



Coalition of The Silence

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FAIRFAX ALLIANCE FOR APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION (FAAPE) LAUNCHES TO RESPOND TO THE UNMET NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

[Fairfax, VA] January 2, 2013 – Today, Tina Hone, Founder and Chair of The Coalition of the Silence (COTS), and Sheree Brown-Kaplan, Chair of COTS' Committee on Students with Disabilities, jointly announce the launch of the Fairfax Alliance for Appropriate Public Education (FAAPE), a new organization to respond to the unmet needs of students with disabilities in Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). Brown-Kaplan, a long-time advocate for students with disabilities and a former school board candidate, serves as the Chair of FAAPE and member of the COTS Advisory Board.

“The formation of FAAPE offers the families of children with disabilities a unified voice to advocate for better student outcomes,” stated Brown-Kaplan. “FAAPE will work to ensure every child with a disability has a high quality education that prepares him or her for further education, meaningful employment, independent living and full participation in their community,” Brown-Kaplan added.

"Special education comprises almost 20 percent of the \$2.3 billion FCPS budget," Brown-Kaplan added. "Parents deserve to know that these funds are being used effectively and efficiently to benefit their children and ensure them a foundation for long-term success as workers, citizens and members of society."

“COTS celebrates the launch of FAAPE,” stated Hone, Founder and Chair of COTS. “By supporting the development of an organization that specifically addresses the needs of students with disabilities, COTS is working to ensure their complex needs are met more effectively.” Hone added, “For COTS, this a natural extension of our mission. COTS ultimately succeeds when impacted communities have their own voice. We look forward to the day when there is no more Silence.”

The Coalition of The Silence launched one year ago with the goal of giving voice to those communities whose children are underrepresented at the highest level of academic achievement and overrepresented in school discipline procedures. Poor children, Black and Latino children, and children with disabilities are at the heart of COTS.

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About Fairfax Alliance for Appropriate Public Education: Founded by long-time advocate for students with disabilities and former school board candidate Sheree Brown-Kaplan, FAAPE is committed to effective special education policies, programs and services in FCPS that help ensure students with disabilities have a foundation for long-term success as workers, citizens and members of society. Learn more about FAAPE at www.faaape.weebly.com.

About Coalition of The Silence: Founded by former At Large School Board Member Tina Hone, COTS is committed to eliminating the achievement and discipline gaps that disproportionately negatively impact economically disadvantaged students, Black and Latino students, and students with disabilities in Fairfax County Public Schools. Learn more about COTS at www.coalitionofthesilence.org.