

## Executive Summary



### ***Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Committee 2010 Session of the Virginia General Assembly**

The *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program and Fund was created by the 2004 General Assembly, within the legislative branch of government, in response to Virginia's two-year long commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). The Program is designed to assist persons who were enrolled in the public schools of Virginia during Massive Resistance between 1954 and 1964, in jurisdictions in which the public schools were closed to avoid desegregation. The enabling legislation was amended in 2005 and 2006 to clarify program requirements and extend educational opportunities to eligible Virginians. Currently, eligible persons may use the award to obtain an adult high school diploma, the General Education Development certificate, CLEP credit, career or technical education or training, transitional education services, a two-year degree, or a four-year degree from an accredited public or private Virginia institution of higher education.

The *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Awards Committee, consisting of legislative and nonlegislative citizen members, administers the Scholarship Program, and is assisted by the Counseling and Technical Advisory Subcommittee which is composed of representatives of relevant state agencies, public and private institutions of higher education, persons with expertise in adult education and literacy, career and technical education and training, college admissions, financial aid, and legislative and public policy. The State Council of Higher Education also provides technical assistance and disburses scholarship funds upon the approval of the Committee.

The Committee begins the application cycle each year in January. The scholarship application deadline is March 1 each year. Meetings are held between June and December annually to (i) review applications, (ii) develop policy, (iii) resolve matters pertaining to scholarship recipients and approved education programs, (iv) conduct public informational sessions for current and prospective *Brown* scholars and training programs for representatives of approved education programs, (v) establish protocols and relationships with institutions of higher education and other state, local, and private entities to ensure the full implementation of the Program, and (vi) make other decisions governing the Program and Fund.

### **Appropriations and Other Resources**

State funds to support the work of the Committee were first appropriated in 2008. The 2010-2012 Appropriations Act provided \$25,000 in each year of the biennium for the support of the Committee's work. This appropriation does not represent monies in the Fund that are dedicated solely to scholarship awards.

### **2009 Statutory Changes**

House Bill 1893 (Dance) amended the enabling statute for the *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program to provide that awards may be used to cover the costs of required academic fees, in addition to tuition and textbooks already provided by state law, and graduate study at the masters and doctoral levels, as determined by the Awards Committee. The amendments also clarify the Committee's authority to establish policies, standards, and rules to govern the Program, thereby strengthening its accountability for and authority to administer and oversee the Program.

### **2010 Statutory Changes**

House Bill 1227 (Dance) provided that scholarships awarded through the *Brown v. Board of Education* Scholarship Program may be used to cover the costs of professional degree programs and mandatory fees. This bill also clarifies that awards may be granted for part-time or full-time attendance in approved education programs for no more than the minimum number of credit hours required to complete the program requirements.

### ***Brown* Scholars Graduation and Completion**

Five *Brown* Scholars were graduated from Saint Paul's College on May 10, 2009. One scholar was graduated in May 2010. Since the inception of the program, 21 *Brown* scholars now have completed the undergraduate four-year degree and others have met their individualized education goals.

### **Special Subcommittee on Public School Closings in Virginia**

The Committee, in collaboration with the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission, will commemorate Massive Resistance and will include a visit to each affected locality during the commemoration.

The Committee will resume its meetings in spring 2011. This Executive Summary incorporates the Committee's work during 2009 and 2010. The Committee will not submit a document to be published as a state document.