
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: BOYD
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: FYI: DR. FLETCHER'S ATTEMPTS TO SEND SOMEONE OTHER THAN OUR OFFICE'S
DESIGNEE TO NGA CONFERENCE
DATE 10/16/00
CC: FILE

This memo will summarize Dr. Bettye Fletcher's attempts to send someone other than this office's designee to a NGA conference. NGA's Center for Best Practices is hosting a forum entitled "Extra Learning Opportunities: Defining the State Role" in Seattle, Washington, on November 16-17, 2000. NGA is paying all expenses.

We were first made aware of this forum back in the spring and I contacted personnel at DHS, MDE and the Division of Public Safety and Planning to see if their calendars would allow them to serve on the state team to the forum. We never designated anyone as a state team member to the forum. The Governor did not approve the team, so we did not plan to send anyone.

NGA notified us on Friday, October 6, that they would still pay for Mississippi to send a team to the forum. Donna and I reviewed the proposed team from back in the spring. Donna instructed me to submit the following as our state team: Thornell Williams of our office, Dr. Thompson's designee, and DHS's mentoring coordinator. Thornell contacted Willie Blackmon, DHS' Interim Director of Youth Services, on Monday, October 9 and requested that they provide us with the name of their mentoring coordinator. Mr. Blackmon's office phoned us with the name of Sollie Norwood on Wednesday, October 11. As Donna was out of the office, I informed you and Armerita of Sollie's name, with both of you saying to go with him. I faxed our team registration form to NGA on Thursday with the names of Norwood, Thornell and Judy Couey from MDE.

Dr. Fletcher left voicemail for me while I was out of the office Thursday afternoon and again Friday morning while we were in meetings. I phoned her at approximately 10:15 Friday morning and she inquired as to how we got Sollie's name. I explained that we had contacted her staff. She said that she thought Carol Burnett or someone from Michael Raff's office would be more appropriate. I explained that we had already submitted the team registration, that we would include these individuals in activities pursuant to the conference, but that Mr. Norwood would be attending as designated on our state team list.

Devon Dennis, an assistant at DHS, left several messages for me to call her Friday afternoon. Miss Dennis left me voicemail informing me that her instructions from Dr. Fletcher's office were to inform me that Carol Burnett would attend rather than Sollie Norwood. I contacted Dennis and she said that she needed to make a reservation for Carol Burnett to attend the conference. I asked her who had given her this information, she said that it had come from Burnett's office, but that she thought Mr. DeWeese, who works for Dr. Fletcher, had sent the information to Burnett. After conferring with you so that someone else would be aware of what was going on, I explained to Dennis that the conference was only open to those persons designated as state team members by the Governor's Office. I told Dennis that I had spoken to Dr. Fletcher about the matter Friday morning and had explained to Fletcher that Norwood would be attending. I offered to call Dr. Fletcher's office again to answer any questions. Dennis asked that I do that.

I spoke to Annette Bailey in Dr. Fletcher's office and explained that, as I had explained to Dr. Fletcher that morning, the Governor's Office had to submit the team list and that Mr. Norwood would be attending. Annette asked if it was too late to change that and I stated that we had already submitted our team list, which had to be submitted by the Governor's Office. Bailey responded "that's fine if that's the line."

Theresa Clark of NGA phoned me just before lunch this morning. She said that she had 2 phone messages and 1 e-mail as to Carol Burnett's attending the conference. I phoned Clark immediately and explained that there had been some confusion and that Norwood, not Burnett, would be attending the conference. I inquired as to whom the e-mail and phone messages were from. Clark said that they had been left while she was out of the office Friday, but that the e-mail and one phone message was from Devon Dennis and the other voicemail was from a gentleman who said that he would call her back. My guess is that the gentleman was Mr. DeWeese, as his name came up in my conversations with Dennis on Friday.

So, not only did Dr. Fletcher have her staff contact us, she also apparently directed them to contact NGA.

Mr. Norwood has made his hotel reservation for the conference and NGA has him on our team.