

VERSION ONE

My name is ... As a [parent, grandparent, concerned community member] in [this district], I **stand against racism and intolerance in all of its forms**. I believe that all students in our district have the right to learn and thrive and fulfill their own potential as they seek academic excellence, achievement, and success. **Racism and bigotry have no place here, and we are grateful that the district is making a serious effort to address these important issues.**

But although it's well-intentioned, the district is now promoting an intolerant ideology that is harming our students. This ideology instructs our children to view themselves and others not as unique individuals, but instead as either "oppressors" or "oppressed" based on their various immutable characteristics. Our schools are now teaching our kids that the most important thing about them is their skin color (or gender or some other "group identity"), not the qualities that make them individual human beings, each with their own unique personality, interests, talents, hopes, and dreams.

Sadly, children in our schools are now demonized due to their immutable traits. This is simply wrong. All of our children deserve to be seen and treated as individuals worthy of dignity and respect. Children need to be taught love and understanding, tolerance and fairness, and, as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. eloquently said, to judge each other not based on the color of their skin, but on the content of their character.

[In our school, I have seen.... --- insert personal stories here]

Racism is real. Prejudice is real. We agree that it is important for our schools to oppose all forms of racism and prejudice. But we urge you to reject this divisive and racist ideology that is damaging to our children's academic, psychological, and emotional development.

Instead, our district should oppose prejudice by emphasizing empathy and our common humanity, as we strive to create a truly inclusive and nurturing learning environment for all. By focusing on what we have in common, we can transcend differences and create bonds of trust and understanding as we continue to grapple with difficult issues in our community.

VERSION TWO

My name is ... As a [parent, grandparent, concerned citizen] in [this district], **I am deeply concerned that the district is promoting a divisive ideology that is stunting our children's growth and creating a harmful learning environment for all of our children.** This ideology asks our children to view themselves and others solely as members of an oppressed or oppressor group rather than as individuals. The district is now teaching our children that the most important thing about them is their skin color (or gender or some other "group identity") rather than what makes them human, with their own unique personalities, interests, talents, hopes, and dreams.

All of our children have the right to be seen as individuals as they develop and fulfill their potential to become the best versions of themselves. **We want all of our children to develop independent and critical thinking skills, their own sense of personal agency and responsibility, kindness and moral character. But when we teach kids to view the world only through the lens of group identity and power, we are stunting their growth. We need to instead provide a positive and inclusive environment for all of our children to thrive.**

[In our school, I have seen.... --- insert personal stories here]

Any ideology that demonizes students due to the color of their skin is simply racism with a different name. Racism has no place in our schools. It is our job as adults to reject racism and promote a better way for our kids. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., taught, our goal should be to transcend our differences and to judge each other not by the color of our skin, but by the content of our character. I urge the school to recognize this divisive ideology for what it truly is -- a giant step backward for our children and our community -- and to embrace instead a constructive approach that is based on understanding, fairness, and shared humanity within our community.

VERSION THREE

My name is ... As a [parent, grandparent, concerned citizen] in [this district], I don't usually speak at these meetings.

But our educational system is facing a crisis that demands courage on the part of ordinary people, so I feel I must speak up. I can no longer sit by and watch as our district promotes an intolerant and regressive ideology that is damaging our children and our community.

The district now teaches our children that the most important thing about them is their skin color (or gender or some other "group identity") rather than what makes them human, with their own unique personalities, interests, talents, hopes, and dreams. This ideology is divisive, pitting students against each other, students against teachers, and even teachers against teachers.

[In our school, I have seen.... --- insert personal stories here]

Racism is real, and it has no place in our community. But our district's attempt to address racism with this regressive ideology forces us to view each other primarily based on the color of our skin and other immutable traits. Our nation was built upon the liberal values of equality, freedom of speech and conscience, and individual human rights for Americans of all backgrounds.. Although we have not always lived up to these values, they remain the most effective framework for defeating all types of oppression, including racism.

Children should not be made to feel guilty for wrongs they did not commit. We must teach them about the darker parts of our nation's history, while also teaching them about the immense progress we have made. We should present a fair and balanced accounting of history, while also providing our children with a sense of hope and optimism that America's liberal ideals can help us solve our difficult contemporary issues. The regressive ideology the school embraces will move us backward toward more division and racism, instead of forward toward greater understanding, fairness, and compassion within our community.

VERSION FOUR

My name is ... As a [parent, grandparent, concerned citizen] in [this district], I don't usually speak at these meetings.

But our educational system is facing a crisis that demands courage on the part of ordinary people, so I feel I must speak up. I can no longer sit by and watch as our district promotes an intolerant and divisive ideology that is damaging our children and our community

The district has adopted an ideology that makes "equity" its primary goal, which sounds admirable on the surface. We all want people to be treated equally and fairly.

But by "equity," this new intolerant ideology means something completely different than what most of us understand it to mean. Instead of referring to equality of opportunity, this new definition of the term equity is used to mean equality of outcomes. And in order to achieve an equality of outcomes across racial groups, we should do everything possible, including engage in racial discrimination. By embracing "equity" instead of equal opportunity and equal treatment, our district is in fact inviting and promoting racial discrimination in our community.

[In our school, I have seen.... --- insert personal stories here]

Discrimination based on skin color is always wrong. It overlooks the dignity and inherent value of every individual human being –a concept that is foundational to our liberal society– and it has no place in our school or in our community. I urge the school to promote Dr. King's positive message of judging people not on the color of their skin, but on the content of their character. It is up to us to help students of every identity and background achieve their fullest academic and human potential. That means rejecting this intolerant orthodoxy, and embracing instead a compassionate program of fairness, understanding, and shared humanity.

VERSION FIVE: FAIR representative

Please check with your chapter leader or chapter specialist before speaking on behalf of FAIR.

My name is ... and I am a member of the [name] chapter of FAIR, the Foundation Against Intolerance. FAIR is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization with approximately 40,000 members and 100 chapters nationwide and in Canada. FAIR is dedicated to advancing civil rights and liberties for all Americans, and promoting a common culture based on fairness, understanding and humanity. I invite you to look at FAIR's website www.fairforall.org to learn more about our organization.

Racism is real. Prejudice is real. But I urge you to reject the divisive and race-essentialist [curriculum/programming/initiatives] that [our district] is currently [using or proposing]. By implementing this regressive curriculum, you will move us backward toward more division and racism, instead of forward toward greater understanding, fairness, and compassion within our community.

FAIR stands against all forms of racism and bigotry. We advocate for providing a fair and balanced accounting of history, that includes our country's flaws and failings, as well as its great progress over injustice. By teaching our children that the most important thing about our country's history is the skin color, gender, ethnicity, or group identity of the people involved, you are locking them into a limited view of themselves and others, and stunting their potential to gain a true and critical understanding of our history and how it has shaped our society. Instead, students should be exposed to a diversity of perspectives and sources so that they can learn to weigh competing ideas and develop the habits of critical thinking. This is how we teach them *how* to think, not *what* to think. We have an obligation to cultivate young minds that can think and see new possibilities as they work to solve our world's most difficult and complex problems.

Fortunately, FAIR has a solution to fighting racism and intolerance in all of its forms, while also teaching a fair and accurate view of history. FAIR has created FAIRStory, a [research-based curriculum](#) that focuses on our shared humanity, understanding, diversity and fairness, and empowers educators to create inclusive classrooms. The FAIRStory Curriculum exposes students to the histories, experiences, struggles, accomplishments, and contributions of Americans of diverse backgrounds. Ours is a fact-based approach to teaching students about racism; it's honest about the failures and shortcomings of our American past and present, while also recognizing how the struggles and accomplishments of Americans continue to move us closer to our founding ideals.

I believe that [our district's] students, families, educators, and administrators would find FAIR's curriculum to be a balanced and constructive way of implementing diversity, equity and inclusion policies. All will benefit when we promote shared humanity and empathy as we transcend differences and create welcoming learning environments that enable our students to fulfill their fullest potential.

I am hopeful that, with constructive and open dialogue, [our district] can create [curriculum/programming/initiatives] that [is/are] fair, balanced and constructive. All students, families, and educators, regardless of their skin color, ancestry, or other immutable traits, must feel a sense of belonging in [our district's] classrooms. By acknowledging our uniqueness as individuals, while also emphasizing our common humanity, we can inspire our children toward a more fair, tolerant, and optimistic future.