For Immediate Release
Thursday, April 27, 2017

NAACP Legal Defense Fund Responds to Directive to Keep White Students Together in Florida Elementary School

On April 18, 2017, Christine Hoffman, the Principal of Campbell Park Elementary School – a predominantly Black public school in Pinellas County, Florida – sent an e-mail to the school’s instructional staff which included a directive that read, “white students should be in the same class.” The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), is currently litigating Bradley v. Pinellas, a desegregation case in the Pinellas County School District. The following statement was issued by LDF staff attorneys Angel Harris and Elizabeth Reese and local counsel Roger Plata and Enrique Escarraz III:

“We are appalled by this reprehensible directive, which only underscores the importance of our continued litigation in Pinellas County. This desegregation case has been going on for more than 50 years, and disturbing incidents like this make clear that discrimination is hardly a thing of the past in Pinellas County schools. We will continue fighting to ensure that Black children receive the quality education they deserve and that is the legacy of Brown v. Board of Education. As we continue to gather information about the experience of Black children in Pinellas County schools to inform our ongoing advocacy, we encourage concerned parents to contact us if you believe your children are not receiving the quality, equitable education that they deserve due to continued systemic segregation in the school system.”

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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.