

Action Steps for HCAR2 Education - May 17, 2023

1. [5 votes] Explore ways & approaches to support Black students' parents in their involvement in the education process and to provide support to them with respect to student schoolwork requirements & ways to facilitate student-school engagement.
2. [5 votes] Explore ways & approaches to influence adoption of more classes in Black History and to require incorporation of Black History elements in the standard education curriculum in Howard County schools.
3. [3 votes] Explore ways & approaches to assist in & support student mentoring and tutoring programs in Howard County Title I Schools and Black Pre-K activities.
4. [3 votes] Identify ways & approaches to get involved with the Maryland Suspension Representation Project (MSRP). MSRP is a partnership between Disability Rights Maryland, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender, the Public Justice Center, the University of Baltimore School of Law Family Law Clinic and the University of Maryland School of Law Youth, Education and Justice Clinic. It is committed to protecting the due process rights of Maryland students who face school suspension actions. In Howard County, most suspension actions directly impact Black students.
5. [2 votes] Research & create a Black education Resource Directory to identify activities, programs, knowledge sources, and other resources to support Black students & parents.
6. [2 votes] Explore ways & approaches to facilitate & aid Black Adult Education programs in Howard County, and to provide Educational Support for Black Parents through better integration with local school curricula & assignments.
7. [1 vote] Explore ways & approaches to participate in the Anti-Racist Education Alliance (AREA). AREA focuses on dismantlement of the racist systems & structures within education and the greater community, & building structures that promote equity of access for Black, Brown, & Indigenous Students.
[<https://www.facebook.com/AREAlliance/>] [NOTE: The general group consensus was that it makes sense to partner with larger established organizations to expand our impact. AREA might be an organization that St. John's can partner with for actions 1 & 2 above.]
8. [1 vote] Explore ways & approaches to work and/or engage with PATH (People Acting Together in Howard) broad-based community power organization rooted in Howard County's neighborhoods and congregations. PATH is a non-partisan, multi-faith, multi-racial, and dedicated to making Howard County and Maryland a better place to live and thrive. Their change-oriented activities include: door-to-door engagement, local living room / church / classroom sessions, engagement with the County Council and engagement with the State House in Annapolis. PATH is committed to training and developing neighborhood leaders so that they can change the economic and social structures that affect their lives. One of the participants indicated that they know a teacher at Wilde Lake who is involved with PATH; she said she would pass on the contact info, but we have not heard back. [NOTE: The general group consensus was that it makes sense to partner with larger established organizations to expand our impact. PATH might be an organization that St. John's can partner with for actions 1 & 2 above.]

9. [1 vote] Site Visits to Historical Education Sites in Howard County & vicinity to learn more about our local history in black education, e.g.:
 - Harriet Tubman Cultural Center
 - Howard County Center of African American Culture
 - Ellicott City Colored School
 - Boyds Negro School House
 - St. Frances Academy
 - Oblate Sisters of Mount Providence
 - Hosanna School Museum
 - Sykesville Colored Schoolhouse
 - Drayden African-American Schoolhouse
 - St. Jerome's Hall
 - Hope School
 - Stanley Institute
 - Kennard School
 - Sturgis One-Room School Museum
 - Mount Zion One-Room School Museum
 - African-American Schoolhouse Museum
10. [1 vote] Write letters to, communicate with, and participate/watch (YouTube) meetings of the Howard County Board of Education (BOE) to ensure proper equity & justice for Black students & their families within the Howard County school system.
11. [1 vote] Have St. John's Parish participate in the Edible School Yard Program [<https://edibleschoolyard.org>]. The Edible Schoolyard Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the transformation of public education by using organic school gardens, kitchens, and cafeterias to teach both academic subjects and the values of nourishment, stewardship, and community. Edible education provides hands-on experiences that connect students to food, nature, and each other; and it systematically addresses the crises of climate change, public health, and social inequality.
12. [1 vote] Have St. John's Parish adopt a local school (e.g., based on recommendations from St. Bernadine's Parish) and provide needed student supplies.
13. [1 vote] It was suggested that we support the American Center for Law & Justice (ACLJ). From their website [<https://aclj.org>], it appears the only ways to become involved are either to sign one or more of their petitions (few of which appear to be education-related) or to request legal 'help' from Jay Alan Sekulaw (it is unclear what form such assistance might take but assume Pro Bono representation based on alignment of case with ACLJ perspectives). This organization likely represents the viewpoints of some very conservative Catholics. From <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/american-center-law-justice-aclj/>: *The ACLJ is a politically conservative, Christian-based social activism and watchdog headquartered in Washington, D.C. and associated with Regent University School of Law in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The ACLJ was founded in 1990 by law school graduate and evangelical minister Pat Robertson to protect constitutional and human rights worldwide. ACLJ generally pursues constitutional issues and conservative Christian ideals in courts of law. The ACLJ arose in part as a right-leaning political answer to the*

American Civil Liberties Union. The American Center for Law and Justice Chief Counsel is Jay Alan Sekulow, one of former President Trump's attorneys. The ACLJ is owned by Pat Robertson and funded through donations. In review, The American Center for Law & Justice has a borderline extreme right-wing bias in reporting news on their website. Most stories published are favorable to the Christian right and negative toward the left. There is frequent use of loaded words in articles such as this: "Chief Architect of ObamaCare's Deceit and Pro-Abortion Deception Fired for Fraud." The ACLJ also has produced a half-true claim via a fact-checker. Further, the Southern Poverty Law Center has an article describing how the ACLJ has been opposed to civil rights for homosexuals, as evidenced by their drafting of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act.