

Position Paper

We agree with the United States Department of Justice that the students of Northwest Huntsville deserve fair and equitable treatment in respect to all of their relationships with Huntsville City Schools System. These students deserve equity in:

- Curriculum Considerations
- Teacher Assignments
- Facility Provisions
- Transportation Concerns

1. Equitable Curriculum Considerations – We strongly support the findings of the Department of Justice in its response to the plan submitted by Huntsville City Schools System. We want our children to have a curriculum that is competitive and equal to schools in South Huntsville. Johnson and Butler High do not have a curriculum that is equal to other majority white attended high schools in Huntsville City Schools System. We agree with the Department of Justice’s objection to the motion regarding differences in curriculum in racially identifiable black schools and white schools. Black schools would lack access to the array of advanced courses and science programs offered at schools that are identified as racially white. The Department of Justice’s brief more than adequately demonstrates the

lack of difference in educational opportunity. In its findings, the Department of Justice used the example that Hampton Cove Middle School (84.4% White) provides fifteen different honors and advanced placement classes, while Chapman Middle School (76.1% Black) provides only four advanced classes. (page 8 of the DOJ response to HCS, filed on 2/26/14)

The District Plan does not anticipate or allow room to develop viable magnet programs capable of attracting a desegregated enrollment at its racially identifiable black high schools. (page 16 of DOJ response to HCS, filed on 2/26/14)

For example, the main Law in Society course offered through the Johnson magnet is offered at Grissom and Huntsville. Also, while the Johnson students were provided Introductory French and Honors Spanish through distance learning, Grissom provided AP Spanish, AP French, Honors Latin, Honors German and via distance learning, Mandarin Chinese (page 17 of the DOJ response to HCS, filed on 2/26/14). Furthermore, the Department of Justice identified that Grissom and Huntsville High, racially identifiable white schools, provided the greatest number of Advanced Placement (“AP”) courses in the District (22 and 14, respectively, not including multiple sections of the same course), while Johnson, Butler and Lee, racially identifiable black schools, provided the fewest (5, 6 and 9 respectively).

Among the AP courses absent from racially identifiable black high schools were “Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics” (“STEM”) courses such as Chemistry, AP Physics, AP Computer Science, and AP Calculus courses. (Page 8 of the DOJ response to HCS, filed on 2/26/14)

2. Equitable Teacher Assignment – We want teachers who are highly qualified and formally trained in their respective content areas to teach our children. Every teacher including Teach for America should be prepared for the reality of teaching in the classroom. All teachers should be aligned within their content area. Regardless of who the teacher is, we want certified and qualified teachers instructing our children.

3. Equitable Facility Provisions - While we applaud the construction of new facilities, we are aware, however, that bricks and mortar do not teach students, nor do new buildings guarantee quality education. We also have serious concerns in reference to Environmental Air Quality and Physical Separation of middle and high school students on the new North Huntsville Campus. Initially, we understood that the two schools would have separate buildings, only now to know it is basically one school.

4. Equitable Transportation Concerns – We agree with the extension of the transportation limits from two to five miles, to ensure that students have transportation. The Huntsville City Schools System has proposed a policy to provide transportation for high school students (other than disabled pupils) who live more than five miles from school. This extension addresses a particularly significant hardship for impoverished families in the district who may not own multiple vehicles or be able to make alternative arrangements for students in their families to drive themselves to school. (page 18-20 of HCS plan, filed on 3/10/14)

Again, we agree with the United States Department of Justice that the students of Northwest Huntsville deserve fair and equitable treatment in respect to all of their relationships with Huntsville City Schools System.