

**Testimony to the Montgomery County Public School's Board of Education
1.15.2020**

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Good evening, I'm Kember Kane. I'm a Kindergarten Teacher and MCEA Bargaining Team Co-Chair. I am here tonight exercising my right in COMAR to speak directly to you about what we as MCEA unit members believe students need to be successful no matter what school they attend.

We were gathered at an unprecedented event that night in October: The Black and Brown Forum for Educational Equity and Excellence. The Black and Brown Coalition shared data about the current school experiences of students in MCPS. Everyone in that standing room only crowd knew that it was beyond time for our children to experience the schools they deserve.

The goal that the black and brown Coalition shared that night was to: "Work **with** the Montgomery County Public Schools, its partner associations, and other county leaders to immediately eliminate institutional barriers to student achievement. Their focus was to: "Create the infrastructure and culture needed to achieve real and lasting improvements that transform student experiences in schools for all youth, especially Black, Brown, and low-income students."

At the end of that evening, the Coalition asked:

"Will you pledge to take specific and measurable action – working with other leaders – to accomplish the asks presented today on behalf of black and brown students?"

If yes, please stand up to demonstrate your commitment."

I stood up because I knew. You stood up because you also knew. The educators on our bargaining team stood up because we all knew it was about time.

Time for all children to receive quality early childhood education and the academic supports to maintain on-or-above grade level performance through to high school graduation.

Time to expand the number and types of advanced courses in schools serving the most black, brown, and low-income students.

Time to remove bias-based exclusion practices for advanced courses.
Time for all students to have access to effective supplemental learning opportunities to help students catch up and accelerate.

Time to empower students, families, and community members with training and information to engage in shared decision-making about which courses students can take and how they can help students succeed.

We have offered up many potential solutions to address the asks of the Black and Brown coalition and to live up to the commitment we made that night. We look forward to your representatives engaging with us in real and effective discussions to bring justice to our students.