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**EduPAC Endorses "Top 10" Candidate Slate**

**ATLANTA (October 5, 2005)** – EduPAC today endorsed its slate of school board candidates for the Atlanta Board of Education election on November 8.

While the school board is a nine-member board, EduPAC found it necessary to endorse 10 candidates whom they believe are best qualified to provide effective governance for the Atlanta Public Schools. School board leaders provide governance and set policy for the management of a \$527 million taxpayer-funded budget that affects more than 51,000 students and 11,000 employees.

The endorsed slate below includes 10 candidates.

- ✓ District 1: Brenda Joyce Muhammad
- ✓ District 2: Byron D. Amos
- ✓ District 3: Cecily Harsch-Kinnane
- ✓ District 4: Katy Pattillo (i)
- ✓ District 5: LaChandra Butler (i)
- ✓ District 6: Lea Wise (Leronetta)
- ✓ At-Large Post 7: Tiffany Friesen
- ✓ At-Large Post 9: Emmett D. Johnson (i)
- (i) Incumbent

For At-Large Post 8, EduPAC found it necessary to endorse both candidates because they were both deemed well-qualified candidates. They are:

- ✓ At-Large Post 8: Reuben R. McDaniel, III
- ✓ At-Large Post 8: Mark B. Riley (i)

In making today's announcement, William "Sonny" Walker, EduPAC co-chairman and member, Past Presidents Council, 100 Black Men of Atlanta, stated: "The Atlanta Public School District has made some progressive changes over the last decade, thanks in part to the dedicated business, civic and community partners of EduPAC. "We are building upon that momentum with these 10 endorsed candidates. We expect them to be effective board members who will keep learning and achievement for all students as their primary focus."

EduPAC interviewed 22 of the 24 school board candidates on September 29. Each candidate was assessed through a careful and thoughtful screening process that evaluated and ranked candidates. The screening process included a written questionnaire and interviews with a 20-member EduPAC board and 11 other community stakeholders. The endorsed slate reflects those candidates that EduPAC believes is best suited to guide the Atlanta Public Schools for the next four years.

"The future success of our city depends on our public education system," says James E. Bostic, Jr. EduPAC co-chairman, member of the Georgia State School Board, and executive vice president, Georgia-Pacific Corporation. "By working together with a common vision for improving the quality of education in Atlanta, the school board, superintendent and our mayor can produce the future leaders our city deserves."

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A profile of the candidates:

**District 1: Brenda Muhammad**

Muhammad served on the Atlanta Board of Education from 1996 to 2000. She was vice-president of the board in 1997 and president in 1998. She is a public school graduate, and she has three adult children who attended public school. She is currently executive director of the Atlanta Victim Witness Assistance Program and founder of MOMS (Mothers of Murdered Sons and Daughters). Muhammad was a cluster coordinator for The Atlanta Project in the early 1990s. For more than 30 years, she has been active in the Atlanta community serving families and children. She has been active as a PTA president and has served as director of several boards including the Atlanta Educational Telecommunications Collaborative Inc.; Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials Corporate Roundtable; NFL-YET Boys and Girls Club; National Kidney Foundation; National Coalition for Survivors of Homicide; and the Carrie Steel Pitts Home. She is a 1996 graduate of Leadership Atlanta and a member of Zeta Phi Beta. In addition, she is a fulltime grandmother of three children who attend the Atlanta Public Schools.

**District 2: Byron D. Amos**

Amos is president and chief executive officer of the Vine City Civic Association Inc. He is a former chair of Neighborhood Planning Unit – L (NPU-L), Vine City Civic Association and D.H. Stanton Elementary PTA. He is a public school graduate and attended college for three years. He has two children who attend Holmes Elementary and Bethune Middle schools. Amos serves on the board of directors for the University Community Development Corporation and the City of Atlanta's Weed & Seed Steering Committee. He also served as co-chair of the Historic Westside Village Steering Committee and served on the Fulton County Blue Ribbon Panel on Juvenile Justice.

**District 3: Cecily Harsch-Kinnane**

Harsch-Kinnane was a teacher for nine years, eight of which she taught high school math. She is a graduate of Druid Hills High School, and she serves on the PTA for Morningside Elementary, Inman Middle and Grady High schools where she has three children enrolled. She is a board member of the Council of Intown Neighborhoods and Schools, Atlanta Youth Soccer Association, and the Elected Officials Compensation Commission. Harsch-Kinnane has also served on the Habitat for Humanity Family Selection Committee. Also, she coordinated a mentoring program at Drew Charter School through the East Lake Community Foundation.

**District 4: Katy Pattillo (i)**

Pattillo is currently a member of the Atlanta Board of Education for District 3 and served as vice-chair in 2003. She is a public school graduate and has three children. One child attends Sarah Smith Elementary and the other one attends Sutton Middle school. She has worked with the PTA of Sarah Smith for more than a decade and while serving as president, she was instrumental in the school being named a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education, the highest award a school can receive. She also served as chair of the Metro Atlanta Boys and Girls Club and as a board member for Georgia Perimeter College. Pattillo is a former lawyer who worked in the United States Senate.

**District 5: LaChandra Butler (i)**

Butler is the program director at Mechanicsville Community Learning Collaborative, an education initiative of The Enterprise Foundation. She was appointed in May 2005 to the Atlanta Board of Education to fill an unexpired term in District 5. She is a public school graduate. She is also a founding board member of a quality childcare center and tutors elementary and middle school students. Prior to her role at the Enterprise Foundation, Butler was employed by the City of Atlanta for 13 years. During her tenure, Butler worked on a start-up reading program, "Booking It with the Mayor," and currently serves on the Mayor's Early Child Care and Education Taskforce.

**District 6: Lea Wise (Leronetta)**

Wise is a community activist and an advocate for children. She is the mother of four children who attend Atlanta Public Schools. One child is in elementary, one in middle, and two are in high school. She volunteers at Mays High, Bunche Middle and Deerwood Academy and has volunteered over 600 hours in various Atlanta Public Schools. She has also served on four PTA executive committees. Wise is a public school graduate and has an educational background in urban government and administration. Additionally, she has worked extensively with the business community in her former role at the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce and has been a member of Word of Faith Family Worship Cathedral for more than 15 years.

**At-Large Post 7: Tiffany Friesen**

Friesen is an Associate Campaign Director at Coxe Curry & Associates. She is an active parent in Atlanta Public Schools where she has provided PTA leadership. Her youngest son attends Inman Middle School and she has two stepchildren in college. She has spent many years volunteering and mentoring children and women through several nonprofit agencies; some of which included The Emmaus House, Summerhill Neighborhood Inc., Neighborhood Charter School, The Mennonite Central Committee, Hands on Atlanta, and Americorps. Friesen currently serves on the Board of Directors for the non-profit organizations KIPP WAYS Academy and the Atlanta Victim Assistance Program, as well as serving on the Advisory Board for the Parent Network for Better Education at the Center for Education Reform. She is a former Board member of The Association of Fundraising Professional and Dress for Success. For the past several years, Friesen has directed multi-million dollar fundraising campaigns for many of Atlanta's premier public/private partnerships.

**At-Large Post 8: Reuben R. McDaniel, III**

McDaniel is president and chief executive officer of Jackson Securities. He is a public school graduate and has three children. His youngest child attends Brandon Elementary, and his older children graduated from public schools in Texas. He currently serves on the board of directors in various executive capacities with Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, Clark Atlanta University's OFC Ventures, Maynard Jackson Youth Foundation, Metro Atlanta Area Boy Scouts of America, Georgia Perimeter College Advisory Board, PRWT Services and Sanderson Industries. While living in Texas, McDaniel was a board member of East Texas State University and other civic associations. In his spare time, he coaches soccer at the local YMCA and serves as President of his Homeowners Association.

**At-Large Post 8: Mark B. Riley (i)**

Riley is currently a member of the Atlanta Board of Education representing Post 8. He has served as Chair of the Budget Commission for the last four years and is a member of the Audit Commission. He is a founding partner of Urban Realty Partners, an intown real estate development company. He is active in various community and charitable organizations that focus on education. He serves as director of the Sartain Lanier Family Foundation, a charitable foundation with a focus on improving education options in Atlanta. Riley is a member of the Atlanta Rotary Club and Leadership Atlanta, and a board member for Collaborative Education Partnership, Trust for Public Land and Central Atlanta Progress. He is also an active alumnus of the Vanderbilt Alumni Association. He is married and has two children including a 5<sup>th</sup> grader at Morris Brandon Elementary.

**At-Large Post 9: Emmett D. Johnson (i)**

Johnson has served on the Atlanta Board of Education since 1997. He served as chairperson of the Board in 2003 and as a member of the Community Support of School Reform and Innovations Ad Hoc Committee in 2000. He is a public school graduate and his two children attended public school. He is currently the legislative liaison to the Georgia General Assembly. He is also a member of the Georgia School Boards Association and was recently appointed by Governor Sonny Perdue to the Master Teacher & Academic Coach Implementation Committee. Johnson has been a PTA officer for 16 years and is a past president of the Atlanta Council of PTAs, Douglass High School PTSA and the Collier Heights Elementary School PTA.

**About EduPAC**

EduPAC reconvenes every four years to evaluate, endorse and support a slate of credible and competent candidates who are expected to provide effective governance for the Atlanta Public Schools. The EduPAC Board reconvened in January 2005 to support the election of quality school board leaders for the Atlanta Board of Education elections on November 8.

EduPAC is a nonpartisan, independent political action committee governed by a Board of Directors composed of volunteer partners from business, civic, education and faith-based communities. The organization has been active in promoting quality school board leadership since its inception in 1993.

For more information visit, [www.edupacatlanta.org](http://www.edupacatlanta.org) or call 404.586.8411.

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