

# Communities need to support education

By George Curry  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

This country likes to celebrate anniversaries. Last year, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision. This week-end will mark the 50th anniversary of Rosa Park's decision not to give up her bus seat in Montgomery, Ala. What many people don't realize is that there were two major Brown decisions in the mid-1950s. The landmark ruling outlawing "separate but equal" schools was handed down in 1954. A companion ruling was issued in 1955 calling for schools to be desegregated "with all deliberate speed," which essentially meant no speed at all.

Perhaps it is fitting, given this propensity for celebrating the past, that this week — 50 years after the second Brown ruling — that the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education at New York University has issued a report titled, "With All Deliberate Speed: Achievement, Citizenship and Diversity in American Education." The 44-page report, available online, does more than revisit the 1950s; it outlines a series of steps to improve public education.

After pointing out that the U.S. is undergoing one of the most profound demographic transitions in history, the report observes: "Unfortunately, the United States continues to have an unequal and two-tiered system of public education. Even as the United States becomes increasingly diverse, our nation's K-

12 education system remains unequal and increasingly segregated by race and income."

The report says the country has a mixed record on eradicating the last vestiges of its Jim Crow public education system.

"We are a nation ambivalent," it observes. "We are both for integration and against it. We are for equality, but we are unwilling to create and sustain policies that ensure equal opportunity. We are for academic success for all children, but we allow millions of them to remain isolated in inferior schools."

We have traditionally shifted too much of the burden to the schools.

"Desegregation failed in some communities because almost the entire burden of integrating our society was placed on our public schools," the study says. "That was a mistake we cannot afford to repeat," it cautions.

"...We, therefore, recommend a fundamental change in the relationship between schools and the community, where both are seen as having a shared responsibility in the education of all children."

To do its part, the community should take over responsibility for providing the schools' support services, freeing teachers to concentrate on what they do best — teach.

The schools must also change.



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"Even today, too many of our schools still are being used as sorting machines — sorting children into those who are college bound, those who will use basic skills and those who will be left behind," the report said.

In order to do better, the report argues, diversity must be part of the equation long before students enter the first

grade.

"If we expect all of our children to go on to college and have diverse learning experiences and then go on to work with people from diverse ethnic, racial, social and economic backgrounds, surely it makes sense to prepare our children for these new experiences as early as possible," the study says.

"We are losing ground and jobs to other countries — for example, China and India," the report states. "Our nation's ability to sustain our long-term economic success increasingly depends on the very children we are not educating now."

Put another way: Each year, 1.2 million children do not graduate from high school. Of those, 348,427 are African-American and 296,555 are Latino.

At the college level, almost a quarter of first-year students do not stay around for their second year.

Figures show that only 31 percent of

Latinos and 48 percent of African-Americans complete some college, compared to 62 percent of Whites and 80 percent of Asian-Americans.

"According to the National Center on Education and the Economy, by the year 2020, the U.S. will need 14 million more college-trained workers than it will produce," the report states. "Nowhere is college participation lower than among African-American and Hispanic youth; nowhere is the potential to meet our nation's need for college graduates greater."

Among the report's recommendations:

- Push state legislatures to provide essential and quality educational opportunities, regardless of where the child attends public school.

- Make sure all students have access to a high-quality education and the opportunity for diverse learning experiences.

- Provide additional opportunities, including after-school programs, for students to improve academic skills.

- Create greater regional equity.

- Support and stabilize integrated residential communities.

Whether we accomplish those goals will have impact on our national security, our ability to compete globally and field an able military, the report says. That alone should be incentive to take on these tough issues.

George E. Curry is editor-in-chief of the NNPA News Service.

## Few have enough courage to tell truth to Americans

By Ron Walters  
Special to Sentinel-Voice

My frustration with the Democratic Party grows day by day, as the leadership squanders its responsibility to its constituency and to the American people. So, who had to step up? Rep. Jack Murtha, a Democratic member of Congress from Pennsylvania, and a decorated ex-Marine, called for a pullout of American troops not only because of his view that no plan exists for how to pursue victory, but because the American people are way out ahead of their leadership.

In late August, a Gallup poll asked about troop withdrawal, and a majority felt that "the U.S. should withdraw some troops (27 percent), or all of them (26 percent) from Iraq.

### LaGrande

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amount compared to what has been spent in other neighborhoods); even this, however, she wrote with a negative spin.

She implied that there was some possible wrongdoing with a project in the West Las Vegas community. She even mentioned Frank Hawkins, an African-American developer, in the article. What is bizarre, is that she linked Chambliss to a Black politician, Morse Arberry, then linked him to Hawkins, and ended up casting aspersions on a successful housing project. This appeared in the section subhead "Accounting and Accountability." Why were these men and the project mentioned? From 1999?

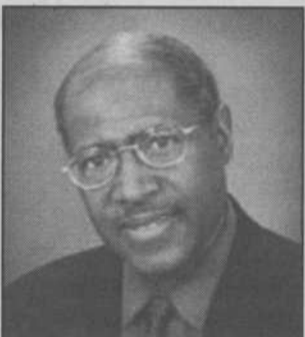
Neff wrote, "During the 1999 session, lawmakers approved \$2.8 million for a community housing project at Martin Luther King and Lake Mead boulevards." At that time, Whispering Timbers was the first new housing project built in West Las Vegas in 30 years, so how can that be negative?

On the site where there were 300 blighted

In the most recent polls, a majority now believes that going into Iraq was a mistake and that the troops should come home.

But the position of Democratic Party leaders sounds like it's coming out of the White House. Hillary Clinton believes that it would be a mistake to pull out American troops because Iraq could dissolve into a civil war, creating a situation "where terrorists are free to basically set up camp and launch attacks against us."

Let me get this straight: Terrorists need Iraq to launch attacks against the U.S.; they



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didn't need Iraq to bring down the Twin Towers in New York City. So, why would they need Iraq now? I guess Clinton's argument is that it would be easier for them to do so. Yes, but we are also making it easier by staying there, killing innocent civilians, as well as combatants; rousting families out of bed in the middle of the night, taking away their men

and torturing them for information in a scenario geared for them to love us for a long, long time.

A 10-year-old could figure how why they hate us and will continue to do so, but a town

full of Harvard, Princeton and Yale PhDs. in Washington, D.C. are stumped.

Black folks love Bill Clinton, and he has been critical of the war, saying to an audience sponsored by the Ladies Home Journal, that it can't succeed. But more recently, he said in upstate New York that Bush's strategy could. Which is it? His former aide, Dick Morris thinks it's a case of "good cop, bad cop" they are playing.

I'm more worried about Hillary, because if she runs in 2008, Black people will be out there laying down the red carpet. But that doesn't make sense because Black support for George Bush is the lowest of any president in modern history; and much of that is

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public housing units in the area formerly called Gerson Park, now stand 208 affordable single family homes for low- to moderate-income residents, a 48-unit multi-family housing development and a 100-unit, affordable senior family development.

The project by Community Development Programs Center of Nevada, was developed in conjunction with the City of Las Vegas and the City of Las Vegas Housing Authority. Frank Hawkins is the Executive Director of the organization, and Neff has filled her article with falsehood and negative implications about Chambliss, Hawkins and CDPCN.

First of all, I have been working for CDPCN for over seven years and we have never been under legislative scrutiny for this project, nor have we been "plagued" with any "accounting issues" at all. Where she gets this stuff from is absolutely amazing; she obviously made it up.

Neff continued in the story, "Hawkins built the Whispering Timbers project, which apparently provided enough proof that the

money went to build the homes."

So, there was no problem. Right, Erin?

Right. No problem there. In fact, the monies were funneled through the city, and there were all sorts of reporting requirements that we had to meet and that were met. No one just wrote a check for \$2.8 million dollars and said, "Here, go have your way."

What is Neff implying by her off-track comments?

She throws a low, telling, blow: "But Assemblywoman Chris Giunchigliani, D-Las Vegas, who is vice chairwoman of Ways and Means, has asked legislative fiscal staff to revisit the 1999 Whispering [Timbers] grant despite the lack of required reporting at the time." Neff chose to add this politician — who happens to be a White woman — but what has any of this to do with Chambliss, the stabbing incident, or any current news?

Once again, the *Review Journal* says and does whatever it wants to about African-Americans — half-truth, insinuations and lies — and gets away with it. They don't even

care whether they get their information correct, just so long as they sell papers.

What amazes me is that the Black community continues to purchase the *Review Journal*, instead of supporting, at an acceptable level, this *Sentinel Voice*, the only Black newspaper. I'm sure the R-J feels that the amount of Black people that purchase subscriptions from them is not enough to warrant ever giving us fair coverage, so boycotting their paper may not be the answer.

Maybe the answer is getting their advertisers to not support them. If we approached these people — those businesses who say that they support diversity, equality and fairness, who advertise in the R-J's newspapers — and propose to them that they not support a paper that continuously denigrates and misrepresents people of color, maybe we might be able to convince them that advertising in a racist paper is not the right thing to do. You think the *Review-Journal* would change their way of portraying Black people then?