

From: Brown, Nelda N <nnbrown@fcps.edu>
 Sent: Tuesday, August 24, 2021 10:05 PM EDT
 To: Keys-Gamarra, Karen A (School Board Member) <akekeysgamarr@fcps.edu>
 Subject: FOR YOUR REVIEW: Constituent Response - CRT/Anti-Bias Curriculum Concerns

Hi Karen – You have several Client messages and emails sent directly to you from families who are concerned about Critical Race Theory, FCPS's focus on anti-bias curriculum and related issue. Below is a draft response. Please review and revise. I opted with including a Q&A to supplement because honestly the concerns mentioned vary in range and focus.

Critical Race/Anti-Bias Curriculum Concerns

Case Number	Constituent	
CASE-0000569474	Brown, Rashida	[REDACTED] personal contact information
CASE-0000561302	McFadden, Rich	
CASE-0000560148	Kay, Laura (wants help with Gold Award)	
CASE-0000559879	Cryz, Bill (concerned about the survey)	
CASE-0000550033		
CASE-0000550928		
CASE-0000551106		
CASE-0000551604		
CASE-0000559879		
Will also use to respond to email correspondence received		

Thank you for contacting my office regarding this issue. I appreciate you taking the time to contact my office regarding this issue. I have received your correspondence and wanted to share my thoughts with you.

Fairfax County Public Schools does not teach Critical Race Theory. Our social studies curriculum is designed to help students understand the ramifications of events from the past and to prepare for the future as part of a global society. Across all grade levels, our students are taught historically accurate lessons. FCPS students are given opportunities to study history, geography, civics, and economics. Our students learn basic concepts of chronological time, physical and human geography, citizenship education, and economic choices. Older students study Virginia Studies, World History, and United States History and are taught to use skills for historical and geographical analysis as well as identifying the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens; and describe the structure and operation of government at the local, state, and national levels.

At times, this includes teaching age-appropriate lessons on tough, uncomfortable subjects such as slavery and legal segregation propagated by Jim Crow policy, as well as times when people experienced discrimination and violence due to their race, ethnicity, or gender. This summer, our nation recognized Juneteenth and marked the 100th anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre. These events and many others are rarely mentioned in our history books because we didn't talk about it. We know this today because only recently have we as a nation begun to talk about the horrors of post reconstruction and other sad, tragic times in our nation's history. For the sake of future generations, we need and we must get comfortable teaching and learning from tough moments in our collective past and how those actions have had impact throughout our history and even today.

I come from a family not unlike many others. My father served in the military and my son, a West Point graduate is currently serving. I say this because my belief that we should *introduce/tackle/teach* these tough issues in our classrooms does not arise from a disdain for this nation, but rather, a profound belief that we can rise higher still to the ideas of democracy that have not been realized. I also come from a family that is founded on faith and I grew up hearing the familiar statement that the truth will set you free. Today, I believe we need some truth in our conversations about education—a truth that represents the beautiful cultural diversity of Fairfax County. I pray that we as a community come together grappling with our truth for the betterment of every student in FCPS and in our nation.

To that end, I wanted to share with the most Frequently Asked Questions/Comments I have received on this topic. While we may not agree, I do appreciate hearing your viewpoint. If you have additional thoughts or comments, please share them with me via my [School Board Portal Page](#). My staff and I read all correspondence received and make every effort to respond to each as time allows.

Best,
 Karen

Q1. Will children be taught to hate or that it is okay to highlight differences between people based on their race?

Hate is not tolerated in FCPS schools. Our efforts are designed to ensure students are taught history lessons that are historically accurate and that reflect the truth of diverse cultures and experiences of people represented in our FCPS community. I believe that increased understanding of others and their American experience leads to greater unity based on an appreciation for our cultural experiences.

Q2. Will anti-biased/anti-racist curriculum divide students by innate characteristics, such as race, gender, or religion?

No. We are simply taking steps to address the deficiencies and discrepancies of our current curriculum. It is not our intention to divide students by race, ethnicity, religion or gender. On the contrary, our goal is to ensure that all students and staff are seen, heard,