

Picket Extreme Right-Wing Civitas Institute's Training for School Board Members!

WHEN: Thursday, April 14 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM

***11:00 AM – TEACH-IN ON RIGHT-WING MONEY
INFLUENCE, TEA PARTY, ART POPE, KOCH BROTHERS
AND THE RISING TIDE OF RACISM ACROSS THE
COUNTRY***

12:00 NOON - RALLY

WHERE: WS/FC Schools Education Building
4801 Bethania Station Road
Winston-Salem, NC

WHO: NAACP and Statewide Partners

HOW: Supporters of public education will gather before 9:30 AM on Thursday, April 14 to set-up for a picket at the school system's building on Bethania Station Road. We will hold a rally at 12:00 noon. If you can only come for part of the day, **COME TO THE RALLY AT 12:00 NOON!**

WHY: Civitas is an ideologically and profit-driven right-wing think tank, funded and directed Art Pope, one of the most influential, millionaire Tea Party funders in the United States. They have an agenda to dismantle public education through privatization and further re-segregation. Between three Tea Party organizations that Pope supports – Americans for Prosperity, Real Jobs NC and Civitas – Pope poured \$2.2 million into the recent NC legislative election, which resulted in the right-wing take-over the NC General Assembly. The Civitas Institute has no place training our school system on budget cuts. Pope is responsible for 90% of all funding for all major right-wing think tanks in North Carolina!

***CIVITAS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SUPPORT BUDGET CUTS ON THE
BACKS OF THE POOR, BLACK AND LATINO SCHOOLS, CHILDREN
AND COMMUNITIES***

CONTACT: Atty. Wayne Patterson (336-995-3072) Stephen Hairston (336-813-7311) or Rob Stephens (336-577-9335, robstephens50@gmail.com) for more information on the picket and rides to the location.

NAACP Statement Urging the WS/FC School Board from Voting to Invite the Civitas Institute to Conduct Training

For Immediate Release:

8 March 2011

For More Information: Atty. S. Wayne Patterson, President, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Branch of the NAACP, 336-995-3072

The Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Branch of the NAACP calls on the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School Board to VOTE NO to co-sponsoring the budget-training seminar with the extreme right wing, divisive and regressive Civitas Institute.

The Civitas Institute has consistently supported efforts to re-segregate, disinvest and privatize public schools in North Carolina, most notably in Wake County. It is shocking that the School Board is still considering hosting the Civitas Institute for this seminar after the controversy over the past few months. This is the last group of people we need to advise our School Board on responsible budget cuts.

At first, the Civitas Institute and the WS/FCS School Board publicized the seminar as featuring John Dornan, the former president of the widely respected NC Public Schools Forum, on the program. However, they did this without informing him who planned the seminar. Later on, Dornan was shocked when friends, colleagues and others informed him that The Civitas Institute was organizing the training seminar. He immediately withdrew from the training and wrote an email to the School Board and Superintendent Martin criticizing both their decision to invite the anti-public education Civitas Institute to conduct the seminar and their decision to not inform him of Civitas's involvement in the seminar. Here is a section of that letter:

“For your information, while I believe in a free exchange of ideas and respect the right of any would-be think tank, be it Civitas or the Public School Forum, to hold views contrary to my own, I do not agree with Civitas when it comes to their stance on public schools and would not knowingly help them advance their views. They appear to view the free market and choice/vouchers/tax credits as the answer to the challenges of education – solutions I fear would only compound the challenges we now face. As for their very recent entry into the school board training arena I can't help but believe that it is a thinly veiled attempt to spread their ideology, not one focused on building the capacity of school board members to make decisions that will strengthen the public schools (Email from John Dornan to WSFCS School Board and Superintendent Don Martin, January 6, 2011).”

The Civitas Institute will undoubtedly advise the school board to cut the budget on the backs of the poor and minority students and families in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System. At a time when more and more organizations are distancing themselves from the ideologically driven Civitas Institute, the School Board would be putting themselves, as well as our schools, students and teachers, in the unfortunate position of being associated with people who want to take us backwards, and dismantle public education.