

# Georgia insight

Sue Ella Deadwyler  
4168 Rue Antoinette  
Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083  
[www.GeorgiaInsight.org](http://www.GeorgiaInsight.org)  
*"She hath done what she could."*  
Mark 14:8a

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## ***Chicago-Style Marine High School Proposed in Georgia***

*Question: What's the goal of a public Marine high school – education or recruitment?*

*Question: Would the marine school be a training ground for the president's proposed "civilian" army?*

*Question: Will the new U.S. Secretary of Education, Chicago's Arne Duncan, multiply military schools?*

While the ROTC flourishes in Georgia, a planned Marine High School is on hold after fierce opposition surfaced in DeKalb County. The idea has its roots in Illinois, where community organizer Barack Obama became U.S. senator, then president. On January 20<sup>th</sup> after taking the oath of office, President Obama appointed Arne Duncan, Chicago public schools' chief executive officer since 2001, as his new U.S. Secretary of Education. Duncan attended the University of Chicago and Harvard University, graduating in 1987 with a sociology degree.

**The Chicago public school system** includes six full-site military academies, each partnered with a different branch of the military. Chicago is the only city with schools dedicated to the Marines, Army, Navy and Air Force. They include the Marine Institute, Rickover Naval Academy, an Air Force academy, Chicago and Carver military academies, plus 33 high school-based Junior ROTC programs overseen by an army lieutenant colonel. Another 20 Chicago public schools have active Middle School Cadet Corps programs.

### **Origin of the DeKalb Marine High School**

- *September 2008*, the DeKalb County School Board *approved the concept* of a military-style 650-student Marine High School, funded from a Marine recruiting budget. It would not replace Junior ROTC or military academies, but would give parents an added school choice.
- *February 2009*, the Board *approved the school*, which would open for 9<sup>th</sup> graders the first year, with one grade added per year until grades 9 – 12 could attend. DeKalb County and the Marines will share the costs of set-up and operation under a Memorandum of Agreement.
- *August 2009* was the *proposed opening* of the Marine Corps Institute to be located at 2225 Heritage Drive, now the site of a DeKalb County special needs elementary school whose students would be relocated. A principal would direct the academic program, emphasizing math and science, and a Marine commandant would lead the military program.
- *March 23<sup>rd</sup>*, *AJC.com* announced, "DeKalb County school officials are forging ahead with plans to open a first-of-its-kind military-style public high school, despite a growing campaign by activists upset at the involvement of the U.S. Marines." Any DeKalb student could apply, but admission to the school would depend on the student's mastery of algebra.
- *March 31<sup>st</sup>*, *APN* reported, "Planned public Marine High School draws outrage in DeKalb."
- *May 29<sup>th</sup>* *AJC.com* and *May 30<sup>th</sup>* *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* featured articles entitled, "DeKalb cancels plan for military school." Reportedly, it's on hold until 2010, if the Marines and the DeKalb County School Board reach a Memorandum of Agreement.

**ACTION – Oppose. Contact DeKalb County School Board listed by district number:** 1. Jim Redovian, 404 392-2593; 2. Don McChesney, 404 635-5393; 3. Sarah Copelin-Wood, 404 371-1490; 4. Paul Womack, Jr., 404 325-5821; 5. Jay Cunningham, Jr., 404 392-3091; 6. Thomas Bowen, 404 392-1621; 7. Zepora Roberts, 404 284-7314; 8. Pamela Speaks, 770 493-4805; 9. Eugene Walker, 404 593-5095. **Office of DeKalb County School Board, 678 676-1200.**

June 2009

## ***President Obama Proclaims June LGBT Pride Month***

On June 1<sup>st</sup>, the White House Press Office issued President Obama's proclamation that June is Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month in which he said,

*"I am proud to be the first President to appoint openly LGBT candidates to Senate-confirmed positions in the first 100 days of an Administration. ...My Administration has partnered with the LGBT community to advance a wide range of initiatives. At the international level, I ...joined efforts at the UN to decriminalize<sup>1</sup> homosexuality around the world. Here at home, I continue to support measures to bring the full spectrum of equal rights to LGBT Americans. ...enhancing hate crimes laws, supporting civil unions and Federal rights for LGBT couples ...ensuring adoption rights and ending the existing 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy. ...During LGBT Pride Month, I call upon the LGBT community, the Congress, and the American people to work together to promote equal rights for all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity."*

### ***In 1996, Georgia Banned Same-Sex Marriage***

**H.B. 1580 of 1996** passed to define legal marriage in Georgia. It's now Code Section 1.19-3-3-1. When lesbians went to court in Hawaii to challenge the traditional definition of marriage there, Georgia and 14 other states passed bills declaring the union of a man and a woman as the only legally recognized marriage. As Governor Miller signed it into law April 2, 1996, he said,

*"H.B. 1580 defines marriage in Georgia as the union between a man and a woman. Further, the bill forbids the issuance of a marriage license to persons of the same sex or for the state of Georgia to recognize marriage licenses from other states which do not meet Georgia's definition of marriage."*

Therefore, since 1996: 1. Marriage in Georgia has been defined as the union between a man and a woman (outlawing polygamy). 2. Marriage licenses are not issued to same-sex couples or groups (prohibiting marriage between or among same-sex applicants). 3. Marriage licenses issued elsewhere are rejected, unless issued to a man and a woman (to protect Georgia's definition of marriage).

**S.R. 595, passed in 2004**, amended the *Constitution of the State of Georgia* to clearly define marriage in the constitution as "only the union of man and woman" and to prohibit same-sex marriage or recognition of same-sex unions for any reason or benefit.

### **DOMA, the Federal Marriage Law**

*(DOMA is a federal law defining marriage, but the U.S. Constitution does **not** define marriage.)*

Bill Clinton signed the federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 1996, after its passage in the U.S. House 342 – 67 and the U.S. Senate 85 – 14. DOMA confines marriage to heterosexual couples and requires federal laws to be interpreted using the definition of marriage as the union of husband and wife. 30 state constitutions have language supporting traditional marriage, though some states have legalized same-sex marriage. DOMA's provisions:

- (a) Marriage is the legal union of one man and one woman.
- (b) Spouse is defined as a "person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife."
- (c) Each state may decide whether to legalize homosexual marriages.
- (d) States cannot be forced to recognize same-sex unions legalized in other states.

**ACTION – Support traditional marriage in Georgia.** Ask your state representative and senator to retain Georgia's law and constitutional definition of marriage as between a man and a woman and no recognition of same-sex unions.

<sup>1</sup> In March 2009, the AP announced the Obama administration's endorsement of a U.N. call for global decriminalization of homosexuality. Former President George W. Bush refused to sign it in December 2008.

### ***Passed: The “Fat” Bill***

**H.B. 229**, introduced by Representative Brooks Coleman January 30<sup>th</sup>, requires students in first through 12<sup>th</sup> grades to undergo fitness assessments once a year in physical ed class. Individual results for each child will go to the child’s parent or guardian and aggregate results by school will be sent to the State Board of Education, annually. Beginning October 1, 2012, the State Board of Education will send an annual report to the governor, who is authorized to provide monetary or other incentives to local school systems that attain certain levels of health status. However, this law is not permanent. It will be repealed July 1, 2019.

### ***Passed: Students May Self-Administer Epinephrine***

**S.B. 8**, introduced by Senator Murphy of District 27, allows students to self-inject auto-injectable epinephrine at school, at school sponsored activities, under school personnel supervision or in before- and after-school care on school operated property.

Local school boards will adopt policies to relieve schools, their employees and agents of any liability. Parents or guardians of participating students must, periodically, provide a written statement from a licensed physician, that identifies the drug, method, amounts and times of doses. Students violating the self-injecting provisions will be subject to disciplinary action.

### ***Passed: Support for Military Colleges***

**S.R. 96** passed February 10<sup>th</sup> after being introduced by both Republicans and Democrats who acknowledge the Georgia Military College as one of only five U.S. colleges authorized to award second lieutenant commissions in only two years. The Secretary of the Senate sent a display-quality copy of S.R. 96 to the Board of Trustees and president of GMC.

In 1950, the U.S. Department of the Army designated GMC as a Military Junior College. Its military science program distinguishes GMC from every other junior college in this state. The General Assembly designates GMC as the State’s Military Junior College and urges the continuation of its current military program.

Among its distinguished alumni are those who have been elected or appointed to national positions of leadership. They include the former Secretary of Labor under President Ford; a former Deputy Postmaster General; a former U.S. Congressman who was Chairman of the House Naval Affairs Committee and, later, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. Plus, a former Governor of Georgia; numerous Senators and Representatives in the General Assembly; as well as many local government officials; untold numbers of general officers and others who served our country honorably in combat, disaster-relief, and peacetime operations.

### ***Passed: Resolution Commending OMEGA***

**H.R. 366**, introduced by Representative Amerson on February 18<sup>th</sup>, was unanimously, adopted the same day and adopted in the Senate February 19<sup>th</sup>. It recognizes and commends OMEGA (Organization for Military Education in Georgia) for doing its job well and for being recognized by the Department of Defense as an Advisory Council on Military Education (ACME).

OMEGA works with legislators, policymakers, educators, military organizations, communities, and associated state and federal agencies in efforts to enhance educational options for military work forces, veterans, and their families within Georgia. The Clerk of the House sent an appropriate display-quality copy of this resolution to OMEGA.

## ***Georgia Passed Resolutions to Support Israel***

Two tremendously important resolutions passed this session – H.R. 29 in the House and S.R. 15 in the Senate. Both, eloquently, support the nation of Israel in its continued war with terrorism, but neither has the effect of law.

Representative Howard Maxwell of District 17 introduced H.R. 29 on January 14<sup>th</sup>, two days into the session. In the bill's presentation to fellow legislators, Representative Maxwell recounted his Holy Land visit where he saw, first hand, the plight of Israel amidst unending threats and terrorist acts.

**H.R. 29** reminded legislators of the Palestinian terrorists of the Islamic Jihad that, without provocation, suddenly and arbitrarily, interrupted and ended the six-month cease-fire agreement. Terrorists fired upon civilian targets in Southern Israel only days after the U.N. Security Council's adoption of Resolution 1850 in unanimous support of the peace process, thought to have been achieved between Palestine and Israel.

Representative Maxwell requested this of his fellow representatives: *"I am asking any of the House members that would, to sign a resolution expressing our support for the Nation of Israel in their continuing fight against the giants of today."* Though it remained in committee until March 30<sup>th</sup>, the House voted 149 – 1 to pass it, with 17 not voting and 13 excused.

**S.R. 15**, introduced January 29<sup>th</sup> by Senator David Shafer of District 48, passed unanimously in support of Israel in its defense against terrorism in the Gaza Strip. That's, especially, significant since the State of Israel is the greatest ally of the United States in the Middle East.

Senator Shafer's resolution reminded other members of the Senate that Israel's antagonist, Hamas, is a terrorist organization whose charter calls for the destruction of the State of Israel. He, further, states that these adversaries, who are trained and sponsored by Iran, recently fired hundreds of rockets at civilian targets in southern Israel. Despite the fact that during the six-month "state of calm," better known as a "cease-fire," Israel had allowed some 17,000 truckloads of humanitarian aid to enter the Gaza Strip, despite the fact that Palestinian terrorists were launching 538 rockets and mortars into Israel.

By a unanimous vote, Senator Shafer and the Senate resolved that they ...

*"Stand in solidarity with Israel ...to provide security to its people; ...[Support] Israel's right to self-defense and support additional U.S. assistance to help Israel defend itself. Condemn the end of the cease-fire by Hamas; condemn the firing of rockets into civilian areas by the Iran-sponsored terrorist groups of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad;*

*"Urge all Arab states to declare their opposition to terrorism and attacks on civilians. Urge all parties in the region to pursue lasting peace in the Middle East. [The Senate] will ...promote economic relations, bilateral trade, and partnerships in green technologies and alternative energy ...to stimulate the economies of both the U.S. and Israel in this time of crisis."*

The Secretary of the Senate sent an appropriate copy to the President, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President of the U.S. Senate, each of the 15 members of the Georgia congressional delegation and the General Consul of Israel.