

State House News: June 19th – 23rd

June 23, 2017

On June 20, former state representative **Ralph Norman** (R-York) defeated Archie Parnell (D-Rock Hill) in the [special congressional election](#) to fill the state's vacant U.S. House seat. Norman will serve the remainder of former representative Mick Mulvaney's term, who resigned to lead the Office of Management and Budget after an appointment by President Trump.

Two vacant House seats were also filled on June 20. **Bruce Bryant** (R-York), a former York County Sheriff, was [elected to fill Norman's vacant House seat](#) after a quiet and uneventful campaign against Democratic challenger Bebs Barron Chorak. **Wendy Brawley** (D-Richland) was [elected to fill the vacant seat of former Rep. Joe Neal](#), who passed away unexpectedly earlier this year. Brawley, the former chair of the Richland One School Board, easily defeated Republican challenger Bill Strickland in the special election.

Ethics Probe Leader Beats Disqualification Motion

On June 23, the disqualification motion filed by the legal team representing Rep. **Rick Quinn** (R-Lexington) was [denied](#). Rep. Quinn faces two counts of misconduct in office and sought to disqualify David Pascoe, the state solicitor leading the team of investigators in the state's ongoing ethics probe, before the beginning of the trial. The court determined that Pascoe will remain on the case, stating that the integrity of the judicial system had not been compromised, as Rep. Quinn's legal team argued.

Rep. Quinn is the third legislator in six months to be indicted during the investigation, and his team argued that [Pascoe wrongfully viewed documents](#) seized in a raid on a business run by Rep. Quinn's father that would be constitutionally protected as attorney-client privilege.

SC Superintendent Takes Over Failing School District

On June 19, the state's education Superintendent **Molly Spearman** announced her decision to [take control of Allendale County schools](#), one of the state's four lowest-performing districts and a plaintiff district in the long-running *Abbeville* lawsuit for school equity.

Spearman's decision to declare a state of emergency in Allendale and take over the district's operations was not her first choice, but the school board's continual efforts to prevent the state department's involvement in assisting the board in efforts to improve management and academic performance left her no choice. Spearman noted that the district's school board has failed to improve the district's academic performance despite receiving more funding per student than most districts in the state. Allendale has received over \$17,000 a year per student from combined federal, state, and local funding efforts aimed at increasing the district's academic performance, but the results remain dismal.

SC Superintendent Takes Over Failing School District, *continued*

The Allendale County School District [responded by filing a lawsuit](#) on June 21 aimed at stopping the takeover. School board leaders argue that Spearman does not have the authority to simply take control of the district, but their attorney conceded that they do need assistance, also implying the need for additional funding, to improve the district's academic performance.

Please contact a member of the McGuireWoods Consulting team if you would like more detailed information.

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