

**“Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope our people will ever learn to live together”  
*Milliken v. Bradley* (1974) (Marshall, J. dissenting)**



***A Community Dialogue on the Future of Education in Pitt County***  
**Tuesday, July 13, 2010**

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children, along with the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University and the Center for Civil Rights at UNC School of Law, thank you for considering co-sponsorship of *A Community Dialogue on the Future of Education in Pitt County* on **Tuesday, July 13, 2010, 6:00-9:00 P.M** at the **Cornerstone Baptist Church, Family Life Center**, 1095 Allen Road, Greenville, NC 27834.

**Summary**

The North Carolina Constitution grants all children the right to receive a sound, basic public education in our state’s schools. To guarantee, preserve and protect that right, Pitt County Schools must, among other things, make a greater effort to close the racial achievement gap, develop effective disciplinary policies that do not disproportionately punish students of color, and recruit high quality teachers for every classroom. Moreover, many of the reforms needed to improve education for all children are best implemented in racially, ethnically and socioeconomically diverse schools and classrooms.

The Coalition has invited the Kirwan Institute to facilitate an evening of community dialogues about the role of diversity in our schools and neighborhoods, as well as discussions of how specific policies either promote or hinder academic excellence in our public schools. Kirwan and the Center for Civil Rights will provide a historical and legal background of education in Pitt County to help frame these discussions. By the end of the evening, we hope participants will have shared their individual thoughts and concerns about education in Pitt County, and gained a broader understanding of and appreciation for the variety of perspectives and opinions on these issues throughout our community.

**Objectives**

By engaging residents in conversations around race and its relationship to public schools, this meeting will provide them with an opportunity to discuss the importance of, alternatives to and impact of integration in our community. This discussion will try to uncover the basis for our thoughts and measure the intensity of

our feelings, as well as assess the language that we use to express our experiences, frustrations, and future hopes for equality and integration in Pitt County.

### **Format**

The meeting format will provide an opportunity to interact in large and small groups. Law students from the UNC School of Law will facilitate small group discussion. In addition, we plan to provide refreshments and on-site childcare for the duration of the meeting.

5:45-6:00 Registration

6:00-6:05 Welcome

6:05-6:20 History of education in Pitt County

6:20-6:35 Overview of the goals/structure of small work groups

6:35-6:40 Break

6:40-7:20 Work groups

7:20-7:25 Break

7:25-7:40 Overview of existing educational inequities in Pitt County

7:40-7:45 Break

7:45-8:25 Work groups

8:25-8:30 Break

8:30-8:55 Work groups report out

8:55-9:00 Closing remarks

### **About Kirwan**

The Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity at The Ohio State University partners with people, communities, and institutions worldwide to think about, talk about, and engage issues of race and ethnicity in ways that create and expand opportunity for all. Kirwan envisions a society and world that is fair and just for all people; where opportunity is not limited by race, ethnicity, gender, or class; where democratic ideals inform social policy; and where all people recognize and embrace the universal responsibility that each person has for the welfare of every other person. Educational equity and messaging around race are two of Kirwan's key research areas. Kirwan has facilitated community dialogues in numerous school districts across the country, often in partnership with local and state school administrators. For more information about Kirwan, visit <http://kirwaninstitute.org/>

### **About the Coalition**

The Pitt County Coalition for Educating Black Children is a collaboration of individuals and community organizations working to improve the quality of education for all children in Pitt County Schools. Although the Coalition has targeted Black children because they have been adversely affected by racism and discrimination, its work will improve education for all children. For more information about the Coalition, visit <http://pccbec.org/default.aspx>. For more information about the community meeting please contact the Coalition's Secretary, Melissa Grimes, at (252) 520-3408 or at [mgrimes07@yahoo.com](mailto:mgrimes07@yahoo.com).

### **About the Center for Civil Rights**

Founded by Attorney Julius L. Chambers in 2001, the UNC Center for Civil Rights at UNC School of Law is committed to the advancement of civil rights and social justice, especially in the American South. It fosters research, sponsors student activities and convenes conferences to confront legal and social issues of greatest concern to racial and ethnic minorities, to the poor and to other potential beneficiaries of civil rights advances. The Center's work focuses on education, housing and community development, economic justice and voting rights. For more information about the Center, visit <http://www.law.unc.edu/centers/civilrights/default.aspx>

