

Black leaders criticize junior high assignments

Thomas Sammon, formerly principal at Pelton Junior High School, has been assigned by Superintendent Thomas Shaheen to be principal of the new Potrero Hill Junior High School. Sammon had been serving as acting principal for the school in its final stages of construction.

Sammon was relieved of his post at Pelton at the end of the fall semester last year following considerable pressure from the Hunters Point community.

In addition to Sammon, the School District has named Dr. Ramona Galerno as assistant principal. Galerno comes to Potrero from Marina Junior High School where she also served as assistant prin-

cipal.

Assigned as dean for Potrero is Benjamin Criswell who has been serving as dean at Pelton. Criswell was also one of the 14 candidates for the principal post at Potrero.

Leaders of Potrero Hill's black community were disappointed with the administrative assignments for the new school.

The majority of the students at Potrero will be non-white. Furthermore, if parents on Treasure Island refuse to let their children be bussed to Potrero, as they have threatened, the percentage of white students will be even smaller.

"After Sammon's past
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Widespread opposition to new school principal

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bad experience he's not what we need," said Enola Maxwell, minister of Olivet Church.

Ms. Maxwell spearheaded an active campaign to interview all the candidates for principal and submit recommendations to Shaheen. Her choice for principal was Criswell, the black man who has been named as dean for Potrero.

"We don't want just any black man. We need someone, black or white, with awareness," said Ms. Maxwell. "Criswell has worked will with all races. He's a darn sight better than

Sammon.

"Sammon is a very nice man, but he's wishy-washy," Ms. Maxwell continued.

"The kides won't be any more integrated after they have been to Potrero than they were before."

Ms. Maxwell added, "Unless black and white young people get a chance in this system, we'll never get out of the educational rut we're in."

Cleo Wallace, president of the Citizens Improvement Association and also an active supporter of Criswell for the principalship, echoed Ms. Maxwell's complaints.

"Sammon shouldn't be in," she stated.

On the other administrative assignments Ms. Wallace said, "At least Criswell could have come as assistant principal. But the person they got (Ramona Galerno) was someone who wasn't even interviewed by people from the community."

Mojo Tubutu, director of the New Society Youth Club, also advocated Benjamin Criswell for the principal's job.

"The principal of that school ought to be black, considering the ratio of the students.

"If Sammon is there he'll probably cause the school to be shut down."

Aside from an on-going letter writing campaign to the School District, there is no planned protest action against Sammon's appointment as principal.