

## Immigration complaint filed against school system

By Pamela Permar Shierling

Pro-immigration enforcement activist D.A. King of Marietta, Georgia has filed a complaint against the Glynn County School System for alleged violation of Georgia's illegal immigration laws.

The complaint sent to the state Immigration Enforcement Review Board (IERB) alleges that Glynn County School System (GCSS) has conducted English language classes for parents of K-12 students without verifying the U.S. citizenship or legal immigration status of the adults.

King cited a 2016 flyer offering English classes to parents at Glynn Middle School as one example of the classes in violation. Except for the words "Learn English," the flyer is printed in Spanish, King said.

Under Georgia law Adult Education is considered a public benefit and requires that administration of "public benefits" include a verification process along with a sworn affidavit from applicants and presentation of "secure and verifiable ID" to prove eligibility for the benefits.

King alleges this verification process did not take place.

*The Islander* has seen King's open records request from and the response from Jim Weidhaas, GCSS Public Relations Director.

Weidhaas wrote, "The Glynn County School System does not offer Adult Education courses as referenced in

your (King's) request. In compliance with federal guidelines, parents of enrolled students can attend classes designed to help them improve their English skills. The goal is to improve communication between the home and school and enable parents to effectively engage in their child's education. As these classes do not meet the criteria of an Adult Education course, there is no documentation to provide regarding your request."

King said he sent an open records request to GCSS in January asking for "copies of any and all documents, including applications, affidavits and Secure ID associated with the calendar year 2016 administration of the adult education classes for adult English language classes conducted by Glynn County Schools as described in this flyer and email from your staff."

In a recent letter to the IERB on behalf of the GCSS, Phil Hartley of Harben, Hartley & Hawkins, LLP, wrote:

*This firm represents the Glynn County School District and, in that capacity, we are responding to a letter dated February 23, 2017 from the Director of Administration of the Department of Audits and Accounts referencing a complaint filed with the Immigration Enforcement Review Board.*

*The School District believes that it has fully and completely complied with O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1. Specifically with regard to the apparent allegations, the School District does not offer adult education programs. The program that appears to be referenced by the complainant involves Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which provides funds to the State and through the State to public school districts. This program serves*

restoration projects.

- Natural resource management will consist of:

- sand fencing and dune vegetation targeted to promote dune growth;
- managing sand around beach access routes and structures;
- create a "Sand Bank" which is to collect and bank "nuisance sand" to facilitate targeted, beneficial dune protection / restoration projects;
- sand will be removed from sidewalks and access structures and returned to the sand-sharing system as locally-derived, beach-quality sand.

- Public access projects include:

- maintenance of beach accesses and crossovers and signage posting advisories (structures require frequent repair and upkeep to ensure safety and functionality);
- maintenance and addition or relocation of trash and recycling structures and containers along access routes as well as trimming of vegetation impeding access.

The JIA will keep marine debris removed from the beach including derelict boats and unauthorized beach access structures.

Maintenance and management of existing public use facilities will also take place under the permit. However, no expansion of developed existing use footprints is proposed.

The permit request for a five year revocable permit was submitted to the CRD on March 15 with written public comments due by April 14. □

*qualifying students and, in doing so, attempts to facilitate parental involvement and provide assistance to parents so they can assist in their children's education. In that way, it is similar to many programs that school districts offer to get parents more involved in the education of their children.*

*Rule 160-5-1-28(2)(b)(VII) of the State Board of Education, a copy of which is attached (see page 5), specifically prohibits any inquiry into the legal status of students or their parents as a condition for enrollment in the public education program of the state.*

*Just recently, school districts received further explanation from Cori Alston, the Program Manager, ESOL and Title III Coordinator at the State Department of Education, together with a letter from the United States Department of Education. Hopefully as is clear from these documents, both*

March 27, 2017, *The Islander*, Page 5 state regulation and federal law prohibits the School District from inquiring into legal residency status or basing any decision regarding enrollment in a K-12 program on residency status. Of course, the provision of K-12 public education to the students of the state is not one of the services listed or specified in O.C.G.A. § 50-36-1.

To the extent there are issues with regard to the application of the state law to this federal program, the inquiry should be directed to either the state or federal departments of education.

As to this specific complaint, hopefully this provides all the information that you need, but do not hesitate to let us know if additional information is sought.

According to Andrew Lakin, GCSS attorney, nothing further has been heard by the school system from the IERB since February 23. □

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## Jekyll beach

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"These projects by nature arise opportunistically, have light footprints, and the motivational drivers tend to be protection or enhancement of natural resources values and management of human interaction within the jurisdictional area."

SPA jurisdiction on Jekyll Island extends from the mouth of Beach Creek on the Southern end of the island to the mouth of Clam Creek on the North end of the island which is the entirety of the Jekyll Island beach.

According to Carswell actions covered under the permit would fall into two focus areas: Natural Resources Management and Public Access. The permit would only apply to actions to be carried out by the JIA.

All activities in the jurisdictional area would be done in communication with the DNR and CRD staff.

Activities in the area would include:

- removal of invasive plant species;
- plant / promote beneficial native vegetation to promote dune growth and / or stability as well as enhanced habitat value for wildlife;

- periodic maintenance activities including using hand tools, temporary irrigation, or any other targeted and controlled means;

- maintenance of a particular habitat type; and

- harvest of native seeds for