



January 9, 2017

For Immediate Release

**STATEMENT FROM BOARD PRESIDENT STACY KORBELAK
REGARDING TOLERANCE AND DIVERSITY**

Board of Education President Stacy KorbelaK today released the following statement on behalf of the Board in the wake of Friday’s incident in which a racist petition was circulated at Arundel High School:

“When students enter our school buildings, they should be walking into a space where they feel supported, encouraged, and respected by their teachers, classmates, and staff. There is absolutely no room in that space for the racist language contained on the petition distributed Friday at Arundel High School. No matter the reasons behind its inception or distribution, this petition brings to the forefront once again that, sadly, intolerance exists at all levels of our society.

“This is an issue far bigger than any single school. We are all bombarded with misguided messages on a daily basis that attempt to divide our society and create intolerance. We must redouble our efforts as a community to remind each other, and especially our children, that (in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.): ‘...Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.’

“We at AACPS are fortunate to have strong partners who are there to support us in our efforts to drive out hate. We are most appreciative of the assistance that County Executive Steve Schuh, Police Chief Timothy Altomare, and State’s Attorney Wes Adams provided on Friday. We are also appreciative of the conversations that have taken place between our school system and leaders of the African-American community in the wake of this incident. We look forward to having similar ongoing conversations with governmental, civic, and faith-based agencies and organizations so we can collectively chart a course of tolerance and appreciation for diversity that continues to Elevate All Students and Eliminate All Gaps.”