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The Birmingham News

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Birmingham school Superintendent Craig Witherspoon, right, is shown at the Jefferson County Courthouse on Friday with his lawyer, U.W. Clemon.

Judge tells board: Hands off schools

al.com
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See the State of Alabama court suit and the resulting temporary restraining order at al.com/birmingham, the online home of The Birmingham News: blog.al.com/bn/documents

Bice must be able to maintain free rein

By Eric Velasco
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and Marie Leech
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A judge signed a temporary order Friday telling the Birmingham Board of Education to stop interfering with the state superintendent's takeover of city schools, as a new front opened in a battle between the state and city school boards.

Jefferson County Circuit Judge Elisabeth French issued the restraining order in re-

sponse to a lawsuit filed Friday by state Superintendent Tommy Bice and state Attorney General Luther Strange against the Birmingham board and its members.

Bice said he would take control of Birmingham school board meetings, including one he set for noon Tuesday at the board office.

"I've given every single effort I can to work this out collaboratively," he said in an interview. "But the last meeting and the meeting before that appear to have been staged and was a direct defiance of my authority, so I've been forced into a corner."

In a letter to Birmingham school board members after Friday's hearing, Bice said

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Area jobless rate jumps to 7.9%

Job seeking soars in summer

By Roy L. Williams
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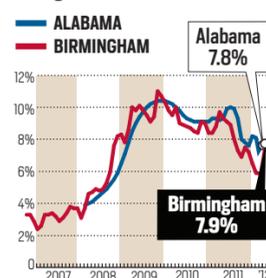
The Birmingham metro area's unemployment rate jumped sharply in June, a climb that state officials and labor experts attribute to a surge in the number of college graduates and people who had been on the sidelines beginning to look for work.

There were 41,903 residents in the Birmingham-Hoover area listed as unemployed in June, up by 6,800 from a month earlier as the metro jobless rate jumped from 6.8 percent to 7.9 percent, according to the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations. It was the second straight monthly rise in Birmingham's unemployment rate since April, when it stood at 5.9 percent. A year ago, the rate was 9.1 percent.

Alabama's jobless rate climbed for the second straight month from 7.4 percent in May to 7.8 percent in June.

BIRMINGHAM UNEMPLOYMENT

Metro Birmingham jobless rate rose for the second straight month in June



Source: Alabama Department of Industrial Relations
The Birmingham News

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"People looking for summer work as well as teachers and education employees who are not working

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Air National Guard under investigation

Relatives may have improperly joined flight to England

By Mike Oliver
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The Alabama Air National Guard has launched an investigation into a recent deployment from Birmingham to England in which guard personnel may have improperly taken relatives along on military aircraft.

Brig. Gen. Steven Berryhill, commander of the Alabama Air National Guard,

confirmed Friday that there was an investigation "regarding adherence to some procedures and regulations."

"It came to my attention that there was an incident surrounding a recent deployment of Alabama Air National Guardsmen," Berryhill said in a prepared statement. "I take such cases very seriously. Therefore, I immediately ordered an investigation into the incident."

The guard on Friday declined to elaborate on the

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High court may get Shelby voting case

By Mary Orndorff Troyan
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WASHINGTON — Shelby County took its challenge of the Voting Rights Act to the U.S. Supreme Court on Friday, asking the justices to declare part of the 1965 law an unfair burden on states such as Alabama where the federal government still keeps a close watch on elections for evidence of racial discrimination.

Shelby County is appealing two recent lower court

decisions that upheld the constitutionality of the landmark civil rights-era law. If the justices agree to accept the case, they'll schedule it for oral arguments sometime after they return in October, and it would be one of the highest-profile cases of the court's 2012-13 term.

"This case presents the Supreme Court with an opportunity to strike down an outdated and unnecessary

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Eyewitness Jacob Stevens, 18, hugs his mother Tammi Stevens after being interviewed by police Friday outside Gateway High School in Aurora, Colo., where witnesses were brought for questioning.

Suspect's motive probed in Colorado theater massacre

By Bill Turque
The Washington Post

The madness, once again, descended without warning. This time, instead of Virginia Tech, Columbine or Fort Hood, it was a suburban Denver multiplex where a heavily armed man clad in black came through an emergency entrance, set off canisters of an unknown gas and opened fire in a darkened theater early Friday morning.

Authorities in Aurora, Colo., are just beginning to piece together how and why the suspected gunman, James Holmes, 24, allegedly killed 12 people and wounded 59 others during the midnight premiere of "The Dark Knight Rises."

But emerging details suggested that Holmes, a University of Colorado graduate student who was



James Holmes

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