

Date : 9/27/2017 5:06:56 AM
From : "Lexus Walker"
To : "april.dockery@acsgmail.net"
Subject : Concern
Hi April,

My name is Lexus Walker, currently a mentor to two AMS 6th graders. I am extremely concerned and disappointed to hear that Bree Newsome was dis-invited to a speaking engagement at AMS. Can you shed some light as to why this is the case? Ms. Newsome is an amazing leader, activist, hero, and role model and the chance to hear her speak would be a tremendous opportunity for our middle schoolers.

To say that the reason for Ms. Newsome's dis-invitation has to do with her previous arrest is absolutely absurd. The greatest of civil rights leaders have been arrested for their brave and heroic activism.

The dis-inviting of this great leader goes against the very mission and vision of Asheville City Schools. How can you ensure excellence with equity for all students if you refuse to show them the many inspiring forms that leadership can take? How can you empower and engage every student while refusing them the privilege of learning from an inspirational woman of color who is fighting to make a better world FOR THEM. Our students need to hear from more speakers like Ms. Newsome, and I am so very disappointed that a school and district supposedly committed to equity would make a decision such as this one to silence a leader who is actually committed to equity and who is fighting to end the white supremacy that has created the "achievement gap" that Asheville City Schools struggle with. Our education system has long kept the truth hidden from students, and has long contributed to inequalities in our society; will you continue this shameful legacy?

Our students, black and white and in-between, deserve to see what black leadership looks like in every form. I strongly urge you and your team to reconsider this decision and to allow your students this incredible opportunity to be inspired.

Best,
Lexus

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