

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE
ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE,
SPRING VALLEY BRANCH; JULIO
CLERVEAUX; CHEVON DOS REIS; ERIC
GOODWIN; JOSE VITELIO GREGORIO;
DOROTHY MILLER; HILLARY MOREAU;
and WASHINGTON SANCHEZ,

Plaintiffs,

v.

EAST RAMAPO CENTRAL SCHOOL
DISTRICT and MARYELLEN ELIA, IN HER
CAPACITY AS THE COMMISSIONER OF
EDUCATION OF THE STATE OF NEW
YORK,

Defendants.

17 Civ. 8943 (CS) (JCM)

DECLARATION OF DOROTHY MILLER

DOROTHY MILLER, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, declares under penalty of perjury as follows:

Background

1. I am a United States citizen. I am 69 years old. I am a black woman.
2. My address is 5 Tioken Road, Hillcrest, New York 10977. I reside within the East Ramapo Central School District (“East Ramapo” or “District”).
3. I have resided in the District for the past 45 years.
4. I am currently retired. Prior to my retirement, I worked as a manager at IBM.

5. I have two adult daughters who attended public school in the District. My daughters attended South Madison Elementary School, which no longer exists, Kakiat Junior High School, and Spring Valley High School.

6. As a woman in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) field, I have always been passionate about education and have volunteered to speak at many public schools in the District.

7. I am a registered voter in the District.

Voting and Lack of Representation on the Board

8. For at least the last 15 years, I have voted in each of the elections for members of the District's Board of Education (the "Board").

9. Since Steve Price, Mimi Calhoun, and Suzanne Young-Mercer were elected in 2007, no candidate who I voted for has won a contested election for the Board. I voted for Suzanne Young-Mercer and Steve Price in 2010, JoAnn Thompson in 2011, and Sabrina Charles-Pierre in 2016, each of whom were elected but in uncontested elections. For example, in 2011, I voted for Tony Luciano and Carole Anderson, who both lost, and in 2012, I voted for Kim Foskew, Hiram Rivera, and JoAnne Thompson, who also lost. During the most recent election, held in May of 2017, I voted for Alexandra Manigo, Chevon Dos Reis, and Eric Goodwin, who all lost.

10. I am aware of and have attended candidate forums hosted in my community by the Spring Valley Branch of the NAACP, the Jamaican Civic and Cultural Association of Rockland ("JAMCCAR"), Power of Ten, CUPON Rockland, and Strong East Ramapo. With the exception of Bernard Charles, who briefly attended a 2015 student sponsored protest/campaign event at Memorial Park, and Ms. Charles-Pierre, I am not aware of any current member of the Board participating in any of these candidate forums or any other candidate forum in my community.

11. My candidates of choice in the May 2017 election, Eric Goodwin, Chevon Dos Reis, and Alexandra Manigo, published a campaign web page. Other than Ms. Charles-Pierre, I am not aware of any campaign web page published by any of the current Board members.

12. I have made an effort to participate in the political process in East Ramapo. For the past ten years, I have campaigned, attended candidate forums, and served as a poll watcher during the District's elections.

13. Of the three black members on the Board, I only voted for Ms. Charles-Pierre. I did not vote for Mr. Charles or Pierre Germain. I do not know of any black or Latino voters who voted for Mr. Charles or Mr. Germain. Other than Mr. Charles' brief appearance at one candidate forum, I am not aware of Mr. Charles or Mr. Germain campaigning in minority neighborhoods or making any significant effort to appeal to black and Latino voters.

Lack of responsiveness of the Board

14. Before 2013, I regularly attended Board meetings, however, I stopped attending in 2013, except occasionally, when the Board began to make the public wait for long periods of time while it met in executive session. When the Board would eventually meet in open session, it would not genuinely consider the public school community's concerns about the quality of the public schools. For example, at Board meetings, when parents and students spoke, some Board members were rude or fell asleep, and they would frequently get up and walk out. Moreover, the Board did not address any of the concerns raised by the parents at these meetings, in particular parents from the black and Latino communities. I rarely saw members of the white community at these Board meetings.

15. Because of the Board's hostility or non-responsiveness to the concerns of my community at Board meetings, I have been discouraged from making the effort to call, write, visit

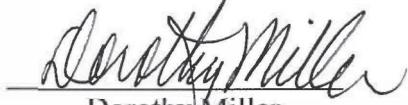
with, or otherwise contact Board members individually because I believe such contacts will be futile. Instead, in order to express my concerns about the decline in the quality of public school education, I have spoken to my New York State legislators. I attended lobby days in Albany on two occasions and have made phone calls to legislators on many other occasions. For example, I went to or called the offices of Ellen Jaffee, Ken Zebrowski, David Carlucci, and John Flanagan and asked them to bring some form of accountability over the Board's decisions.

16. Since New York State sent monitors to oversee the Board's activities, the Board members have not been as openly hostile to the public school community, and the Board has provided more detailed explanations about the decisions that they make. I am concerned, however, the Board will revert to a more hostile approach to public education once the state monitors are no longer involved in the District.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Dated: Hillcrest, New York

Nov. 6, 2017.


Dorothy Miller