



For Immediate Release
Friday, February 2, 2024

Media
media@naacpldf.org

LDF Sends Letter Regarding Student Uniform Code to Philadelphia Private School

The [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\) sent a letter](#) to a Philadelphia private school, Cedar Grove Christian Academy, expressing concern regarding its uniform code, which expressly prohibits certain culturally significant hairstyles, like locs and afros. In the letter, LDF asks Cedar Grove Christian Academy to reassess their rules to ensure that all grooming policies serve legitimate safety concerns and are applied in a manner that does not target Black students with culturally significant hairstyles.

Students should not be deprived of equal educational opportunities because of hairstyles or hair formations that pay homage to their racial and cultural heritage. Such exclusionary disciplinary measures often lead to academic, social, and emotional harms. In fact, a 2021 education [equity report](#) found that “[a]cross the Philadelphia metro area, students of color are 3.7 times as likely as white students to miss days of school due to discipline [and] [t]he gap is even larger between Black and white students, with Black students 5.5 times as likely to miss school from suspensions.” This discriminatory treatment may violate federal, state and local laws.

Philadelphia was one of the first municipalities to enact the [CROWN \(“Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair”\) Act](#), which prohibits [discrimination](#) based on characteristics commonly associated with race, including hairstyles. The broad protections in the Philadelphia CROWN Act extend to natural, protective or cultural hairstyles—like braids, cornrows, locs, Bantu knots, afros, and twists—of any length.

Read the full letter [here](#).

Learn more about natural hair discrimination [here](#).

###

Founded in 1940, the [Legal Defense Fund \(LDF\)](#) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. 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 Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that LDF 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.