



Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Committee

April 16, 2019, at 11:30 a.m.

Pocahontas Building, Senate Committee Room A

brownscholarship.virginia.gov

The Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Committee (the Committee) met in Richmond with Senator L. Louise Lucas, chair, presiding.¹ The meeting began with introductions and opening remarks followed by presentations, a review of scholarship applications, and discussion. Materials presented at the meeting are accessible through the [Committee's website](#).

Updates on the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program

Lily Jones, Division of Legislative Services

Lee Andes, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

Ms. Jones provided an overview of the status of the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Program. In 2016, the Committee voted to close the scholarship program to new applicants and accept only renewal scholarships due to depletion of funds and increasing costs of education for enrolled students. This policy was first implemented in the 2017–2018 school year, during which six renewal scholarships were awarded. For the 2018–2019 school year, the Committee voted to award five renewal scholarships. Of the five students currently receiving scholarships, two are receiving bachelor's degrees in 2019 and are not seeking scholarship renewal. The three remaining students reapplied for scholarships for the 2019–2020 school year. Of these three students, one is pursuing a GED, one is pursuing a bachelor's degree, and one is pursuing a doctorate.

Mr. Andes reported to the Committee on the fiscal status of the scholarship program. Since the program's start in the 2005–2006 school year, \$1,263,777.70 have been disbursed to support the education of 88 individual students. The fund has \$1,005,680.40 remaining in its balance. Mr. Andes noted that the program had the largest expenditures in its early years and enrollment has declined since then, due largely to the fact that eligible students are now in the age range of 61 to 84 and are less likely to pursue higher education than they were when the program began.

In response to inquiries from members, Mr. Andes noted that at the close of the program, the remaining balance will revert to the general fund. Brenda Edwards added that the Committee's funds can be used only for the scholarships and cannot be designated by the Committee for any other purpose.

In light of the large balance remaining in the scholarship funds, Committee members discussed reopening the program to new applicants. Ms. Edwards suggested a limited-time reopening ahead of the coming school year, and staff agreed that, with immediate action and a follow-up Committee meeting scheduled for early summer, there would be sufficient time to process applications and award scholarships ahead of the 2019 fall term. After discussion, the Committee

¹ **Members Present:** Senator L. Louise Lucas (chair), Delegate Luke E. Torian, Joan Johns Cobbs, Robert Hamlin, M. Vishon Luck, Joy Cabarrus Speakes, Dr. Karen Eley Sanders (by phone)

Members Absent: Senator Mamie E. Locke, Delegate Les R. Adams, Delegate Jeffrey M. Bourne, Delegate Margaret B. Ransone

directed staff to announce the limited-time reopening of the program for new applicants prior to the 2019–2020 school year and to make application packets available to potential applicants.

Executive Session

The Committee voted to convene an executive session pursuant to subdivision A 36 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. At the conclusion of the executive session, the Committee voted to return to open session.

2019-2020 Academic Year Scholarships

The Committee directed staff to notify two students of the approval of their scholarship renewal for the 2019–2020 academic year and to notify one student of approval pending enrollment in an accredited course.

Commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of Public School Closings in Virginia

Lily Jones, Division of Legislative Services

Ms. Jones informed the Committee of plans of the Virginia Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission (the Commission) to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the public school closings in Virginia related to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. In 2009, the Committee and the Commission joined to form the Special Subcommittee on Public School Closings in Virginia to mark the 50th anniversary of the school closings and the 55th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, hosting town halls in each of the five localities where schools were closed to discuss the impact of Massive Resistance on those communities in Virginia. The Commission is planning similar programming in 2019 and invites the Committee to host these programs jointly. Currently, a program at the Moton Museum in Farmville is planned for September 10, 2019, and a program at the Jefferson School in Charlottesville is tentatively planned with a date to be determined. Committee members expressed interest in participating and asked to be kept informed of the progress of the events.

Next Meeting

The Committee tentatively planned to meet again at 11:30 a.m. on June 25, 2019, to review new scholarship applications for the 2019–2020 school year.

For more information, see the [*Committee's website*](#) or contact the Division of Legislative Services staff:

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