



## **CAPITAL ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION**

**"LEADING THE NATION'S CAPITAL TO BE THE NATION'S BEST IN ATHLETICS"**

**Presentation to the DC State Board of Education  
At the Public Meeting on  
Graduation Requirements for Secondary Students  
Submitted By  
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Executive Vice President  
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Thank you, Members of the DC State Board of Education for giving Capital Athletics Association this opportunity to present for the record the advantages of implementing First Aid/CPR training certification plus ACT or SAT testing as a mandatory graduation requirement. My name is Joy Taylor, Executive Vice President for Capital Athletics Association.

Founded on December 4, 2008, Capital Athletics is a non-profit 501c (4) social welfare organization, incorporated in the District of Columbia. Its mission is to provide career development resources and mentorship to high school scholar-athletes to increase the number of graduates who are admitted to institutions of higher education; thus, access to living-wage employment opportunities.

Using research and data-analysis, it is the purpose of this presentation is to advocate for two (2) specific mandatory graduation requirements which will allow the Nation's Capital to effectively improve its education, evaluation and training of our students to prepare all for higher education and employment opportunities.

### **First Aid/CPR Training as a Graduation Requirement for Secondary Students**

At the March public hearing on Health and Wellness programs, Dr. Daniel Fagbuyi gave a presentation on the importance of First Aid/CPR training certification for secondary students. We also submitted to you all a notebook with the Science Advisory report from the American Heart Association about their recommendation that all secondary students should be required to be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, as heart attacks are the leading cause of death in the United States. Dr. Fagbuyi also spoke on how such training has many educational values plus gives students insight to the health industry as a career option. More importantly, it will help better prepare our communities in case of disaster, natural or any other. While I hate to think about it, the District of Columbia will always be one of the top targets for terrorists and we must prepare our children for this fact. I would like to also add that since many of our children live with grandparents or other elderly relatives that such training will give their families peace of mind. Lastly, it is my hope that if we teach our children how to save a life, some will think twice before taking a life.

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### **ACT or SAT Testing as a Graduation Requirement for Secondary Students**

As today's meeting is also focused on the Race to the Top Award, I would like to talk about how other awardees have used their funding to mandate ACT or SAT testing. While I acknowledge that all students will not choose to attend college, I believe that the true purpose of education is to give the student freedom to choice. Without taking either the ACT or the SAT, the educational thus career

choices available to the students are dramatically reduced – some say by 75 percent. Right now, our students are mandated to take three (3) tests that if they do well - everyone from the janitor to the principal will receive monetary awards and public accolades. Therefore, it is my request that we add one more mandatory test that will directly benefit the students with college admissions and scholarships. Memphis City Schools District, which has a total of 105,000 students and 30 high schools has used their Race to the Top funds to mandate the ACT test to over 30,000 secondary students. The State of Delaware is looking to also mandate the tests. Low tests scores has been the main reason that many of our scholars have not been able to secure scholarships. *(Tell the story of Destiny)*

### **Conclusion**

My immediate goal is to secure to establish a taskforce of the numerous stakeholders for First Aid/CPR training certification and yet another for the ACT or SAT testing to determine the best strategy for implementation. Each taskforce must be assigned staff from various District of Columbia government agencies including but not limited to the District of Columbia Public Schools and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education. In addition, both of the taskforces must include students, parents, teachers, education specialists and community leaders. It is imperative that either the State Board of Education or OSSE take the lead on these initiatives to determine the stakeholders and host the meetings, otherwise it will be fruitless.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to present to the DC State Board of Education. I look forward to answering any questions that you may have about First Aid/CPR training certification plus ACT or SAT testing as mandatory graduation requirements or about the Capital Athletics Association.