



For Immediate Release
Tuesday, July 3, 2018

Contact: LDF Media
212-965-2200 / media@naacpldf.org

LDF Condemns Trump Administration's Rescission of Guidance Promoting Diversity in Education

The U.S. Departments of Justice and Education plan to announce today that they are rescinding guidance issued to help promote diversity and reduce racial isolation in K-12 schools and higher education. The guidance emphasizes ensuring that, “our nation’s students are provided with learning environments comprised of students of diverse backgrounds” which “greatly contribute[s] to the educational, economic, and civic life of this nation.” [Todd A. Cox](#), Policy Director at the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF), issued the following statement:

“Rather than helping schools across the country provide the best possible learning environment for all students, the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education launched yet another attack on the principles of equal access and opportunity. Racial diversity is not only key to preparing our nation’s young people for the global economy, but it also exposes students to new ideas and perspectives, which are essential to a well-rounded education.

“While the Trump Administration’s decision does not affect state or federal law – which still encourage the consideration of race as one of many factors during the admissions process to advance diversity in higher education – it sends a disturbing signal about its priorities. The federal government has set its sights on challenging Harvard’s admissions policies, making clear that the decision to rescind this guidance is part of a concerted effort to dismantle diversity efforts in higher education. Even though LDF’s landmark [Brown v. Board of Education](#) case was decided almost 65 years ago, we continue to fight for diversity in K-12 schools as well. We urge all schools – from K-12 to higher education – not to be dissuaded in their efforts to pursue equal access and opportunity as part of their educational mission.

“U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy upheld affirmative action in [Fisher v. University of Texas](#), and this guidance simply sought to clarify consistent Supreme Court holdings that aiding diversity and avoiding racial isolation in schools are in the government’s best interest and among our nation’s highest priorities. Less than a week after Justice Kennedy announced his retirement, the Trump Administration is seeking to undermine that precedent. This underscores the need to proceed slowly and deliberately in choosing and vetting the next Supreme Court justice, which should happen no sooner than the electorate has had a chance to exercise its voice in the next election. Moving quickly with the nomination process threatens to jeopardize hard-fought civil rights advancements.

We must ensure that the Court continues to advance diversity and protect equal opportunity for students of color.”

###

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.