



## **Statement on Today's Latest Victory in the Bradford Case Championing State Constitutional Right to Education**

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BALTIMORE -- Today, the Circuit Court for Baltimore City forcefully rejected the State of Maryland's attempt to dismiss *Bradford v. Maryland State Board of Education*, an important lawsuit brought by families championing the state constitutional right to an adequate education for students in Baltimore City. For decades, children in Baltimore have been denied the constitutionally guaranteed funds they need to get a quality education. Consequently, they have been forced to learn in subpar conditions, including schools where there is lead in the water, faulty heating systems, no air conditioning, not enough teachers, a lack of afterschool programs, inadequate lighting and ventilation, leaking roofs, and deficient fire alarm systems.

Today's victory in the *Bradford* case brings Baltimore City students closer to securing the adequate and equitable education they deserve. Not only does this decision uphold the continued importance of a consent decree in the case and the court's previous rulings, but it underscores the right of the Maryland Judiciary to have the final say as to the state constitutional requirement that the State provide children an adequate education. Judge Audrey Carrion rejected out of hand the State's argument that such issues present "a political question" that Maryland judges are powerless to address. Judge Carrion further ruled that the families' requests for equitable relief are not subject to statutes of limitations, but even if they were, advocates' diligence in fighting for children for nearly two decades makes the lawsuit timely.

Executive Director of the ACLU of Maryland, Dana Vickers Shelley, said: “This latest ruling in the *Bradford* case empowers Baltimore families to move forward in their effort to ensure Maryland’s education system upholds the constitutional rights of children in Baltimore to a quality education. That education is a state constitutional right for all our children. The Black and Brown children who have been failed by the State of Maryland for generations must have their education needs fully addressed so they, too, can realize their dreams.”

Ajmel Quereshi, Senior Counsel at the NAACP Legal Defense Fund (LDF) said: "Now that the court has conclusively rejected the State’s legal arguments, it is beyond time that Maryland meet its constitutional obligation to provide all students – including the thousands of African-American children in Baltimore – the education they need and deserve. In the event the State does not fulfill this duty, LDF will continue to fight on behalf of students and is heartened to know they will have their day in court."

The *Bradford* plaintiffs are represented by Sherrilyn Ifill, Ajmel Quereshi and Cara McClellan from the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund; Deborah Jeon from the ACLU of Maryland; and Elizabeth B. McCallum from BakerHostetler.

See an interactive timeline, videos, and legal documents for [Bradford v. Maryland State Board of Education](#) here.