

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG, STATE SCHOOL BOARD, STATE SUPERINTENDENT FILE LAWSUIT AGAINST BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL BOARD

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange, the Alabama State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Education Dr. Thomas R. Bice today filed a lawsuit against the Birmingham City Board of Education and its members. The lawsuit seeks a court order instructing the Birmingham school board to adhere to the directives from Superintendent Bice and the State Board of Education. The lawsuit became necessary due to the local board’s failure to comply with state law and its open defiance and obstruction of state education directives.

Attorney General Strange said, “As the State’s chief legal officer, it is my responsibility to ensure that public officials follow the law. The Birmingham Board of Education has not only failed to follow the law, but they have further openly challenged state authority. In so doing, they have created chaos and have put the interests of school children at risk. Relief from the court is requested to affirm the constitutional and statutory authority of the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Education, and to end the Birmingham Board’s continued interference with state mandates.”

Superintendent Bice said, “It is regretful that our attempts to achieve a collaborative resolution with the Birmingham Board have reached a point of impasse that calls for legal action. However, this step has been taken in order to ensure that the educational interests of the students of the Birmingham City Schools are met.”

The officials’ lawsuit explains that the Birmingham Board is in a state of financial and political crisis. The local board, however, has openly challenged and impeded the properly-invoked statutory authority of the State Board of Education and Superintendent Bice. Such a situation is untenable and jeopardizes the immediate and long-term educational interests of the Birmingham City school system.

Furthermore, the lawsuit asks the court to affirm that Superintendent Bice and the State Board of Education have full and complete authority and the responsibility to manage the financial operations and related functions of the school board. The State officials seek a permanent court injunction to stop the Birmingham board from taking any action contrary to the authority of the State Superintendent of Education and the State Board of Education.



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