Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell makes picks to school merger transition panel

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Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell chose three Memphians and two suburban residents as his five picks to serve on the commission that will create a transition plan for merging the county's two school systems.

His picks, pending approval by the Shelby County Commission, mean that more than half of the members have been selected for the 21-member team charged by the new Norris-Todd state law with developing a plan for consolidating Memphis City Schools and Shelby County Schools by the 2013-14 school year.

"I knew I wanted a good mix, some who lived outside the city, some who lived in the city. I wanted racial balance and gender balance and certainly professional balance," Luttrell said.

His picks:

Christine P. Richards, executive vice president, general counsel and secretary at FedEx Corporation. She handles international and domestic legal, security and government affairs for all FedEx operating companies and subsidiaries.

John Smarrelli Jr., president of Christian Brothers University, who has also served in senior administrative positions at Loyola University in Chicago and Le Moyne College in Syracuse, N.Y.

Barbara Roseborough, associate vice president for academic affairs at Southwest Tennessee Community College, who in 20 years at Southwest has also served as in various capacities.

Jim Boyd, an ordained Episcopal priest and departing president and CEO of Bridges USA, the local organization dedicated to racial, economic, educational and environmental justice. Boyd has announced he is leaving Bridges to head a yet-to-be-named Memphis foundation.

Louis Padgett III, the principal at Northaven Elementary School who is a 24-year employee of the Shelby County Schools.

Richards of Arlington and Smarrelli of Germantown are the two non-Memphis residents.

Memphis City Schools made its five picks -- four of them Memphians -- to the transition commission last week:

Fred Johnson, a former SCS superintendent and county school board member who also worked in MCS administration.

Collierville resident Reginald Green, a University of Memphis education professor and a former superintendent elsewhere who helped in the Louisville and Jefferson County, Ky., schools merger.
Kenya Bradshaw, local and state director of Stand for Children.

Barbara Prescott, longtime community leader and former three-term MCS school board member.

U of M law professor Daniel Kiel, an MCS and Harvard Law School graduate who helped people understand the objectives of both school districts during panel discussions last winter.

The SCS board will meet Thursday to choose five.

The other three appointments will come from Gov. Bill Haslam, Lt. Gov. and state Senate Speaker Ron Ramsey and state House Speaker Beth Harwell.

Nonvoting members of the committee will be Luttrell, SCS board chairman David Pickler and MCS president Martavius Jones.