

**FEDERAL FUNDING: RACE TO THE TOP INITIATIVE**

Relative To Low Performing Schools

August 24, 2009

**Governor's Press Conference**

10:00 a.m. / Jefferson Elementary School / 202 North Mariposa Street / Fresno, California

**Alice A. Huffman, President**

California State Conference of the NAACP

Thank you, Governor and Mr. Secretary, for the privilege to stand with you today. As introduced, I am Alice Huffman, the president of the California State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and I'm also on the National Board. I always tell you what the acronym NAACP means so that you won't forget.

I'm here to support the Governor today because I believe that this is a bold move to rescue our children who are trapped in failing schools. In the NAACP education is one of our top priorities and it has been most frustrating, as we know that quality education is a civil right. Not having the tools to bring up those who are failing in our public schools is civil rights denied.

Despite our landmark decision in 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education*, a court decision that said everybody should not be in separate schools but should be in equal schools, our students, in performance, along the lines of race and socioeconomic status, are still at the bottom. They are unequal.

California public schools are not only separate and unequal but in most urban areas our children have been consigned to schools that show very little evidence of a commitment to serve their educational needs. On every known measure of academic performance most African-American and Latino children in public schools in California have deficiencies in basic literacy and math skills.

Every time we lose a child's mind we lose an opportunity to prevent a child from becoming a ward of the state and captured by the criminal justice system. This is a lot more expensive than providing a quality education.

I think this is bold, I think this is needed, I think this is something we have long advocated for - and so the California NAACP applauds the Governor and President Obama for taking the action necessary for the children by turning around these failing schools.

I at this time would like to introduce (THE NEXT PERSON'S NAME).