



9 May 2024

Dear Members of the Arlington Public School Board:

The NAACP Arlington Branch is writing to urge you to include a prevailing wage requirement in the bid for the Arlington Career Center Project.

The NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. We have a long history of advocating for economic and social justice for Black people and all people of color, including ensuring fair compensation for workers. **We firmly believe that the implementation of prevailing wage requirements for the construction of the Arlington Career Center is crucial in achieving equity.**

Prevailing wage requirements align with the NAACP's mission to eliminate racial discrimination and secure equal rights for all people. By mandating prevailing wages, Arlington Public Schools not only upholds ethical labor standards, but will also contribute to the economic stability and well-being of workers and families who we know will be disproportionately Black and Brown. Prevailing wage ensures workers are fairly compensated for their labor, thereby reducing income inequality, and promoting financial security within our community. Prevailing wage protections represent a necessary step towards living our community values of equity and dignity for workers, and a step that supports legislation already established in Arlington to include a prevailing wage requirement in all County government projects.

We are also extremely concerned with the potential selection of Whiting-Turner for the Career Center project. The company's recent [significant EEOC settlement for racial harassment](#) and retaliation casts much doubt on their ability to create a safe and equitable work environment. We call on you to re-open the bidding process to consider all companies willing to participate in prevailing wage requirements. The pre-qualified company has a long history both here locally and across the nation of unsafe working conditions.

We urge the Arlington Public School Board to stand on the side of justice and equity by implementing a prevailing wage requirement for the construction of the Arlington Career Center. In revising the bid, we also urge the school board to not make any reductions to the number of student seats planned for this project, as this will only further disproportionately harm Black and Brown students.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical protection. We eagerly anticipate a favorable outcome. The amount of time it takes to re-bid is a small price to pay for a project that will stand for the next 75-100 years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Hemminger".

Michael Hemminger
President, NAACP Arlington Branch