

Howard County NAACP
2nd Vice President and Education Committee Report – April 25, 2019
General Membership Committee Meeting

The Howard County NAACP Education Committee advocates for an effective, accountable and accessible public school system anchored by great teaching, fair discipline, equitable resources and challenging curriculum with parents as empowered partners in the education process. Our ultimate goal is that every student receives a quality public education that prepares him or her to be a contributing member of a democracy.

Key Education Dates

- May 1: Teachers of Color Recruitment Event –9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Ascend One Building
- May 4: College Signing Day and Career Fair in partnership with the Black Student Achievement Program (9-12 noon) at Oakland Mills High School
- May 11: Freedom Fund Jazz Brunch with keynote speaker/education trailblazer, Dr. Freeman Hrabowski III
- July 8-13: National Summer Learning Week
- August (TBD): Education Committee Planning Retreat
- October 14: Cocktails and Conversation with Education Champions at 18th and 21st Restaurant

Activity Report

Education Committee Chair, Laura Johnson, and members of the committee attended the Board of Education Coffee and Conversation on March 19. As part of the NAACP's March 28 general meeting, the Education Committee hosted a discussion on HCPSS Superintendent Martirano's Strategic Call to Action plan which was presented by Dr. Monifa McKnight, Chief of School Management and Instructional Leadership and her colleagues, Ron Morris, Theodore Hartman and Dr. Mary Klyap. The conversation recapped the district's strategic goals and progress measures while offering community members opportunities to express concerns and offer ideas for moving the plan forward.

On April 3, HCPSS, in partnership with the NAACP, Council of Elders and the Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee hosted a Community Forum on Effective Discipline Practices at Wild Lake High School. Laura brought greetings on behalf of the branch in this meeting to update the community on new discipline data, progress underway and community resources to support a comprehensive approach.

Laura Johnson served as a judge for the Howard County Library's Battle of the Books on April 5. John Wheatland and Natalie Ziegler of the education committee have volunteered to be judges for upcoming Simulated Congressional Hearings at local schools.

We will host our first College Signing Day and Career Fair (**scheduled for May 4 at Oakland Mills High School**) in partnership with the HCPSS Black Student Achievement Program. Championed by former First Lady Michelle Obama and hosted by schools, organizations, community leaders and influencers, College Signing Day is a chance to rally around students who have committed to higher education. Whether at a community college, a university, a certification program, and the military or any other education past high school, College Signing Day shows support for this future. The event is a way for educators, counselors and parents to encourage those heading to college, and while also being a way for students to inspire and encourage others.

The Board of Education will be voting on the Policy 9210 (School Dress Code Policy) recommendations at the Thursday, May 9 Board of Education meeting. Our very own Seanna Camp and Zhion Perkins of the Youth Council have served on this very important committee. The topic is towards the end of the afternoon agenda, likely to be fall between 5:30-7:00pm.

The HCPSS FY20 Budget process is underway. See the FY20 Budget Process [Schedule](#). Key dates include:

- County Executive budget presentation to County Council | April 24 – 7:00 p.m.
- County Council Public Hearing on Board of Education’s Requested Budget | April 25 – 7:00 p.m.
- Board of Education Public Hearing on Requested Budget | April 29- 9:30 a.m.

The NAACP is represented on several important HCPSS policy or work groups:

- Lynda Earle-Hill is representing the NAACP Education Committee on the HCPSS, Educational Equity Policy Development Committee
- Laura Johnson is representing the NAACP Education Committee on the Mental Health Advisory Council which is tasked with developing an understanding of the current state of mental health services/resources in Howard County and offering recommendations on a plan to enhance current mental health services for students and families. The Mental Health Advisory Council, in partnership with the HCPSS and the Horizon Foundation, will present four screenings of the movie Angst scheduled in April 2019. This 55-minute film features candid interviews with children and young adults who struggle, or have struggled, with anxiety — including Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps.
- Laura Johnson is representing the NAACP Education Committee on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee whose purpose is to gain community input regarding systemic efforts around diversity, equity, and inclusion, including district efforts to execute the Strategic Call to Action. Education Chair serves on the Workforce subcommittee tasked with creating a vision and recommendations for advancing HCPSS as a workplace of choice for diverse candidates with a focus on recruitment and retention practices and workplace culture enhancements.
- The Effective Discipline Work Group will continue working with HCPSS to address discipline disparities. The HCPSS discipline disparities plan will be submitted to Maryland State Department of Education for review.

Freedom Fund Jazz Brunch

Plans are underway for the NAACP’s 40th annual Freedom Fund Jazz Brunch at the new location of The Hotel at Arundel Mills in Hanover, MD. Laura Johnson serves on the planning committee and the group has secured honorees, Dr. Freeman Hrabowski of UMBC and Howard County Executive, Calvin Ball. Hammond High School Jazz Ensemble and jazz vocalist, Lavenia Nesmith will bring the occasion to life through music and song. Laura Johnson has secured the AFRO Newspaper as a media sponsor and drafted a press release to share the news.

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