



NAACP Talk

South Middlesex Branch Vol. X No. Summer 2007

Branch Response to Supreme Court Ruling that Threatens Brown Decision

Branch Political Action Committee and Education Committee Chair William Robinson issued the following statement, on behalf of the Branch and the NAACP New England Area Conference (NEAC) at a Massachusetts State House press conference on June 29.

The NAACP is disappointed in the Supreme Court's Seattle and Jefferson County ruling because it chips away at an important series of court and legislative rulings that represent "accountability landmarks" designed to ensure resource equity and adequate benefits in public education. (The landmarks include *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), the Civil Rights Act (1964) (which has not been fully enforced), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965) (not fully enforced), the No Child Left Behind legislation (2002) (unfunded reauthorization of the 1965 ESEA), and the state's Education Reform Act of 1993 (deficiencies unresolved).

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Response to Supreme Court Ruling

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The NAACP and its partners discourage reestablishment of obstacles that prevent reaching the goals of a half-century of accountability landmarks, and they will pursue the reconstitution of provisions targeted to strengthen equal access and participation in education for minority, poor, and ethnic subgroup citizens.

Correct MCAS Implementation

Bill Robinson also authored a statement in support of Massachusetts House Bill 561, calling for reviewing and correcting MCAS, which was initially introduced through a flawed implementation program. Steps were missed, communications were poor, accountability is still unclear, and the funding formula was never addressed as part of the general education reform. Moreover, monitoring agencies have been eliminated. Robinson concluded the statement — co-signed by Laura Medrano (President of the MetroWest Council of the League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and Frank X. Kavanagh (President of the Brazilian American Association (BRAMAS) — that Massachusetts, which provides multi-cultural, multi-racial, and culturally relevant learning accommodations, should not be saddled with a biased testing system that is not managed well.

Temporarily Exempt Students from Science Requirement

The NAACP, BRAMAS, and LULAC — who joined recently to form the “Community Empowerment Coalition” — have also registered their support of state Senate Bill 369, arguing that 371 schools have not met the progress goals of the No Child Left Behind Act and urging the legislature to mandate that students be exempt from the science

\$1,000 Grant from Framingham Rotary

The Branch has received a grant of \$1,000 from the Framingham Rotary Club to develop and distribute a *Public School Education Primer* to parents in MetroWest school districts that will improve parents’ support of students and increase parental involvement in school activities. The primer, based on the the Branch’s recently released “Best Practices in Education Report” — the effort to produce it was led by William Robinson — will provide a menu of options and a road map of choices for area residents, of whom 28% are foreign born.

curriculum test as a graduation requirement until the necessary performance, training, and accountability programs for teachers have been implemented and teachers have reached proficiency level. The Coalition believes that such action would help productive districts avoid falling into the failing category.

In addition, the Coalition, in support of House Bill 550 and Senate Bill 369, has called for the collection of statistical data on Brazilian student enrollment, performance, and achievement gap in order to be able to track progress on implementation of the 210 MCAS upgrade, which raises the test score threshold to 240 and adds the Science Framework component. The information will help reduce the cost of improving underperforming schools.

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