



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Black Alliance for Educational Options will Intervene in the DOJ Case on Behalf of Louisiana Parents Benefitting from the Louisiana Scholarship Program

The Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO) joined attorneys from Goldwater Institute, the American Federation for Children, and Louisiana parents today at a press conference announcing the filing of a motion to intervene in the Louisiana Scholarship Program *Brumfield v. Dodd* case. The press conference was held at the Hale Boggs Federal Courthouse in New Orleans.

Represented by the Goldwater Institute, five Louisiana families and BAEO entered a motion asking a federal district court judge to dismiss the recent challenge by the US Department of Justice against the Louisiana Scholarship Program. The families and BAEO also asked to be allowed to join the state in defending the state scholarship program.

“The Louisiana Scholarship Program gives children a chance for a better education – children who otherwise could not afford that opportunity, and when that is threatened for legal reasons without regard for how it might negatively affect children, it’s disgraceful and unacceptable.” said Kenneth Campbell, President of BAEO. “We are here to stand with the parents of Louisiana once again to let them know that they are not alone. BAEO will fight to help ensure that our children and the options available to them are protected.”

The United States Department of Justice petitioned the federal courts in Louisiana last month to prevent students from participating in the Louisiana Scholarship Program in 34 school districts with open desegregation cases unless otherwise allowed by the federal judge overseeing the case. Starting in the 2014-15 school year, parents will need to receive permission from the applicable federal judge to receive a scholarship; thus, removing the option of educational choice from the parents and giving it to the federal courts.

“This isn’t a matter of politics. Our children’s futures are at stake here. There should be no reason whatsoever to deny children from low-income families a state scholarship that allows them to attend schools that might better meet their needs.” said Campbell. “We would all like to attend schools that are racially and economically-diverse; however, that’s not the reality for most of our low-income and working-class Black families. The Louisiana Scholarship Program allows them to have an opportunity to receive a better education that could possibly change the trajectory of their lives. Do we really want to tell children they have to remain in a failing school simply because of their skin color?”

BAEO is an advocacy organization whose mission is to increase access to high-quality educational options for

Black children by actively supporting transformational education reform initiatives and parental choice policies that empower low-income and working-class Black families. BAEO champions parental choice policies and programs that serve low-income and working-class Black families, but is equally focused on promoting quality to ensure that Black students have access to high-performing schools. BAEO envisions a future where low-income and working-class Black families are empowered to choose a high-quality primary and secondary education for their children that enable them to pursue the college or career path of their choice, become economically independent adults, and engage in the practice of freedom.

To schedule an interview with a BAEO staff member, contact Tanzi West Barbour, National Director of Communications, BAEO at (202) 253-6233 or tanzi@baeo.org.

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