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**Statement on Supreme Court Justice Scalia's Inaccurate and Offensive Remarks
By
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WASHINGTON -- The Council of the Great City Schools, the nation's primary coalition of large urban public school systems, strongly resents U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia's inaccurate and offensive remarks that he delivered in the courtroom on December 9 in arguments in the *Fisher v. University of Texas* affirmative action case.

His remarks suggesting that minority students could do better academically in a "slower-track school" as opposed to advanced schools are not based on fact, and were unprofessional, inaccurate and, frankly, hurtful to those working in education who have seen minority students excel when given the opportunity and challenge to succeed.

We are not clear how minority students could be better off at "a less advanced school, a slower-track school where they do well." First, the facts are clear that many of the greatest scientific minds of any race in the country are products of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) – the so-called "slower track schools." The scholars and educators in HBCUs are second to none academically.

In addition, his comment that, "Most black scientists in this country don't come from schools like the University of Texas. They come from lesser schools where they do not feel that they're pushed ahead in classes that are too fast for them" is due only to the fact that African American students historically could not attend predominantly white institutions. Today, predominantly white institutions produce more African American scientists than do HBCUs.

In truth, of the 26,134 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degrees awarded to Black or African American students in 2009, only 4,734 such degrees were awarded at HBCUs. Almost 81 percent of STEM degrees that year were awarded at so called "faster-track" schools. For these Black scientists, classes at predominantly White institutions were obviously not too fast for them.

Justice Scalia's remarks were unbecoming of a member of the nation's highest court, and send the unfortunate signal to our over 7 million urban students that the highest academic standards are not expected of them.

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