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PRESS RELEASE

The Augusta Chronicle published an article regarding a discussion of SAT scores that occurred during the monthly meeting of the Columbia County School Board. I regret that the article reported that I accused Richmond County Superintendent Charles Larke of "rigging SAT averages". The discussion focused on how SAT scores are being reported and the comparisons that are being made between school systems. At issue was the different approaches that systems take regarding the number of students whose scores are being reported by the College Board and used for the comparative purposes. Some school systems have begun requiring students to enroll in a program of study that is designed to fully prepare the students for the SAT in order for those scores to be reported and reflected in the school's report. It is our understanding that Richmond County Board of Education has a Board policy that reflects this approach. There is nothing unethical or deceptive with such a policy. My purpose was to clarify that Columbia County School System has no policy regarding test takers and that our report includes every student who wished to take the test, regardless of the program of study. Consequently, a far greater number of students are included in our reported scores. I made the point that if we were going to be compared with other systems, then our system should seriously consider a policy that would make our testing population similar to others, thereby keeping a more level playing field. I wish to express my apologies to Dr. Larke and the Richmond County School System for any comments attributed to me as being critical or accusatory. I believe I made it very clear that the Richmond County Board of Education had been very upfront and straightforward in setting forth their policy position.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Price", written in a cursive style.