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December 31, 1936

STATEMENT FOR THE PRESS
AND THE PUBLIC ON
DISCRIMINATION IN SALARIES PAID
NEGRO AND WHITE TEACHERS IN
SEPARATE SCHOOL SYSTEMS

All the material in this statement and in the legal petition attached is based upon the proposition that:

Teachers in the same county or school district who have equal qualifications and who do the same kind and amount of work shall receive the same salary irrespective of race or color.

In continuing its program against inequalities in public schools, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has opened an attack upon the wage differential in separate schools whereby Negro teachers are paid much less salary than white teachers with similar certification and qualifications, and who perform essentially the same duties.

This salary differential is another method of discrimination in the separate school system. The entire system is based upon gross inequalities in school plant, current expenditures, transportation, library and health facilities and teachers' salaries.

The Journal of Negro Education for October, 1936, states in an editorial comment on teachers' salaries:

"It is probably unnecessary to reiterate but it should be repeated for emphasis that as a general rule Negro teachers in separate schools have never received salaries equal to that of white teachers in the same community, even when

they had the same training and performed the same kind and amount of work. Nor are they paid in proportion to their training when it is more or less than the white teacher. The Negro elementary teacher in separate schools, for example, although she has 70 per cent as much training as the white teacher in the same community and teaches 38 per cent more pupils, nevertheless receives only 47 per cent as much salary.

"Moreover, it should be emphasized that the present discrimination represents an increase rather than a decrease; the situation instead of improving is growing worse. In 1900, the Negro elementary teacher had to teach only 29 per cent more children than the white teacher; in 1932, she had to teach 38 per cent more. In 1900, the average salary of the Negro elementary teacher was \$106 and that of the white elementary teacher in the same community was \$162 or only \$56 more; in 1930, despite the fact that the training of the Negro teacher more nearly approximated that of the white, the salary of the Negro elementary teacher was \$423 and that of the white elementary teacher was \$901, or a difference of \$478. In other words, the average Negro elementary teacher has had her teaching load increased proportionately 9 per cent more than it was in 1900 and she receives relatively 60 per cent less salary than she received in 1900."

Interested groups in the states having separate schools have been constantly making every effort to have local school authorities equalize the salaries of colored teachers with the salaries of white teachers. Except for certain isolated instances, such as Washington County, Virginia, Knox County, Tennessee, and a few others where Negro and white teachers are paid the same salary according to classification, experience and rank, there has always been a blunt refusal.

IN MARYLAND

It must be observed that Maryland provides by law a different salary scale for white and Negro teachers, irrespective of identical certification, teaching level, or teachers' load. The sections of the Annotated Code of Maryland are set out at length on the last page of this statement for comparison.

According to the latest annual report of the State Board of Education, more Negro teachers have first grade certificates or

better than white teachers--97.9 per cent white teachers have first grade certificates or better, while 98.7 per cent Negro teachers have first grade certificates or better.

The average salary of a white elementary school teacher in the counties of Maryland is \$1,135 as compared to the Negro elementary teacher's salary of \$602, or an average difference of \$533. The average salary of a county white high school teacher is \$1,398 as compared to the Negro high school teacher's salary of \$790, or an average difference of \$608.

For more than ten years Negroes have been importuning the Maryland State legislature and the State Department of Education to equalize teachers' salaries. Each effort has met with failure.

The Maryland State Colored Teachers' Association sought the aid of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People who on December 8, 1936, filed a petition with the Board of Education of Montgomery County, Maryland, on behalf of a Negro teacher to have teachers' salaries equalized. Upon the refusal of the Board of Education to act a petition for a writ of mandamus to compel the Board of Education to equalize salary schedules was filed in the Circuit Court for Montgomery County on December 31, 1936. Copies of both petitions are attached to this statement.

A check of records of the Board of Education of Montgomery County and the scales of salaries reveal that in Montgomery County, white high school teachers receive an annual salary of \$1,571 as compared to \$859 for colored teachers, or a difference of \$712; that white elementary teachers receive an annual salary of \$1,362 as compared to \$631 for colored elementary teachers, or a difference of \$731.

The schedules of salaries for white janitors provides for \$80 a month for twelve months, or \$960, which is \$339 a year more than the average salary of a Negro elementary teacher or Negro elementary principal, and \$101 more than the average salary of a Negro high school teacher or Negro high school principal.

Repeated requests have been made to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to file similar cases in other states. Investigation has been started in several states and other cases will no doubt follow the present case filed in Montgomery County, Maryland.