

September 30, 2020

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos,

We are in the midst of a national reckoning about the role systemic racism and racial violence and injustice has played in the history of our country and the continuing need to assess, address, and right the wrongs that continue to exist today.

It is to the credit of a great nation and thoughtful individuals that all parts of our society, from the business community and religious institutions to professional athletes and sports leagues to civic and elected officials, are engaged in this collective effort to take stock and chart a productive, inclusive, and equitable path forward. Like the rest of our society, colleges and universities across the United States are engaged in this most important of efforts, with leaders from all types of institutions, public and private, faith-based and secular, tackling in forthright fashion what can be done today to ensure their campuses are exemplars of equity and inclusivity.

It is vital for the federal government to support and assist this pursuit of diversity, equity, and inclusion. One way to do this is by affirming institutional and individual confidence that speaking both within organizations and publicly about these hard, important issues will be enabled and applauded, not attacked by the government.

Like colleges and universities all over our country, Princeton University is strongly committed to ending racial injustice and preventing discrimination in any form and to do so in a way that will benefit all members of the Princeton community. Regrettably, instead of encouraging Princeton's efforts, the Department of Education launched an unprecedented and unwarranted investigation into the institution. Such an action is likely to chill the genuine efforts of hundreds of other institutions, many without the resources that Princeton has to defend itself against a federal investigation, to identify, recognize, and correct injustices.

We urge the department to end this misguided effort and not use the power of the federal government to investigate schools that are trying to build a better, more inclusive America.

Sincerely,



Ted Mitchell
President

On behalf of:

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Achieving the Dream

ACPA-College Student Educators International
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of University Professors
American Council on Education
American Dental Education Association
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
APPA, "Leadership in Educational Facilities"
Association of Accredited Naturopathic Medical Colleges
Association of American Colleges and Universities
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Universities
Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Association of Schools Advancing Health Professions
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities
College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
Common App
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Council on Governmental Relations
Council on Social Work Education
EDUCAUSE
Higher Learning Commission
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Association of System Heads
New England Commission of Higher Education
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
Phi Beta Kappa Society

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
UPCEA
WASC Senior College & University Commission