



THE GOOCHLAND COUNTY BRANCH NAACP
P.O BOX 235 • GOOCHLAND, VA 23063

WENDY S. HOBBS
President

DRAFT

May 10, 2010

Mr. Maxwell G. Cisne, Chairperson
8 Partridge Hill Road
Richmond, VA 23233

Dear Mr. Cisne:

Thank you for the invitation to present a written statement following my presentation to the Goochland County School Board at your monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 27, 2010. I prepared in my mind but not on paper my thoughts regarding the issues of disparate services and disproportionate results for African-American students in the Goochland County Public School System. A summary of my position on behalf of the Education Committee of the NAACP is as follows:

It is approaching ten (10) years since the NAACP started formally petitioning the Goochland County School Board and the Goochland County Public School system to establish a plan in cooperation with the NAACP and the African-American community to effectively address the negative indications in the school experience of and services to African-American students. We at the NAACP believe that all children absent organic conditions that affect cognitive performance are capable of learning. We need assurance that the opportunities and resources are present to allow learning to take place.

Therefore, it is recommended that the school board cause the following actions to serve as first steps:

1. Have a review of the causes of disparity and negative disproportional results in the school experience for African-American students to be done by a reputable agency or agencies who have an understanding of cultural differences and diverse approaches to learning for the population in question.
2. Develop a comprehensive plan to address the above-defined problem that includes the African-American students, their caregivers, the African-American community and significant others who are able to make a positive contribution to the initiative.
3. Include short-term and long-term approaches in the plan.
4. Include goals, measurable objectives, accountability measures and timeliness in the plan.
5. Include, where appropriate in the problem-solving model, some of the following issues, understanding that these issues are not all inclusive:

- Curricula;
- Pedagogy;
- Learning styles;
- Teacher quality;
- Teacher training;
- Classroom management;
- Reading deficiencies;
- The short attention span of some students;
- The high energy levels of some students;
- The slow maturation of some students; and
- Strategic lesson planning

Our purpose for petitioning is to bring awareness to the issues on a consistent basis and offer the invitation of assistance as appropriate. A new model of engagement is needed by the NAACP, the Board of Directors and the Gochland County Public School System. The failure to develop a new paradigm will only result in elevation and escalation. This we care to avoid.

Please inform the Education Committee of your response and intentions at your earliest convenience.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sekou Shabaka

SS/mh

cf: Dr. Linda Underwood, Superintendent
Gochland County Public Schools

Mrs. Wendy S. Hobbs, President
Gochland County Branch NAACP