

NAACP NEWS

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Derrick Johnson
State President



Mississippi State Conference

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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May 12, 2016 - The Mississippi State Conference NAACP is deeply concerned with the current plight of Calhoun County District School senior Tyra Tucker. The Calhoun County School Board informed Tyra, who holds the number two GPA in her class, that she would share the title of co-salutatorian with Taylor Collums, a junior who would be graduating early. Then only two weeks later, Tyra was informed that she would not be a co-salutatorian, and, in fact, would be no salutatorian at all.

The timing and circumstances of the Board's abrupt change of position raises concerns and questions that this decision was not based on student merit, but on racial motivations. "This new decision is especially disturbing in the light of new information that indicates that Tyra's GPA was miscalculated because two of her grades were not included in her final GPA" says Derrick Johnson, President of the Mississippi State Conference NAACP. "When the missing classes are added to the calculation, Tyra's GPA increases. This is significant because the miscalculation resulted in Taylor's GPA being only hundredths of a point higher than Tyra's."

The NAACP wants only to ensure that the process of graduation honors and class ranking has only been determined by merit and not ulterior motivations, that the awards and titles have been given for achievement and on the correct calculation of GPAs. Johnson continued stating that, "the naming of a graduating class's valedictorian and salutatorian should always be fair and balanced. That is what we want to see here and that is what Tyra Tucker deserves."

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Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, conducting voter mobilization and monitoring equal opportunity in the public and private sectors. For more information about the Mississippi NAACP or news stories, call 601-353-8452 or log on to www.naacpms.org. Like us on Facebook by searching Mississippi NAACP and follow us on Twitter @MSNAACP.