



OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENT

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MEDIA CONTACT:

LaToya Henry
(313) 447-6404

EDUCATION – AMERICA’S NEVER ENDING ISSUE OF CIVIL RIGHTS

DETROIT -- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said years ago, *“the function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically.... intelligence plus character. That is the goal of true education.”*

As we think critically and intensively about the state of education in our nation today, we must all come to the realization that it is not functioning at its highest level. The NAACP has historically made education one of its core concerns. *Brown vs. the Board of Education* in 1954 brought together critical thinkers and activist lawyers, among them Thurgood Marshall and Charles Hamilton Houston, to forge a new pathway for public and equal education. Unfortunately, both in cities and rural communities across America, quality education has been diminished, neglected, and de-prioritized as a cornerstone necessary to fully realize the American dream for all of its sons and daughters. In city after city, whether in Connecticut, Mississippi, Tennessee, California, New York, Florida, South Carolina, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Washington D.C., and now Detroit, we are compelled to re-prioritize the quality of education that is being provided to our children. It is often said by many in the educational community that *“they do, what they do, for the children.”* It is our belief, from critical observation, that it is no longer what you do for the children, it is what we are doing **to** the children. This is why the NAACP nationwide has moved from city to city, to ascertain the best practices, the most successful and significant pathways, to achieve quality education. While we do not believe that public funds should be provided for private education, we do believe in the necessity of standards for all schools, whether public, private, or schools of choice. We remain open to innovation and stabilization, consistent with the history of free and public education, long provided to the children of this nation.

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Wednesday, March 8, here, at the Detroit Collegiate Preparatory High School (Northwestern High School), located at 2200 West Grand Blvd, Detroit, Michigan, we are bringing together educators, innovators, and members of our National Board of Directors for a special town hall meeting on the state of quality education, and how to advance its cause here in the city of Detroit and the state of Michigan. This is being done in various cities across the country to provide a clear analysis and perspective. We seek input from people of all walks of life, who share a common concern and have a solid stake in the educational future of our children. The town hall opens at 5:00 PM for registration and begins promptly at 5:30 PM, with testimony and perspectives by educational professionals. It is free and open to the public for their comments and input. It will run until 9:00 PM. For more information, you may contact the Detroit Branch NAACP at (313) 347-2820 or go to www.detroitnaacp.org.

This town hall is being hosted by the Detroit Branch NAACP, Michigan State Conference of the NAACP, UAW Ford Vice President Jimmy Settles, and members of the NAACP National Board of Directors. We are grateful to the Detroit Public Schools for their cooperation and assistance with this matter. The eyes of the nation are now on the State of Michigan, following the appointment of Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education. The City of Detroit, after 17 years of Emergency Management rule over our educational system and its effects, now stands at the crossroad as to what kind of quality and what the direction of education will be for us in this community. This is true not only in the state of Michigan, but throughout our nation. We invite everyone to join us at this most important town hall here in the city of Detroit.

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