



# Georgia HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## Legislative Call

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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### **Investigate Habersham County Board of Education**

*By State Representative Dan Gasaway (R-Homer)  
(408 words)*

I have asked the Attorney General of Georgia to assist me in opening an investigation into the Habersham County Board of Education. The primary focus currently is to investigate how much improper influence employees of Carroll Daniel Construction had in procuring construction work at Woodville Elementary School and Hazel Grove Elementary School in Habersham County. In addition, were the construction bid or construction bid conditions manipulated to benefit Carroll Daniel Construction? Was the construction work advertised properly so that all area contractors could compete in a fair manner?

Habersham County School Superintendent Matthew Cooper's relationship with Chris Erwin, Director of Business Development for Carroll Daniel Construction, should have disqualified Carroll Daniel Construction from consideration to do work in Habersham County. It is common knowledge Erwin played a very influential role in Cooper obtaining the position of superintendent in Habersham County. The blatant ethical violations in this matter should be clear to all involved.

In addition, Erwin's position on the board of the Professional Standards Commission further disqualifies him, in my opinion, from doing any business with Georgia school systems. One of the Professional Standards Commission's roles is to enforce ethical standards for how educators and school system employees are supposed to conduct themselves in their classrooms, with their peers, and in their communities. The Professional Standards Commission has tremendous power over school system employees' careers. This power provides an obvious chilling effect on anyone wanting to blow the whistle on corrupt backroom deals.

I recently have been involved with a case in which the Professional Standards Commission was railroading some young teachers in Habersham County. I had to involve the Attorney General of Georgia to bring justice for these young teachers and protect them from overreach by the Professional Standards Commission board. All of this went on while blatant ethical violations occurred between Habersham County School System leadership and Carroll Daniel Construction.

*Representative Dan Gasaway represents the citizens of District 28, which includes all of Banks and Stephens counties and portions of Habersham County. He was elected to the House of Representatives in 2012 and currently serves as Secretary of the Natural Resources and Environment, Human Relations & Aging, and Intragovernmental Coordination committees. He also serves on the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Oversight, Higher Education, and Insurance Committees.*

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