

NAACP Bucks County Branch

PRESS RELEASE

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NAACP Bucks County Condemns Pennridge School Board Decision on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Karen Downer, President, NAACP Bucks County, made the following statement in response to the recent Pennridge School Board decision on DEI:

The NAACP Bucks County branch strongly condemns the recent Pennridge School Board decision to scrap a thoughtful and well-reasoned diversity, equity and inclusion plan designed by education professionals in favor of an ad-hoc committee that includes an angry DEI opponent and other members who voted against the district's DEI plans.

School Board member Joan Cullen, who was appointed to the new committee, has publicly stated that she does not believe there is any systemic racism in our country. Her appointment is a slap in the face to children of color who attend Pennridge schools and their tax-paying parents, who deserve an inclusive school that celebrates and encourages all children. Today, because of the School Board decision, schools throughout the Pennridge district are already pulling all references to diversity from their websites, their classrooms, and their curricula. It is clear that, right now, only white children are welcome in Pennridge.

Our children are growing up in an increasingly diverse country. America's future depends on their ability to work together productively, to respect each other, and to thrive as one America. Our children need to learn the real facts of America's history so they can understand where we have been and how people of all races came together throughout our history to create a more perfect union. Unfortunately, the Pennridge School Board has established a committee

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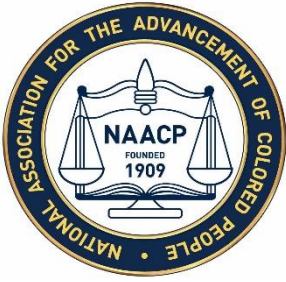
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that is designed to do just the opposite. We do not believe that these school board members have the knowledge, experience, or desire to develop a diverse plan that could begin to equal the one Penridge developed through educational professionals, and which is now being destroyed.

The NAACP Bucks County joins the ADL in:

- denouncing the decision to replace the district's original DEI committee with one partially overseen by a board member who has publicly displayed a lack of understanding regarding how racism and other forms of oppression function.
- calling on the School Board to immediately and in good faith reinstate DEI efforts and education across the Penridge School District.

We are requesting an immediate meeting with the Superintendent to discuss the current freeze on DEI initiatives. The NAACP Bucks County will stand with the parents and children of Penridge who believe all students should have the opportunity to thrive and to live up to our nation's founding principles of liberty and justice for all.

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Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest nonpartisan civil rights organization with a mission to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities. The Bucks County Chapter was chartered in 1951 and pursues the same mission.

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