

MORE 4 MANN COALITION CHALLENGES SCHOOL DISTRICT'S BAN OF AFRICATOWN ARRESTEES

There was a hearing this morning concerning Seattle Public Schools' decision to ban several people from district property because of their involvement in the [More4Mann](http://more4mann.blogspot.com) movement (<http://more4mann.blogspot.com>). This coalition attempted to challenge the school to prison pipeline by taking back a district school and setting up educational programs attuned to the needs to Black youth. Here is the press release from [More4Mann](http://more4mann.blogspot.com) (<http://more4mann.blogspot.com>):

9 a.m. Friday, July 25, 2014 Judge Kimberley Prochnau

King County Superior Court, 516 3rd Ave., Seattle

Courtroom E-201 Supporters and journalists encouraged.

The More 4 Mann Coalition of Historic Africatown (in Central Seattle) is continuing to challenge the unconstitutional "EXCLUSION NOTICE" imposed upon three of our members by the Seattle Public School District since last November, in direct violation of the First Amendment.

The three members, Omari Tahir, Greg Lewis and Leight J-K, appealed this decision to the King County Superior Court. Judge Prochnou will hear the appeal at 9 a.m. Friday, July 25, in Courtroom E-201, at 516 3rd Ave..

The Exclusion Notice bans the three members of the More 4 Mann Coalition from any and all public meetings and community events held on any SPS property for one year.

Former Seattle Public Schools social studies teacher Omari Tahir has served as the elected co-chair of the Seattle Alliance For Black Education since 1970. Greg Lewis is a martial arts and fitness instructor. Leith Jasinowski-Kahl is a local longshoreman and community activist who has served as a member of SPS's Horace Mann-African American Community Partnerships Task Force since August 22, 2013, at the request of outgoing Superintendent Jose Banda. In September, that task force reached overwhelming joint District-Community agreement on thirteen (13) clear recommendations (attached), which the More 4 Mann Coalition continues to support.

We believe this perverse and backward "Exclusion Notice" to have been concocted by loyalists of SPS General Council Ron English, and his old-guard faction within the School District. This is the same School District (and Ron English faction) that has always welcomed the infamous former Urban League chief James Kelly into its facilities, even after he brought a firearm onto Rainier Beach High School campus and publicly threatened people with it in May of 2002 (<http://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/City-right-to-bring-charge-in-gun-case-1091852.php> (<http://www.seattlepi.com/news/article/City-right-to-bring-charge-in-gun-case-1091852.php>)).

Last Autumn, Ron English sabotaged the Superintendent's pragmatic efforts at multicultural dialogue, and abruptly shifted the District's tone and policy. In early November, the District suddenly and unilaterally began addressing the More 4 Mann Coalition as "trespassers" instead of Partners. The District also sent a letter to task force member Leith Kahl, threatening to exclude him from Board meetings if he so much as mentioned Ron English by name, title, or pronoun (also attached).

The Ron English machine is using District Exclusion Notices and Seattle Police to silence its critics because it does not want Seattle's taxpayers to pay attention to the record of Ron English's involvement in the 1986 through 2005 process of privatizing Queen Anne High School (http://seattletimes.com/html/education/2002440838_queenanne15m.html (http://seattletimes.com/html/education/2002440838_queenanne15m.html)), the illegal 2003 "transfer" of the African American Heritage Museum & Cultural Center's Coleman School Building to the Seattle Urban League (<http://www.aahmcc.org/a-brief-history/> (<http://www.aahmcc.org/a-brief-history/>)), the theocratic 2010 giveaway of MLK High School to a religious institution (http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2015242396_mlk06m.html (http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2015242396_mlk06m.html)), and the Seattle Public Schools Small Business Contracting Program Scandal of 2011 (http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2014375410_potter03.html (http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2014375410_potter03.html)). A thorough review of this long related train of abuses and usurpations would lead most taxpayers to conclude that Ron English is not a good steward of public resources, and that he should, at the very least, be let go from his job at SPS.

The District still had yet to implement any of these task force recommendations by November 19th, when a Seattle Police SWAT Team raided the Mann building at Ron English's desire, arresting Leith, Omari, Greg and one random bystander who was not a Coalition member. They were each issued the District's one year Exclusion Notice at the time of their release the same day. Not a single task force recommendation had yet been implemented by December 12, when we appealed the Exclusion Notice within the District's internal Kangaroo "appeal procedure", where it was of course upheld by THE SAME PERSON WHO HAD WRITTEN IT IN THE FIRST PLACE. Not a single recommendation had been implemented by December 19th, when we appealed this matter to Superior Court.

Since then, we are happy to report that at least ONE important task force recommendation was achieved, when SPS signed an interim re-location lease agreement with one of the More 4 Mann Coalition's affiliated organizations. However, to date, less than four out of the thirteen task force recommendations have been achieved.

The programmatic and visual presence of ALL Africatown activities have been, at least temporarily, displaced from 2401 E. Cherry Street, the historic heart of Africatown. This was the opposite of both the letter and spirit of the task force's recommendations, and of the School District's stated intent in convening that task force.

Our attorney will therefore ask the Superior Court to quash this unlawful exclusion notice.

(<https://creativitynotcontrol.files.wordpress.com/2014/07/2.jpg>)

- **COMMENTS** *1 Comment*
- **CATEGORIES** *Event, Race, What's happening in Seattle?*

		5 Strongly disagree	4 Disagree	3 Agree	2 Strongly Agree
3c.	The district should consider delaying the construction schedule for Mann for one year.				
3d.	Capital Project staff and design team should work with representatives from Africatown Center for Education & Innovation and NOVA school to identify opportunities to honor the African-American culture and identify dedicated space for community partners.	1 Strongly disagree	0 Disagree	2 Agree	13 Strongly Agree
3e.	Africatown Center for Education & Innovation will work with design/construction team to incorporate design/build out elements for dedicated space that honors the African American community legacy at Mann building.	3 Strongly disagree	1 Disagree	3 Agree	12 Strongly Agree
3f.	The murals created by Africatown Center for Education & Innovation and NOVA youth should be attached to construction fencing to demonstrate the district's and community's commitment to the ongoing partnership.	3 Strongly disagree	1 Disagree	4 Agree	11 Strongly Agree

Jean Dingfield

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November 13, 2013

Leith Kahn
leithkahn@gmail.com

Re: November 6, 2013 School Board Meeting Conduct

Dear Mr. Kahn:

The purpose of this letter is to formally remind you of the "Rules for Public Testimony" when speaking before the Seattle School District ("District") Board of Directors at a board meeting.

On November 6, 2013, you made a personal attack against the District's General Counsel during your public testimony to the Seattle School District Board of Directors. During your public testimony you stated:

- Get a better lawyer. Get a lawyer who blows the whistle in 2007 when Silas Potter starts stealing money instead of three years later. No offense to your current lawyer, I am sure we can trust him to make the coffee, just lock the coffee maker down to the shelf.

This comment was gender specific and targeted one lawyer- the District's General Counsel. Your comment is considered a personal insult toward a District employee. The District Rules for Public Testimony provide that "no racial slurs, personal insults, ridicule, or threats will be allowed." A copy of the Rules for Public Testimony is enclosed. The comment made by you during the November 6, 2013 public meeting violates the Rules for Public Testimony and Board Policy 1430, which prohibits personally directed and abusive testimony.

Please be advised that any future violation of the Rules of Public Testimony or District policy during public testimony or audience participation will result in restrictions being placed on your ability to speak at future school board meetings.

Sincerely,

Larry Donney
Safety and Security

Enclosures (Rules for Public Testimony and Board Policy No. 1430)

cc: Kay Smith-Bloom, School Board President
Ron English, General Counsel