

Governor Carney Recognizes Anniversary of U.S. Supreme Court Ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney on Monday [signed a proclamation](#) recognizing May 17, 2021 as *Brown v. Board of Education* Day at the Hockessin School #107C.

[Click here](#) to rewatch the event.

*“Today we recognized and reflected on the significant role that Delaware played in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision,” said **Governor Carney**. “It’s important to learn the lessons of our past – the good and the bad – and to acknowledge our shared, often ugly history around race. That will help us move forward productively and in good faith. Thank you to the Friends of Hockessin Colored School #107 for the important work that you do to educate our communities.”*

This event commemorated the 67th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, and recognized Delaware’s role in the landmark case. *Bulah v. Gebhart* and *Belton v. Gebhart*, both decided in the Delaware Court of Chancery, were included in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case before the U.S. Supreme Court.

“The Friends of Hockessin Colored School #107 are beyond grateful for the leadership of Governor Carney and members of the Delaware State Legislature in making today’s *Brown v. Board of Education* Day so meaningful,” said **David Wilk, President of Friends of Hockessin Colored School #107**. “It was truly humbling and validating to receive such strong support from Governor Carney at a time in history when our mission to

transform the former Hockessin Colored School #107 into a Center for Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Equity is so closely aligned with contemporary social issues.”

“On the anniversary of the Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, we proudly recognize the critical role played by Delaware judges, lawyers, and citizens in ending state-sponsored segregation,” said **Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr.** “The Delaware decisions eventually became part of the five cases appealed as part of *Brown*. Of the five cases, Delaware was the only state that got it right.”

“Delaware’s role in this monumental decision was nothing but extraordinary,” said **U.S. Senator Tom Carper**. “Chief Judge Seitz, along with the extraordinary talents of Louis L. Redding who argued these cases, changed our nation. They said that this discrimination was unconstitutional. That access to education is essential, and it’s something worth fighting for. If we tackle each day as the students and their parents in these cases, there’s nothing we can’t accomplish. I’m so proud of the Governor’s office and the State Legislature for taking the lead to honor the impact the African American community in our state had on the desegregation of education throughout the nation.”

“We are 67 years past the day, declared now as *Brown v. Board of Education* Day, when the Supreme Court said in our legal system that we will end segregation in our schools,” said **U.S. Senator Chris Coons**. “Still, it took decades for desegregation to become a reality, and the fights for equality and understanding are far from finished. No student should fail to learn about these sites because history, if not understood, if not examined, will be repeated – that’s why earlier this year, I joined with colleagues in Congress on a bill that would expand the *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Site to include the Hockessin Colored School, Claymont Community Center, and Howard High School.”

“I was humbled to join so many officials, the Friends of Hockessin Colored School #107, Delaware students, and community members as Governor Carney declared today *Brown v. Board of Education Day* in Delaware,” said **U.S. Representative Lisa Blunt Rochester**. “It was a day filled with reflection on how far we have come and how far we still must go. As we witness attempts to diminish Black history across the country, I applaud the effort that Delaware is making to ensure this history lives on.”

“There could have been no more fitting place in Delaware to mark this occasion than the former Hockessin Colored School 107, whose history of segregation was one of the five cases included in the *Brown v. Board* decision,” said **Rep. Krista Griffith**. “Many people are unaware that the now vacant, small brick building on Millcreek Road once housed the only school black children could go to in the Hockessin area as they were not allowed to attend any of the white schools. They had one teacher and faced racial inequality every day, from having to read from torn books with missing pages, lack of bus transportation and no running water. That changed when 7-year-old Shirley Bulah’s mother, Sarah, went to noted civil rights attorney Louis Redding, whose tireless and fierce advocacy led to the eventual desegregation of Delaware schools.”

“Often, the drivers of real and lasting change in this world are ordinary people who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances,” said **Sen. Laura Sturgeon**. “Shirley Bulah was an 8-year-old girl who simply wanted to ride a bus to school, and yet her fight for justice became one of the central pillars in our nation’s fight for equality. Black history is American history, and I am proud of my colleagues in the General Assembly for working to ensure all students in Delaware learn about the bravery of the Rev. Shirley Bulah Stamps, the determination of Louis L. Redding and the integrity of Collins J. Seitz.”

“The Delaware Judiciary has long played a central role in our

fight for equality and one of the most pivotal moments in our nation's history was the direct result of one little girl's bravery and two men called to do what is right." said **Sen. Darius Brown**. "Even though separate but equal was written into the Delaware Constitution, 8-year-old Shirley Bulah showed tremendous bravery by standing up for what is right, Louis Redding fought for her equality all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court and Collins J. Seitz was the first official of power to recognize their cause as just. As we honor and celebrate their impact on our state and our nation, let us also dedicate ourselves to continuing their legacy by fighting against the injustices that still pervade our society today."

"The fight for educational equity didn't end with the *Brown v. Board* decision in 1954," said **Rep. Nnamdi Chukwuocha**. "Today, the struggle continues, and we must resist indifference and stand up with courage and conviction just like the Bulah family and Mr. Redding. Laws and policies within our state have reversed many of the gains achieved in this landmark case. Today, our schools are more segregated than ever. We must honor those who came before us by working to ensure that their efforts were not in vain."

"Today is the 67th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*, the most consequential court decision of the last century," said **County Executive Matt Meyer**. "Today I walked two miles with HB DuPont and AI DuPont students to commemorate the walk that Shirley Bulah made every day, as a bus for white students passed by her house. We are proud that New Castle County government has commemorated its 250th park as a monument to that struggle, and as a center for equity and inclusion so that one day every child in our county will have an equal opportunity to attain an excellent education."

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