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MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND ARTS EDUCATION IN MARYLAND SCHOOLS HOSTS “NIKKI GIOVANNI SPEAKS”

*Educators throughout Maryland Invited to Register for Free, Keynote Delivered by
Renowned Poet Nikki Giovanni;
Presentation Focuses on Social Justice, Equity and Antiracism*

BALTIMORE, MD (June 1, 2021) - The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and Arts Education in Maryland Schools (AEMS) are pleased to announce that Nikki Giovanni will engage with educators across the state on June 6, 2021 from 1 to 2 p.m. as part of a keynote presentation on equity titled *Nikki Giovanni Speaks*. The virtual event is free and open to the Maryland education community. Space is limited and registration is required to receive a link for this event. Attendees can register at <https://bit.ly/3yywTt6>.

MSDE Division of Curriculum, Instructional Improvement, and Professional Learning offers diverse professional learning opportunities to educators every summer. Giovanni's presentation is the pinnacle of ongoing professional development focused on educational equity and antiracism in the Department's summer professional development program.

Giovanni, one of America's foremost poets, will talk about the role of art and education in social justice and share reflections of the Black Arts Movement. Publishing more than 30 books, she is internationally known for her work as a poet, author, essayist, activist, and educator. The Tennessee native has also been named Woman of the Year by *Mademoiselle Magazine*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *Ebony Magazine*, received more than 25 honorary degrees and Governor's Awards from both Tennessee and Virginia. Furthermore, Giovanni is a University Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech and a recipient of Virginia Tech's highest honor, the Alumni Outreach award.

In support of its mission of equity and excellence, the State Board approved COMAR 13A.01.06, Educational Equity in 2019. This heralded an intense focus on taking deliberate action to ensure that all Maryland students have equitable access to the “educational rigor, resources, and supports that are designed to maximize the student's academic success and social/emotional wellbeing.”

This opportunity is made available to all Maryland educators through the collaboration between AEMS and the MSDE Offices of Fine Arts, Professional Learning, Equity, and English/Language Arts.

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