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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, January 25, 2020

ALAMANCE NAACP REQUEST ABSS BOARD OF EDUCATION PARTICIPATE IN RACIAL EQUITY TRAINING FOLLOWING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

On Tuesday, January 25, 2021, during the public comment portion of the ABSS Board of Education meeting, the Alamance NAACP requested that all school board members participate in training by the Alamance Racial Equity Alliance (AREA). This was in response to racially insensitive comments made by ABSS Board of Education Member Ryan Bowden.

The request, submitted by Barrett Brown, Alamance NAACP President, stated the following;

Madame Chair, Board Members, Superintendent,

I am Barrett Brown and on behalf of the NAACP, I would like to address comments made at the last meeting by Ryan Bowden. It was troubling to realize that he was not sensitive to the differences between Title 1 schools and Low Performing schools. His off hand comment about Ray Street was insensitive to not only the students and parents, but to the faculty and staff that serve their academic needs. Mr. Bowden's comments throughout the meeting were divisive. He spoke in terms that might lead some to believe teachers did not have the student's best interest at heart. He tried to pit the needs of urban students against rural students. He was even divisive with board members. We all watched as he tried to draw imaginary political lines between board members. There were illusions cast about an alternative plot driven by unnamed parties. The divisive nature of his comments are not good for this community, least of all for our students. There was also an attempt to, in his own words, "paint a picture" that the students at majority minority schools were designated as low performing. He asserted that the majority of parents wanted to go back to face-to-face school. That was based on a survey conducted by the schools system which put parents who did not return the survey in the same cohort of parents who wanted to return, as a default. This was not a scientific poll and the results are at best inconclusive; and at worst the statistical equivalent to a game of duck,

duck, goose. We would ask the board member in future, to have consideration for all the students and faculty and not attempt to divide our community into an "us vs them scenario".

Given the lack of sensitivity displayed by Mr. Bowden . We are asking the board to adopt for yourselves, a policy that board members should attend the Alamance Racial Equity Alliance Training. We request that the board make this as a matter of policy that board members take sensitivity training.

Respectively Submitted,

*Barrett Brown
President, Alamance NAACP*

For more information on the Alamance NAACP, visit acnaacp.org or find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @alamancenacp.

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