

Please see this written testimony and explicit permission for any party to read verbatim on my behalf.

Caralee Kennedy

I've Worked for years with the naacp on issues of harassment with my son and was offered the opportunity to speak at this hearing because of my experience.

We need to stop putting burdens on kids to prove that they are being harassed in order to be protected. Our experience in 2 of 3 Vermont schools has been awful in this regard.

I had to transfer my Black child out of two schools because it wasn't safe for him . Then start with your bullet points

-At a Vermont school in 2018 a teacher struck my 6 year old for being the single black child in the room there should have been an investigation. I reported it to the police but the school and police decided not to investigate so I changed school. when I told the school we needed clearance to transfer schools I was threatened with knocks at my "new" door to prove that I changed residence. I always think about families that don't have the financial resources to move like we did.

-after transferring schools and renting another apartment to do so I reported multiple instances of racial violence against my child at the new school and we were met with only disciplinary actions against my son.

when disciplining him was no longer something I was willing to do we were told a 529 plan, while it will stain his academic record is the only way they'll protect him by separate him from the classroom rather than protecting him or separating the aggressors. Additionally he has zero disability but was told that the school could get a diagnosis. Mind you this was a principal and not a doctor making this claim. And while my son has spent years in counseling with therapists no diagnosis has ever been established or recommended and this was purely on the basis of removing him from the classroom rather than creating a safety plan as I had requested.

-I involved the naacp to create the legal safety plan I had pushed for and it was disregarded in the following school year and verbiage changed without consent without notice regardless of countless phone calls prior to the new year to make sure this plan was still in place.

-I brought in outside trainers for equity they should not be ghosted after myself, the naacp and this individual shed light on these issues and were promised additional staff training.

-he's was again beaten after the safety plan is disposed of with out consent after weeks of calling prior to the new school year And we were left searching for my suicidal 9 year old as he fled the school in fea

-when after multiple reports of this racial abuse I called the police who again didn't investigate regardless of stabbing threats and left it a school issue.

-we again hastily relocated and bought a second home while on the brink of recession to protect my child by trying a 3rd school within the same supervisory union where he now attends.

my child should have safety in schools but he hasn't and there has been no reporting mechanism to ensure he does. This law will prevent trauma from happening to other children because it will allow for immediate investigation . We cannot wait and see kids are being harmed now with no recourse