

For Immediate Release

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Jackson and Mayor Call for Renewed Focus on Education

56th Anniversary Brown V. Board of Education

WHO: Rev. Jesse L. Jackson Sr., founder and president of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, **Eugene Grant**, mayor, Seat Pleasant, Maryland

WHAT: PRESS CONFERENCE

WHERE: Ebenezer AME Baptist Church
7707 Allentown Road
Fort Washington, MD 20744

WHEN: Sunday, May 16, 2010 at 2:00 p.m.

WHY: Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr., and Seat Pleasant Mayor, Eugene Grant, are teaming up to call for a renewed focus on the state of public education.

Monday, May 17th marks the 56th anniversary of the Brown V. Board of Education Supreme Court decision.

"That day was a great moment for American history," Rev. Jackson said. "The Supreme Court's 1954 decision in the Brown case marked the birth of an American promise and an end of racial policy in the United States. The issue is just not to desegregate schools between blacks and whites, but to fight for a constitutional amendment granting all Americans an equal, high-quality public education, as a matter of law and American right."

Jackson said the Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education end legal segregation by race in our public schools. But there are still inequities in the funding provided to different schools systems. But we still have "rich and poor" schools, disparities in the quality of education and academic achievement.

Today's schools have been radically re-segregated, sometimes using taxed-based funding formulas, the privatization of public schools, and the use of vouchers to children choosing to go to private schools.

The racial disparities abound. The gap between inner city and suburban public education is growing. One group of children cannot have the best facilities with new computers, Internet access, Olympic swimming pools and gymnasiums and music appreciation while the other group has been stripped of all educational resources. These two groups of students cannot be expected to compete and take the same standardized exams. The disparities and results are predictable.

"We are taught to live apart, taught to look at each other through prisms of race and prisms of fear," he said. "Today we come together to rededicate ourselves to the struggles of dealing with

America's unfinished business, to provide equal, high quality education for our nation's youth, to reinvest in America and to put America back to work.”

The economic crisis confronting states and cities have forced school districts across the United States to make extreme cuts – laying off teachers, expanding class sizes, cutting classes and programs. Education has gone from an “investment in our future” to a commodity. On the anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, we must renew our commitment to place education and the future of our youth at the top of the nation's agenda.

This past year, we've bailed out the banks on and the insurance (AIG) and auto companies; it is now time to invest in American students. They are this country's future.

The Rainbow PUSH Coalition is a progressive organization protecting, defending and expanding civil rights to improve economic and educational opportunity. The organization is headquartered at 930 E. 50th St. in Chicago. For more information about the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, please visit www.rainbowpush.org or call (773) 373-3366