LDF Statement on Trump's Executive Order Calling for Local Control of K-12 Schools

Today, the White House issued an executive order directing U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos to conduct a study on the federal government’s role in K-12 education and align existing education policy with this Administration’s vision of the proper role of the federal government in K-12 education. NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. Policy Director Todd A. Cox issued the following statement in response:

“This Executive Order is yet another reflection of this Administration’s contempt for the role the federal government has in ensuring education equity. It also follows Congressional and Executive action gutting vital safeguards intended to ensure that states are held accountable for the educational success of all students, particularly historically underserved low-income students and students of color.

“Next month, we will celebrate the anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, the landmark Supreme Court decision that overturned the Jim Crow “separate but equal” doctrine of legally sanctioned discrimination. Local education initiatives must be closely examined and held to federal standards that guarantee equality and that root out practices that reinforce racial disparities and inequity. Federal oversight is important precisely because too often local jurisdictions have failed to ensure that children who are most marginalized are protected from discriminatory practices. The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. intends to hold this Administration to its obligations under federal law to enforce the Constitutional imperative of equality and the guarantees in federal statutes that protect those students who are most in need.”

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National
Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.