regarding 2024-37 combined with 2023-27 public, based upon the determination that the release of such information is in the public's interest," he said.

At the same meeting, the Ethics Commission also voted 5-0 to file a subpoena seeking campaign records related to Walters' successful 2022 election after not getting a response to a request made to him in October for the material. Walters' attorney responded last month by saying Walters and his committee objected to the subpoena's requests, arguing they lack any responsive documents to produce to the Ethics Commission. Commissioners also voted to make that investigation of Walters public.

Walters, who is halfway through his four-year term as state superintendent, did not respond to requests for comment to the Ethics Commission's investigations prior to the publication of this article.

At a hearing on proposed administrative rule changes for the Oklahoma State Department of Education, OSDE director of communications Dan Isett declined comment.

"That's a campaign thing, that's a campaign-side thing," Isett said.

After clarification that questions regarded the commission's separate investigation into social media posts —

including one from the official OSDE Twitter account, he reiterated the issue was a "campaign-side thing."

The Ethics Commission released documents Friday disclosing that the two cases approved for prosecution involved Walters, who was notified of the social media investigation in a Dec. 18 letter sent to him by Margaret Kerr, general counsel for the commission. She informed him in the letter that the commission had approved the initiation of settlement negotiations, and Walters was asked to respond by writing in no less than 20 days.

Boone said Friday that Walters has not responded. She said the agency plans to file a civil case against him in Oklahoma County District Court.

"We gave him time to respond, and we've heard nothing," Boone said.

Boone said different attorneys representing Walters have talked her office, but she said they have given conflicting responses.

"We don't have anything on paper as far as (Walters') response," she said. "We don't know what his take is on this."

### Walters' alleged violations listed

Walters is accused of violating Ethics Rule 2.12, which deals with material posted by elected state officials indicating

positions on issues, and Ethics Rule 2.16, which deals with the use of a social media account by a state officer. Those rules have long faced applicational uncertainty as social media use has expanded among state officials.

In her letter, Kerr alleged that Walters posted material using state funds, property or time to advocate the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate for an elective office and used social media maintained in the name of a state agency "to advocate the election or defeat of a clearly identified candidate for an elective office."

Kerr listed several examples, often involving tweets from Walters' @RyanWaltersSupt account, which he describes his "personal account" in his bio:

- On Oct. 9, 2023, Walters issued a statement on his state of Oklahoma letterhead, saying in part, "Under President Trump, Israel could rest assured that the United States had its back, but under the Biden administration, the U.S. arms Israel's enemies."
- On or about June 23, 2024, he reposted on Twitter a post from Trump and added a comment: "Thank you @realDonaldTrump! Here in Oklahoma



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

## Ethics, Walters

# Allegations of using state funds, property or time to advocate election outcomes

From A9

we are leading the country in reforming education!”

- On or about Oct. 30, Walters posted on Twitter stating in part, “We need @realDonaldTrump back in the White House.”
- On or about Oct. 31, someone used the Oklahoma State Department of Education Twitter account to post a video that included footage of migrant children climbing over a wall at the Mexican border. The words, “From 2021 to 2023, 3,000 unaccompanied migrant children were sent to Oklahoma,” appear in the picture. (Kerr said the post gives the impression the State Department of Education doesn’t support President Joe Biden and is advocating his defeat in the November 2024 election.)
- On Oct. 31, Walters posted a video and caption on Twitter stating, “The biggest threat to our economy, our kids and our families is (Vice President) Kamala Harris.”
- On Oct. 31, he posted on Twitter stating, “Time shut the border down: elect @realDonaldTrump and @jdvance.”
- On Nov. 4, Walters posted on Twitter, “Tomorrow, we will elect @realDonaldTrump.”
- On Nov. 5 — Election Day — Walters posted on Twitter, “I just cast my ballot for President Trump” and “Let’s get President Trump back in the White House and get this country back on the right track!”

### Walters’ rhetoric, policy harkens back to Trump

Since winning nearly 60 percent of Oklahoma’s vote for state superintendent in the 2022 general election, Walters has drawn

**Walters’ anti-immigrant rhetoric, such as that seen in the posts where he entreats Trump to take action, is not limited to social media.**

lots of attention to himself with incendiary posts and appearances on Fox News. Like Trump, Walters supports eliminating the U.S. Department of Education. For a time after Trump’s election, Walters was mentioned as a possible candidate for Trump’s secretary of education.

Only halfway through his four-year term, Walters has pushed for controversial policy changes, including new rules related to banning books in public schools and supporting the creation of a state-supported Catholic charter school. He has been criticized by the state’s attorney general for transparency law complaints and has been taken to court for blocking an OKC news station from accessing State Board of Education meetings.

One of Walters’ most controversial efforts has involved directing Oklahoma classrooms to contain and teach the Bible as a U.S. historical document. The department’s initial bids to purchase Bibles, since modified, included stringent vendor specifications that one Bible in particular seemed to meet: The God Bless the U.S.A. Bible, colloquially known as the Trump Bible.

Walters’ anti-immigrant rhetoric, such as that seen in the posts where he entreats Trump to take action, is not limited to social media. The most recent of Walters’ actions garnering mass criticism involves OSDE’s 2025 proposed administrative rules, in which Walters proposes eliminating the agency’s civil rights guidance and amending rules to require public schools to document and report the number of enrolled “undocumented” students. On Tuesday, Walters sued U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas, other Biden administration officials and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement alleging that inaction on immigration

enforcement has cost Oklahoma \$474 million to educate undocumented children.

A public hearing was held Friday to allow public comment on the proposed rule changes, which will be submitted for legislative or gubernatorial approval if advanced by the State Board of Education.

Although Walters was absent from Friday’s hearing, dozens of Oklahomans stood ahead of OSDE general counsel Michael Beason and law clerk Kory Kile to share their grievances.

“It’s disappointing to know that citizens are always going to be the currency that is used for political gain,” YWCA Tulsa workforce development coordinator Kesa Mitchell said about the new measures regarding undocumented students.

Molly Bryant, the senior director of immigrant and refugee services at YWCA Tulsa, also spoke in opposition.

“The 1982 US Supreme Court decision *Phylar v. Doe* already guarantees all children, regardless of their immigration status, the right to public education,” Bryant said. “Yet Superintendent Ryan Walters’ recent proposal, this one that we’re against, undermines this fundamental principle. His claim that the initiative will reduce the cost and burden of undocumented students on schools and taxpayers is both misleading and harmful, distorting the reality of Oklahoma.”

“These actions are politically-motivated taxes on schools and does nothing to further the mission of educating our children. Superintendent Walters was more interested in using this topic to further his own political ambitions, likely in the hopes of advancing his own career after being passed over for roles in the U.S. Department of Education.”

**Michael McNutt** became NonDoc’s managing editor in January 2023. He has been a journalist for nearly 40 years, working at The Oklahoman for 30 years, heading up its Enid bureau and serving as night city editor, assistant news editor and State Capitol reporter. An inductee of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame, he served as communications director for former Gov. Mary Fallin and then for the Office of Juvenile Affairs. Send tips and story ideas to [mcnutt@nondoc.com](mailto:mcnutt@nondoc.com).

**Sasha Ndisabiye** grew up splitting her time between southern California and southern Arizona before moving to Oklahoma to attend Langston University. After graduating from Langston with a bachelor’s degree in broadcast journalism and a minor in sociology, she completed a NonDoc editorial internship in the summer of 2024. She became NonDoc’s education reporter in October 2024.

## Bibles

# Education Watch: Walters’ Budget Request Includes \$3 Million Annually for Bibles

JENNIFER PALMER  
Oklahoma Watch

Superintendent Ryan Walters presented his agency’s budget request to the Oklahoma Senate last week and the ask included \$3 million annually for Bibles for public school classrooms.

The Oklahoma Department of Education is asking for \$3.9 billion overall for fiscal year 2026, which begins July 1.

It was unclear from the presentation how purchasing Bibles will further the agency’s goals, which include increasing the number of students in early childhood education and improving Oklahoma’s ranking on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, known as the Nation’s Report Card.

Walters didn’t explain at the hearing why

he wants the \$3 million to recur each year.

Last fall, the agency canceled a vendor search to supply the state with 55,000 King James Bibles for \$3 million — more than enough for the 43,000 classroom teachers in the state.

And in November, the Department purchased 500 Trump-endorsed Bibles for Advanced Placement government classrooms at a cost of \$45 each, plus \$600 for shipping, records show. (Paperback Bibles are readily available for \$3 each, and there are free apps, too.)

In his budget request, Walters is also asking for \$24.3 million for agency administration, a \$5 million increase over the current year. He told the Senate committee that category includes legal services. His Bible purchase is being challenged in court and mandates with state funds could draw additional legal action.



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES



Fifth graders Hadley Alston, left, and Lexie Alexander worked on a math problem on Jan. 11, 2023, at Lawton Academy for Arts and Sciences, a private school in a warehouse district.

PHOTO WHITNEY BRYEN/OKLAHOMA WATCH

## Education Bills

# Education Bills to Watch in This Year's Legislature

JENNIFER PALMER  
Oklahoma Watch

Newly filed bills show lawmakers are looking to boost teacher pay, ban student cellphones and revamp the state Board of Education, among other education initiatives.

Two years ago, the Legislature approved raises of \$3,000 to \$6,000 per teacher, the largest salary increase for educators since 2018. Lawmakers looking to build on that this year with additional increases include Sen. Adam Pugh, R-Edmond, who chairs the Senate Education Committee, Sen. Carri Hicks, D-Oklahoma City, and Rep. Ellen Pogemiller, D-Oklahoma City.

Pugh's bill would create a new minimum salary range that starts at \$50,000 for a first-year teacher with a bachelor's degree (up from \$39,601 currently). Hicks' bill would increase minimum salaries by \$3,000. Pogemiller proposes increasing minimum salaries by \$5,000 and boosting support staff pay by 6%.

Thursday was the deadline to introduce bills.

Here are five additional bills to watch in the upcoming legislative session, which starts February 3.

### Banning cell phones in schools

Senate Bill 139

Sponsor: Sen. Ally Seifried, R-Claremore

Under Seifried's proposal, local school boards would have to adopt policies to prohibit student cellphone use throughout the school day. The policies can carve out exemptions, such as for emergencies and for students who use a cell phone to monitor a health issue. Seifried, in an op-ed in the Tulsa World, explained that bell-to-bell policies are most effective at eliminating student distractions to improve learning, according to researchers. Statewide participation is critical, she wrote, to improve student engagement and academic performance.

### Senate Bill 28

**Under this bill, schools would provide free meals to students whose families earn 250% of the federal poverty level or less. For a family of four, that's \$78,000.**

In the last session, Seifried introduced a bill to incentivize phone-free schools with a grant program, but the legislation didn't progress. Seifried, vice chair of the Senate Education Committee, co-hosted a two-day interim study with Pugh on the issue in October.

### Opening school sports to charter and virtual charter school students

Senate Bill 388

Sponsor: Sen. Ally Seifried, R-Claremore

This proposal by Seifried would make significant changes to the world of school sports by allowing charter and virtual charter school students to participate in extracurricular activities at the school district where they reside. For example, a student who attends Epic Charter Schools could play on an Oklahoma City Public Schools team if they live in that district. The student would still have to meet the district's rules for eligibility, according to the bill. Charter and virtual charter students could also participate in interscholastic activities or contests in their resident district under the proposal.

### Remove the Parental Choice Tax Credit cap

Senate Bill 229

Sponsor: Sen. Julie Daniels, R-Bartlesville

This bill would remove the cap from the Parental Choice Tax Credit program, which distributes vouchers of up to \$7,500 per child per year to parents to pay for private school tuition. When the Legislature authorized the program in 2023, they set a cap of \$150 million the first year, \$200 million the second year and \$250 million the third year. Under Daniels' proposal, starting in 2026-27, there would be no limit to the amount of tax credits awarded through the program. Many private schools raised tuition once the tax credit was implemented, reducing the ability for low-income families to benefit.

### Expanding free school lunches for low-income students

Senate Bill 28

Sponsor: Sen. Carri Hicks, D-Oklahoma City

Under this bill, schools would provide free meals to students whose families earn 250% of the federal poverty level or less. For a family of four, that's \$78,000. The state would reimburse districts the cost of those meals. Currently, students whose families earn 130% of the federal poverty level qualify for free lunches and those who live below 185% qualify for reduced-price lunches.

### Reform Oklahoma Board of Education appointments

House Bill 1054

Sponsor: Rep. Jacob Rosecrants, D-Norman

Currently, the governor has the sole authority to appoint all six members of the Oklahoma State Board of Education (the state superintendent is automatically a member and the chairperson). Rosecrants' proposal would limit the governor to two appointments, and the leader of the House and Senate would each get two appointments. If passed, board members could only be removed for cause by their appointing authority. The current board has delivered unanimous approval throughout Superintendent Ryan Walters' tenure, and Rosecrants said his bill is an attempt to bring counterbalance to the board. The Statewide Charter School Board, which the Legislature created in 2023, has an appointment process similar to the proposal, except with nine members (three appointed by the governor, two each by House and Senate leaders, plus the superintendent of public instruction and state auditor, or their designees).

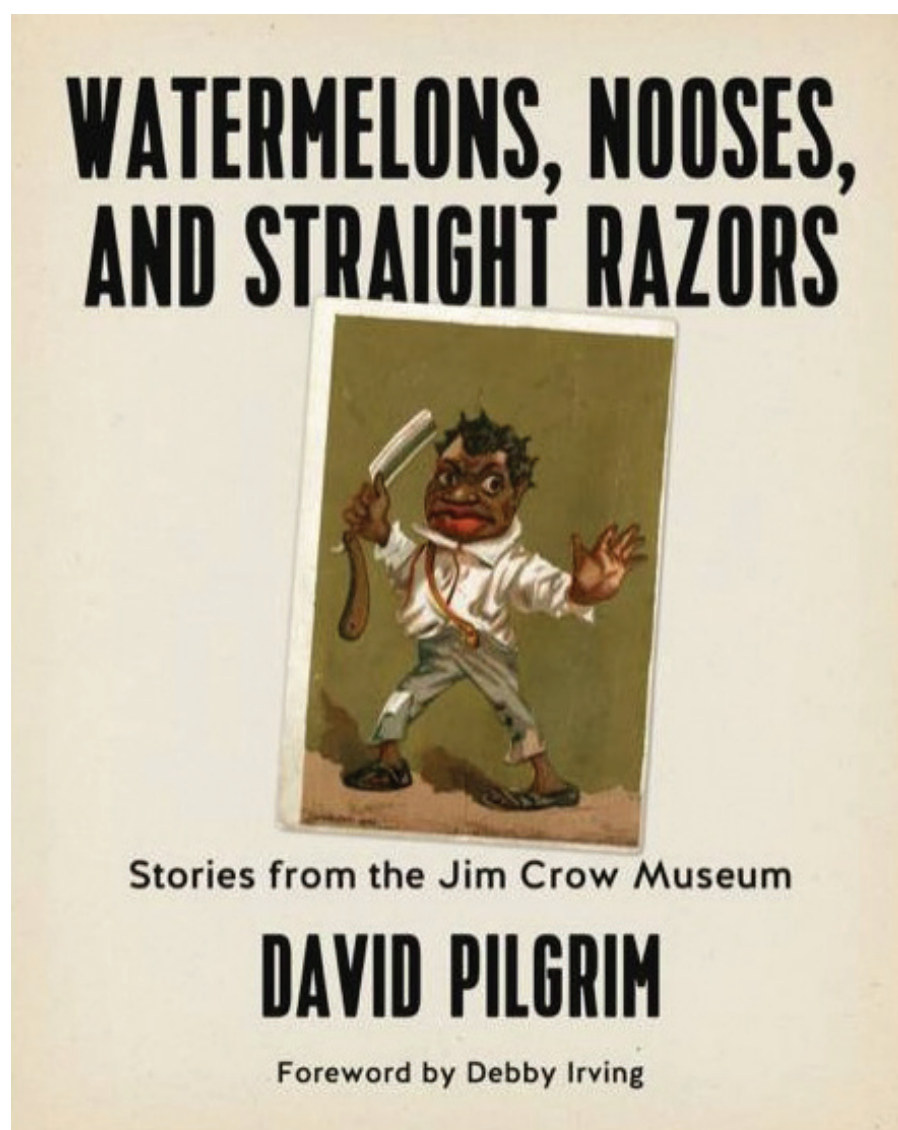
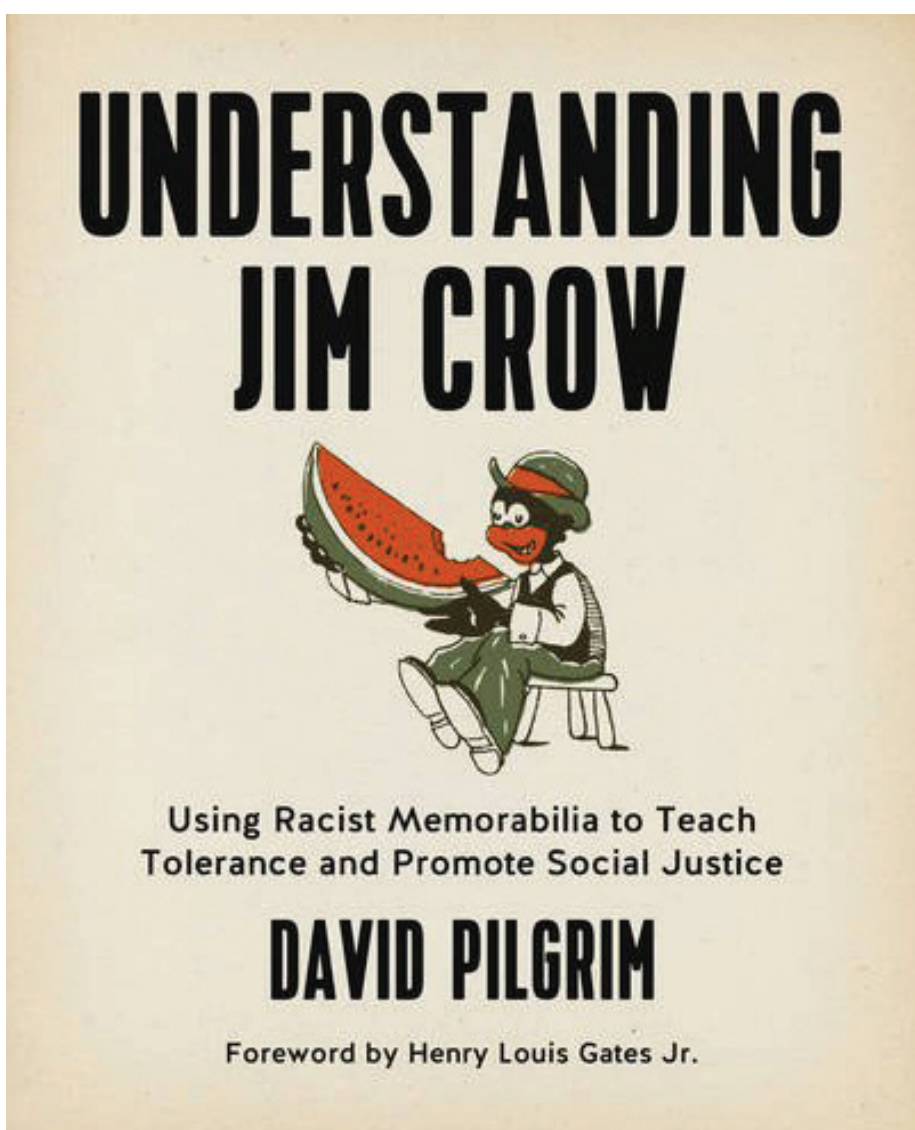


Jennifer Palmer has been a reporter with Oklahoma Watch since 2016 and covers education. Contact her at (405) 761-0093 or [jpalm@oklahomawatch.org](mailto:jpalm@oklahomawatch.org). Follow her on Twitter @jpalmerOKC.

# How Closeted Racist Memorabilia Continues to Fuel Generational Racism

WE MUST NO LONGER PRETEND THAT OUR KIDS ARE TOO FRAGILE TO DIGEST THE TOPIC OF RACIAL INJUSTICE.

Melanie N. Latson, Word In Black



As Donald Trump's second inauguration looms ahead on Jan. 20, I am reminded of a troubling experience my realtor husband had a few months ago while visiting a client for an in-home consultation. To my surprise, while he was on this visit, I received a video displaying shaky footage of a 360-degree view of the client's bathroom covered from counter to ceiling in racist blackface memorabilia. From watermelons to sambos to mummies, this space easily rivaled the extensive collection within the walls of the Jim Crow Museum. Almost as disturbing as the memorabilia was the irony that this client was willing to work with a Black professional while proudly owning and displaying these items. My husband stood in that bathroom facing a conundrum Black Americans so often face — so much progress, yet so far to go. In today's times right in Metro Atlanta, a Black man found himself deep within the outlandish imagination of a racist white man, the most dangerous place for any person of color to be. In Jordan Peele fashion, after quickly documenting, he knew it was time to get out!

As an Atlanta native, raised in the Black Mecca of Civil Rights and being a grandchild of community activists, I have had a front-row seat to the growth of a thriving, Black-majority metropolitan area, but I also know all too well the regressive past of the sundown towns surrounding it. I have had the safety of living in community with Black judges, doctors, and teachers, yet the fear of dwelling in the deep South where our hospitals, schools, and libraries are often adorned with the names of white supremacists of yore. The Jim Crow Museum urges that to truly use "objects of intolerance to teach tolerance," we must, as a society, continuously witness, understand, and heal. What my husband saw that day has led me to wonder if much of America is stuck at simply witnessing with no care to understand or heal. As my husband walked out of the bathroom that Wednesday, he noticed something very different:

the many pictures of the homeowners' grandchildren throughout the home. When he told me about this, I thought back to memories of my grandparents' house: the savory aroma of soul food and hallways lined with pictures of family, friends, and good times. However, the grandchildren of these homeowners were learning a far different lesson, taking in the unsavory, pungent aroma of white supremacy. Without saying much, they are teaching their grandchildren a mouthful by this choice of peculiar home decor. As an educator who has taught from the Bay Area to the shores of Georgia on a small island, I have passionately planted social justice as a pillar of my teaching to ensure that my students did not just learn how to read and write, but also how to show compassion, respect, civically engage, and lead in their community. As I thought about the grandkids that visit this house of horror, my heart ached as I questioned if the work I had done with my students was enough for them to boldly advocate, activate, and disrupt injustice when they witness it throughout life, even if it is within their own family. I wondered what these grandchildren thought about the objects and how they translated those ideas to the people of color they see in the world.

While I created my classroom to be an inclusive safe haven, I vividly remember the racial tensions among my students that showed up all too often in their community. I remember when a Black student shared that he saw his best friend (a Latinx male) at a neighborhood playground over the weekend. He then expressed his sadness and frustration in overhearing his friend's parents say that they could not play together because he was Black. I also remember when a white student invited everyone to her birthday party except for the few Black students in our class. While I used this as a teachable moment to discuss inclusion with my students, my frustration was more with the parents who created this situation than the kids who were collateral damage in a situation that they could not

fully digest. Racism, you see, is like a nefarious virus that spreads and spreads, never seen yet always felt. I cringe at the vicious attack on conversations about race in U.S. classrooms through the never-ending anti-critical race theory bans because little do these legislators know that the kiddos are the ones who are longing to discuss their confusion, sadness, and anger about the scary "R word." Contrary to ignorant beliefs, we, the "woke teachers," have no desire to indoctrinate, but a commitment to affirm, educate, and liberate all of our students. While Black and Brown kids have never had the privilege to not know, in a particular way, the white kids have always known, too. Throughout history, they knew when they watched their parents yell racist vitriol at Black people, they knew when they could never bring their Black friend over for a play date, and they knew when they witnessed injustice with no explanation other than the question of race at hand.

In a Trump-era America, where the quiet parts are often screamed for all to hear, we must no longer pretend that our kids are too fragile to digest the topic of racial injustice. To be clear, not every white child with racist grandparents will become racist; many will push back and disrupt injustice, but let us not make it hard for them to do so. Initiatives like Project 2025 have plans to erase all of the ugly parts of American history and replace it with lies that will leave our youth miseducated and ill-equipped to become civically engaged change-makers in our world. Parents now is not the time to assume your kids are learning everything in school. It is your time to shine and introduce your children to culturally inclusive literature and discussions. While we can't change who is in the White House, we can change what conversations we do and do not allow in our communities. Our fight is in our voice. Let us not be quiet about the things that matter most. While they yell the racist parts out loud, let us mute their lies with bold and undying truth that disrupts inequity and fuels racial justice.

(FEATURED IMAGES) David Pilgrim, the founder and curator of the Jim Crow Museum, has published two books related to the museum's collection and mission. Understanding Jim Crow introduces readers to the Jim Crow Museum and how the museum uses racist memorabilia to teach tolerance and promote social justice. Watermelons, Nooses, and Straight Razors is a compilation of stories from the Jim Crow Museum. PHOTO WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

MELANIE N. LATSON is a Public Voices fellow on Racial Justice in Early Childhood with the OpEd Project in partnership with the National Black Child Development Institute. She is the Founder and CEO of March on, Kid!, a youth social justice collective. She is also a Doctoral student in Education Policy and Leadership at the American University.

LEGAL NOTICE

Published in The Oklahoma Eagle:  
January 3, 10, 17, 24, 2025

NOTICE TO BIDDERS  
SEALED BIDS FOR  
PROJECT NO. 145500

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to an order by the Mayor of the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma, sealed bids will be received at the Timberlake Construction Office, 11349 East 60th Place, Tulsa, OK 74146 until 2:00 p.m. on the 4th day of February 2025 for furnishing all tools, materials, and labor and performing the work necessary to be done in the construction of the following:

PROJECT NO. 145500 - Tulsa Animal Services

A MANDATORY Pre-Bid Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 16th, 2025, at 10:00 AM at the Tulsa Animal Services site located at 5995 East 36th Street North, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74115 to familiarize themselves with the project site conditions and their scope of work for the following bid packages, Demolition, Earthwork, and Utilities. The meeting location is at the southwest corner of the site.

The Pre-Bid is NON-MANDATORY for all other scopes.

NOTE: All utility contractors MUST be approved IDP contractors with non-expired registrations to bid and perform the associated scope of work on this project.

Timberlake Construction, Inc. will accept bids on behalf of the City of Tulsa for the following bid packages along with ALL associated alternates.

- Bid Package #2A
- Bid Package #3A Demolition
- Bid Package #4A Building Concrete
- Bid Package #5A Masonry
- Bid Package #6A Structural Steel Fabrication and Erection
- Bid Package #7A Millwork and Finish Carpentry
- Bid Package #8A Rough Carpentry
- Bid Package #9A Roofing and Wall Panels
- Bid Package #10A Waterproofing and Joint Sealants
- Bid Package #11A EIFS
- Bid Package #12A Doors, Frames, and Hardware (Material Only)
- Bid Package #13A Overhead Coiling Doors
- Bid Package #14A Storefront, Glass, and Glazing
- Bid Package #15A Framing, Drywall, and Ceilings
- Bid Package #16A Flooring
- Bid Package #17A Painting
- Bid Package #18A Specialties
- Bid Package #19A Signage
- Bid Package #20A Flagpoles
- Bid Package #21A Fixed Sunscreens
- Bid Package #22A Residential Appliances
- Bid Package #23A Window Shades
- Bid Package #24A Site Furnishes
- Bid Package #25A Tensioned Fabric Structures
- Bid Package #26A Fire Suppression
- Bid Package #27A Plumbing
- Bid Package #28A Mechanical HVAC and Controls
- Bid Package #29A Electrical
- Bid Package #30A Earthwork
- Bid Package #31A Site Concrete and Paving
- Bid Package #32A Chain Link Fences and Gates
- Bid Package #33A Landscape and Sprinklers
- Bid Package #34A Utilities

Drawings, specifications, and contract documents for the construction of said public improvements may be obtained from the Timberlake Construction website, iSqFt, Southwest Construction News, major plan rooms, or by email request from [estimating@timberlakeconstruction.com](mailto:estimating@timberlakeconstruction.com).

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. A Certified or Cashier's Check or Bidders Surety Bond, in the sum of 5% of the bid amount is only for bids over \$50,000, as per statutory requirements, and 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, acceptable to the Tulsa Public Facilities Authority, in conformity with the requirements of the proposed contract documents.

All bids will be publicly opened, recorded, and considered by the Bid Committee of said City at a meeting of said Committee to be held in the Timberlake Construction Office, 11349 East 60th Place, Tulsa, OK 74146 until 2:00 p.m. the 4th day Of February 2025. A link is provided in the documents for remote participation in the bid opening.

Late bids will be returned unopened to the submitting entity. We reserve the right to request a Subcontractor's Qualification Statement (A305) from the bidders. All proposals must remain irrevocable for 45 days after submission, meaning the bidder cannot withdraw or alter their bid during this period. The owner (City of Tulsa) reserves the right to waive informalities and accept or reject any or all bids received.

This information sets clear expectations for bidders regarding the submission process, documentation requirements, and conditions for bid evaluation.

Dated at Tulsa, Oklahoma, this 6th day of January 2025.

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**TUES. JAN. 21ST AT 10:00 AM**

ITEMS LOCATED AT: 1211 SW 59TH ST, OKLA. CITY, OKLA.  
**INSPECTION: MON. JAN. 20TH FROM 8:00 AM TO 5:00 PM AND STARTING AT 8:00 AM DAY OF AUCTION**

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# THE OKLAHOMA EAGLE CHURCH DIRECTORY

**The Oklahoma Eagle publishes news and announcements for churches currently listed in The Oklahoma Eagle's Church Directory. For information, please call our office at (918) 582-7124**

## Church Of The Living God

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

Minister RJ Smith

Sunday school - 9:30am  
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

Sunday School 10:00 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.  
Bible Study & Prayer Wednesday 7:00 p.m.  
For Transportation (918) 402-6027

## Words of Wisdom Ministries FC

Temporarily meeting at the Courtyard Marriot 3340 S 79th E Ave Tulsa OK  
(918) 230-3022

Pastors Wesley & Alfie Gray would like to invite you to come and experience the Word of God in action this Sunday! God has a word for you, He Guarantee's it!! You'll be glad you did!!!

## The Oklahoma Eagle Church Directory

List your church in one of the largest church directories in Oklahoma.

Participation in the directory allows free church announcements/ church news.

Post events and celebrations. Priority over non-listed churches for news.

## GTOMi

Gospel Tabernacle Outreach Ministries, Inc.  
Traveling Outreach Ministries

609 E. Zion Street  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Elder Julius W. Bland  
Sr., Pastor  
918-810-3882

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

## MOHAWK FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

3329 E. 30th St. North • 834-0391

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship 11 a.m.

Bible Study Wednesday 7 p.m.



Rev. Emanuel L. Collier, Sr. Pastor

## Zoe' Life Church of Tulsa

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.

"The Seventh Day Is Still God's Sabbath"

## 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

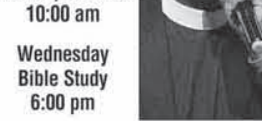
## VERNON AME CHURCH

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

Sunday Church School 8:30 am

Worship Service 10:00 am

Wednesday Bible Study 6:00 pm



Rev. Dr. Robert R. Allen Turner

## FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH NORTH TULSA

THE CHURCH WHERE THE HOLY SPIRIT LEADS US



Pastor Anthony L. & Mrs. Kelly Scott

Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.  
Morning Worship - 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Prayer Meeting - 6:30 p.m.  
Bible Study - Noon & 7:00 p.m.

1414 N. Greenwood Ave.  
Tulsa, OK 74103  
918-582-5129  
www.fbcnt.org

"Teaching Minds Changing Hearts Touching the World"

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## BOSTON AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1301 S. Boston  
(918) 583-5181  
Rev. David Wiggs  
Senior Minister

Sunday Worship 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School 9:40 a.m.

Sunday TV Worship 11:00 a.m.

KTUL Channel 8

## TIMOTHY BAPTIST CHURCH

821 E. 46th St. N. • 425-8021

REV. TWAN T. JONES

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

"We've come this far by faith"

## NORTH PEORIA CHURCH OF CHRIST

2247 N. Peoria  
Tulsa, Okla. 74106  
(918) 425-1071

Warren Blakney, Minister

Sunday Bible School.....9:00 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

There's no place, like this place, anywhere near this place.

## Pettie Chapel CME

19364 S. S. Mingo Road.  
Bixby, 74008  
Phone: (918) 366-8870

Rev. Robert Givens

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.

"Where Peaceful Waters Flow"

## Church In Power

732 E. 31st North  
Tulsa, OK 74106 - (918) 835-1525

Service times: 9am Sundays, 7pm Wed, and Special Supernatural Breakthrough Services every last Friday and Saturday of every month at 7pm and Sunday at 9am  
Wednesday Bible Study - 6:30 p.m.

Church Ministries: Children's Church, CIP Praise Dancers, and CIP Praise Tem.



Pastor Bukky and Wunmi Alabi

For Further Information call (918) 835-1525.

"Have Faith In God." Mark 11:22

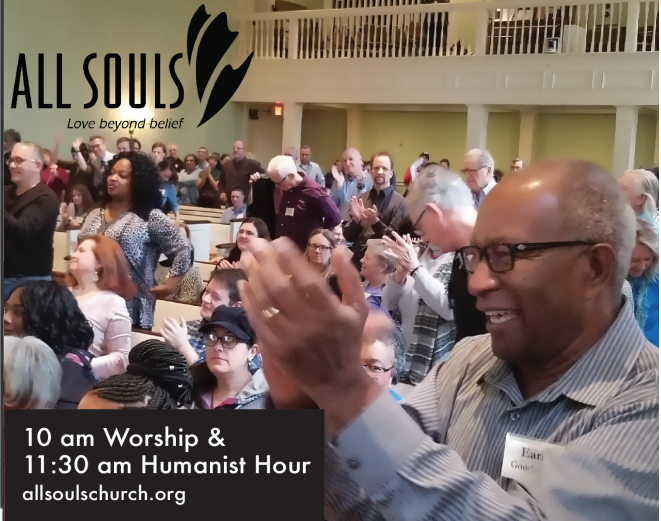
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2952 S. Peoria Ave. Tulsa, OK | allsoulschurch.org



10 am Worship & 11:30 am Humanist Hour  
allsoulschurch.org



## Mount Zion Baptist Church

419 N Elgin Tulsa, Oklahoma

Office: 918-584-0510  
Fax: 918-584-1958  
Prayer Line: 918-584-PRAY  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Morning Worship 10:45  
Wednesday Bible Study Noon and 7:00



## In The Spirit Christian Church

"Come And Experience The Spirit"

1020 South Garnett  
Tulsa, Okla., 74128  
Phone: (918) 836-6823  
Fax: (918) 836-6833



Rev. Sharyn Cosby-Willis,

Eclectic Praise, Extraordinary Worship, And Spirited Preaching.

Wednesday Services 10:00 a.m. Spirit Seniors 5:30 p.m. Support Groups 6:30 p.m. Community Dinner 7:00 p.m. Bible Study

Sunday Worship Church School 9:45 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m.

Ministries: Administration, Children's Church, Children's Choir, Spirited Kids, Guest Services, Intercessors, Men's Fellowship, Outreach and much more...

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# SMILING HEARTS

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PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

## Black Resistance

# Trump 2.0 Is Here — and So Is the New Black Resistance

**UCHÉ BLACKSTOCK, CHRISTOPHER BOUZY, ELIZABETH DAWES, TANANARIVE DUE, CHASE MOORE, KHALIL GIBRAN MUHAMMAD, BAHIA OVERTON, D. DANYELLE THOMAS, ARTIKA TYNER, FAITH OHUOBA, AND FALLON WILSON**

Word In Black

Some of the most brilliant thinkers and doers of our time tell us what fighting for justice will look like and how you can do your part.

Uché Blackstock, Christopher Bouzy, Elizabeth Dawes, Tananarive Due, Chase Moore, Khalil Gibran Muhammad, Bahia Overton, D. Danyelle Thomas, Artika Tyner, Faith Ohuoba, and Fallon Wilson share what will be critical to protecting our rights, our community, and our nation during Trump's second term.

When Donald John Trump takes the presidential oath of office for the second time, it will finalize an outcome that seemed improbable four years ago: the re-election of a twice-impeached insurrectionist and budding authoritarian who is now a convicted felon and purported sexual abuser.

For MAGAland — Trump's coalition of tech-bro billionaires, Christian evangelicals, white ultranationalists, and rural white voters — the inauguration validates their choice of the thrice-divorced, reality-TV businessman with four bankruptcies on his record to lead the free world. No small amount of

gloating and flexing has accompanied his return to power.

For Black America — specifically, the 92% of Black women and 80% of Black men who voted for Vice President Kamala Harris, then hoped or even believed she would vanquish Trump and make history as the first female president — Inauguration Day 2025 is the latest bitter pill white America has forced us to swallow.

### Black to the Future

With Republicans and Trump loyalists in control of all three branches of government, including a 6-3 Supreme Court supermajority, it's not surprising Black people are worried about Trump 2.0. Given his racist campaign rhetoric, his habitual, blatant lying, and his chaotic first term (remember the Charlottesville rally? The botched pandemic response?), it's easy to feel hopeless, overwhelmed, and maybe a little paralyzed with anxiety

Cont. A16, Black Resistance

## LA Fires

# Prayer, Positivity, and Schoolwork

**AZIAH SIID**  
Word In Black

*The West Angeles Church of God is providing homework help, hot meals, and other support to student victims of the Los Angeles fires.*

When the massive Eaton and Palisades wildfires swept through areas of metropolitan Los Angeles earlier this month, it consumed or severely damaged a total of 10 schools in the Pasadena and Los Angeles Unified School Districts. Evacuation orders, and poor air quality, has forced schools to remain closed, reminiscent of lock downs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

But families of students who have been displaced are seeking alternatives to make sure their kids' education won't

Cont. A16, LA Fires

## Black Resistance

# The waning DEI commitments of far too many companies



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

From A15

about what comes next.

Feelings of paralysis, however, decrease when there is a plan of action.

Keep in mind, Black people are no strangers to tough political times, and presidents have rarely been on our side. While Trump 2.0 takes us into unprecedented territory — and while it is tempting to check out and let white America reap what it has sown — don't forget this is our country, too. Black America literally built this nation, and we should not give up without a fight. Our ancestors would demand it.

But how do we fight for our rights and justice strategically — and win — when the game is rigged? How do we push back against corruption and avoid bargaining away our humanity? What does resistance look like



social media and allocated millions of dollars for so-called DEI initiatives were never fully committed. At the same time, I admit that I had hoped that we would've seen some systemic changes. It's been sobering, indeed.

For me, this moment calls for community — and coalition building. We cannot get through these next few years alone. We must be together in purpose with each other to move forward. It's time to steel ourselves, dig

“

## The challenges Black folks face today are nothing new

Dr. Uche Blackstock, Physician and Author, "Legacy: A Black Physician Reckons With Racism in Medicine"

when the other side seems to hold all the cards?

We asked some of the most brilliant thinkers and doers of our time what the New Black Resistance will look like, and how you can do your part. Here are their answers as told to Word In Black. Their responses have been edited for length and clarity:

### Dr. Uche Blackstock

Physician and Author  
"Legacy: A Black Physician Reckons With Racism in Medicine"

The challenges Black folks face today are nothing new. We've been here before, but the difference is how quickly the backlash came. In 2020, many knew that the corporations and businesses that posted black squares on

deeper, and work within our communities, for our communities.

As for health equity, Black resistance looks like intentionally focusing on community-centered models of care and funneling resources into HBCU medical schools and hospitals. Over the last four years, it's become more than obvious that we are best served by serving each other. Not only that, but we don't have to reinvent the wheel.

The Black Panthers practiced community-centered care in the 1960s by offering free health clinics, breakfast giveaways, legal assistance, and sickle cell testing. They laid the groundwork for what we needed then and still need for our communities to be healthy — a more holistic idea of well-being. Additionally, we've seen how HBCUs have

Cont. A17, Black Resistance

## LA Fires

# West Angeles Church of God In Christ, a light in troubled times

From A15

backslide into learning loss. And L.A.'s Black churches are stepping up to help.

That includes West Angeles Church of God In Christ, a longtime staple of the city's Black worship community. The Crenshaw Boulevard megachurch is providing educational opportunities for students while schools are closed, helping them stay focused on their work — and offering a distraction from the ongoing disaster.

Deacon John Wilson, director of West Angeles's Education and Enrichment Program (EEP), says the church is going above and beyond to open their doors to both returning and new students whose education have been disrupted by the fire. The goal, he says, is to be a lifeline for families and students dealing with a series of traumatic events.

This week West Angeles will "have at least 12 Black students who go to Palisades High School come in," Deacon Wilson says. "We have a group of Black kids over there, and I reached out to the parent group, and we had some we already knew about who were in our program already on the way."

Students from neighboring districts will be able to come in from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. for meals, homework help, technology assistance if their schools are open remotely, and additional emotional support if necessary.

Beginning in 1991 as a faith-focused program, for West Angeles teens, the ministry has evolved to emphasize "academic excellence and enrichment" and has expanded its services beyond church members to include all community residents.



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

The EEP is specially designed to help middle and high school students navigate the difficult teen years and get the academic and social support they need to go to college.. They provide after-school tutoring, summer bridge courses, personal finance seminars, information about STEAM-based careers, and more.

"We have all this technology for them, and we're gonna have activities," Wilson says of students affected by the fires. "We

are gonna help you with your homework before you go home, and it's gonna be a good situation. You'll meet some new friends. A lot of them will meet people they didn't know in their schools."

In an executive order, California Gov. Gavin Newsom has allowed displaced students to attend school outside of their district, making it easier for students of schools damaged or destroyed in the fires to use temporary facilities. The governor

has also vowed to help schools avoid penalties for not meeting minimum school year requirements. The order explicitly directs state agencies to work with destroyed or damaged schools to "develop a plan for serving displaced students and rebuilding."

### Keeping Students' Spirits Up

While parents might want to protect their children from the pain and uncertainty the disaster has wrought, Wilson believes children don't need to be shielded from difficulties. Rather, he says, parents must be compassionate but realistic: "You know this is a tough situation. We know you miss your friends, but we're going to try to work this out."

At the same time, instead of allowing their kids to languish in unstructured time away from school, Wilson says parents "should try to design time they can spend with their old friends away from the school. Not knowing when they can return to their old routine can be triggering for young people who had just put the pandemic lockdowns behind them.

"This is really tough on kids. You should see what they're saying on social media," Wilson says. "They're saying, 'Oh, shoot, it's just like the pandemic. Here we go.' It's not a good thing."

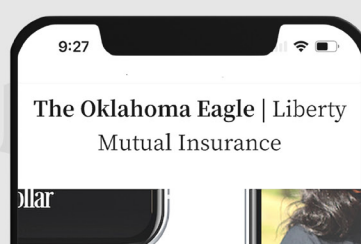
Most importantly, the deacon encourages families to "talk, talk, talk" to their kids. Conversations — even on difficult topics — are better than trying to shield them from the challenges the whole family may face.

"Don't isolate your kids, and if they're old enough to understand what's happening, let them see the news," he says. "Let them understand what's happening. That's what I've told a couple of families already."

The Oklahoma Eagle

## Our Mission

To amplify our core value of equity, through journalism and editorial is the cornerstone of our continued success.





## Black Resistance

# A need to work on long-term policy change for lasting results

From A16

remained deeply committed to educating future health professionals in the face of the 2023 SCOTUS decision on race-conscious admissions. They still produce the most Black physicians. We should be supporting them more now than ever before.



**Christopher Bouzy**  
Tech Entrepreneur  
Founder and CEO of Spoutible and Bot Sentinel

Resisting Trump 2.0 will come down to keeping the public informed with accurate information. That's the only way that you'll be able to "resist" — by constantly pushing back against the false narratives and lies that we're going to see.

Resisting also means providing space. What I'm doing right now with Spoutible is providing a space for us — a space where Black and Brown folks can connect and talk about topics that, obviously, we need to talk about in an environment where we're not being targeted or inundated with misinformation and disinformation.

Whether on Instagram, Threads, X, or even BlueSky, people are inundated with misinformation and toxicity. It is not good for your mental health. We've had quite a few people say that Spoutible has reduced their stress levels. They've stopped using other platforms, and they're using Spoutible exclusively. It's impossible to stop all misinformation or disinformation or all bad actors. But people just want to know that a company is actively trying to mitigate as much of it as possible.

Black folks need to get off of platforms that do not take their mental health and their safety into consideration. Close their X account. The safeguards that we've had in place are being eroded, and these platforms don't care. I can't say, well, stay off of social media completely because there are platforms like Spoutible that are trying to make a difference, but there are very few.

AI worries me. Although there are positive uses, it has the potential to do a lot of harm by being able to create automated inauthentic accounts that could spread misinformation and disinformation, as well as AI-generated videos that craft false narratives — the list goes on and on.



**Elizabeth Dawes**  
Director of Maternal and Reproductive Health, The Century Foundation

I absolutely believe that Black people in the Black community have the knowledge, the expertise to take care of ourselves when the government won't or when our society won't. I'm a firm believer that we have all we need. We have the power. We have the knowledge. We have the connections.

I wholeheartedly expect that as we enter into a new presidential administration and into new political times that aren't favorable to Black people, that Black people will increase their organizing, increase the level of services that we provide to each other, and increase their activism. What's happening now and what we anticipate will happen is



PHOTO ADOBE IMAGES

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**Resisting Trump 2.0 will come down to keeping the public informed with accurate information?**

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Sentinel

certainly going to engage a lot of folks who have not been engaged in political space — community service, or activism in any way. We will see more of that, and we need to see more of that.

On the health note specifically, I don't believe that solutions can be found where the problems are. Waiting for healthcare systems — for policy change — isn't an ideal way to go, right? We have to have "both-and" solutions.

We have to work on long-term policy change, which is what I do at The Century Foundation, but we also have to take care of ourselves. That means I would love to see more Black individuals, including men, go through midwifery school, medical school, or other training that prepares them to be direct service providers.

There are a lot of great people doing this work, but there are, again, really scary shortages in healthcare providers across the country. This is especially true in obstetrics and gynecology, so we need more of them. We didn't come this far to come this far.



**Tananarive Due**  
Award-Winning Horror Author  
Continuing Lecturer of African American Studies at UCLA

About two days before the election, I saw something on social media when someone said, 'White women are going to have our back this election, right?' I thought, oh my God, is that the plan? That's what we're counting on? I got this chilled feeling where I thought, no, they're not. We have to take care of ourselves.

Let's not forget what we already know about self-sustenance in the face of adversity. That's going to be the key for Black America — looking out for each other. For some families, that might just mean in your own home. For some other people, it's your neighborhood, your community. I think a lot of people will find themselves stepping into voids, which is exactly what happened during the Civil Rights era.

Art is often an overlooked aspect of resistance because art brings people joy, and joy is also an overlooked aspect of resistance. The first thing a tyrant wants to do is steal your joy and your hope. If there's one thing I want to convey in my art, it's that my characters somehow manage to hang on to hope, even against great adversity, and learn how to stand up.

Like my mother used to say, 'History happens one person at a time.' That's a lesson all of us are going to have to remember during the next four years.



**Chase Moore**  
Education Equity Advocate  
Outgoing Special Advisor, U.S. Department of Education

I don't know if the U.S. Department of Education will get dismantled. I don't know if Congress and the president have the authority to do so. But what I can say is that it is extremely important that we leverage who we already are.

I think about all of the different relationships, organizations, and people

doing amazing work in their own right. We had a partnership for the past year, and some change with Discovery Education, where I work specifically with the White House Black Initiative housed at the U.S. Department of Education. In this work, we've had the privilege to travel to six different cities and host an event called "Power Up." That's an opportunity to bring the power and the resources to the community, but also empower them, inspire them, innovate them, and provide information.

We connect with superintendents, local school board members, principals, and Black educators who've seen successful things and know the best practices. We advance those, advocate for them, and then provide policy recommendations. There's no reason that say, a Power Up or a similar event can't happen beyond the administration.

We have to be strong and understand the value that we already bring to the table. We have to really understand the role of local elections and the local school board. Anything that needs to happen, we have the power to do.



**Dr. Khalil Gibran Muhammad**  
Professor of African American Studies and Public Affairs, Princeton University

We're already living in Trump's world, where states are banning the truth about Black history. Now there's going to be even more pressure to rewrite curricula and spread lies about America. Book bans will get worse, erasing stories where Black people are the heroes. I expect to see severe Black enrollment declines at predominantly white (colleges), the purging of Black studies programs, and even fewer opportunities to learn about race and racism at all.

(But) Resistance in our DNA. Black history itself is a reservoir of inspiration. We've been here before. There is no American democracy without the Black freedom struggle. Black people have never stayed silent in the face of oppression, and we're not going to start now.

Start book clubs. Organize freedom schools. Host workshops. We have the tools — resources like the Southern Poverty Law Center and Teaching for Change are out there. It's about being intentional and not waiting for someone else to save us. We've faced erasure and censorship before — and we've always resisted.

The only way to freedom is to fight for it.



**Dr. Faith Oluoba**  
OB-GYN, Author, Coach, and Speaker

It has — and always will be — important for women to continue advocating for their own health by staying informed and involved in their healthcare. This may be the season of second opinions.

Black women should be increasing their awareness about "weathering" and its incredible impact on our health. "Weathering" means that we — Black women — are 7.5 years biologically older than our white counterparts due to various stressors including our environment, poverty, racial issues. Stress shows up in our bodies and in our DNA.

## Black Resistance

# Grave concerns by Black Americans

From A17

This political climate is a very stressful time for Black women. Because of this, Black women need to be extremely serious about their health. Black women need to choose a physician they align with on values, rapport, and trust.

Black women need to make sure to ask questions. If you don't get a clear response or the information you need, then ask again or rephrase your question. There is a difference between getting responses that you don't agree with versus not being heard.

Prevention is key, including understanding your current health state but also your family history. A mental health plan is important. It includes self-care, but also for some, it may also include having a therapist, scheduling regular time off, getting plenty of sleep. Black Women have historically shouldered the weight of the world and this year we need to advocate for rest.



**Dr. Bahia Overton**  
Executive Director, Black Parent Initiative

My initial reaction was grave concern for the average Black person walking around. The election results highlighted the agenda of white supremacy, where economic hardship, rising grocery costs, or healthcare struggles didn't matter as much to some as their sense of superiority. That was sobering to see.

No matter who's in power, we have to support our families and continue the work. Historically, we've been through a lot, and this is no different. This is a time to come together and stop fighting for crumbs. We need to collaborate more because, in many ways, we're all we got. We're not fixing broken people. We're fixing systems that were designed to break them. We know that students with at least 6,000 out-of-school learning hours thrive academically and behaviorally. For Black students, we're pushing for 8,000 hours. That means mobilizing organizations and individuals to contribute —whether through literacy programs, STEM education, or arts and culture. We have to take ownership of our children's education."

Resistance doesn't mean despair. It means

**Black Resistance looks like remembering that our Ancestors are with us and will guide us in dreaming of our present freedoms.**

**Dr. Fallon Wilson**  
- Co-Founder,  
#BlackTechFutures  
Research Institute, Vice  
President of Tech Policy,  
Multicultural Media,  
Telecom and Internet  
Council



**Dr. Fallon Wilson - Co-Founder, #BlackTechFutures Research Institute, Vice President of Tech Policy, Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council**

Black Resistance looks like remembering that our Ancestors are with us and will guide us in dreaming of our present freedoms. It looks like black joy in our traditions and our impromptu gatherings that we breathe freely and are human. It looks like corporate prayer, corporate worship, and collective singing as we fine-tune AI foundational models to see us. It looks like digital freedoms set upon the red hills of Georgia. It looks like us as a movement dreaming of the future.

recognizing what we already have — our abundance, collaborating strategically, and being unwavering in our commitment to our people. We can't rely on traditional systems to do right by us. We must be unapologetic in demanding what our children need to thrive.



**D. Danyelle Thomas**  
Founder, "Unfit Christian"

Black Resistance, going forward, must focus on rest, joy, and trusting our collective knowing. We must build our pathway on a foundation of rest, understanding that emotional and physical burnout is intentionally induced in our lives to obstruct our abilities to both dream and create our liberation. Essential to fruitful rest is joy, remembering that pleasure is not only our birthright, but also fulfillment of our ancestral dreams.

Finally, we must trust our knowing: we understand how whiteness functions both by lived experience within its systemic constructs and from the inherited wisdom of elders and generations preceding us. We also know that not all gatekeepers of supremacy are white men — many of the best arbiters of oppression look like our kinfolk. As has been said before, we must keep our eyes on that prize, which remains the complete and total liberation of Black Americans, the African diaspora, and all oppressed people globally.



**Dr. Artika Tyner**  
Founder of Planting People Growing Justice Institute

Root our resistance in literacy. Invest our time, talent, and treasure in increasing literacy in the Black community through a combination of engagement and advocacy strategies. The political climate under Trump has been marked by efforts to erase the teaching of Black history, restrict discussions on systemic racism, and ban books that center Black voices. Falling behind in literacy at this critical stage creates barriers to academic achievement and perpetuates cycles of oppression. By focusing on improving our literacy outcomes, we can create new pipelines to success.

In a time when anti-Black policies and rhetoric are on the rise, grassroots efforts are just as important. Organizations like our literacy nonprofit Planting People Growing Justice Institute provide such a lifeline to combatting Black educational censorship that is sure to fester under a second Trump presidency. We've been at the forefront of promoting literacy engagement nationwide to foster learning and growth beyond the classroom.

Organizing and mobilizing will be critical for cultivating Black educational resistance and literacy is central to the fight for justice. As Frederick Douglass said, "Once you learn to read, you will be forever free." Freedom and liberation are within our reach as we continue to inspire our children to learn, grow, and lead.



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# Helping Homeowners



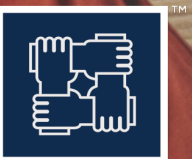
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# MY LOVE LANGUAGE *is* SMILING

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*Whodunit?  
Based On  
The Board  
Game,  
'Clue:  
A New  
Comedy,'  
Comes to  
Tulsa*



THE CLASSIC DETECTIVE BOARD GAME THAT WAS TURNED INTO A 1985 MOVIE IS NOW COMING TO LIFE ON A TULSA STAGE. CELEBRITY ATTRACTIONS PRESENTS "CLUE: A NEW COMEDY" AT THE TULSA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER FROM FEB. 11-14, 2025.

**Kimberly Marsh**  
The Oklahoma Eagle

CLUE Tulsa, February 11 - 16, 2025, Tulsa Performing Arts Center.

PHOTO CLUE LIVE ONSTAGE.COM

**T**he tale begins at a remote mansion, where six mysterious guests assemble for an unusual dinner party. Murder, blackmail, and good comedy are on the menu. When their host turns up dead, they all become suspects. Led by Wadsworth – the butler, Miss Scarlet, Professor Plum, Mrs. White, Mr. Green, Mrs. Peacock, and Colonel Mustard race to find the killer as the body count stacks up.

Cast member Teddy Trice examines the play and offers insights in this question-and-answer profile. Trice plays the Unexpected Cop (and is Colonel Mustard's understudy), who gets called to the mansion because of a tip about an abandoned car left at the gates of Boddy Manor. Upon his investigation, he is taken on a wild ride during the most chaotic and high-stakes moment of the show. He invites Tulsa to join in the game.

**How does this stage adaptation compare to the classic 1985 film?**

Sandy Rustin, our playwright, did a masterful job preserving the comedy and integrity of the film while also giving the stage production an exciting, fresh perspective. Our stage adaptation is incredibly fast-paced, with our own twists and turns to keep the audience guessing.

**What has been the most exciting part of preparing for this production?**

The most exciting part is getting the opportunity to share this piece across the country. In each new city, we sound-check and rehearse a list of technical elements for the local crew. It's the first time we step onto the stage and take everything in before the audience arrives. Certainly, an exciting part of the preparation.

**Clue is a mix of comedy and mystery—how do you balance the two on stage?**

Comedy is the result of expecting one thing but receiving another. Mystery constantly keeps you guessing. When you don't know what to expect, and the circumstances are outrageous, it manages to blend the two genres in an effective way.

**Can you share any fun or unexpected moments from rehearsals?**

Casey Hushion, our director, is one of the most clever, smart, and tenacious directors working today. She's also hilarious. One of her favorite songs is "Yeah!" by Usher. She would play it to pump us up or after a great rehearsal. Worked every time.

**Without giving too much away, what should audiences pay extra attention to during the performance?**

Good question. All I'd say is (to) pay close attention to the motives.

**What do you hope Tulsa audiences take away from this production?**

I was drawn to the role because it's a thrill to be a part of an ensemble of characters that so many people know and love. I also feel a bit like the voice of reason juxtaposed to the larger-than-life suspects. It's a lot of fun. I hope audiences leave feeling sore with laughter and are immersed in the story as if they were back playing the board game.

**What is your background?**

I was born and raised in Kansas City, Mo., and now live in New York City. I started acting when I was 12, and theatre and the arts have been a part of my life ever since. I received my Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from Drury University in Springfield, Mo. I've been truly grateful to call it my career. In addition to "Clue," I was on Broadway in "The Book of Mormon," the Australian tour of "Come From Away," along with numerous Off-Broadway and regional productions.

For Trice's updates from the road, visit @teddytrice on Instagram.

Tickets are available now. For more information, visit the Tulsa Performing Arts Center's website, tulsapac.org, or call 918-596-7111.