



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE-ATLANTA BRANCH
970 Martin L. King Jr. Drive SW • Suite 302 • Atlanta, Georgia 30314 • Phone (404) 524-0580

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CONTACT: Richard Rose
media@naacpatlanta.org
(404-931-2602)

PRESS ADVISORY

NAACP urges “NO” on school superintendent’s plan

March 1, 2017 (Atlanta, GA) – Saying that it mirrors Gov. Nathan Deal’s rejected initiative to address “failing schools,” the Atlanta Branch of the NAACP is calling for the Atlanta Independent Schools Board of Directors to vote “No” on Superintendent Meria Carstarphen’s latest plan for school closings as a part of her “turnaround” plan.

“We call on the Atlanta School Board to adopt a student-first approach and abandon the concept of ‘failing schools’ that encourages privatizing public schools and issuing school vouchers,” says Richard Rose, president of the Atlanta branch of the NAACP.

Studies have shown that the voucher system is grossly overrated and does not work well for most low and moderate income families. Already, Carstarphen has outsourced several schools instead of implementing a proven methodology that boosts reading and math skills by offering students much-needed sociological and psychological services; and extends the school day, adds Saturday sessions and expands school calendars.

“The Carstarphen plan focuses on blaming education professionals and appears to mirror Gov. Deal’s Opportunity School District (OSD) ballot initiative,” Rose says.

The 15-page APS strategy document contains only two references to students and ignores the system of racial oppression that has handicapped generations of African Americans. Black baby-boomers who attended segregated schools in the south were handicapped by out-of-date books with missing pages, crowded classrooms and limited resources. The same kind of thing is happening in de facto segregated schools today, where teachers work in vastly overcrowded classrooms and administrators are not given adequate resources to promote success.

Rose says Carstarphen’s latest turnaround plan contains only one reference to “students” and focuses on eliminating school “leadership” positions in favor of the top-heavy, bloated APS bureaucracy that now burdens Atlanta’s taxpayers.

Carstarphen’s plan will ultimately commandeer public resources for the benefit of families with superior means, as we have seen in some of the most well-known charter operations. Atlanta Public Schools pays for educational top talent who should work for the benefit of our children to help break the cycle of poverty and oppression. The turn-around plan does just the opposite.

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