

Community Roots: Seattle Native Addresses Youth And Sports In New Book

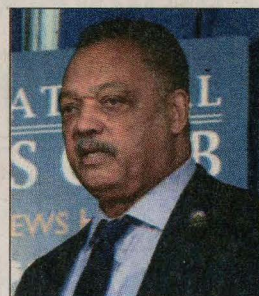
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The Seattle Medium

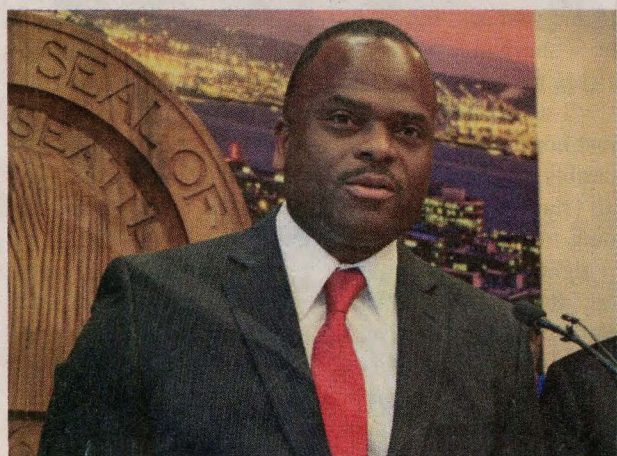
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Murray Nominates Harold Scoggins As Seattle's Next Fire Chief



Harold Scoggins

Last week, Seattle Mayor Ed Murray announced his nomination of Harold Scoggins as the next Chief of the Seattle Fire Department.

Scoggins comes to the Seattle Fire Department from Glendale, CA. He joined the Glendale Fire Department 25 years ago as a fire fighter and rose through the ranks, serving at every level of the department. He was named chief in Glendale in 2008.

"As Seattle grows rapidly over the next 20 years, our fire service must continue to evolve to serve the city's public safety needs," said Murray. "Our department saves lives every day and our Medic One program remains a national leader in paramedic training for our fire fighters. Chief Scoggins has an outstanding track record and brings the right kind of experience to Seattle."

The department currently has 80 vacancies, and Murray is directing Chief Scoggins to intensify recruitment of a diverse workforce of fire fighters, as well as ensure proper succession planning at lieutenant, captain and senior leadership positions in the department.

The Seattle Fire Department's percentage of women fire fighters is 8.4 percent, which exceeds the national average of 3.4 percent, and the mayor is urging continued focus on the recruitment of qualified women.

"I look forward to working with Chief Scoggins, who will lead the best group of firefighters in the country - protecting us daily and providing emergency care that keeps us all safe," said Councilmember Bruce Harrel. "One critical aspect for the new Chief will be to complete implementation of the five-year strategic plan completed in 2012, setting goals for developing leadership abilities of Fire Department employees at all levels, helping employees develop and improve, health and safety, ensuring a diverse and inclusive workforce, fostering community outreach and partnerships, and maintaining equipment

and technology critical to the department."

Scoggins served for five years as a fire fighter in the U.S. Air Force before joining the Glendale Fire Department in 1989. He was promoted to Fire Engineer in 1996, Fire Captain in 1998 and Battalion Chief in 2003. In that position, he was responsible for recruitment, hiring and training of the department's fire fighters. In 2007, he was appointed Deputy Fire Chief, before being named Chief of the Glendale Fire Department a year later.

Scoggins is a past-president of the Los Angeles Area Fire Chief's Association. He taught Fire Science as an adjunct professor at Mt. San Antonio College and El Camino College. He has served on the boards of several non-profit organizations, and is an active community volunteer.

Scoggins earned his associate's degree in Fire Technology from Glendale Community College in 1994, a B.S. in Fire Administration from California State University Los Angeles in 1996 and a Master of Public Administration from California State University Long Beach in 2007.

Scoggins replaces Seattle Fire Chief Gregory Dean, who retired at the end of 2014 after a decade at the helm. Interim Chief Michael Walsh, who first joined the department in 1971, stepped in to fill the role for the first part of 2015.

"I am honored to serve as the Fire Chief for the City of Seattle," said Scoggins. "I look forward to working with the men and women of Seattle Fire Department to set its course for the future. My family and I are also very excited about the community and all it has to offer."

The Seattle Fire Department has more than 1,100 employees and an annual budget of \$178 million.

Chief Scoggins' first day at the department will be April 1. He will be paid an annual salary of \$205,000.

Blacks Students Bear Brunt Of School Suspensions

By Jazelle Hunt

Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - According to a report released last week, 3.5 million K-12 public school students were suspended in the 2011-2012 school year - enough to fill every stadium seat in Super Bowl 1 through Super Bowl 45.

And Black children are bearing the brunt of these excessive suspensions.

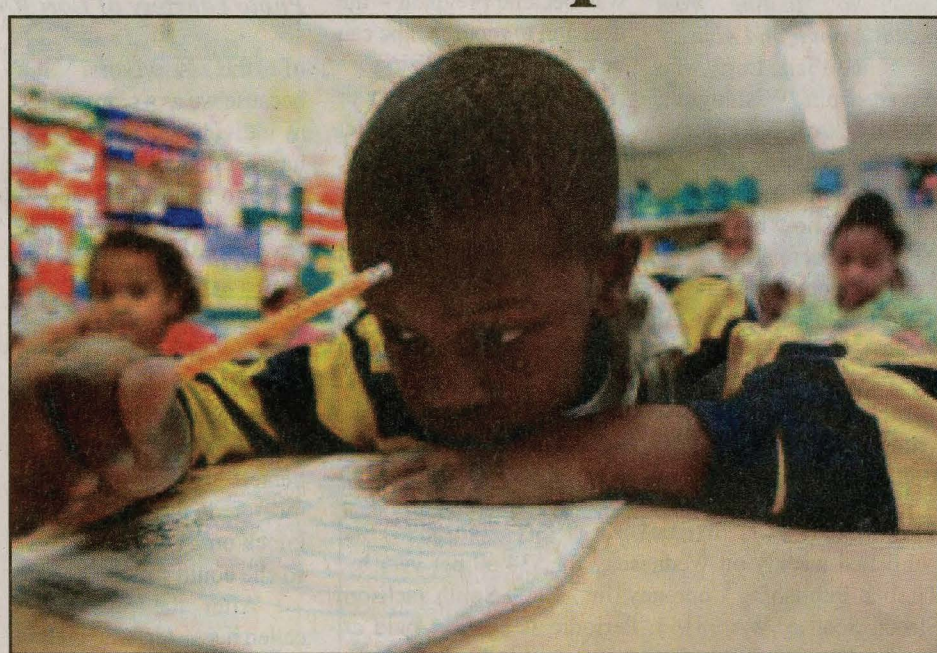
The report, "Are We Closing the School Discipline Gap?," states, "Demographically, the seven highest-suspending districts all had majority Black enrollment, although the range was from 26 percent to 99 percent Black. Only one [of the seven highest], Taylor, Florida, was majority White, at 67 percent."

The research, conducted by the Civil Rights Project at UCLA, offers a detailed analysis of public school suspension over the last few years, with the data broken down by elementary and high school, district and state, race and gender, and language and learning ability.

In the past two to five years, schools have made a concerted effort to avoid out-of-school suspensions for elementary schoolchildren, though it still happens. The reversal is not happening as fast at the high school level.

Black high school boys are suspended at the highest rate of all groups - 28.4 percent, compared to the 10 percent national average. Black high school girls follow at 17.9 percent (Native American and Latino boys come next, with 15 and 14 percent, respectively). Between 2002 and 2006, the suspension rate for Black girls increased at the highest rate of all groups.

For Black students with disabilities, the rates are even higher - 33.8 percent for Black high



school boys, and 22.5 percent for girls - "shocking" enough to suggest that these students' civil rights are being "unlawfully violated."

Out-of-school suspensions also feed the racial and economic achievement gap, and have far-reaching effects on future outcomes.

"...higher suspension rates are closely correlated with higher dropout and delinquency rates, and they have tremendous economic costs for the suspended students, as well as for society as a whole," the report explains.

"Therefore, the large racial/ethnic disparities in suspensions that we document in this report likely will have an adverse and disparate impact on the academic achievement and life outcomes of millions of historically disadvantaged children."

The starkness of the data has lead schools, administrators, teachers, and parents to believe that Black children must be earning these suspension rates. But an examination of the data at the state and district level shows does not support this belief.

For starters, Black students are enrolled in almost equal numbers in both high-suspending and lower-suspending states.

Since 2009, suspensions in the 35 school districts with the lowest suspension rates have continued to decline.

"In other words, readers would be wrong to assume that something about the behavior of Black elementary students requires greater use of suspension," the report says. "To the contrary, these data, along with several studies that tracked behavior ratings of students as well as disciplinary outcomes suggest that Black students are punished more harshly and more often for subjective minor offenses. Instead, researchers conclude that school policies and practices more than differences in behaviors, predict higher suspension rates."

In addition to a race and gender analysis of the suspension data, the researchers examined and ranked the data, district by district and state by state. Florida suspends its students more than any other state, both at the elementary and high school levels. Other K-12 high suspending states with high suspension rates in both elementary and high schools were Mississippi, Delaware, Alabama, and South Carolina.

Notably, Missouri is home to three of the

highest-suspending school districts in the nation and has the highest Black-White discipline gap. Michael Brown, the unarmed Black teenager killed by a White policeman in Ferguson, Mo., was a graduate of Missouri's Normandy School District, where students are suspended at a 48.4 percent rate.

The worst districts for Black students in particular are Oklahoma City in Oklahoma, Cahokia CUSD 187 in Illinois, and Greenville Public Schools in Mississippi - where Black kids are suspended at 64, 63, and 59 percent, respectively. In Oklahoma City, that number is 75 percent for Black boys; in Cahokia, it's 58 percent for Black girls.

There were also districts that have done well in reducing out-of-school punishments, especially among Black children, including: Edgewood ISD in Texas, Richmond County in Georgia, and Lawton County, Oklahoma.

States with large Black populations that have improved over the last few years include Maryland, Pennsylvania, and California.

While excessive school suspension remains a significant barrier to equitable, effective public

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Murray Sends Pre-K Implementation Plan To City Council

On Tuesday, Seattle Mayor Ed Murray sent his plan to implement the voter-approved Seattle Preschool Program to the city council.

The implementation plan provides details about how the preschool program will be rolled out, and how it will work toward meeting its goal of closing the achievement gap for Seattle's youngest learners.

"Included in this implementation plan are the key ingredients to creating a successful program that will make a difference in the lives of young children and their families across our city," said Murray. "With the plan's focus on quality, we're working to ensure

that the children participating in the Seattle Preschool Program will be ready for school and have the foundation to succeed in school and life."

To develop the plan, the City's Department of Education and Early Learning conducted significant community outreach - holding seven meetings across the city and conducting online surveys in order to gather community priorities and values on key issues.

The implementation plan outlines how the city will select qualified preschool providers, and how those providers will be supported, in raising or

sustaining their classroom quality.

"Unfortunately, many children in our community don't have access to quality programs. By expanding access through the Seattle Preschool Program, Seattle is ensuring that all children in our city will enter kindergarten ready to learn and thrive," said Brianna Jackson of the Community Day School Association. "The Seattle Preschool Program is a great first step toward closing the achievement gap and assuring that all children have the skills needed to succeed in school and beyond."

The City will select

preschools by prioritizing programs that serve areas of the city with the most need for quality early learning programs, those that can meet the needs of low-income and working families, and those that can demonstrate evidence of high-quality classrooms.

The plan also lays a path for enrollment and how children will be selected and assigned to attend Seattle Preschool Program classrooms.

The City will begin selecting preschools in Spring 2015, and the first classrooms will open in Fall of 2015, serving as many as 280 children.