

Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Committee
Richmond
August 22, 2012

The first meeting of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Committee for the 2012 interim was held on August 22, 2012, in Richmond, to review and make recommendations regarding scholarship applications submitted for the 2012-2013 academic year.

Administrative Staff Support and Election of Officers

Given the transfer of administrative staff support for the Committee from the House Clerk's Office to the Senate Clerk's Office, elections for chairman and vice chairman were conducted. Delegate Rosalyn R. Dance was re-elected chairwoman and Senator Henry L. Marsh, III was elected vice chairman.

Staff Briefing

The staff updated the Committee concerning the need to amend the Committee's Policies to address awards to graduate students who are not required by their institutions to attend classes while engaged in writing the theses or dissertation. Preliminary information indicated that each institution of higher education has different requirements. The scholarship award covers tuition and fees, and provides a maximum book allowance. However, some institutions assess graduate students certain fees and costs while others do not. The Committee determined that graduate students in the thesis or dissertation term would be permitted to use the book allowance to cover the cost of books and other fees associated with researching, writing, and publishing the thesis and dissertation. The Committee agreed that its policies would be amended to reflect this change.

The Committee reviewed how online courses are charged the Program by institutions of higher education. While the scholarship program disburses funds once during the fall, spring, and summer terms, some colleges have online programs that are organized according to the block system (e.g. series of weeks), which results in students being billed several times during the traditional fall or spring term, depending upon the program requirements. This approach to billing conflicts with the Committee's fund disbursement process and it causes confusion and frustration among students concerning the sufficiency of their award to meet academic costs. To address disbursement, billing, and other payment problems as they may arise, the Committee clarified that the staff was authorized to settle problems with institutions and approve payment of awards throughout the academic year.

State Council of Higher Education Assistant Director of Financial Aid, Lee Andes, provided the Program Accounting Summary, which indicated that 23 students were awarded scholarships during the 2011-2012 academic year, of which 8 students were enrolled at community colleges and 25 were enrolled at public and private four-year institutions of higher education. The scholarship awards totaled \$885,359, in the 2011-2012 leaving a balance of \$1,343,435.

Preparation for 2012-2013 Application Cycle

The staff was asked to begin the preparations for the next application cycle in 2012-2013, including revisions to the application packet, advertisements, distribution sites, training and public information sessions.

Executive Session

The Committee voted to go into executive session, pursuant to subdivision 37 of § 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, to discuss and consider matters pertaining to the *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program excluded from public discussion under this section.

Applicants Approved for 2012-2013 Academic Year

The Committee approved 27 applicants for undergraduate and graduate school during the 2012-2013 academic year. Other persons who are ineligible for the Program are notified of their ineligibility by staff. This year marks the seventh year of the Program; therefore, certain efforts have been made to encourage and move applicants to more independence and self-sufficiency, and to greater compliance with Program policies.

Next Meeting

Certain of the Committee members have been appointed by Chairman Dance to serve on the King Commission's Special Subcommittee on Public School Closings (Massive Resistance) in Virginia, which will meet on October 23rd in Manassas. However, the next meeting of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Committee will be announced.

Hon. Rosalyn R. Dance, Chair
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