

Decatur, Illinois • Tuesday, November 16, 1999

CENTRAL ILLINOIS A5

## EXPULSIONS: Board members standing firm

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president, said Monday that the board may meet in special session this week to discuss a proposal to return the expelled students to school.

Some of the key points of the proposal, worked out last week by Jackson and the state Superintendent of Schools Glenn W. McGee, include holding the expulsion beyond the time if the students make strides in an alternative school and receive the blessing of a review panel, that would be created in the regular school program for the beginning of the second semester in January.

The school board voted last month to expel seven students for their involvement in a Sept. 17 fight at an Eisenhower High School cafeteria.

Board member Phil Wilhelm said he doesn't see anything new in the proposal, copies of which the school board received over the weekend.

"We're doing more. It's time for Jesse Jackson to move on. He's way past the lines and crossing the line to get in the schools. It's detrimental to the health, life and safety of people," Wilhelm said. Jackson wants to work through the system and do it more quietly behind the lines, instead in front of it. "If he did that, I think he'd get a lot more cooperation from us."

"We've been prepared, but it doesn't mean we're," he said.

"They have no control over us. Unless the school attorney moves, nothing will they do is make recommendation. I think they're doing a real disservice to the whole system — putting their nose where they don't belong. I'd advise everyone to work through the system."

Board member Jan Mandernach agreed that a special session is not warranted.

"The board is pretty firm that what has been done is the right thing," she said. "There is plenty of time for conversation about the deeper issues — about what education is for Decatur students."

Board member Dan Oakes, who took over as president of the board Nov. 9, said he spent three hours one evening last week on the telephone with people who wanted to express their support for the board.

As a courtesy to McGee, Oakes said he will listen to the settlement proposals.

"It's still a legal issue, and we have to make a decision," Oakes said. "We owe it to the community to make that decision. They have to make it."

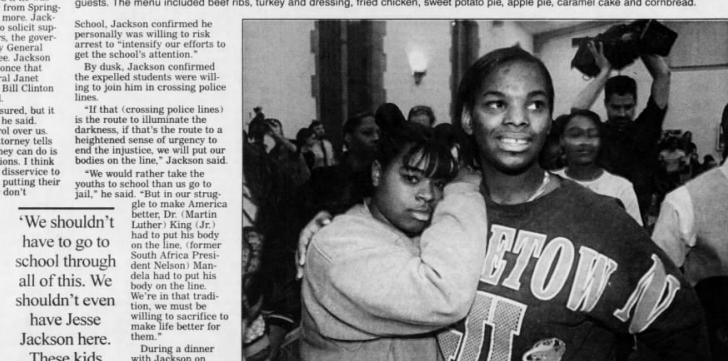
McGee, who told the Associated Press on Sunday that he is removing himself from the case and plans to leave the city and the school board work it out on their own, could not be reached for comment Monday.

Meanwhile, the Illinois Association of School Boards, the Illinois Association of School Administrators and the Principals Association on Monday all affirmed "the statutory authority of local school boards in matters pertaining to student discipline."

At a Monday morning prayer vigil outside MacArthur High



IT'S WHAT'S COOKING: Marilyn Jarrett, left, and Cynthia Howell prepare food in Howell's kitchen for the Rev. Jesse Jackson and other guests. The menu included beef ribs, turkey and dressing, fried chicken, sweet potato pie, apple pie, caramel cake and cornbread.



MAKING A STAND: Jamesa Wills, right, and Waletta Neal, both 15, wait their turn on Monday at the Church of the Living God, PGT Temple 3, as volunteers pledge their support for today's march on Eisenhower High School.

**We shouldn't have to go to school through all of this. We shouldn't even have Jesse Jackson here. These kids brought it on themselves, and they deserve what they got.'**

**MacArthur student Tony Hustadt**

**Board member Jan Mandernach**

**State Sen. N. Duane Noland**

**Bill Mitchell**

**R-Forsyth**

**Stephen**

**Decatur High School**

**91.6 percent**

**98.1 percent**

**MacArthur 88.3 percent**

**88.3 percent overall**

**91.6 percent**

**98.1 percent**

**98.1**