

NATIONAL COALITION OF 100 BLACK WOMEN, INC.

DELAWARE CHAPTER

100 West 10th Street, Suite 1004, Wilmington, DE

19802

Telephone (302) 658-0410

Email: ncbwofdelaware@outlook.com

On the web: www.ncbwde.org

Federal Tax ID# (EIN): 51-0378158

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President

Kristen S. Williams
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PUBLIC COMMENT CHRISTINA SCHOOL BOARD MEETING MAY 04, 2017 GAUGER MIDDLE SCHOOL 50 GENDER ROAD-NEWARK DELAWARE 19713 7:30 P.M.-9:30P.M.

Good Evening,
President Campbell Paige, Vice President Evans and Esteemed Members of the Christina School Board, my name is Melanie Daniels, President of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Delaware Chapter. I bring you greetings on behalf of our members, families, friends and today, the students and parents of the Sarah Pyle Academy.

The National Coalition of 100 Black Women is a non-partisan, not for profit advocacy group working on behalf of Black women and girls to promote leadership development and gender equity in the areas of health, education and economic empowerment. Founded in 1995, we continue in service to Delaware communities.

I am here to speak to the issue and importance of available dropout prevention educational options in the City of Wilmington and specifically in opposition of the proposed funding cut to Sarah Pyle Academy, located in the Northeast Community, 3RD Senatorial District, New Castle County District 4 and the 4th City Council District on 600 N. Lombard Street, Wilmington Delaware.

Recognized as a nationally acclaimed dropout prevention education model by the National Prevention Dropout Center Network, (**NPDCN**), Sarah Pyle Academy has been named a national best practice and innovative dropout prevention high school alternative to students in the Northeast community. The Sarah Pyle Academy received the highest rating, by **NPDCN**, the ceremonial three caps upon meeting the following expressed rigorous criteria (abridged):

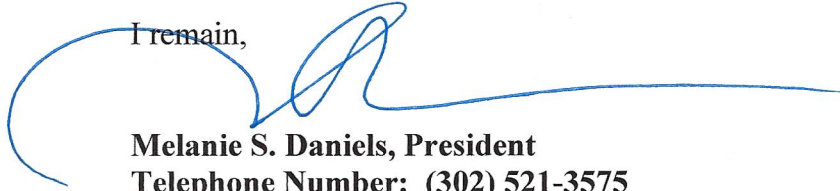
- Strong Evidence of Effectiveness
- Being in existence for three years or more.
- Evaluated using an experimental or strong quasi-experimental design conducted by an external evaluation team and having strong empirical evidence demonstrating program effectiveness in reducing dropout and/or increasing graduation rates and/or having significant impact on dropout-related risk factors.

We understand the motivation for this proposal is to address deficit funding which was prompted by anticipated statewide funding cuts. While we appreciate the need to address funding concerns, we are very concerned that this program has been targeted. This program serves the needs of students that have traditionally not met success in your traditional high schools. We also understand that the intention is to integrate the program within existing schools in the Christina School District. We are aware this was attempted previously prior to the development and evolution of Sarah Pyle Academy without success. We believe a preempted failure is likely should you decide to cut funding and proceed as proposed.

To that end, NC100BW, Delaware Chapter members vehemently oppose this idea as we believe it would further cause undue hardship for students and families— by physically displacing them outside of their community in an already stressed school system. We believe such an act by this board would not support educational gains, but accelerate the educational deficiency to impacted students, and further destabilize their community, so we ask that you vote **NO** to cutting funding which would force the Sarah Pyle Academy to integrate into the three existing high schools in the suburbs and eliminate your only high school program offerings in the City of Wilmington.

We ask that you join us in supporting Christina School District's only 21st Century, technology-driven, evidenced based, non-traditional, drop-out prevention and culturally adaptive community-based high school. Sarah Pyle Academy is such a school/program.

I remain,



Melanie S. Daniels, President
Telephone Number: (302) 521-3575