

Opinion / Editorial



STALKER

Activists Against Racism Movement (AARM)

Howard Eagle is a community activist and a member of Activists Against Racism Movement (AARM). He is a soon to be retired teacher from the Rochester City School District. Eagle is currently running for a seat on the RCSD school board. Contact him at heagle@rochester.rr.com

Below is a copy of a letter I sent to a number of law enforcement agencies after being followed by an unmarked automobile. [For more information about AARM (Activists Against Racism Movement), visit our website at <http://aarm.rocus.org>.]

To Whom it may concern:

Since June 10, 2009 (the date that AARM held a Press Conference in front of Rochester City Hall to denounce the thoroughly racist, so-called federal "racketeering and conspiratorial wolf pack / chain gang" sham-of-a-case) I had suspected that my automobile was being followed around Rochester. This suspicion was absolutely, unequivocally confirmed for me on Wednesday, June 17, 2009 when the following occurred:

I noticed an automobile, which appeared to be following mine, i.e. I made numerous turns to see if the car would follow --- it did; I changed lanes several times to see if the car would follow --- it did.

So I pulled quickly into a side street

and stopped abruptly. The above referenced automobile followed suit, i.e. it turned on the same side street and also stopped (about 3 or 4 car-lanes behind me). I just sat there, and the driver of the automobile behind me got out of his car and checked or pretended to be checking his front driver-side tire (how amateurish).

At this point I drove away. The driver got back in his car and continued to follow me. Thus, I pulled quickly into a parking lot and stopped. The car behind me followed suit, i.e. it pulled into the same parking lot and parked about five or six cars away from mine. After sitting in the parking lot for a few minutes --- I exited my car (with paper and pen in hand) and walked close enough to the back of the car that was following me to see and record its License Plate Number, which is DTE7744.

When the driver of the car noticed what I was doing --- he exited his car, and asked: "Is there a problem sir?" I responded: "No, there is no problem." He then asked: "Are you writing down my License Plate

Number?" I responded "No." Those who ask silly questions often get silly answers. I was so intent on getting the License Plate Number that I failed to make note of the type of car he was driving. However, I did note that it was a newer model and the color was dark gray. I also noticed that when the guy (a BIG, 30-ish - looking white man, whose weight I would estimate at about 250-300 lbs, and height about 6' 2" --- with long, straggly dirty blonde or brown hair, i.e. the hippy look) exited his car his posture was very aggressive, i.e. he was standing with his hands out from his side --- in a manner that was reminiscent of a cowboy about to pull out his six-shooter.

After I obtained the License Plate number and had the brief verbal exchange referenced above --- I got into to my car and drove away. I circled the block, which took probably less than a minute, and parked in an area where the man could not see my automobile, but I could still see his. He was sitting in the same spot where he had parked earlier, and after three minutes, literally (I timed it) --- he



my 2 cents

drove away.

I have come to the conclusion that my being followed around town is connected to our organization's involvement in the above referenced case. I can't imagine any other reason why someone would want to follow me around town. We are aware that some of the defendants in the case are also being followed around. This ordeal conjures up images in my mind of the CO-IN-TEL-PRO efforts of the 1960's --- complete with infiltrators and hit-men.

JUST IN CASE --- I am respectfully requesting that the appropriate authorities run a check on the License Plate Number provided above --- to ascertain whether or not the owner of the matching vehicle is a known or suspected criminal, or an out-of-towner --- say for example from somewhere like Detroit Michigan. I am also respectfully requesting to be informed of the results of your check.

Yours truly,



"Highly Qualified" vs. "Highly Effective" TEACHERS

By Susan Kaufmann { Chief of Schools, Northwest Zone Rochester City School District

"Highly Qualified" and "Highly Effective" are terms often used interchangeably to describe teachers in our schools. While the terms sound much the same, they refer to two different sets of standards.

"Highly Qualified" is a term used in the No Child Left Behind Act (the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965). This federal law requires that a teacher must:

- Have a bachelor's or higher degree
- Meet State certification standards
- Demonstrate subject matter knowledge in their teaching assignments in one of the ways required by law.

"Highly Qualified" basically refers only to what a person must have to become a teacher.

More than a Degree

"Highly Effective" refers to an entire different set of expectations. It refers to a teacher's competence in the craft of teaching. "Highly Effective" teachers make a difference in student learning success and share similar characteristics. A "Highly Effective" teacher:

- Sets clear and consistent expectations for students. A

framework for student behavior, participation, and responsibilities is communicated consistently to all students. Students understand the "rules of the game" in the classroom.

- Creates a learner centered physical classroom environment. Student desks are organized into learning pods not rows. The teacher is the facilitator of learning not the lecturer. The walls are covered with learning charts and students' work to celebrate learning. The room is well lit, colorful and contains resources such as classroom libraries. Students feel a sense of belonging.
- Treats students as individuals. The teacher takes the time to get to know each student as an individual to find out likes, dislikes, academic strengths and needs. Relationships are important. Students are provided with the "personal touch" that includes high expectations supported with guidance, compassion, forgiveness and celebrations as warranted.

- Utilizes assessment to guide teaching and learning. Instruction is guided by the analysis of ongoing assessments of individual student achievement. Observations of student work, interactions with peers, conferring individually with students and testing are utilized as assessment tools. The decision of what to teach is a result of what a student needs to know, not just the next page in the textbook.

- Exhibits flexibility in teaching. Instruction is delivered in various ways to accommodate the differing learning styles of students. Students have the opportunity to learn not only from the teacher, but also from peers and through technology and hands on projects.

- Connects with other educators for professional learning and sharing. Ongoing interaction with other educators for feedback on teaching strategies and the learning of new concepts and instructional tools is a vital part of the profession.

- Respects the home-school connection. Communication between families, students and educators is ongoing, informative and mutually respectful. A partnership is formed that supports the student learning process.

While a teacher must be "Highly Qualified" by federal law to teach, our students deserve more than just a person with a degree and a certificate. Our students deserve "Highly Effective" teachers who will guarantee both a positive and successful school experience.

Hiring and Supporting Effective Teachers

Through proven practices and professional development, the Rochester City School District is working to ensure that teachers are both "Highly Qualified" and "Highly

Effective."

Hiring practices include a structured application and interview process recognized on the national level. Those that meet the requirements of being "Highly Qualified" are interviewed for teaching positions. Each new applicant is screened and rated on his or her ability to succeed in an urban setting. Only those who score well on the screening are considered for positions within the school district.

Professional development opportunities support all teachers as they strive to be "Highly Effective." All first-year teachers are provided with a mentor, a veteran teacher who guides them through their first year of teaching. Other activities such as workshops on teaching strategies, curriculum and assessment, demonstration lessons, inter-classroom visits, collegial circles, and collaborative teaming support all teachers' professional growth on an ongoing basis. "Highly Effective" teachers are lifelong learners who continually strive to improve their professional craft to ensure students' academic success.

Through thoughtful hiring practices and continual training of "Highly Qualified" teachers, the Rochester City School District works to ensure they are also "Highly Effective" teachers.