

of our home school district because kids like my son are targeted. He does not fit into any of the special groups. He is a white, male, that is not involved in any clubs or sports. Our school district promotes child sexuality and racial differences. In our 'home' school district, teachers tell white students that they are the problem. White students should apologize to students with brown skin. During "social justice" week whites are targeted as racist.

Every month there is some sort of transgender, LGBTQ+ celebration. When did it become appropriate for adults to ask minors about their sexual preferences? WHY IS THIS OK IN OUR SCHOOLS?

Studies have shown that most sexual abuse is done by someone a child trusts. Why are schools allowed to have clubs that promote the sexuality of minors?

Everyone is so worried about violating Title IX that they forget that it protects EVERYONE!

To Whom it May Concern,

I have a 15 year old son in 9<sup>th</sup> grade and a 5 year old daughter in Pre-K. A proper education is one of the most important values in our family. We have been happy with the education system, for the most part, throughout my son's elementary school years until 2020. Keeping kids home during the beginning of the "pandemic" was unnecessary. Our precious children were away from their friends, socialization, teamwork, and the teachers they loved. Their fragile lives were upended, creating chaos and uncertainty, when it is fact that children grow best under stable environments. Parents were forced to quit their jobs and rearrange the normal they knew to stay home with their kids and try to be an educational support in subjects they were not trained to teach. My son, in particular, suffered depression and a slip in his grades from A's & B's to C's, D's, and F's. These times were scary for both students and parents. It was the first time we didn't trust our public education system to do what was in the best interest of the children.

Upon returning to school several months later, children were required to wear face coverings. They inhibited their ability to breathe appropriately and share a smile with their peers. Their classrooms were filled with barriers to keep children and



March 18, 2023

Simply put, this is child endangerment and child abuse. As parents, we're supposed to ~~the~~ teach them what is right and what is wrong. YOU, are trying to tell us we can't do that anymore. YOU, are teaching them that it's okay to have premarital sex, with access to condoms and quite possibly birth control and abortion pill with access to Planned Parenthood. YOU, are promoting rape in bathrooms by permitting boys to go into girls bathrooms. YOU, are why girls/women's sports are becoming irrelevant.

Biblical values are being suppressed and the secular humanist "values" are not only promoted, but forced under penalty of ridicule and shame. At this rate, it will be as at Linn Mar, force of Law.

We need to remove this radical ideology from our schools and return to teaching the true founding of this nation and promoting the values this nation was founded on. Quit teaching that this nation is bad!! It's because of what this nation was founded on, that kept it the greatest nation in the world for over 200 years.

Sincerely,

Larry Ulrick

Cedar Rapids, Ia.

To Whom It May Concern:

There are many reasons that I have lost faith in the public school system.

My doubts started with the rising violence on campuses that is now to a terrible point where teachers and students are in physical and emotional danger daily. The lack of respect for authority has grown and morphed into lack of respect for other human beings.

Accompanying this trend has been the downward spiral of education standards. The literacy rate is embarrassing and falling. We need higher academic standards.

School boards and administrations have lost all respect for parental rights. The policies of keeping parents in the dark about things concerning their children <sup>are</sup> ~~which~~ <sup>are</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>are</sup> apphorrent.

The explosion of pornographic material in school libraries and curriculums is totally immoral and contributes to the other breakdowns.

All of this (and more) has led me to become a homeschooler and avoid public schools like the plague.

Kim Miller



To Whom this may concern

To say I'm thoroughly disgusted with the education system would be putting it VERY mildly. I'm concerned about my grandchildren's safety.

Right now I would like you to think back at your own childhood. At age 5 or 6 in kindergarten, did you have sex on your mind? NO! Did you wonder if you were a boy or girl? I think NOT! Whether you were in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade, did you wonder about these things? I doubt it. You MIGHT have thought about kissing your opposite sex, but you were nervous about it. Today however, we're not talking about a boy kissing a girl or a girl kissing a boy here.

So what is the problem with this picture? Did the education system EVER feel the NEED to "teach" anything other than read, writing, math, music, history, and having gym? Not in OUR day, so why is there a NEED now? PLEASE, don't give me the narrative that children are contemplating suicide, because they don't know who they are! That's NEVER been the case!

We're talking about you, the schoolboard, and teachers union pushing out the above curriculum to brainwash our children. You're not only teaching them how to have sex, but graphic sex, homosexuality and lesbianism. Oh, and let us not forget that you're teaching them that they're not what they really are, that they should consider self mutilation and take puberty blockers that would affect them the rest of their lives. Oh, and they're NOT to tell their parents.



Parents will not stop fighting for what's right. All children matter. All

Please help us! The next generation is being desensitized. Are you going to sit back and let this happen? How many kids will be violated because school staff is allowed to continue to do what they are doing?

This is happening everywhere. Parents are fighting alone. Some are afraid to speak up. Some are not.

We are over it. You need to support us.

Dana Tiegens

Marion, IA

Instead of teaching English, my son's teacher decided to teach why certain athletic team mascots are offensive.

The school board had a parent

removed by a police officer for

asking a question. Parents concerns

are ignored on a daily basis.

There was a threat of our violence

at the high school and no one

noticed ~~the~~ parents. We found out

about it on snap chat. There's at

the high school went unanswered.

Parents found out 4 hours later.

These are our children. Not

the schools. We know what is

best. There is zero trust. Parents

question everything!

Something has to change. Parents

rights are being violated. Students

rights are being violated. Teachers

are afraid to speak up. This

has to stop. Are you courageous

enough to help us. We have

been fighting for our kids for

several years! We need help.



igated? I got feedback, In fact, the adults to and our school rallies, celebratory rs, and posts There was so wear certain r walk outs, ns, wave flags etc. emous art that ked in bushes w/ Eve eating "LOVE IS NOT A SIN" drawing hanging w/ breasts blurred when it paper. The school by a student. the Spectrum ub facilitator, on the American ns flag, the LGBTQ flag. That week, complete chaos.

scared. When I did finally get an email response it was generic and insincere. I was feeling disappointed and hopeless but thought things had to get better. WRONG! That's when the new policies were proposed by our school board. These policies would allow kids to use bathrooms and locker rooms according to how they identify. They can room on school over nights according to how they identify. Students and staff face bullying and harassment if they don't call a student in their preferred pronoun. Students can dress out for P.E. and play sports according to <sup>how</sup> they identify. Children 7<sup>th</sup> grade and older can have gender support plans that do not involve parental involvement. At the 1<sup>st</sup> read, the policy passed. After parents and community members began to communicate thousands of people petitioned against it. Including many students ~~over~~ comments from the community went

The police came and students (most) left during the Spectrum club walk-out also advertised and encouraged by Kat Powers. I told my daughter to leave school after I get videos sent to me from a parent of the hallway at Linn Mar high school. It was complete chaos and I was so scared that something crazy was going to happen. It was at that moment that I knew I had no trust in the school to keep my daughter safe. It was a horrible day. I emailed, I called the local p.d. to find out what was going on. I saw video from later that day from inside our school auditorium. The principal invited the student protestors into the auditorium to "decompress" They had students come onstage to speak + two girls got up there + made out with a crowd cheering them on. My daughter missed classes that day. Her friend was crying +



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udent to drop

the class. I've seen videos  
of students cursing in class,  
physical fights including a  
male student repeatedly punching  
a female student, students  
incubating in class and  
there are no serious consequences.  
Our school board are active in  
our community support work  
ideology and racism. They  
usually throw the materials we  
provide them in the trash. We  
dont just feel like they dont  
care that we are saying we  
know they dont. Money is also  
a huge concern. The board  
approves thousands of \$ for  
"data swag" and SEL crap  
and to a waste of money. They  
not helping anyone. They  
daughter, who is a junior in h.s.  
cant wait to graduate & plan to  
take several college courses next year.  
she told me she is afraid of what  
public schools will be like when  
she has kids.

Chelsea D. Esten, Cedar Rapids, IA

To whom it may concern,  
The huge red flag at school  
was when a parent sent me  
pictures of posters hanging up  
around the school. One poster  
had 18 different names, flags  
and definitions for "Asexuals"  
definitions like not experiencing  
sexual attraction but enjoying  
sexual activity and not wishing  
to perform sexual acts but wishing  
to receive them. This was a  
home made drawn and colored  
poster that says it was made  
by the gay/straight alliance  
club, Spectrum. I emailed the  
principal about my concerns  
of exposing my child to this  
sexual content and my inability  
to opt-out. I also shared personal  
testimony of child sexual abuse  
and my concern for any child  
that is involved in a group  
facilitated by an adult and  
discussing sexual desires and  
fantasies. That is the definition  
of grooming. Why arent these



3

that never forced masks, made in school learning a priority and possibility very early on and ached for parental involvement and leadership. The educational and social outcomes far outshined the LMSD in every way. Thanks to the new school choice bill, this option for our son will be much more affordable.

Our teenage daughters also attended LMSD. Aside from all of the above stated issues during COVID, the atmosphere at LMSD

2

the school district he attended (Linn Mar SD) cherry picked data and, with no established guidelines, continued for months with odd scheduling, zoom classes and masks. In all of this, parental involvement was cancelled and replaced with a "we know what's best" mentality amongst district leadership. Masks (also now known to have had little to no effect) were forced with no flexibility.

We moved our son to a private Christian school

1

To whom it may concern, I would like to take a moment and share what led our family to make big changes regarding our children's education.

Our son, who experiences learning delays, fell further behind in all areas as the endlessness of school closures trampled on the forward progress he was just beginning to make. Even after the safety of children during COVID was well established and parents overwhelmingly desired their kids in school full-time

5

Hyper sexual emphasis the norm. Instead of the comfort and safety all students being treated as priority, only a few feelings of the few validated. Threats of violence were common very little resource given to school safety. Was only one Linn Mar school resource office for thousands of students. They were not in a neutral environment. We moved from school district and

4

became toxic, especially to any student or family that held timeless views on sexuality, of the Christian faith, held conservative political views. Shutting down voices that didn't fit for left leaning of board and staff in the norm. Flags, and political symbolism often left my daughter feeling unsafe. Our daughter likened the climate to a cult. She felt so uncomfortable



focused on sexuality,  
anti-Christian, anti-  
conservative vitriol should  
be basic expectations for  
public schools.

My thanks,  
in Benning  
Tawatha, IA  
(formerly in Marion's  
Linn-Mar SD.)

10

have since moved them to  
another public school  
that makes parental and  
family involvement paramount  
and that focuses on  
academics and excellence  
rather than liberal and  
sexual agendas.

They LOVE it!  
They have many friends  
making the switch as well.  
As a parent I want my  
kids to feel safe and  
in a school that honors  
and values the higher role  
of family. Common sense  
principles and environments



To whom it may concern:

Lets get right to the point, our public education system is being used to groom our children into perversion. I have a good idea of the overall plan as to why this is being done, but right now my ~~reason~~ reason for this letter is to say, we as parents have a natural right to our children. We will not sit back as some try to take these rights away saying we don't have the "education" to raise them right.

I am a homeschool mom who has now finished schooling our 4 children, Kindergarten → 12<sup>th</sup>. 3 Graduated from college with honors. One received a Fulbright scholarship to study in China for a year. She is now in the Air Force ROTC, working on a masters in political science. Dang well. Others are in law enforcement, & engineering as an aeronautical engineer. We can educate our children with God's grace all things possible.

In contrast I have nieces & nephews who suffer with anxiety & depression & confusion, & education with no wisdom.

Enrollment - Trisha Maloney

Mar. 17, 2023

To Whom it may Concern,  
I'm seeing Americas' educational institutions at a rapid decline in the outcome of their product; educated, productive citizens.

The responsibility of the schools is to educate, not indoctrinate!

Trans teaching (& acceptance), sexuality, CRT & hate for our country (if you aren't teaching respect & pride for America - you are part of the problem) have no place in our school system.

Please, listen to the parents who are educated, productive, tax-paying citizens & bring our schools back to the basics of education!

Sincerely & with great concern for my grandchildren,

Barbi Howls  
Robins, IA



To whom it may concern,  
Taxpayers, especially parents, have a right to expect proper education that prepares students for a profession and success for their time at school. All school board members should be discussing all items while keeping their political viewpoints to a minimum. Our school board continues to work based off of implicit bias and is not doing a good job at working collaboratively with all board members' perspectives, to support the school as a whole. It seems lately it is more important to push through their personal agendas than to discuss perspectives that may be different than their view. Perspectives that are congruent with a large population of our district, has been very clear during school board meetings that they treat people differently based off of which side the speaker/parent is representing. Groups for Liberty and Parent Choice groups are here to help make sure that parents, students, and families are being represented and supported. School board should not be there to only represent their own political views. They are not there to rudely judge other parents' concerns and ideas. Some of the topics that have impacted my family are: mask wearing, book banning, drug values, and intimidation. These are just a few. I'm frustrated with feeling intimidated by the ones who feel strongly about pushing their ideas and values on others. This intimidation occurs from some of the teachers, with some of the board members and running board members, and it occurs toward people who are employed within the school district. My family has personal experiences from each of these categories. The message is clear, vote and support our ways or be negatively judged, labeled, and targeted. I'm not supporting the banning of books in general, however, I feel that there should absolutely be one over

4-17-2023

To whom it may concern,

As a former teacher, now grandparent, I am dismayed and disheartened at our current public education systems.

Our children are being taught untruths regarding United States history (I majored in US history). Children have been used to continue propagating these lies + untruths (slaves did not build our original colonies for example)

I am very concerned about the sexualization of our children also. My son's girlfriend is a second grade teacher. In her district the children in second grade are to be given instruction concerning masturbation + self pleasure sexually. Parents are not to be informed of these curricula! Just an example of this inappropriate agenda to destroy our children and culture.

I will be seeking out morally upright women of integrity & character to be candidates for local school board positions to counteract these evils.

Sincerely,  
Kendra M. Drosak



To Whom it may concern,

March 18, 2023

I have four children, two that are in public school and two in a private Christian school. My two in public school are in high school and were in private school for elementary and Jr. High. The quality of education between the public and private school is astounding, from the expectations to the curriculum being taught. The Public school has low expectations and has infused curriculum with the ideology. The LGBTQ+ Agenda is being pushed upon all children in school. Parents are being pushed out of the education of their children by policies that are being implemented at the local school board level. Last May at a school board meeting 70% of over 100 parents that stood up to speak were against a proposed policy, but the school board chose to enact the policy anyway. We need to give parents the power to control their children's education.

Thank you

Barrrett Hubbard, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

March 18, 2023

To Whom it may concern:

As a citizen of this great nation, a tax payer and most importantly a mother to children, I am appalled at what is happening in our public schools. Schools that feel they own our children and can teach them things that are not supported by parents are violating the rights of parents. The indoctrination of hate for America is not acceptable. Most importantly it's not OK to tell parents that the schools know better how to raise their children.

Sandy Thurin  
Cedar Rapids, IA



health, when in reality, it's making it worse. On the days they focus on these programs, the children are more irritable and tend to have more behavioral issues. They need to focus more on disciplining bad behavior, returning to education, and listening to parents, and less on woke indoctrination.

In my personal experience they are trying to intimidate parents into shutting up and going along with what they want to do. During a board meeting last August I tried to ask a question about an SEL presenter they were bringing in. The board president didn't want to hear my concern, she had me police escorted out of the meeting. Three days later I received a certified letter signed by the board president and the superintendent banning me from

03/18/23

To whom it may concern,  
Lincoln Mar School district has been shutting parents out of our children's education for the last couple years, they ignore our concerns and don't answer questions. Instead of focusing on academics they are focusing on woke ideology. They are pushing an LGBTQ agenda. They allow pride flags to be hung and worn around the school, while every classroom does not have an American flag hung, and a student wearing a republican shirt will be asked to change. They allow posters to be hung that give names and explanations to when and whom you are attracted and want to have sex with. They allow walkouts, in the middle of the school day, to support these ideas or to voice concerns. With legislation they claim is against them. They allow children to make out on stage while other students cheer, and



through dangerous policies that contort the law through twisted definitions and legalize. A woke agenda is now being pushed by the leftist teachers unions and is fueled by an aggressive federal administration. This agenda pushes an ideology identifying our skin color, gender identity, and sexual orientation as the most important thing about us as human beings. It teaches our children to hate America, to hate each other, and to hate themselves. It teaches our children that equity is better than equality. It teaches our children to distrust their own parents.

Our role as parents is to prepare our children for the world. We have a right and a responsibility to be involved in every single aspect of our children's lives. Yet parental rights are at stake with the Department of Justice

o whom it may concern,

In 2009 I began teaching gifted and talented in the Cedar Rapids Community School District. Teaching gifted and talented, I was assigned to three schools a year that I rotated between and over time taught at a variety of different buildings. I also have two daughters, ages 13 and 24. Through the lens of a parent as well as a teacher I have seen a lot of harmful things creep into our schools over the years.

The most recent, which I will simply refer to as the "woke" ideology is terribly destructive and it has become so bad in the Cedar Rapids district that I did not renew my contract last year and in fact am not currently seeking reemployment in the realm of education.

Our public schools are foundational to society, yet we have allowed corruption to take hold at the roots



students who speak out against anything they disagree with.

The truth of it is this ideology only supports its own brand of "inclusivity" and brands anything that doesn't align with it worse than "unkind" or "non-inclusive", it brands with the label of it being a "hate crime." Teachers are being misguided and those who feel it's wrong are silenced by the fear of being accused of a hate crime, losing their jobs, or even the threat of losing their teaching licenses.

Perhaps the worst thing for teachers who do not agree with what is going on is the feeling of isolation. The feeling of being alone. The feeling of not knowing WHAT to do or WHO to turn to.

Most people assume that our public schools are non-partisan and that

making parents out to be terrorist, and school boards ignoring parent voices. For example, several times over the course of the past couple of years, I've witnessed members of the CRCSD and Linn-Mar school boards on their phones and/or hiding behind masks and not making eye contact with parents speaking to them. Also, parents have been told that if they don't like the way things are going in the district to go somewhere else. Now, these very same people are upset and complaining about ESAs and parents going somewhere else.

To be clear, I don't think that all teachers are to blame. What I do believe is that teachers are working within the confines of a system pushing an ideology and if they do not conform, they are considered unkind and called non-inclusive, as are the



email communication was always full of left-wing propaganda and often demonized Conservative views. How do you think that made me feel as a teacher with Conservative values? So much for so called "equity and inclusion."

As freedom-loving Americans, we cherish our God-given rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness and we value the opportunity to participate in the creation of a free, fair, and prosperous society. But, as we teach our own children principles such as individual liberty, high moral character, and limited government, there are opposing forces hard at work undermining our conservative values through indoctrination and mental programming. This is a war for the hearts and minds of our children and we must stand

everyone has an equal voice. This could not be further than the truth. The leftist teacher unions hold TREMENDOUS power. In fact, the National Education Association (NEA) funds a super PAC who holds a liberal viewpoint. In 2020 they raised over 25 million dollars of which they turned around and contributed all of it to candidates who hold liberal views. It's no surprise they hold tremendous sway at the state and federal levels. This organization creates ties within school districts and whispers in the ears of superintendents, school board members, and holds tremendous influence and power over school districts. This includes the teachers, by the way. I would know. I was a member of the ISEA teachers union (state level of the NEA). Their



March 17, 2023

To whom It May Concern,

Seven of my children have gone through our public school system, and are functional adults in America today. But the schools they attended are now hosting classes with lewd and lascivious materials presented. Immorality and promiscuity are becoming core material, and destroying the moral fiber that holds our country together.

This trend began even while my kids were still in school! In 2020 we lost one of our sons to suicide. When did the bottom fall out of our system? When did he find his moral foundation had crumbled.

Identity matters. Security matters. When will our schools once again insure that men are not in girls' bathrooms. When will locker rooms be safe again? Our Education is highly at risk.

We care - Please fix it!

Brett Mason cedar rapids IA

To whom it may concern:

Being both a parent and grandparent I am admittedly appalled by the state of our public school system. I nearly became a secondary ed teacher myself but withdrew after  $\frac{1}{2}$  of my student teaching. The system was antithetical to real learning and geared to "teaching to the test." It was all about bowing to state & fed masters and teachers' unions.

On a moral note I find the emphasis now on sexuality and racial divisions in the classroom to be undesirable for parents who have the best interests of their kids at heart.

In short,  
I am one angry parent & grandparent!

Mike Nissen  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa



To Whom it may concern,

As a teacher of over 25 years in the Marion and Cedar Rapids area, I am very concerned that we respect parent rights to protect their children from government overreach into the personal and religious lives of children.

As a nation, we are very divided on many religious & political beliefs. The government has no power to "establish religion" nor religious ideas (such as how many genders or whether we are one race - human race or many races.)

The schools need to teach what parents want taught. The children belong to their parents - not the state. Leave religious and political education take place in the home - not the schools. Parents have the primary responsibility to guide the children. Schools have delegated authority. Schools authority is delegated by the parents. Respect that,

Respectfully,  
Kathryn Chas

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

WE ARE SEEING OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM FAIL AND ITS BECAUSE OF WHERE WE ARE AS A COUNTRY. EVERYTHING HAS GONE WAKE AND ITS BREAKING OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS. WE JUST WANT OUR KIDS TO READ, WRITE AND DO MATH. LETS GET BACK TO THAT!!

END THE WAKE GARBAGE. GET RID OF THE TEACHERS UNIONS, RID THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION!

AS A PARENT, I SHOULD TRUST MY KIDS WILL LEARN IN SCHOOL - HOW I AS THE PARENT WANT MY KIDS TO! IT IS MY RIGHT TO PARENT AS I PLEASE. IT IS MY FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO DETERMINE THE UPBRINGING OF MY CHILDREN. IT DOESNT STOP AT THE CLASSROOM DOOR.

AND ANOTHER THING - TOO MUCH SCREENS AT SCHOOL! THEYRE NOT DEVELOPING THEIR BRAINS - GET BACK TO CURSIVE HANDWRITING. ABOUTSH THE COMMON CORE GARBAGE, SEL, CRT, ANY-ANYTHING ELSE THAT IS A THREAT TO OUR CONSTITUTIONAL REPUBLIC!

LEADING PARENT,

Geralyn Jones

MARION, IA



3-18-2023

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in my concern of our public schools. Our children are in danger in our current public schools due to the "woke" agenda. Our schools are indoctrinating our children not teaching them reading, writing or math skills. The public schools are failing. The teachers who care are leaving in droves. The department of education needs to be abolished. Parents know what is best for their children. School choice has been instrumental in bringing choice back to parents & families. Schools are to teach reading, writing & math skills - families & churches & communities are to teach morals & values. This woke agenda is awful and needs to be stopped. Parents are in charge of their children - NOT the schools.

Merrivue  
Cedar Rapids, IA

To whom it may concern,

I am a 63 year old man with 14 grandkids and 1 great grandkid. I am concern with the direct the education of our school. When I was growing up, we did the pledge of Alliance. It built a foundation for our belief system. I made a mission trip to Haiti and in there schools, they pray, do you country pledge and sing there country song. It starts there day reminding them why they do what they believe it. I believe our education system needs to go back to what our country was founded on. Pray, Pledge of Alliance, and parents.

Thanks for your time

Ken Crooks



To Whom it may concern,

I am an older parent with children ages 7+12. I have friends their kids went through Linn Mar High school recently. They all had issues + none of their children had good experiences. Half of them pulled their kids due to issues. Most of these issues were from the bad mental health of ~~the~~ their peers. The constant assumption <sup>new</sup> needed to be asked about pronouns + what they were sexually got to them. Plus, the sport teams at Linn-Mar are not good for the size of this school. These kids just want to go to school + not be harassed about being a boy or girl, pronouns from staff + peers. It doesn't appear these kids are getting an education for after high school. I hear about Linn Mar pride + from graduates from the 1980's + 1990's. They loved this school - the school pride, not the GBTA pride. None of the graduates from 2008 - recent has this. Why? My fear is that my kids are going to get the same treatment as my friends' kids + not get the schooling they thrive. They love Linn Mar + the elementary + intermediate schools are the best! The teachers are so great, we have no complaints + my kids are thriving. We are going into the middle school next year. My friends all say they are good as well. Their kids did well. Once they went to high school, however that changed. I have faith in middle schools, ~~because~~ <sup>but</sup> none in the high school. Why are kids allowed to do whatever they want + expect everyone to agree? But, they don't expect themselves to agree with everyone? So greedy + so selfish. I guess Linn Mar is educating the students as society wants them - selfish + not caring for one another. Plus, when did minority rules? Who cares what the majority thinks + what they feel. At least the 2% - 3% of the school gets their way, that's OK. What about the other 98% of the kids. Aren't you →

To Whom it may concern -

3-18-23

The future of our children is at risk and it simply cannot continue. Our public school system has gotten off course in believing they can usurp the role of parents.

I attended a school board meeting @ Linn Mar Comm Schools with a record number of parents, 300 plus who turned out against dangerous policies the school planned to vote into their policy. At least 80 individuals spoke that evening, nearly 80% who were against the proposed policies.

The board went on to vote in their dangerous policies to keep parents out of critical decisions, made by the student and school staff.

Our schools were never meant to replace parents, but that is where we are headed and my taxes + other tax payers are funding this and do not agree with it.

Please stop this dangerous road our public school have us on.

Thank you,

Cheryl Gontz



March 18

To Whom It May Concern:

Education today is so full of "feel good" & other time wasters for kids while they're in school. Assemblies should not be about social emotional learning, or whatever term covers this garbage, but for ACADEMIC reasons, otherwise stay in the basics of math, science, reading & writing to enable our children to be intelligent contributors in society! Opinions in education are not appropriate when it has to do with something other than the core curriculum. I, as the parent, will talk with my child about other "social emotional" topics as I see fit.

The school board pushing curriculum changes &/or supporting this garbage, other than core subjects, should never happen. This is very disturbing & has enlightened my daughter much sooner than any child should ever have to know about these topics.

Thank you,

Jean Milburn, Marion, IA

March 17, 2023

To whom it may concern:

As a parent and grandparent I am greatly concerned about our public schools and what they are teaching our children. Additionally, I am concerned that so many administrators, teachers, and counselors are more interested in promoting left-wing ideology than basics in education that will provide solid citizens fully prepared for work and for contributions to society through political activities. Let's teach constitution, personal responsibility and accountability, and a love for this country while acknowledging its shortcomings and encouraging student to work for the country's betterment. My grandchildren go to private schools because the public schools are such a disgrace.

The Medley

Joe Gooding, Cedar Rapids, IA



To whom it Concerns,

I am a parent of 2 students in Public Schools.

Due to the way our district, which we loved for so many years, is being led we feel it no longer has the safety and actual education at the forefront.

We no longer were able to keep our daughter in our home district, and open enrolled her into a different district at the start of this school year due to outrageous policy changes and culture.

We are now actively working to get our special needs son out of our home district into other placement. There are many reasons for this change to be regarded but the biggest reason is I believe the focus has changed from what students like ours need, to an overpresent push on political ideology and social issues of the day. It is ruining our once great schools. It is tearing apart communities. And worst of all, its destroying our future generation of adults.

This IS happening. It's wide spread. Stop ignoring it.

MATT Bollinger  
Cedar Rapids, IA

To Whom It May Concern:

We were affected by our local School Board abruptly passing bills (more than one) leaving parents out of communication, between school & child, shared restrooms depending on how one is identifying today (sexually) so if I identify as a girl and I was born male, I can use girls restroom though neutral restrooms were already in place. Spending the night on school functions that required overnights with whatever sex I identified as. our board past that school can change sex & name of child without parental consent.

Posters on walls with different sexual terms.

As a grandparent I find the school placing only one group ahead of the other.

It is terrifying that they are teaching more than studying & basic classes at the school.



march 17, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to share a recent experience I had with a teacher at my children's middle school. I have an 8th grade daughter and a 6th grade son. In late ~~December~~ <sup>October</sup> my son was asked at the dinner table what he learned that day at school. His response was that he learned about his "white privilege" in his Wellness class. An email was sent that following Monday asking the teacher if she could expand on the lesson she presented on the previous Friday, which was also the last day of class. We were given the explanation that "intersectionality" was the concept presented. She shared that "no matter the person we all have strengths and challenges to work through in our society; hence the importance to better understand each other and support each other. During our discussion, I explained that anyone of any race/ethnicity/social status/religion/etc can experience racism/disadvantage/etc." Hmm, this explanation didn't seem to make sense after hearing my son's interpretation, we had follow-up questions for her and I continued to ask my son questions about the presentation. It wasn't adding up. Finally, he shared that there was a video she showed the class on "the big board" which she conveniently failed to disclose during our back and forth email conversations. I emailed her upon discovering this important nugget and asked her to email

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to illustrate my displeasure with the current decline in quality education.

After observing the levels of learning demonstrated by students part time employment, I can only believe that some instructors have been teaching their personal beliefs rather than the required curriculum.

The educational requirements are intended to prepare students for their future. Today, many instructors prefer to teach students their social values.

It is unfortunate that today social values such as the list of gay categories and woke, items most important in many classrooms.

It is time to restart the basic educational subjects and allow students as in years past, the freedom to learn social values outside the classroom.

Respectfully,

Jane Hauer  
Cedar Rapids IA



to ensure appropriateness. The teacher didn't respond again after making several requests to meet in person until the principal responded for her to set up a meeting. By the end of this meeting, it seemed our concerns as parents would change nothing and our only recourse was to present our concern to an Instructional Materials Reconsideration Board. I made it clear in the meeting that I would be taking this course of action. There was an extensive questionnaire to fill out in order to present the request to the board. I took the time to answer all the questions, supplied ~~as~~ the video link, along with a copy of the Iowa Code. By this time, it was almost winter break. During the break I received a phone call from the Deputy Superintendent of the Cedar Rapids Community School District. She told me that the board agreed with me. She said that I didn't need to submit a request for reconsideration because this video was not a part of the approved curriculum or supplemental resources. The teacher was told to never show this video again or anything like it. The teacher and curriculum lead completely ~~misled~~ misled us and her boss.

This process took us quite a few weeks from the last day of my son's class (the day she showed the video) on October 20, 2022 until the end of December when I received a response from the Deputy Superintendent. My son was no longer in this teacher's class, but my

me the video. She sent me the following link: <sup>(and)</sup>  
[https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=dV9vhtS\\_1rw&feature=youtu.be](https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=dV9vhtS_1rw&feature=youtu.be)  
this was a huge part of the presentation and I couldn't believe she left this out of the conversation. Watch it. It explained the gap between what my son was explaining and what she was telling us. Never doubt your children. My son's father emailed her his thoughts and I did as well. She stopped responding. A week later I followed up with her to ask if we could discuss further. She responded cc'ing the principal and curriculum lead on the email with the Iowa Code 2022, Section 279.50 stating that this "provides guidance regarding human growth and development instruction which includes interpersonal ~~relationships~~ relationships" to support her choice to use this video. I read this code and it seemed to me to support my right as a parent more than her right to show such a video in my son's 6<sup>th</sup> grade class. I responded by saying that I disagreed that the video was in line with code based on the fact that the video wasn't "free of racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, and gender biases", it wasn't age appropriate, and it failed to truly teach him interpersonal skills. It in fact was the opposite approach of everything I teach my children in treating others. I asked for an in-person meeting. The curriculum lead emailed us supporting her by thanking us for investing and asking for clarification. She supported the teacher's use of the video stating that they will examine the curriculum and supplemental resources



by telling me that there was a "disconnect" exposed in my questions. She was off topic, treading into political territory and rhetoric, and social activism, which has no place in public schools. I want ~~the~~ reading, writing, and arithmetic taught in public schools again.

My kids still struggle to tell time on a rotary clock and don't have a signature because cursive is <sup>now a</sup> ~~separate~~ semester class in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Students should be taught critical thinking, not being inundated with far-left propaganda. They are not being adequately prepared for real life.

Lynne Lefebvre - Cedar Rapids, IA

daughter was now taking ~~but~~ the 8<sup>th</sup> grade <sup>wellness</sup> course with the same teacher. Parents received an email from this teacher right before winter break began letting us know the content of the class and telling us that we are more than welcome to review any content before she covers it. I responded and asked to review particular topics. The end of my daughter's semester was about a week after winter break. I never received a response from the teacher allowing me to review, and she didn't return from the break until my daughter was no longer in her class. The students ~~did~~ <sup>were</sup> ~~given~~ packets with a sub instead.

During this process I asked how I could find and review what was presented in class. Since Covid, the school has moved to online assignments. The teacher didn't make it easy for me to review. I was directed to Google Classroom and classlink. I found curriculum and assignments but not how it was presented to the class. I did find images that were concerning that I brought to the principal's attention. They were taken down.

My biggest concern is that the teacher, and curriculum lead, were misleading. I would even say ~~deliberate~~ deceitful. She purposefully withheld and hid videos that she was showing in class directing me to look online where I would never find them. They weren't located in these places. She showed them on "the big board" therefore making them impossible to review by a parent unless the parent specifically knew how and what to ~~ask~~ <sup>ask</sup> for. She insulted my views



3/17/23

To:

THE CONGRESS of the U.S.

From:

A CONCERNED CITIZEN of the U.S.

I AM A 72 YEAR OLD FATHER OF FOUR AND GRANDFATHER OF 10. I AM A PRODUCT OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. DURING MY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DAYS WE STARTED EACH MORNING WITH THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG, FOLLOWED BY A SCHOOL WIDE PRAYER OVER THE "INTERCOM". WE WERE TAUGHT TO RESPECT AUTHORITY, OUR TEACHERS AND FELLOW STUDENTS. THE FOCUS OF OUR EDUCATION WAS ON "READING, WRITING AND ARITHMETIC", AND NATIONAL NEWS, CURRENT EVENTS, AND MATTERS OF FAITH WERE DISCUSSED AT HOME WITH PARENTS.

AS A "BABY BOOMER", PART OF THE POST WWII EXPLOSION IN THE BIRTH RATE, I GREW UP IN A TIME OF GREAT EXPANSION IN MATERIAL PRODUCTS AND A GREAT CULTURAL SHIFT. WE GOT OUR FIRST TV IN 1956, A BLACK AND WHITE CONSOLE THAT RECEIVED 3 CHANNELS. ALL OUR NEWS EXPOSURE CAME THRU "TRUSTED" MAJOR NEWS OUTLETS. THE POPULAR SHOWS OF THE DAYS WERE "LEAVE IT TO BEAVER", "DOLLY AND HARRIET", AND "FATHER KNOWS BEST". ALL PROJECTED THE VALUE OF FAMILY, GOOD MORALS AND POSITIVE CHARACTER.

3/18/2023

To Whom It May Concern,

As a parent, and now a grandparent, the educational system has a serious breakdown. Our children are lost, they have no trust in their teachers, and the parents have lost their rights to their children while they are in our schools. I remember the days of children going to school, where they could have prayer and say the pledge of allegiance. Why are these basic rights taken away? Why are parents not allowed to protect and speak on behalf of their children when they are in school. The government needs to quite stepping in where they don't belong. Let the teachers teach, let the children learn, and let the parents speak on behalf of their children. Let the children be children, to play, to learn, to have lifelong friendships. Not what the system is trying to force on our children. Bring back prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the rights that children and parents should have in our educational system. But more importantly, build trusting relationships between all families across the nation —

A concerned parent /  
grandparent for children  
of the future

Brita Cooks, Cedar Rapids, Ia.



Vickie Carrie  
with Out Prejudice  
PO Box 636  
Black Mt NC  
28711

I was a resident of Buncombe County all my life.  
I raised my 3 children in the North Buncombe Area of the County.  
So I am familiar with the schools here. My youngest son is now  
32 years old. So when my grandkids came along + started  
these same schools I noticed a big difference, not so much  
in Boardmansville Elementary, but the middle school and  
High school. Things were greatly changed as far as the way  
the students interacted. There seemed to be a sexual over  
tone in everything! When I asked them where did you hear  
or learn that... they'd always reply At School!  
In High school they didn't teach any trades. Sometimes  
my grandkids would tell me their teachers let them use  
their phones the whole class or play video games. So they  
didn't learn anything in those classes + the teachers passed  
them anyway. No work Required?

Currently in our community we can't trust what restaurants  
to go in with our family. There are Drag shows that are allowing  
kids to be there + participate by being the ones to tip the drag queens  
+ the parents think this is funny. Drag shows are presented  
to be sexually enticing. This is confusing to these young  
impressionable <sup>innocent</sup> minds. Children should never be exposed to  
this very adult centered sexual performance. It's sickening  
to me + shocking to most parents, Grandparents, + even young  
folks (teenagers) I know! It is bad enough to have explicit video +  
books in our school + public libraries, now our family recreation,  
eating establishments are being affected. Our whole Country needs  
to take a good look at where these lead us. The innocent lives  
Vickie  
Carrie

(3)

AS CHILDISH AND SLOWLY BEING REPLACED OUT  
OF NECESSITY. THE 60'S BROUGHT US THE VICTORIAN  
WAR, THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY,  
MARTIN LUTHER KING, BOBBY KENNEDY, ETC.  
A GREAT MISTRUST IN OUR GOVERNMENT BEGAN.  
THE DRUG CULTURE BEGAN TO EXPLODE. "HIPPISS SMOKE"  
MARIJUANA, KIDS IN GHETTOS PUSHED HEROIN AND  
TIMOTHY LEARY, A HARVARD PROFESSOR, URGED THE  
WORLD TO TRY LSD. I WAS SPARED BECOMING  
A PART OF THE "ROT" IN OUR CULTURE. I WAS  
A PART OF THE "JESUS REVOLUTION" THE SWEEP  
10'S OF THOUSANDS INTO A REVIVAL WHICH LED  
TO THE RE-ESTABLISHING OF THE STANDARDS OF  
GOD'S WORD IN OUR LIVES.

Our 4 children were raised under those  
values. They were raised to put God First,  
Family Next and a respect for our Country.  
Because we were watching the "infiltration"  
of a Foreign culture, we chose to Home  
School them in the early years of their  
education, and later choose CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOLS. We have never regretted it.  
They are all intelligent successful adults  
raising their children in a world gone  
mad. Religion is in "Full Bloom".  
Our children have chosen to  
Home School their children or send to  
private school where they know the



March 20, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

It is very distressing what is happening in our communities. The degradation of human souls occasioned by ungodly actions of our community leaders -

In schools and various areas of society, including government.

When the county ~~board~~ sheriff refuses parents' entry into school board meetings it leaves the people little recourse in expressing their grievances and indicates tyrannical governance.

I pray for national repentance and submission to Almighty God.

Sincerely,

Martha Hubert

Black Mountain, NC

W/out Prejudice

10 #4 Westkit Drive



are untouchable! This is horrific and must be stopped as many children have encountered this type of behavior from school educators including coaches. Furthermore, my son was the only non-returning senior varsity athlete cut from playing his senior year of high school with a college scholarship to play baseball. So as you can see there are many more issues within the public school system besides the curriculum that needs to be addressed and fixed.

These past couple years I have been to many events, spoken at many BOE meetings, wrote countless emails, FOIL requests, taken time out to talk to parents that needed guidance. I have educated parents on what is really going on in the public-school system.

The educational system especially in New York needs to be torn down and teachers' unions dismantled. There should be no more common core, or no child left behind laws in education as all this did was lower the expectations and individual intelligence of our future generations. The school districts are absolutely indoctrinating our children to hate their country, have no respect for their parents and confuse them about their gender.

The parent's bill of rights on the federal level is a great start, but it is extremely vague! This should be a start to the partnership that needs to be established with children, parents, and the communities within all the school districts throughout the United States.

- We need to be able to work with our school districts hand in hand, no more being locked out of the schools.
- We need school choice; a child should not be defined by their zip code! The money should follow the child.
- The school curriculum should be accessible to all and be posted on the school district's website.
- Every child should be given a syllabus in the beginning of the school year by their teachers, for every subject, that includes all lessons and books being taught throughout the year.
- Any changes to all policies should be sent directly home for all parents to review.
- All BOE meetings should be held at least one a month in a public forum setting and be recorded.
- BOE members should not be backed by the unions and should not be able to serve the public more than two (2) year terms.
- Strict laws should be in place to protect children and parents from all educators that gaslight, bully or intimidate. Zero Tolerance for this type of horrendous behavior. DASA reporting cannot be done in house within the school district.

This is just a sketch of some of the major problems plaguing our public educational system and some suggestions from parents, to build the trust back into our school districts, so that ALL children matter, and ALL children can succeed. If the educational system fails "One child, it is too many". Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,



Holly Davis

Chapter Chair- Westchester County

Moms for Liberty

[M4LofWestchester@gmail.com](mailto:M4LofWestchester@gmail.com)

Dear Members of the Committee,

3/20/23

I would like to share with you how I went from being a mom to becoming a "Mama Bear". My journey started with Covid lockdowns, when my child was no longer attending class but being taught remotely at home. The silver lining to covid was that it gave me the opportunity to see inside the classroom as to what my children were being taught. I was appalled at what I saw. Instead of being educated, my children were being indoctrinated. More and more school districts were pushing DEI, PBIS, and Social Emotional Learning. Our schools are grooming and sexualizing our children instead of teaching academics as I expected. This upset me as a mother so much that I could not sit back and watch my children as well as all children being indoctrinated with harmful, destructive values, ideologies, and beliefs. Since this is such a controversial topic, everyone thinks differently, and this is not academics, we should not be teaching this in the "public" school system.

In speaking out, I started to look for other parents, like me, who were deeply disturbed by a curriculum that valued wokeness over education. We became vocal in our local school districts BOE meetings. The BOE largely ignored all our protestations. It was very frustrating to realize that unless you were speaking about being supportive of the political agenda being pushed upon our children, they did not care to listen. We felt as parents, we had no rights. Furthermore, anytime parents did speak out, they were ostracized, bullied, gaslighted and their children faced retaliation. We were even called "domestic terrorists" by our own government. Parents feared they would face repercussions with their employment as many watched other parents become a victim of this. The "public" education or what is now known as "government" education has completely changed into something unrecognizable. There is zero transparency, zero accountability and zero respect for parents and their children. Today schools and most educators care more about power, money, and control, and not the students and communities they serve.

Let me tell you a personal story about my son. When he was in second grade, he asked me, "Mom, does my life matter?" I was horrified. Why would my child ever ask or think this? How did this happen? He was bombarded by TV commercials filled with racism, hate and a message that divides us. He heard "All lives can't matter until Black Lives Matter."

This message was reinforced in his second-grade curriculum when his teacher decided to teach the class about slavery in the United States. A 7-year-old cannot comprehend these issues. Also, there were slaves of all nationalities and all races. In some countries, slavery still exists today, but why was there no mention of this? The sole purpose is to plant the seeds in young minds that America is a bad place and white people are oppressors, and black people are victims. In short, it divides us. I felt like all the love and caring we gave to our children, all the work my husband and I have done was being sabotaged. No child should ever think or ask if their lives matter, shame on anyone who thinks this is ok!

Another personal story about my oldest son. He has played baseball since he was 4. He loves, lives, and puts his heart into the game. His dreams were crushed all because he spoke up against a horrible coach, his junior year. Little did we know that just speaking out, respectfully to his coach, his senior year was destroyed, and his college future was hindered. This is the type of power these educators and these school districts hold. They bullied, intimidated and gaslighted us. In the end, my son was hurt beyond belief, the educators involved faced no repercussions and did not even apologize to him. In fact, they lied, and showed no remorse as they



To whom it may concern,

When my children's elementary school refused to put the kids back in the classroom during Covid, we moved to a nearby district that did. During our move they ushered in a new set of DEI standards + began ushering in new books more diverse that included hard porn, instructions on how to masturbate your buttocks w/ butt plugs, picking the right lube, how to pick + pay for pornography to support porn stars. How to properly blur one's face + birth marks for nude selfies + how to join on-line kink sites to explore adult fetish communities on-line.

In addition, they wrapped one book up in wrapping paper to hide the title so students wouldn't judge the cover + handed them out. It featured 8 young boys standing in a circle conducting a circle jerk where they vigorously masturbate to shoot their cum into a Mt Dew bottle in the center + the last to cum must drink it. I spoke w/ my principal + librarian + they defended the books. Well, the librarian did, the principal was visibly uncomfortable. There was a book about a transgender crayon in kindergarten's library. They ask for pronouns in 6<sup>th</sup> grade + the middle school teacher told the students they were homophobic if they ate at Chic-fil-A. The HS Spanish teacher told them that all white people are racist + the teachers professional development seminar was on teaching identity as an "illusion".

My children came home during Black History Month telling me they hated their white skin. While the class across the hall was reading aloud a book about how cops hate black people. They were bothered by a family member choosing to be a police officer + what that said about him.

We met w/ the superintendent. We knew we couldn't stay in our school. He was not aware of the pronoun surveys bc he had instructed all teachers not to give out + over 100 teachers defied him + did anyways. He was aware of the sexually ideological posters + media plastered all over the halls, bathrooms + classrooms as well as the 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher all over social media scolding us parents for not checking our white privilege or buying school supplies from all-black companies. He simply said there was

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to let you know of an issue I see as a problem in education today. I am on the Johnston Community School District School Board. My children are graduated from this district, having gone through grades K-12 in this district.

What I find the most alarming in our schools today is the lack of consequences for behaviors. Specifically, in regards to students having Individual Education Plans (IEP's) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP's), they can not be consequenceful due to Federal Law. We have teachers suffering multiple concussions are hit, kicked, pinched, bitten, threatened, called degrading names, spit upon, hit with chairs + books, stabbed with pencils, have rocks thrown at them, + windows broken out at schools. Teachers are being assaulted by students.

The following is the guidance we have been given: Given the individual protections afforded to students with disabilities, as well as the enforcement power of the purse wielded by the OCR (Office of Civ. Rights housed within the US Department of Education), our district has been advised by legal counsel to follow IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) - federal law - requirements to return a child to their educational placement rather than disciplinarily remove or expel them when violent conduct is a manifestation of the child's disability.



To whom it may concern,

Our public school systems need help.  
We need to get Back to Basics in education  
in the US..

We are seeing sexually graphic content in  
the schools. Critical Race theory and harmful gender  
ideology are being taught. Our children are being surveyed  
often and asked inappropriate questions. Data harvested.  
They aren't being given homework and can retake tests  
multiple times. The focus has moved from academics  
to "Emotional Competencies".

Even in small town Iowa. A school with less  
than 1,000 students K-12 had 200 parents sign a petition  
to get "Back to Basics" in education. It's truly an  
epidemic.

We need a Big Change and a Parental Bill of  
Rights.

Sincerely,  
Oliver Bardwell  
Oliver Bardwell  
Clive, Iowa

nothing he could do about these things. And other things  
he simply said he just didn't know about at all.

My children's worldviews were being framed into hateful,  
sad + guilty, sexually exploitive ones. And there was Nothing  
I could do about it if they remained in school. So we pulled  
our kids in the middle of the year for a private school we  
could not afford. I drive them 2 hours a day now + my  
husband had to take a traveling job that paid more to make  
ends meet. My children see less of their father, all extracurricular  
paid activities including our math tutor was ceased. This  
was our 2nd public school we were forced to flee in order to protect  
our children. It is not an isolated problem. This problem resides in  
MOST public schools near me. Not a few.

Now, having had our kids in private for 1 year, my daughter  
who was behind in reading is reading past her goal. My other daughter  
who was behind in math + needed an outside tutor is one of the best  
in her class, which is great considering we could no longer afford the  
tutor anymore any ways. But most importantly, they came home during  
black history month telling me iconic stories of brave black humans,  
the history of slavery + the realization that there's good + bad people  
in the world. They did not hate their white skin. Instead, they wanted  
to be sure to be a good human, + love ALL people of the world.

Worldview matters. The Public School system single handedly changed  
the trajectory of my families life for the worse - forcing us to flee  
+ sacrifice to protect + educate them. It's happening... + I  
barely scratched the surface here.

Anyone who says its simply not happening is either lying,  
not looking, or closing their eyes when we put it right in front  
of them to see.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Briggs  
Wendland, IA



Iowa Legislators and others it may concern,

Our public schools are out of control. My grandson, as a senior at Lisbon High School in 2020-2021 was told by one of his teachers, regarding wearing masks, that the good thing about China is that they learned to obey - she was talking about Communist China! When my grandson tried to argue for not wearing his mask, he was shamed and ridiculed, and that affected him emotionally to this day.

Linn Mar's transgender policy requires students and faculty to affirm a student's transgender pronoun under penalty of bullying, with possibility of significant repercussions.

Last month at the Mount Vernon school board meeting, Superintendent Batenhorst said the Iowa Bills in progress "are hateful bills and are putting schools in a horrible place".

This all is pushing a one-sided agenda and suppressing free speech and open and honest discussions. All the while, biblical values are suppressed and these secular humanist values are not only promoted but forced under penalty of ridicule and shame, and at this rate, as in Linn Mar, force of law.

We must remove this radical ideology from our schools and return to teaching the true founding of this nation and promoting the values this nation was founded on.

Sincerely,

Curt Hancock

CURT Hancock  
Mount Vernon, IA.

To Legislatures

It is unfair for parents who don't want their kids indoctrinated or groomed to have to pay twice for their kids education; once for public schools and again for the school of their choice.

Not so long ago there was a move to reduce class size. Supporting parental choice in education would help reduce class size.

Fred Hubler

9422 Deer Ridge Dr

Cedar Rapids, IA 52411

Fred Hubler



And there have been exactly ZERO alterations made to the benchmarks. And ZERO alterations made to the required time frames for testing these timed tests put an unnecessary amount of pressure on young children who are trying to learn.

#3 Common Core Math. This is the most ridiculous change. Every child learns differently. Why can we not teach both methods? It is apparent when working with children that some benefit + some do not. We have the capacity to do better.

#4 This should have been #1. **NO CHILD SHOULD EVER BE SUBJECTED TO KNOWLEDGE OF ANY STAFF MEMBERS SEXUAL PREFERENCE, BELIEFS OR HABITS.** Nor should they be exposed to ANY symbolism that relates or pertains to sexual preference. "Pride Month" should NOT be perpetuated in public schools. There should be no books, papers, magazines or any other form of written or audible content regarding sexual preferences available at a public school. There should be no education

To Whom It May Concern, March 17, 2023

It is my understanding that you are legislators "representing" us who do not feel as though we who are parents of school aged children have issues with the current educational systems for public schools. You must be joking. As a parent of a 4th grader + a freshman, I am exceedingly displeased with the current "educational system."

Where to start....

#1 quality of staff. How does one possibly think a high quality educator is going to accept a salary that is closer to minimum wage than McDonald's?

Our teachers are paid a pathetic wage. When you pay poorly, you will NOT attract high quality staff.

#2. TIMED Benchmarks. These timed benchmarks are ridiculous. ESPECIALLY after forcing our kids to mark for an entire school year. I'll spare the paper for elaborating on that. My now 4th grade + many of her peers are now in special education classes because their reading skills were so negatively impacted due to your ridiculous mark mandates they are so much further behind now.



To Whom It May Concern:

March 18, 2023

My name is Janet, and my husband and I have four children. Two have graduated, two are still in school, and all of them have attended our local public schools for parts of their education. One graduated from a private Christian high school, one graduated from our public high school, and another is about to do the same. Our district is one of the most highly regarded in our state, yet when people ask I tell them to send their kids somewhere else.

My oldest child was explicitly taught in elementary school that meeting minimum standards was all that was necessary. He was not allowed to move beyond that minimum, even if he met it on day one. He was given the same work, over and over, while teachers worked to help kids who were behind. He was expected to be quiet and compliant, sometimes completing the same worksheet five times in one week. Exceptionalism was not allowed. He was being taught laziness. We were supplementing at home so often we eventually pulled him out to homeschool him. As a high school student, we sent him to a private school that allowed him to work at the level he needed, even if that meant senior classes as a freshman. He was so successful there he went on to become a National Merit Scholar and was awarded a full tuition scholarship for college.

My second child was taught, in a high school English course, about his supposed biases and racism. The entire class was made to take the Implicit Associations Test. When their results showed they had no automatic preferences

(1)

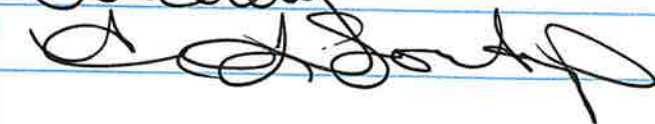
or opinion lessons on the subject of sexual preference outside the biological teachings of anatomy + reproduction. These topics are ~~OFF~~ LIMITS + do psychological damage to minors.

#5 The school lunch program needs a MASSIVE overhaul. The food pyramid has been manipulated to propagate big corporations + give you kickbacks at the expense of the health of MY KIDS. You know good + well why we have a horrific obesity problem in our country.

As a business owner + cattle farmer, I know a thing or two about hard work + creating positive outcomes. I am not successful at doing that unless I put the needs of my clients FIRST + ~~the~~ way to ensure THEIR success.

You are failing our children + I refuse to stand by + allow it to happen any longer.

Sincerely



Brandon, IA



because no one else had witnessed it and the boy denied it, it did not happen. When we appealed to our state Board of Educational Examiners we learned they're in the business of protecting teachers and administrators, not students. The board, made up of teachers and administrators, oversees any investigation and makes a judgement on the results of the investigation without any oversight. The person filing the complaint only gets to know the result. In our case, they decided the district acted appropriately. We were not entitled to know how they reached this conclusion. Teachers and administrators decide, out of public view, whether other teachers and administrators are behaving ethically. How could this possibly go wrong?

At the beginning of the current school year, our high school senior was suspended for wearing a shirt that meets the dress code. Her award winning Government teacher had lectured on the First Amendment, telling students they had very limited rights in school, including dress. After they discussed *Tinker v Des Moines* and read the current dress code, he told the class there were things he would not tolerate in his class, like clothing with images of guns. The district dress code does NOT ban images of guns. My child knew her teacher was wrong, so the next time she had his class she wore a shirt that said, "What part of 'shall not be infringed' do you not understand?" with a drawing of a rifle. This is a shirt both she and her brother had worn to this school before without incident. She was thrown out of class and suspended for refusing to change. I emailed the school board later that day and after consulting with district attorneys, the superintendent called to apologize. ③

between white and black people, their white teacher informed the students their results didn't matter. They were white, systemic racism is real, and they were unwilling to recognize their own racism. In an English class.

His high school also eliminated deadlines and allowed reassessment, so homework was never really due until the end of the grading period and tests could be taken over again to get better results. We warned him that his high school was nothing like the real world, but... To say his transition to college was rough would be an understatement. So far, university professors still expect work to be submitted on the actual due date, and a test is given once. When he got to college he had to learn to study and turn work in on time. Our public high school taught him about his internalized racism and white privilege, but did not prepare him for the realities of post-secondary life.

My third child is a high school senior. Her sophomore year was completely upended by covid, where teachers used an expensive yet terrible online curriculum that was basically busy work and called it school. Her junior year, a boy masturbated next to her in an AP class. When we talked to the school principal, he showed no concern for her. He did not ask how she was or if she was okay, but did tell her he needed to talk to the boy to see why he had done it. When pressed, he told my child she could switch seats if sitting next to that boy made her uncomfortable. The boy was never disciplined, the school refused to move him to another class, and they refused to investigate properly as dictated by Title IX. After months of trying to work with the district, they decided ②



To Whom it May Concern:

I want you to look back to when your children were younger, maybe they are still young and you've noticed minor changes in our schools across the country. I'm here to tell you, times have changed.

As a parent having two littles in elementary school, we've only experienced "COVID KINDERGARTEN", "COVID 1ST" and now to homeschool to catch up. Shouldn't our public schools be producing the academic success through its ability to access programs, curricula, etc. that will allow a child to make up for the classroom time lost during covid? You'd think. However, in figuring out how I was going to ensure my child get a proper education, I as the parent took it upon myself to look into the academic success of various ways to educate my child. I found private schools are generating better test scores, in the Iowa Assessment scores (ie LMCSID vs ISAAC NEWTON). I found one school focused on truth in academia & the other focused on political ideology with the LGBTQ+ activism that seems to take precedence over making sure our next generation is able to read, write & do math! Political activism has flooded our halls, our libraries, our classrooms and even our parking lots with administration siding in student "led" walkouts. That's inappropriate.

①

She admitted students DO have First Amendment rights in school and my child should not have been suspended. The Government teacher, however, has never corrected himself in class. He has never admitted he was wrong about students' constitutional rights. He's paid to teach young people the Constitution, he's deliberately doing it wrong, and the district knows it. When I emailed our superintendent to ask if she's okay with this, she never responded.

The youngest of my children is currently in middle school, where violence, disrespect, and verbal outbursts are the norm. What was shocking to her at the beginning of the year she no longer finds worthy of mention. Students physically attack each other and teachers. They call each other awful names, including racial slurs. They are openly disrespectful to their teachers, cursing at them, refusing to do work or pay attention or even just be quiet so other students can listen. Teachers are prevented from disciplining certain students because of perceived racial bias, and the students know it. This is every day. Sometimes teachers spend the entire class period dealing with disruptive students, never getting to the lesson. There are days my child comes home and says she did nothing all day because of the disruptions.

We are just one family in one district in one small state. If all this has happened to us, how many other families like ours are out there? The reason American students are struggling emotionally and academically is because our public schools are failing.

- Janet Bristow Johnston, Iowa

④



Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> 2023

There are things that I am not happy with as far as the education system.

I find issue with the inability for a certain demographic of parent primarily described as the "conservative" to speak on behalf of their children. For instance we had a local parent here, that was kicked out of a board meeting for asking a question. More and more I am seeing people of like mind, almost bullying others who do not feel the same or have the same opinions, into silence. This should never happen, for obvious reasons.

I do not agree with any data to be taken from or tracked from my child. This should be up to the parent. There is much too much government over reach.

Not to mention, the amount of info. given to a parent regarding therapy given to children, advice in therapy, information tracked from the child, is now existent I have heard. The parent, seeing as how they are so meant to "parent" their child,

should have access to know information pertaining to our children. Such as therapy

② the school (LMCSD) repeatedly sweeps important info. under the rug. It's a problem with our schools today. the disrespect towards a parents fundamental right to determine the care and upbringing of their child. When our schools recieved the ESSER funds, our schools were doomed. If the schools fail, it's because they have lost touch with what schools were intended to be. Funding over Safety is what matters most to them.

③ Policy 504.13 & 504.13-R - LNN MARS Transgender plan, allowing students to use whatever bathroom they want, with no requirements to having a 'Gender Support Plan' on file prior to entering, Schools are to not share these plans w/ that child's parent if that child specifies, overnight field trips can have mixed sexes in each room. Specifically, the bathrooms applies to K-12 grades the "Gender Support Plan" is for 7-12 grades. We have 4<sup>th</sup> graders using the opposite sex restrooms and identifying as the opposite sex. It's only a matter of time before elementary age schools administrators are keeping a transitioning child from their parents, it must stop!

I could give so many examples, but I'll keep it brief. We must get back to the basics of education Reading, Writing, Science, Math and leave the rest up to the families. Stop indoctrinating our children and teach them to be smart, able citizens who are actually walking into a better future than what "they" have

③



See the following timeline and the photos to show the turnout for the events in which parents stood side by side to defend their children regarding education, whether it was how they were treated regarding masks and vaccines, safety in the bathroom

Sincerely,

Rafaela (Rachel) Cadena  
Marion, IA (daughter in MVCSD)  
State Leader Americas Frontline Drs  
The great Takedown

May 20, 2021 - Mask law signed by Governor Reynolds that parents can decide whether their child will wear a face mask. She banned mask madates for businesses and schools.

Jan 2022- The Iowa Capitol Rotunda was filled with citizens concerned about medical freedom. We had special freedom doctors to speak

February 2022 – Iowa broke a record for the most people attending a subcommittee meeting for the medical freedom bill.

February 2022 – Linn Mar held a meeting over the gender plan. That meeting filled the room and I attended/ watched via youtube as I was on travel for work. Majority of parents fell on deaf ears except for board member Matt Rollinger and some support by Buchholz.

February 2022 – I had reached out to AJ DePriest who was just on the show ‘the Highwire’ with Del Bigtree. She explained how the covid money and the strings tied to education and to the medical clinics and hospitals.

I later held a meeting for about 40 concerned parents and gave them the Follow the Money presentation.

March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022 – People filled the rotunda for the Protect Girls sports bill signed by Governor Reynolds surrounded by female athletes and their family and the public.

May 6 2022 – Governor Reynolds held a meeting in Marion Ia due to concerns falling on deaf ears.

To Whom it concerns:

Iowa’s education has gotten worse in the last 2 decades to the point we are no longer first in the nation. Luckily we have a wonderful Governor who understands this and was in favor of Parents Choice in their students environment in their education.

In 2020 – 2021 – Mt Vernon had a standing room only board meeting on the mandates. They had mostly opposition on the mandates. I felt it was politicized by certain attendees teacher and former elected officials who’s stance I knew. I felt concerns were considered but fell on deaf ears. Despite providing reams of data showing masks were ineffective in an email to the board, they voted in favor face masks until the vaccines were available and chose to follow non-medical politicized organization, the CDC.

I found out why they did. It was in order to receive their covid funds. They were required to check certain protocols on their district plans.

I was also disappointed at the lack of interest in the board learning about the data and presentation I have to explain the reasons and problems behind the covid money.

I have all the data on the money given to the schools if they go along with the covid protocols in order to get the last 3<sup>rd</sup> of the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of covid money and what the options and consequences are.

I am troubled by the mental health issues such as increased suicide, depression and trauma the students endured. I am troubled by the mask wearing health issues students endured. Luckily my daughter is ok but I care about all students.

In February of 2022 Linn Mar had a standing room only meeting in which the majority of the parents concerns about the gender plans fell on dear ears except for board member Matt Rollinger. In a later meeting some of the members made him an agenda item and tried to attack him. I watched in disgust.

Throughout 2020-2022 – the school boards and Capitol rotundas and other meetings filled room with over a hundred people.



Dear Rep. Wilson

To Whom It May Concern,

There is rumor that everyone is happy with the public school system. This couldn't be farther from the truth.

I grew up in it, ~~in~~ Iowa City, and my experience from everything to being told that we were the smartest generation, a blatant lie when you compare to comprehension and wisdom from generations in the past, to seeing the depression in almost all of my classmates from the helpless, family separating lies, to realizing I was robbed of my youth when I graduated with many others all feeling the same, unsure of what to do with our lives, feeling like we didn't learn a lot that was useful for real life.

I saw teachers having relationships with students, the entire student body

Having raised 3 children in the public school system and one still in it, I am deeply disturbed by the moral corruption and politicization of our classrooms! Spending on public schools is at an all time high, while our children's educational standards and results continue to fall at an alarming rate! If you care about our children's mental and educational health, please stop supporting and funding groups who are intent on indoctrinating our children instead of educating them to be productive thoughtful citizens!

Sincerely

Matthew O'Neal

Cedar Rapids, IA



There is so much divide being created with propaganda, Critical Race Theory, Social Emotional Learning, sexually graphic books & clubs pushing the LGBTQ+ movement. Then there is the restroom situation & children leading others with leashes. Why is this a thing in school? Individuals sexuality should not even be a topic discussed in school. That should be saved for conversations with parents & counselors. We need to get back to the basics to create firm foundations to expand on when they are ready. We need a safe environment for our children to thrive. Students are slipping through the cracks with reading and math scores falling.

We need to get back to the basics of education. Students need to have accountability & consequences for their actions whether its behavior or poor grades. Respect & general human decency needs to be expected from everyone. Teachers need to feel safe in their classrooms as well as their work environment.

Sincerely,  
Michelle Buefle  
Marion, IA

To whom it may concern,

I am a lifetime resident of Iowa with adult children & young grandchildren. When my kids were in school there were certainly concerns but none seem to be concerning as what is happening in current times. It's really challenging narrowing a topic down as there are so many levels of concern.

Many students graduating today don't have basic skills to live. They don't know how to grow food, cook, manage a home, manage money, count money back, general maintenance of vehicles, general maintenance of homes or have basic communication skills to work out problems in productive ways & have strong, healthy relationships in all areas of life. While some argue the parents should teach these skills, many aren't so where will they learn it? These children are our future. This is important! In previous generations Home Economics was part of the curriculum. These classes being life skills to help a child learn to one day become independent from their parents & become a positive role in society.



03/17/2023

are learning, being exposed to, and being called (pronouns/gender).

The explicit and sexual-nature of books available to ~~our~~ children in the district has also impacted our decision.

I hope more and more parents have the gumption to speak up and stand up for their children. Our children need us to protect them, and I fully plan to honor God and His plan for my own family and children.

Sincerely,  
Nicole Kessell  
Marion, Iowa  
03-17-2023

To Whom It May Concern;

My family of five (2 adults and 3 children) have left the public education system as we have completely lost trust and faith in those who make up the system.

Our children have been homeschooled since the beginning of their education with a small 2-month stint in preschool for our middle child.

Three years ago, my husband and I were excited for our new journey in a new community. We spent time researching the best schools until we landed on the Linn-Mar school district. We heard great things about the classes, extra-curriculars, teachers, etc. We moved to an area that we could barely afford so that our children could attend Linn-Mar. The property taxes and home prices were high, but we made sacrifices to make it work.

Our sacrifices ended up being futile. The current state of our local school district



To whom it may concern

OUR PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM IS A  
Joke. THE MAKE CONTENT OF PORN,  
LGBTQ+ AND TAKING POWER AWAY  
FROM PARENTS HAS TO STOP. OUR  
CHILDREN NEED TO LEARN HOW  
TO BE CHRIST FEARING LOVERS OF  
GOD. LEAD BY THEIR PARENTS.  
WHAT YOU SAY OUR CHILDREN  
NEED IS A PAINFUL/WHAT THEY  
ARE BEING TAUGHT IS DISGUSTING.

THIS IS NOT WHAT MY CHILDREN  
WILL EVER BE TAUGHT.

SINCERELY





3/18/2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am very concerned about our U.S. Educational system for the following reasons -

We are behind Internationally in academics - we no longer lead!

My grandchildren are being indoctrinated in our local school system by socialist agenda teachers,

Our girls/women's sports are compromised by allowing males into female sports - women have had to fight for equality in sports only to see this given away in the name of E.D.I.

Schools aren't teaching academics but instead are teaching CRT, SEL and left Socialist agenda,

There is no emphasis in our schools to teach Constitutional rights / law - so our children understand the greatness of our country.

Pamela Robinson

Mr. & Mrs Frank Melis

1725 S. 50<sup>th</sup> St Unit 172

W.D.M., Ia 50265

To Whom it may Concern,

Six years ago we discovered our 5<sup>th</sup> grader could not read. He was in a large public school in western Iowa.

He didn't know what a vowel was and he could not say the ABC's. After testing at Educational Resources in West Des Moines, and after thousands of dollars and tutoring by myself for hours at a time, he did reach a third grade reading level. The staff at his public school didn't seem interested at all in working with Educational Resources in his interest.

I'm sure this is repeated over and over.

We need some changes, back to the basics.

Sincerely,



3-18

March 17, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a lifelong resident of Iowa. I raised two children in the West Moines Public Schools. I went to a Catholic School in West Moines.

When my son was old enough to have homework, I noticed he had spelling errors in writing assignments that were not corrected by the teacher. He said his teacher told the class they did not have to worry about spelling words correctly but to focus on how they feel about what they are writing. I was shocked!! Naturally, I told him that "I" wanted him to be able to learn how to spell correctly because it would be important in his future. So, I worked with him on spelling. We bought the Qui Phonics and Phonics games as a means to teach them properly and make it fun!

When my daughter was in elementary, Smoother Sailing was introduced and parents made aware and given information about it. I did my research. I thought it odd that schools would think it was their responsibility to address and guide children through emotional health instead of the basics, reading, math, spelling, etc. I did not give permission for my daughter to attend Smoother Sailing events. Taking care of her emotional wellbeing is my responsibility.

My Name is Gracie Slaymaker. I go to Kennedy High School. About a year ago I was waiting for my dad to pick me up from school. I went into the bathroom, and I saw a boy dressed as a girl he had a deep voice like a male little bit facial hair. He was just hanging on the stalls talking to his friends he wasn't actually going to the bathroom. When I saw him I was confused, scared, and felt unsafe. I had no idea why he was in the girls bathroom. It was even worse because he was hanging on to the stall next to me. As I was in the stall going to the bathroom I didn't know if I should get out or not I was so uncomfortable. I was being very cautious because I didn't know his intentions. I got out I couldn't concentrate washing my hands because I kept trying to get a good look. I texted my step mom as soon as I stepped out of the bathroom "I just saw a boy in the girls bathroom" and then my dad when he picked me up. They set a apt up with my dad, step mom, me, and the principal. We were told that the students can use the bathrooms based



He held on to the values we taught him. He will, at times, thank us for making sure he ~~learned~~ learned.

SEL, CRT, no matter the label, has its roots in Marxism, Socialism, and Communism. I am so thankful that my children's school experience did not involve the gender ideology that is being pushed by so many in the school system. I hear horror stories from ~~my~~ my nieces and nephews who are in school now. They tell me the main thing they hear about in school is how they feel about gender and sexuality.

We must protect our kids from this indoctrination into SEL, CRT, gender ideology that leads to child mutilation and the push towards socialism and communism. And right now, schools are the number 1 battle ground!

One who has fought and continues to fight the battle,

Roger Hamble  
Des Moines, Iowa

My daughter loved reading classic literature. She was an expert speaker and had amazing comprehension as a result. In high school, she took AP courses. She reflected our Christian and conservative values. She once told me that it was her experience that liberals are the most closed-minded people when it came to having conversations about values. As a family, we talked often about what is happening in school and society and how our faith helps to keep us on the straight and narrow. Well, all that ended when she went to college; though not finishing college, she adopted the very liberal mindsets and shameful set of values she was taught at home. She became connected with Southern Poverty Law information at college. She fell into the party scene and started using alcohol. She became depressed at college and drank more to cope. Today, with our help, she no longer drinks and is a contributing member of Society. However, she still considers herself more liberal ~~than~~ than conservative... I still see signs of the indoctrination she received at college.

My son was not the committed student as our daughter, though he was especially gifted. He was bored in his classes and got along without studying much. My husband and I made sure to educate him in the areas where school fell short. They wanted to get him tested for ADHD, and tested him we did, but not for ADHD. We tested his skill and ability. He tested off the coast! We challenged him and kept him active. He did very well. He also took AP courses. Though he put little effort into whatever he did, including sports, he managed to make honor roll every year and make State in swimming! Today, he is an electrician apprentice. We kept him from the influence of indoctrination as best we could.

Page 2



(Continued)

our law, HF802, I didn't get a very good response. I filed an open records request and the district said it would cost me \$37,000 to receive copies of the emails I had requested. This is unacceptable - to expect a parent to pay that amount of money to find out what is happening in the school.

At a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion meeting this past January 2023 with my district, the DEI director bragged about how schools in the district are teaching transformative SEL, culturally responsive teaching, and how he told a group of High School students about organizing walk outs. Since this meeting in January there have been two administration approved walkouts. In both grade SEL students were provided examples of goals for middle school - along with, pass a test and make three new friends ~~and~~ "WORK FOR A SOCIAL JUSTICE ORGANIZATION!" I send my children to school to learn academics, not be social justice warriors. SEL concentrated learning is taken over and is feelings-based, and transformative SEL is based in Marxist ideology and has no business being in AMERICAN public schools.

Our kids are not learning academics - The NAEP scores for 2022 in my state, Iowa show the following for 8th grade students:

- only 28.08% are proficient or above in math
- only 28.81% are proficient or above in reading

THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE. When parents speak up and voice concerns, we are met with resistance and are basically ignored.

The system is broken! I support a parental Bill of Rights. Our children, their future, and the future of America is at great risk if we do not correct the failing education system.

Sincerely,  
Teri Patrick

Teri Patrick

Clive, Iowa

teripatrick@... .io

Our elected legislators,

March 17, 2023

Our schools and our kids are suffering. Not only are we seeing record-low proficiency scores in reading and math, but our kids are being exposed to sexually explicit material in school, gender ideology, and indoctrination with Marxist ideology through transformative Social and emotional learning.

I have spent the last year and a half trying to remove sexually explicit materials from my district - books with images of oral sex, pedophilia, and descriptions of rape, incest, sexual assault, and graphic sexual encounters. It is not just my district, but districts across the state of Iowa. The American Library Association, school boards, administrators and the Iowa State Department of Education continue to double down and defend these materials. These images and sexual situations are not allowable to be accepted on school issued devices, but are accessible to our students in the school libraries.

Iowa passed a law that went into effect July 2021 stating schools could not teach divisive concepts HF802. Schools continue to break this law. Administrators in five Iowa school districts were caught on undercover video stating they still teach CRT and these concepts. They proudly state they change the wording and teach CRT through Social and emotional learning (SEL). In addition, in 8th grade in my district Social Studies curriculum students read Stamped by Ibram X Kendi - which is in opposition to our HF802 law. A language Arts teacher posted on her door the article "100 ways white people can make life less frustrating for people of color" with suggestions like -

- Don't touch our fucking hair
- Don't say shit like, "I know what it's like to be a person of color... I'm a ginger"
- Remember that having mixed race children is not a cure for racism or a way to live out weird racial fantasies"
- move past you white guilt

When I questioned the school on their policies and enforcement of



## To Whom it May Concern,

Iowa's schools are in decline. Iowa now ranks fortieth (40<sup>th</sup>) among all fifty (50) states on standardized tests. This trend must be reversed, but there is a problem.

The reasons for this are numerous but at the heart of it is the ascendancy of the teachers unions as the purveyors of an ultra-progressive curricular agenda, to the detriment of our children.

In prior years, the core curriculum in elementary grades through high school was the teaching of English, Mathematics, Science and U.S. History. Those courses have increasingly been supplanted by gender studies, radical studies (traditionally taught in U.S. History classes), woke ideology and the like. We can talk all we want to about S.T.E.M. classes, but when many of our students read below grade level, teaching S.T.E.M. classes is challenging, at best. In addition, God has been removed from our schools. Gone are the days when we began our school day with the Pledge of Allegiance. The schools have become undeniably secular in their views.

Elected Legislators.

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023

I am writing to express my concern about our public schools. There are many subjects that concern me, from the increased focus on non-academic material such as Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, SEL, and CRT (or whatever other name the administration calls this divisive concept), to the increased spending on Administration positions coinciding with the decreasing test scores.

The system is broken. We spend more money in the U.S. than any other country, yet we always rank lower than many other countries. Why???

I feel we waste much of the day for our students trying to teach them feelings or values (the wrong ones) that should come from the parents. My son is in school to learn how to read, write, calculate math and science, not to learn what a small group of teachers & Administrators feel are the causes everyone should care about and protest for or against. Just like everyone wants to keep religion out of schools, keep the woke agenda out of public schools.

I urge you to pass legislation that helps our students and future leaders of America get back to common sense, basics in school.

Thank you  
Dale Patrick

Dale Patrick  
Clive, IA



to Christian principles, competitiveness, stability and vitality to our schools.

Scott P. White  
Clive, Iowa

Increasingly, our schools have become petri dishes of social experimentation, indoctrination and propagandizing. Wokeness, trans-genderism, social emotional learning and grooming are the orders of the day, which do nothing to improve our students' minds and to make them critical thinkers. In addition, many school boards have determined that it is acceptable to make pornographic material available to students, even in the elementary schools. One book with which I am familiar is entitled Gender Queer. Within its pages are linguistic and graphical depictions and instructions of administering oral sex, which have no place in school libraries. One must ask what good can come of making such vile material available to impressionable students?

The decline in our public schools and its causal element, progressivism, is edging ever closer to a socialistic model. This trend, which have been evolving for years, is alarming and it must be reversed in order to restore sound educational principles, solid administrative competence, adherence



March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023

3-18-2023

Dearowan,

I am concerned that our Public Education System is not preparing our youth for higher education and becoming a productive member of society. And of course for them to become successful as family members and parents.

The price of education is and should be an important investment in their & Iowa's economic future. Students need to be taught about our American History and our Constitutional Republic. This will help unite our young people as American Citizens focused on our shared set of values.

Please protect our students from the efforts toward social engineering and all that that entails.

Very Truly Yours,  
Rowdy Temple  
Stanwood, Iowa

To whom it May Concern:

It is of utmost importance that our schools prepare our children for a future where they are productive & successful members of our communities. Unfortunately, our children are being taught what to think instead of how to think. Parents are being excluded and vilified for wanting to be involved in even knowing about what their children are being taught. Our children are being indoctrinated and exposed to concepts <sup>that</sup> are not at all age appropriate. We must protect our children and their minds. We must also prepare our children for the future by teaching life-skills that have often been removed from our schools. Please do what it takes to ensure our kids are safe & productive. Expose them to the full list of opportunities for their futures without leading them down a parent's path. Protect our children! Sincerely - Anna Fairchild  
Cedar Rapids, IA



2023-03-17

To whom this concerns;

Our Education System, from the U.S. Department of Education, down to the local school district, has Lost trust of myself, my wife, and many folks I know.

The School District I'm in, didn't tell the truth with (how they packaged) their statements to the Public and to the news media about new proposed policies as compared to actual law. Further...

This same Board didn't seek any opposition parents, or community members, prior to the Public hearings. This was evident when significant opposition showed up and expressed concerns at the second public hearing (70 plus). Though there was a motion to table the Policy adoption, to consider the concerns of the opposition, the Board let the motion fail and adopted the Policies anyway.

Since that time (Above controversial Policy adoption) the Board continues to ignore parents, have no Public, or private, dialogue with opposition parents.

At least two lawsuits have resulted from this Boards poor Public Service method.

Obvious to me, this same style, methodology, is prevalent throughout ~~our~~ Public Education ~~at~~ System.

-- over --



To Whom it May Concern:

We moved to Marion, IA at the end of 2021, having come from Minnesota all me to take a new job. We were excited about being in the Linn Mac school district based on their reputation from 15-20 years prior when two of my cousins graduated from Linn Mac High School. This was despite our misgivings about more recent statistics: children with special needs were statistically more likely to be suspended from Linn Mac schools than in surrounding districts - and we have children who fit that mold.

In Minnesota, where charter schools are common, my kids attended a charter school that they loved: Art & Science Academy of Granite, MN. It was a safe, nurturing environment. However, Linn Mac proved to be an appalling place opposite of our experiences with ASA.

Much of the misery that exists at Linn Mac is a result of the "tone at the top". Administrators at my kids' schools (Coulter Peak and Linn Grove) were unresponsive, passive-aggressive bullies; the teachers were aloof, indifferent, and uncaring - particularly to our autistic son, who told us he no longer liked going to school after excelling for years at ASA; the school board had a chip on its shoulder and clearly played favorites in their dealings

prepared to succeed by the elementary school he had attended and was handed a calculator to multiply for him instead of being taught how to multiply.

The CRCSO has failed to focus on the education of all of its students while saying that it is making "every learner ready". It has instead focused on promoting its social agenda to its unsuspecting students when don't have the guidance of parents in making these important decisions.

  
Barclay Wocner



To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Anel Jimenez and I am a mother of a 3 year old girl. I am also a substitute teacher and hold a para educators license. I had worked in the school setting for 8+ years. I have recently gone back to school for Human Services/Social work. I have decided to step out of the school setting for the time being, because of the burn out associated with the state of the public schools today. Being forced to put she/her on my name tag so that people know I associate myself with being a female I believe is a bit overboard. Can't someone look at me and know I am a she just by the fact that I am a girl. I believe I should be able to look at a girl and call her a she. Being in a public school setting and being concerned that someone might want to be called "they", I was always taught they was referring to more than one person. If I am talking to one person they are a he or she. These types of things are the reason I can't allow my daughter to attend public school. Individuals believing they're cats and wanting to use a litter box, or even allowing men in the women's bathroom. I do not feel safe having my daughter exposed to these absurd things. I am very excited about the new voucher system rolling out as that will allow my daughter to attend private school where they have similar beliefs as me and I know she will be safe. Without the voucher system there would be no way that my family would be able to afford private school.

God Bless, Anel Jimenez *and if you believe*

with people in the district. Many, many, MANY times we lamented, "Why can't Sinn Mar school district be more like ASA?" To say we were disappointed would be an understatement.

We pulled our kids from Sinn Mar after only a few months. We have never looked back.

Our kids are now doing much better with their alternative educational arrangements. In some ways, they are recovering what we lost when they moved from ASA to Sinn Mar.

Sincerely,  
Matt Rothermel  
Marion, IA



3-18-23

MARCH 18, 2023

To Whom it may concern,

I am a 63 year old woman, with seven sons, and four grandchildren. I grew up in Orange and Santa Clara counties, CA. and I was educated in the public school system in both. at the time, as a child and young person, I did not realize that even at that time in the 60's + 70's, I was being indoctrinated by what we now call the "woke agenda". I was a believer in our Lord Jesus and did take ridicule from peers and teachers because of it, but it happened way back then.

What I experienced in my education was the tip of the agenda that has been advancing forward for decades. What is happening now in the public schools in our county in Linn. Co., Iowa, is appalling. We have books required that contain paragraphic materials and pictures, we have an acceptance of an agenda that eliminates parental involvement of even medical issues of their own children. This must be stopped. We have to stand up and realize that parents should be raising their own children, and not the state. It is against our constitution of these United States of America.

Please know we are going to do everything we can to fight this. Sincerely, Deborah G. Mason - citizen

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I AM VERY CONCERNED ABOUT THE UNDERLYING AGENDA OF INDOCTRINATION THAT IS BEING PROMOTED IN OUR SCHOOLS. THE WHOLE ANCESTRY OF CRT (CRITICAL RACE THEORY) ONLY FEEDS THE RACIAL DIVISION THAT PERVADES OUR COUNTRY. IT'S ANSWER TO THE RACIAL DIVIDE IS MORE RACISM. THE 1619 PROJECT ONLY ADDS MORE COALS TO THE FIRE AND IS FALSE AND DESTRUCTIVE AT ITS CORE.

MORE RACISM IS NOT THE ANSWER. WE NEED GRACE! GRACE, GIVING UNDESERVED FAVOR TO EVERYONE WHO CROSSES OUR PATH IS THE ANSWER.

E. BERNARD HAYES  
327 30th ST SE  
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52403



now have to be okay with sharing the bathroom, locker room, hotel rooms (if traveling), sports teams with an individual of the opposite sex. In addition their freedom of speech is being violated in that they have to address a transgender person by their preferred pronouns despite the student's own personal views or religious beliefs. These must all be done without any complaints - I'm sure that'll help their mental well-being.

③ ~~It~~ In addition, at Juni Mar students are allowed to identify as cats and dogs. They are allowed to dress as such and communicate as such - hiss, meow, etc. At <sup>what</sup> point does an individual in charge say enough. You are not an animal, and if you want to act like one then you lose the privilege of attending school. If someone doesn't start standing up for common sense this is never going to stop. Students need parameters and we need to love them enough to provide them.

④ Based on student feedback I receive and video clips shared by students there is a lack of consequence at schools. It seems that teachers & administrators are not only being pressured to bow to the woke agenda but also to BLM. Students - regardless of race, ethnicity, etc should ~~be~~ face consequences

To Whom it may Concern 3/17/23

I have been asked to share my thoughts & concerns about the state of <sup>public</sup> education in Iowa - I will be focusing my comments on Juni Mar since that is the school my children have gone to and are going to.

① Report Card on American Education ranks Iowa education overall at C-, ALEC Ranking at 41<sup>st</sup>, and Academic Standing D+. In the 90s Iowa was in the top 5 for its education, currently World Population Review ranks us at 18<sup>th</sup>, Wallit Hub ranks us at 24<sup>th</sup> and US News puts us at 24<sup>th</sup>. We need to get our attention back to academics - so distracted by woke issues!

② In Dec. 2021 the US Surgeon General issued a rare warning about our youth. He stated that our youth are experiencing devastating mental health effects. A mental health crisis is being experienced. So what does Juni Mar do not even 6 months later. Under the guise of being the "safest for all students" it passes 504.13 which as we know is not safest for all. According to the report entitled How Many Adults and Youth Identify as Transgender in US put out in June 2022 in the Midwest 300,000 youth between the ages of 13-17 identify as transgender. That is 1.43% of that age group. So, let's be generous and say that 3% of students at LM identify. So a policy was created that made 3% of the student body feel better. While the crisis being experienced by our youth includes the other 97%. So young people who are already feeling depressed and anxious



3-18-23

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Donna Sims.  
I live in Cedar Rapids Iowa.  
I would like to let you know how disappointed I am in the quality of education in this town. My primary concern is curriculum. If teachers would teach the "3 R's" Reading, Writing & arithmetic, our students would be better off. Iowa used to be number one in the nation for academics. Let's get that back. Teachers need to stay away from all things that are not STEM related.

Also pornography in school is abominable. We should all be ashamed.

Sincerely,  
Donna Sims

if they are fighting or bullying. Suspensions, expulsion. It's not happening. Fights break out and the same students are back in class the next day.

⑤ On the night that 504.13 passed hundreds of concerned parents showed up, what was most disappointing is that no attempt to bring those concerned together occurred. Regardless of our differences as parents we all share concern for the students. Solutions to some of the issues being voted on could have brought about unity and both parties feeling heard. For example, fundraising in order to ~~to~~ redo the bathrooms so that they're single stall, closed in like at the new Maroon library.

⑥ Finally in regards to concern over some sexually explicit books that parents don't want in school libraries - at least in K-8. Books such as Gender Queer, etc. I find it interesting that classics like To Kill a Mockingbird, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Of Mice & Men, The Catcher in the Rye have been removed from many school libraries due to concern over use of profanity and the N word, but when parents raise concern over a sexually explicit book they are put down and called names.

We have lost our way and need to return to our roots of academic excellence.

Karen Cloyd  
Marion, Iowa



Kimberly Potrat  
PO Box 513  
Candler NC 28115

TO: The Subcommittee  
FROM: Kimberly Potrat, Moms for Liberty Buncombe Member  
DATE: March 19, 2023  
SUBJECT: Parental Rights

My name is Kimberly Potrat. I am a resident of Buncombe County in North Carolina. I am a mom to nine children, whom seven are now adults, and seventeen grandchildren, whom eight attend Buncombe County Schools presently. I currently homeschool my two children who are still at home. I have chosen to bring a Moms for Liberty to our county because of the lack of being heard or knowing what our children/grandchildren are being taught in our county schools.

My adult children, who now have children of their own, enjoyed their public school education. I enjoyed their public school education. I always felt like part of the team, working through struggles + celebrating successes. I always believed I was being heard and my children's best interests were mostly being worked towards in ways we could always be a part.

When Covid hit and children were forced to be home educated by our public education system, I saw my children were not receiving what they needed. I had begun to question in my mind if they were learning from our children in the ways they were teaching, one being removing or very minimal teaching of cursive writing. Also,

Heritage Foundation

ATTN: Tiffany Justice

Tiffany, we are elated to be apart of this opportunity. Despite the short notice, we are happy to report the first batch of letters! I'm impressed by the turn out and incredible interest this has generated. Parents are still writing, so we'll keep collecting, for now here is what we have.

It's safe to say there are many joyful warriors that are just as dedicated to the survival of America, as we at Moms for Liberty are.

Please know we are praying for you in that. We're also praying over the hearts and minds of each individual that has been led astray.

Let's Get Back to Basics!

Knock 'em dead,  
Geraldine Jones, chair  
of all members of Linn County, IA

NOT LITERALLY  
FOR LEGAL +  
PROFESSIONAL REASONS.  
It's just what they  
say. LOL.

It's  
silly we  
have to  
CLARIFY  
HA.



3-17-23

To whom it may concern:

I never thought I would be writing a letter asking for help to protect my kids in school from an agenda of sexuality, racism, and oppression. Let me start out by saying we teach our kids that everyone is equal in the eyes of God and so everyone should be equal in our eyes as well. It doesn't matter what color a person's skin is or what religion they are or who they love. That is my job as a parent it is not the job of the school to lead my kids any way towards how that school thinks is right. Schools were intended to teach kids the fundamentals of academics not be a place to groom the future generations of people towards a particular social agenda. We now have books in the school library teaching kids how to be more sexual toward others. Kids need to be kids and allow them to grow on their ~~own~~ own. Kids don't even think about or know about sex until grownups bring it up. Kids don't know about racism until adults bring it up. Please help to bring order back to schools. Whether you think it's there or not it is and it's not getting better until someone with power puts a stop

Our children/grandchildren need to be able to go to school and learn the basics. Our teachers need to be able to teach just the basics of education... reading, writing, arithmetic, science and true history. Our children need to know how to spell and how to write in cursive so they can read our founding documents. Our children need to be able to be taught without the confusion of males dressing as females and vice versa. We, the parents and grandparents, need to be able to clearly understand and know what our children are being taught in their classrooms. We, the parents and grandparents, need to be made aware and involved in ANY decisions made on behalf of our children/grandchildren. We, the parents and grandparents, need to know when our children/grandchildren are experiencing confusion and questioning their bodies/lives. I would one day like to see my children return to public school, but this will not happen if the goal remains to dumb down, create gender confusion, and feed our children pornographic trash. Please help us stop this and get back on the right track. You have the power. Will you?

Our education system was not created to teach morals and values. It was created to teach the basics of education. We need to get back to the basics in the classroom and leave the teaching of moral values at home with parents.

I would ask you to support the Parental Bill of Rights that removes wokeism and special agendas out of our schools and puts education back as the focus in our children's classrooms, leaving the teaching of faith, sexuality, gender



Skyleigh Potrat  
PO box 573  
Candler NC 28715

To: The Subcommittee  
From: Skyleigh Kimberly Potrat  
Date: March 19, 2023  
Subject: Parental / Student Rights (Violated)

I am writing with great concern of our current public school situation. Its being destroyed, and the biggest reason (in my opinion) is because the parental rights are being taken away. And because these rights are being taken, I myself am being affected. I am homeschooled, in my 3<sup>rd</sup> year. I'm 15 yrs old, love to read. My mother got me into reading. I'm doing much better in homeschool than I was in public school.

My time in public school was an enjoyable part of my life. The opportunity to be able to socialize with friends and get a good education was very delightful.

Sadly it had to come to an end because there was no true education going on when Zoom was brought in schools. From personal experience the teacher would just assign the work, explain it a little and give it to you to do. That wasn't helpful at all. And then there's CRT! CRT being the belief that America is oppressive and that all the systems need to be torn down.

Greg Parks  
PO Box 458  
Alexander, NC, 28715

To Whom it concerns,

I was very fortunate to have been provided with an excellent public education experience that prepared me for the future. I was able to learn skills, develop talents and build relationships with my peers without pressure of worldly ideologies. I currently have children in elementary school, and I wish for them to have the same educational experience that I enjoyed at their age. Sadly, this just doesn't seem to be a wish that can be fulfilled.

Recently, I have become very concerned about weakness and extreme ideologies and the impacts they have on the public education system. As a parent yourself I'm sure that you share many of these concerns. The educational system is under attack from all sides, you have special interest groups, teacher unions, government entities, elected officials all waging war on the children and parents of this country. Topics of sex, gender, critical race theory, and social emotional learning do not belong in the education system and simple put are not needed. In the words of John Adams "Children should be educated and instructed in the principles of freedom"



3-17-2022

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you in the hopes that this letter may find a small crack in your heart to fight a little harder for our/my children in the great state of Iowa.

My background is in Education and I taught back from 2002 - 2012. My heart just aches for the teachers, staff, and the youth of today. Some way and some how things have taken a drastic turn in a not so positive direction.

It's actually very interesting because I specifically remember sitting around our large family Thanksgiving dinner and my aunt doing a Deep Dive into Common Core Curriculum and the backers of it being Bill + Melinda Gates and their foundation. I knew way back then that we were in trouble and I shortly got out of teaching.

To Whom It May Concern:

The North Carolina Association for the Education of Young Children (NCAEYC) provided schools resources on radical gender theory. The NCAEYC's website hosts a documentary, titled "Reflecting on Anti-bias Education in Action: The Early Years," which features a scene where four- and five-year-old children receive a lesson on "gender identity" from a "non-binary" teacher.

During the video, the teacher speaks to a doll named "Nash" as part of a lesson to the kids. The teacher says, "A friend likes to ask the question, 'Are you a boy or a girl?'" before stating Nash is "just a kid."

One child in the class interjects "but kids can be boys or girls" prompting another to respond "or maybe non-binary." The teacher goes on to repeatedly refer to the doll with the pronoun "they."

And then the video changes to a group of women/teachers discussing this video. Where one states, "It's like they are four and five years old and ~~it's~~ they don't make a big deal out of being a boy or girl."

Another one chimes in and states, "And I think it was a huge testament as to how much we have been talking about it in the classroom, that you never mentioned the term non-binary. I was a child who brought that up because it's constantly in conversation."

So even though we are constantly told our children are not being taught these things, this video shows different. And this is a violation of parental rights in keeping from parents what their children are being taught.



3-16-23

To Whom it May Concern,

The changes going on in education are very alarming. A lot of it stems from the diversity and equity push in my opinion. As a result of this push in our schools, our schools focus on Social emotional learning (SEL) which focus on teaching our children to be accepting of all, takes discipline out of the classroom, and lowers academic standards. Our school district no longer uses the letter grade system - we now use the standards based grading. Assignments are not counted in the grades. Students can retake tests as many times as they want. Time is taken out of academics to focus on SEL, at a time when our students are not proficient in reading and math. Teachers are leaving in large numbers as they can not gain control of their classrooms. Our children are being indoctrinated with topics such as critical race theory (CRT) and gender ideologies. They are being given access to literature which is highly over sexualized. Our schools are in crisis right now. We need help to right this ship before it's too late.

Sincerely-

Pam Gronau, Urbandale

515-265-3378

I was so surprised by the board members and the topics up for discussion. What ever happened to getting back to reading, writing, math? Now its teaching about sex, transgender, pronouns, etc. etc. etc. When will it stop?

If it was solely up to me I would be homeschooling my children so fast because our Education System is failing their students.

Thank you for reading my letter, It's from my heart.

I'd love to be more involved and help.

Sincerely,

Sonia Schumacher  
Urbandale, IA



reviewing the current material that is used and will take parents concerns into consideration for future language arts units. So for my son and this class, it was just too bad. We were given the option to opt out of that book and pick an alternative, which we did. But that did nothing to prevent my son from being exposed to the content of the book. The book was still used in class room instruction and discussion. He still heard about it at table discussion and knew the entire content of the book despite not reading it. Opting out does not work when it is still being discussed in class. He said another kid in his group was so disgusted with what was in the book, he did not want to keep reading it. You know it's bad when you have grossed out 16 year old boys. After this unit I thought perhaps we were in the clear, but we weren't. A few months later the class took a trip to the library to pick out a book to write a short synopsis on. The library teacher had preselected books to showcase different kinds of genres to each class. My son came home and said that every selection was something involving, sexual content, questioning your gender, lgbtq, etc. He was so discouraged he said he told them, I guess I will just pick a book from home. While a handful of kids are okay with this kind of literature, the majority of kids do not want to fill their minds with this kind of filth. These materials are not educational. Porn destroys young minds. Kids do NOT need to be exposed to graphic disturbing sexual content in public school. This is not what I want my tax dollars going towards. We need academics back in school, not activism and graphic sexual content. The people pushing for this kind of atmosphere in school, are destroying any shred of innocence our kids have left. Kids should be able to be kids without having the weight of adult topics and issues being pushed onto them every single day. School should be a place that is safe. Kids should not go home more confused and disturbed after a day at school.

Sincerely-  
Erin  
A concerned Iowa parent

To whom it may concern,

I am a parent of three children and reside in Iowa. I lived in Illinois my entire life until 2014, when we moved to central Iowa. My children are 16, 12 and 10 years old. When we moved to Iowa my oldest was the only one that was old enough to be in school. We specifically looked for an area that had good schools. We had little to no issues for the first few years we lived here. We took pride in our school district and felt very fortunate. Then, in the last few years things have drastically changed. Our district, that used to pride itself on academic excellence, started this slow shift towards focusing on social issues and political ideology more than academics. My elementary school aged children started telling me how much they hate "guidance". Because "they talk about weird and gross things" I thought this was bizarre, as we always had guidance counselors available when I was in school but it was never a class. Fast forward a few years and I find out that guidance is what we now know to be SEL (social emotional learning) My 10 year old has told me for the last few years that her guidance teacher talks about private parts all the time and it makes her terribly uncomfortable. My 12 year old told me that his SEL teacher made a student say the N word. He was mortified. We do not talk like that in our house. At 12 years old he knows language like that is not okay and can't understand why an adult would say that. In middle school he sees kids licking and "grooming" themselves in class because they "identify as a cat". My 10 year old has told me that she has 2 students in her class that have changed from girls to boys. She said one student "used to have beautiful long hair and this year she cut it all off and demands to be called a them". She was so confused by this and asked me how this happens. In addition to the identify crisis we have children with terrible violent behavior towards teachers and other students. Teachers are no longer allowed to discipline due to "equity". My kids do not have homework due to "equity". My oldest child that is in high school told me the other day, he did not have to deal with any of these things when he was in elementary school. He can remember normal school days but my youngest two have not been afforded that luxury. Gender theory and gender confusion has blown up like a wild fire. This was not an issue just a few years ago. Why is the suicide rate higher among youth now? The people in favor of this claim its due to a lack of support. We have more support, more clinics, more "treatments" now more than ever, so if their theory is true, why wouldn't the suicide rates be higher years ago when there wasn't any support? Gender ideology has taken over every aspect of public school. Kids are easily manipulated and generally trust the adults in their lives, the teachers that are pushing this stuff are completely taking advantage of young malleable minds. This is insidious child abuse. My oldest started to see these changes by middle school, the shift started to happen. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade he had numerous teachers that covered their rooms with flags posters and propaganda that made it more than clear where they stand politically and socially. Learning took a backseat to social issues. He had numerous teachers that focused their time and energy on protests, lgbtq issues, blm, equity, etc. Then last year when he entered high school, I was shocked when I saw the REQUIRED curriculum for language arts. The required readings contained foul language, cussing, explicit sexual conversations and topics, depictions of masturbation, rape, incest and many other grotesque topics. I could not believe that this was in public schools. I promptly emailed my sons teacher and the superintendent. I was met with a condescending email in response saying "I appreciate your concerns" but no changes would be made to the current material but that they will be



has lost multiple friends due to this new way of "being cool."

My 5th grade son's music teacher is a gay, white male who is married and has a son in the school. He teaches the kids about white male privilege - in the scope of musicians like Elvis, and has a Pride flag in his classroom.

Parents are responsible for teaching morals. Our schools must remove SEL, CRT, activities and social instruction from their curriculum, and get back to Math, Reading & Science.

Thank you -  
Michelle Veach  
Wife, Mom of Gabi (8th grade)  
Gavin (5th grade)

Jonathan LA

3/17/23

To Whomever will listen:

Our schools won't listen. They won't dialog and they don't respect parents. I have spoken at school board meetings, written letters, asked for meetings - and receive a polite listen, followed by dismissal.

Teachers are assigning books that are sexually explicit, contain swear words and have more detailed sexual acts than my 8th grade kid is allowed to watch (or wants to watch) on TV. We have meetings - that go no-where. Book reconsideration committees that publicly mock parents - and still don't result in changes in our curriculum.

Our middle school has GSA clubs - that result in groups of girls deciding they are "non-binary" and use pronouns of their choice. Students who don't use the pronoun of the day are disciplined - over and over. My 14 yr old daughter



behavior while well behaved  
Students who do what ~~are~~ is  
expected are ignored. We are  
teaching kids negative behaviors  
Get attention. We are also  
teaching kids too much about  
their emotions excusing their  
outbursts as "okay to feel."  
Life isn't fair, it is okay to  
feel but not okay to lash out  
in response.

- Not enough Patriotism in  
School.

- Quality of education. Math  
content is not rigorous

- Content = my kids (3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>)  
came home asking me what  
bias was. BOOKS!! I shouldn't

have to worry about my students  
being expose at school to  
non-age appropriate or sexual  
content.

- Lack of grading. No child  
left behind and standards  
based grading are a joke! 3

To whom it may concern,  
I am writing you to make  
you aware of the reality in  
public education. I work in  
public education in a Des Moines  
metro community. We picked our  
home because of the schools. To  
make this letter less lengthy and  
easier to read I will make a  
list of concerns:

1. Class sizes

2. Rules requiring "least restrictive  
environment" can and does put  
other students in danger and  
slows the educational growth in  
a classroom. Serious consideration  
needs to be given to all student  
affected by one student's behaviors.  
A student should not be allowed  
to destroy a classroom, continually  
cuss, hit, and expose innocent  
classmates to this daily. Teachers  
need help and laws requiring  
a Free and Fair Public Education  
and least restrictive environment,



March 18, 2023

Dear Elected Officials,

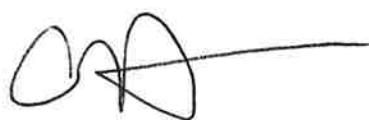
I am writing to describe the experience I had trying to remove inappropriate material from my public school district. In 2021, I worked alongside a small group of concerned parents to remove material showing and describing sex acts from the school district. One parent had filed two reconsideration requests with the district that were in process at the time. This reconsideration process is a policy recommended by our State School Board Association and looks very similar across all districts. I will say that policy is flawed and has many weak points.

The policy calls for students to sit on the committee to judge the very material that is being challenged because it may not be appropriate for them. The committee is hand picked by a school authority. There is an appeal process if you don't agree with the first committee's determination, but it includes more committees containing individuals that work alongside many of the people on the first committee. And in the case I'm familiar with, all subsequent committees cited the first committee's decision as part of the basis for their decision. The fox is guarding the henhouse; the district is policing itself.

We also wrote a letter to our county attorney asking that they investigate the district for dissemination of pornography under Iowa Criminal Code. They responded saying they needed a police report before they could act. We went to the police department and tried to file a complaint and they declined saying that they couldn't use that particular section of the Code to bring charges. When the state legislature was approached about this situation, they told us that the existing Code was sufficient to deal with this issue and pointed us back to the district. As you can see, it's a circle, with no policies or laws robust or comprehensive enough to deal with the matter of protecting our children.

We have been accused of banning books, which is not the case, rather we are wanting age-appropriate material available to all children. There are rating systems which could accomplish this very thing, and we use them with other material our children consume all the time. However, the school districts oppose this kind of solution, and we are directed to a substandard reconsideration request procedure when we have concerns. For reasons like this I support a parental bill of rights as schools are not willing to work with parents.

Sincerely,



Carrie Wright  
West Des Moines, IA

that spending money on D.E.I. is appropriate. Smaller class sized & more associates in a classroom will help improve achievement gaps.

- Constant talk of creating equal outcomes. If student efforts aren't ~~that~~ there outcomes won't ever be the same. We need to teach children you got to work for things you want.

- # of Hours required should be capped. Our school had 10 extra days last year & 13 the year before.

- more talks about more secondary private or charter school options would be nice

- the amount of resources being completely absorbed by students seeking attention. Pretending to be gay one week and straight the next. Distracting others w/ the way they dress → 5



To Whom It May Concern:

I am a parent of two young boys in the Johnston Community School District and am very concerned about their public education.

The district seems to be more concerned about Social, Emotional, Learning (SEL) than they are teaching Reading, Math, writing, Arithmetic. My 3<sup>rd</sup> grader comments all the time about how the counselor wants to know how he is "feeling". Why is this such a focus?

Accountability - The District does not hold any kids accountable. They are always allowed to re-take tests to try to get a better grade, always allows late assignments. How is this preparing kids for the real world? They need to be held accountable for their assignments & work. →

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC  
01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

March 17, 2023

To whom it may concern,

This is in regards to public education. I have four children - 28, 24, 17, & 14. The last few years, things have been way different and disappointing.

We have experienced assignments on BLM & Critical Race Theory. We have had an extreme liberal agenda inserted into classrooms.

The amount of homework is almost none. The level of material has been lowered. Students can re-do assignments as many times as it takes. And if they don't do it, they automatically get 50%. Instead of a zero. Students are graduating who can not read. Social Emotional Learning is taking up 30% of learning time and is damaging, not helping.

The entire system needs fixed. Teachers want to teach. Kids need to learn. The indoctrination is real. I have heard it from teachers and Admin.

Please save our schools and help our kids and students.

304 Kellogg Av  
Dallas Center IA 50063

Thank you,  
Shellic Gluckhart  
(515-416)-5117



Immediately, I started receiving emails and phone calls stating that the book would be removed and not shown in her school again. I was not satisfied with that answer as I had to keep inquiring if the teacher would alert the other parents that this book was discussed. Reluctantly, she did but, my trust was broken.

In my home, I teach my children that if we are ever lost or separated from each other to find a mom or dad with kids, a cashier, or police officer for help. What the school actually taught my daughter by showing her that book, was racism. They taught her how to identify people by the color of their skin. They also completely undermined my parenting by indoctrinating my child into an anti-police agenda as a police officer is considered a safe person in my home. Instead, they taught those kids that police officers identify people by the color of their skin and murder them for it. That is a political ideology that has absolutely zero business inside our schools.

Due to the trust that was broken between the teacher and myself, my husband and I pulled our two girls from public schools and immediately enrolled them in private education.

To Whom it May Concern-

I am a mom of three children in a small, fast growing town, Wauke, Iowa. In April of 2021, my 8 year old daughter looked at me and asked me a question. She said, "Mom, do cops sometimes kill people?" Very carefully, I asked her where she heard that and she answered that her teacher had told her that a cop had shot a black man they assumed had a gun, but didn't. Cautiously, I approached the teacher for clarification. She advised me that this was a classroom question and she answered appropriately and also let the children view a book online called, Something Happened in Our Town. In this book are the phrases, "the cops shot him because he was black," and "Cops don't like black men." When I questioned the content and why parents weren't made aware of such heavy classroom conversations- so we can continue the discussion at home- I was immediately told that these were the updated equity standards passed by the school board in August 2020. Concerned by the blatant political ideology geared towards small children, I also tried discussing this with the principal. She too, gave me the same blanket answer- this was an appropriate classroom discussion and book, per their updated equity standards. Becoming highly concerned with what my child was learning and the lack of transparency between the teachers and the parents, I took screenshots of the book + emailed them to the teacher, principal, superintendent + the entire school board.



To whom it may concern,

I am sharing my concerns regarding our public education system. My kids, my nieces and nephews and many of my friends' kids have been directly affected by the lack of transparency between the school system and parents. In some cases this has been with an inappropriate book that was assigned as a reading assignment. In other cases, this has been with a teacher injecting their personal belief about religion/politics/their world view in the classroom to sway conversation and belittle a student's religious view or personal belief on a topic. There is no room for this in a classroom! There has been intentional indoctrination injected into lessons being taught in the classroom with a one-sided view point. Many times there is no room for a conservative Christian view. Healthy debate should not be stifled!

Another concern I have is with students behavior issues. In these cases when a student faces no consequences for their actions, it puts all other students in a safety concern. Please look into these issues for our future generations! Abolish the DOE and give education to the states control.

Thank you,  
Elicia Brancheau  
Adel IA

Approximately, six months after removing our children from public education, we discovered that our public school libraries were full of books that can only be described as sexually explicit. Books that glorify child molestation, incest, and rape. Books that teach underage children how to safely send nude pictures of themselves to other underage children. Books that encourage children to research kink fantasies ~~etc~~ online, with like minded people.

I am one parent, of potentially millions, who are concerned about the education their children are receiving in public schools. Far left political ideology has taken root, and is being pushed as the new normal.

These issues are impacting children and parents alike. Our children deserve better than the garbage they're being indoctrinated into. I had no intentions of ever utilizing private education. However, due to the far left political ideology in the vast majority of all schools, we have no choice. Our children deserve better, and better they will receive.

I believed in public schools, I trusted the teachers and their lesson plans. Until every last one of them broke that trust with me.

We need to bring back common sense to our country, our leaders, and our schools - for the betterment of ALL of our children.

Respectfully,

Amanda McClanahan



To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to let you know of our family's experiences and concerns regarding public education. The behavior issues my daughter has experienced from other students in the classroom has directly and negatively impacted her learning. During her sixth grade year when it was at its worst, her math and english scores fell from the previous year. The red tape placed on schools greatly inhibits their ability to effectively discipline or remove disruptive students. I believe many of these policies are coming from requirements from the federal level.

In the last few years, we have also experienced obvious indoctrination of gender ideology. Students are regularly asked inappropriate questions regarding sexuality and there is an increasingly hostile environment towards students with a christian worldview.

There are real and serious problems plaguing the public school system. The Department of Education needs to be dismantled and the federal government should remove itself from public education and return control to the states.

Thank you,

Angela Wenell  
Dallas Center, IA

To Whom it May Concern:

Our public schools are failing our children. Spelling was taken out of curriculum when my youngest son was in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and my oldest was in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. My youngest still struggles with spelling and reading and is two years behind where he should be. The basics have been replaced with social & emotional learning which is nothing more than socialist/marxist indoctrination.

We made the decision to leave Public School shortly after my youngest son was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. He asked me if he could stop going to Music class. When I asked why, he told me he didn't want to be made to feel bad for being white anymore. His music teacher was teaching them that to be white was to be an oppressor.

The materials available to our young, impressionable students via the school libraries is appalling. Nothing short of pornography. There is an agenda sweeping the nation and its taking place in tax funded public schools. It needs to be stopped! We need to get back to the basics of educating our children with facts, not feelings. With teaching them critical thinking skills, not what to think. Something needs to change, the future of America is at stake!

Sincerely,  
Amber Williams  
Urbandale, Iowa



3-19-23

To Whom it May Concern,

When my child was 8, he came home from school asking to take a DNA test. As a biracial child, he was hoping a DNA test could tell him how black he was. He wished to have darker skin like his dad. He was ashamed to be white. Did this make him ashamed of me? Did this make him ashamed of all of his white family? The DEI push in schools are destroying our children and our country.

Our schools have shifted away from teaching our children. This is not a made up problem - its very real. ICA members of Congress cannot see this, your eyes are closed.

Adults have a very real responsibility. We can either teach our children how to become productive adults - or we can continue to push division - This country is not one I remember I want my children and grand children to have the same opportunities as we had growing up. We are losing everything - and quickly.

To Whom it May Concern,

We need to get our education system back on track! The state of Iowa used to be known for its strong education. Now, as test scores decline throughout the state, it seems classroom time is spent on social issues. This should not be the priority of school administrators or teachers.

As a parent, I send my children to school to learn English, math, science and social studies. The Covid pandemic set our children back years and we are now seeing those results.

We have so much catching up to do to get our children to where they should be so that they can be productive adults in society. When will this happen?

School administrators and teachers need to stay out of social and gender issues and leave that to the parents. Parents know their children and it is their responsibility to guide those discussions. I do not want teachers pushing their own personal agenda on my children. Again, not their job!

What kind of adults will we be sending out in society if our biggest priority in schools is social issues? They will not be prepared for higher learning at all.

Let's get back to the basics! The future of our country depends on the children of today and right now, the education system is failing them.

Thank you,  
Mindy Pogemiller



3.17.23

To Whom It May Concern:

This year I have struggled with protecting my kids from sexually explicit reading materials in my school. The policies to complete opt out forms only relate to cataloged main libraries, I am responsible for finding which of the 24,000+ books contain this content. The school does not keep track of this information. I was told by our district librarian our school does not have any sexually explicit books yet I have found 40 already.

When I asked if my library opt out form with those 40 books would also cover the non cataloged private teachers libraries as indicated by administration at a previous school board meeting I was told NO. The library book opt out form was intended for use in the main libraries only per our school attorney's & the IASB.

So I have NO way to document with my kids teachers the books I don't want them to read. I have Zero protection when it comes to teachers private libraries. I have to "trust" them.

To Whom It May Concern-

I am writing to share my concerns with the state of education in Iowa.

My first concern is with transparency. With my older daughter I was able to view curriculum online for her upcoming classes. When my younger daughter began high school that was no longer an option. I had to contact each teacher to view curriculum in person.

I also had to file a request to opt my daughter out of surveys because she was being given surveys asking her pronouns & other private information so often.

My daughter contacted me in the fall of this school year & told me she was uncomfortable with what she was being required to read & learn about in health - the different sexualities. I was not informed my daughter would be learning about this topic & was told it was required by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning. →



spelling I am told to search up apps on the phone or online spelling programs. Why? Because the teachers are too busy to teach spelling past 3rd grade. Oh... and he should read more to help with his spelling. I am so frustrated! My child is smart but needs help with spelling and I can't get that from my school. This will affect his ability to get good jobs in the future. Spelling, punctuation & grammar are the first things employers see on a job application or resume.

Typing. Kids are on computers more than ever yet they aren't being taught the very basic skill of proper typing. Basic academic teaching is practically non-existent.

I taught my kids cursive handwriting.

I make my kids practice typing at home.

I teach my 10th grader spelling. What the heck do I send my kids to school for??

I'm not comfortable with that. We have a teacher currently promoting "banned books" in our school. Do you think she won't give them to my kids? I'm afraid she will target them!

My superintendent has no intention of helping me either. So everyday I get the pleasure of sending my kids to a school where they could be provided pornographic content without my knowledge or consent. My school is no longer a "safe" place for my kids to go.

The other issue we have in our school is the unfair, make it up as you go & favoritism discipline "policy" in our school. Some kids are guilty until proven innocent & made examples of while others innocent even when guilty.

Another concern is lack of academic learning. My school doesn't teach spelling past 3rd grade. My 10th grader is a terrible speller & when I ask for help with his



To Whom it May Concern

As a parent and grandparent I'm very concerned about what's taking place in our schools today.

What's happening in our schools today is unconscionable. Propaganda and indoctrination of our children is real and must be stopped. Teachers today are working to instill the ideas that the pillars of our Western civilization were evil and their memories deserve to be thrown in the trash. This is called "Wrong Thinking". They then try other ways to propagandise our children through the normalization of their views and positions as non-political. Suppression of "Wrong Think" is equally as brainwashing our children. This has to stop.

We send our children to school to learn to read, write and learn their basic skills to help them succeed in life. They should be taught the alphabet, forming proper sentences, using proper English, about our Great Country's history, flaws and all. Not indoctrinated into a world of gender identity, hatred of our country and it's people.

I want my kids ~~pop~~ properly educated. I don't even know what to call what they are getting in school. But it's not a solid academic education that is ~~not~~ expected.

Our kids deserve better!

Sincerely frustrated,  
Sara Termeding  
Manning IA



not the truth. Get back to the Basics of reading, writing, arithmetic and saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

From a concerned  
Parent and Grandparent  
Michelle White  
Oliver Iowa

SEL - Social Emotional Learning is destroying our children. Teachers are completely shutting out the parents. Our schools are being used as radical indoctrination mills.

Years ago teachers taught the facts and basics. They did not promote a political agenda or discuss their sex lives. They would have been fired. Now innocent 6-7 year olds are being told they can choose their gender and change whenever they want. This push by our DOE for anti-American, anti-Judeo Christian, anti-white agendas has to stop.

The pornographic material in our middle and high schools needs to be removed. Years ago this too would have been outlawed and people would have been fired. But today with our DOE's propaganda it's to be totally acceptable WRONG. What's happening in our schools today is making our society unrecognizable.

We must get back to the basics our country and schools were founded on. Stop indoctrinating our children with ideology that is



March 17, 2023

To whom it may concern:

I'm a dad in Des Moines area who moved my two adopted Ethiopian kids from public to private school 2 years ago... when I was completely frustrated by the public school COVID "mitigation" efforts. Public school boards around the state completely ignored what vast majority of parents wanted and did what their political masters demanded. That's the real reason school choice is passing in many states.

What I found in private DMC was a school that is doing a far better job preparing my kids for being adults... teaching them RESPONSIBILITY ACCOUNTABILITY ORGANIZATION, and TIME MANAGEMENT. Public school was shuffling them one grade to the next, as they fell further behind. They are now learning so much more working their asses off, to get Bs + Cs, than they were getting straight As at public school.

EQUITY is the effort to equalize outcomes. It's unamerican. It's destroying public schools. Get back to basics. Thank God for school choice movement.

Mike Tenkard Johnston, IA

To Whom It May Concern,

I grew up attending public school in the same city my children go to school. Over the past 400 years it has become clear the priorities in school have changed dramatically since I graduated 25 years ago. I am shocked to see a smallish town in Iowa become so divided between people who want to maintain their value systems and those who feel everyone needs to agree or be called names. High school kids being pulled into adult conversations about decency and age-appropriateness? Activities coordinating students to protest school board members? Adults encouraging students to walk out of class to protest legislation at the capital? The infiltration of activism with our youth is apparent daily. I no longer felt comfortable sending my daughter to public school where she would have to face difficult conversations about her belief system and distractions that have nothing to do with academics. The final straw for me was when the middle school was allowed to print an article in





Jennifer Turner &lt;moms4libertypolkcounty@gmail.com&gt;

## Letter from concerned parent

1 message

Ang Horner &lt;angie\_marie13@hotmail.com&gt;

Sat, Mar 18, 2023 at 2:57 PM

To: "moms4libertypolkcounty@gmail.com" &lt;moms4libertypolkcounty@gmail.com&gt;

To whom it may concern:

I have a 2nd grade son and a 4th grade daughter, both attending South Side Elementary in the Hampton-Dumont School District. I work at the Franklin County Treasurer's office and am a proud resident of Hampton, Iowa!

I have recently written a letter to the school board to address some concerns I have about the CASEL approved curriculum in the Hampton-Dumont Community School District. I am waiting to hear a response. I just attended my first board meeting last month, and plan to continue attending as many as my schedule permits.

In our district, I have had the opportunity to look over some books and teachers' manuals. I have also talked with the curriculum director and elementary principal at H-D multiple times. I have been told that our teachers are generally conservative and I don't need to worry about the social emotional learning in our schools because we have good teachers with similar values and beliefs as my own. I was also told that our schools do not support or teach CRT. While it is great to hear that our teachers are conservatives with similar values and beliefs as myself (not really sure what that comment really meant....), that is not the concern I have. I feel academia needs to be neutral. It needs to be taught with truth and without bias. We need math, reading, writing, history, arts, and yes, even social and interpersonal skills being taught in a neutral manner. But the CASEL approved curriculum being used in many school districts is a framework for education that is anything close to being neutral and is embedded with critical race theory and attempts to influence our children's values and beliefs.

The CASEL approved curriculum our district is using for social emotional learning (SEL) is called *Caring School Community*. The CASEL approved language arts curricula I have found being used are *Being a Reader*, *Being a Writer*, and *Making Meaning*.

By doing some research and reviewing curriculum and teachers' manuals, I could quickly see the connection between the critical race theory framework from CASEL in the curriculum our school is using. I found this in the teacher's manual under section heading "Why SEL and Community Matters".

Legislators:

For years my son was getting straight As at public school, never had homework, never studied for a test, never stressed about school... at the same time showing clear difficulty with basic math concepts and struggling to read... bombing in the 10-20 percentile every standardized test each year. Teachers were unconcerned "He's a good kid... he'll be fine" It's true, but we knew he was falling behind academically.

- Despite his objections, 2 years ago in 8<sup>th</sup> grade we moved him to private school. He learned more about life, being an adult, preparing for graduation in 1 year than he had learned in all his previous time at public school. He has learned about deadlines, prioritizing his time, he has learned grammar, learned to write more coherently, learned that there are consequences for poor preparation.

- Thank goodness my family has financial means to provide him this opportunity. I wish all families regardless of income, had some choice my family had. There are already HAVES + HAVE NOTS. Let's provide for more HAVES!

From Darin Kerry  
Des Moines, Iowa



In addition to a solid research base, *Making Meaning* has been shaped by pilot testing and discussions with a wide range of classroom teachers to assure that it is effective and that it fits into a typical classroom day. The *Making Meaning* program can replace an existing reading comprehension program or supplement basal instruction. It is designed to be accessible to all students, whatever their reading levels, and includes support for English Language Learners.

#### DUAL FOCUS: ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL/ETHICAL LEARNING

The *Making Meaning* program is also unique in its focus on teaching the whole child. Child development research tells us that children learn and grow best in environments where their basic psychological needs are met. Children need to feel physically and emotionally safe. They need to feel that they belong. They need to have a sense of themselves as autonomous and capable. Studies indicate that when these basic needs are met at school by helping students experience a sense of community, the students do better academically (as measured over time by grades and test scores), exhibit more pro-social tendencies, and show greater resistance to problem behaviors, such as drug use and violence (Durlack et al. 2011).

To this end, the *Making Meaning* program helps you create a classroom community in which your students feel a strong sense of belonging, psychological safety, autonomy, and responsibility to themselves and to the group. Teachers know that such an environment does not just happen; it must be deliberately created through setting up purposeful interactions among students, teaching them social and problem-solving skills, and helping them to integrate pro-social values into their lives. As you teach the *Making Meaning* lessons, you will see that the children's ability to learn teaching comprehension strategies is inextricably linked to their ability to work together and bring democratic values like responsibility, respect, fairness, caring, and helpfulness to bear on their behavior and interactions.\*

#### TEACHER SUPPORT

The program is designed to help you develop and practice valuable teaching skills as you support your students' growth as readers. Detailed, easy-to-follow lesson plans include suggestions for introducing and practicing cooperative structures, conducting read-alouds, facilitating discussions, assessing the class, and conferring with individual students. Teacher Notes and references to professional development media throughout the lessons explain the underlying pedagogy of various activities and provide examples of what might happen in the classroom. A regular "You might say" feature provides you with language you might draw on as you model your thinking about a strategy.

\*To read more about the theoretical and research basis for the *Making Meaning* program, please refer to the Bibliography on page 720.

It also talks about helping students understand specific values, and while I agree that the values stated are very important; as a parent I want to be able to instill in my children what I believe are my family values and not what the school curriculum states should be their core values let alone in a language arts class. I would like our district to find a curriculum that fully supports straight forward unbiased reading, writing, spelling, and vocabulary to get the focus back on enhancing our students' language arts advancement.

## Why SEL and Community Matter

An extensive body of research demonstrates what many teachers have long known—that building a safe and caring school community and attending to social and emotional learning (SEL) are essential to students' overall success. When students feel connected to their schools, they not only perform better academically, they develop the emotional resilience, healthy relationship skills, and strong moral compasses that serve them well for their entire lives.

Children learn best in communities where their basic psychological needs are met (Connell 1990, Deci and Ryan 1985). These include autonomy, belonging, acceptance, and physical and emotional safety. Children also need to feel competent and able to make sense of what they are learning. When such basic needs are met, students feel safe to express themselves and take the risks required for learning. Conversely, children who experience chronic fear and anxiety are less likely to learn effectively and often have difficulty concentrating and performing up to their potential (Jensen 2005; Siegel and Bryson 2011).

Given these realities, it is not surprising that students in a caring school community tend to do better academically. A meta-analysis of 213 randomized-controlled studies of SEL programs found that students who experienced such teaching and learning demonstrated significantly higher academic achievement, in addition to improved social and emotional skills; more positive classroom behavior; fewer problem behaviors such as violence, bullying, delinquency, and drug use, and reduced emotional problems such as depression or stress disorders (Durlak 2011; Sklad et al. 2012).

These findings are consistent with evaluations made over a 20-year period by the Child Development Project (CDP), the precursor to the *Caring School Community* program, which found that students who experienced effective SEL approaches had significantly greater achievement gains in both language arts and mathematics compared to control-school students, as measured by grades and standardized tests (San Francisco Unified School District 2006; Marshall and Caldwell 2007; Schaps, Battistich, and Solomon 2004). Moreover, these positive effects followed the students of high-implementation elementary schools into their middle school years, where they demonstrated higher grades in their core academic classes, higher achievement test scores, and less misconduct at school (Battistich et al. 1997).

Caring school communities are absolutely essential if we are to eliminate the disparities in educational outcomes that exist in American schooling today. The "school-to-prison pipeline" has become a shamefully common phenomenon in which the behavior of particular students—primarily poor, African American and Latino boys—is criminalized from an early age. These students are suspended, expelled, and arrested at school at much higher rates than white students, even for comparable behaviors (American Civil Liberties Union 2015). Understandably, such disproportionate and punitive treatment causes many students to become disengaged and fall behind their peers, leading to higher dropout rates, fewer life options, and often incarceration. A caring school community provides an alternative scenario that promotes positive behavior for all students through direct teaching of responsibility, empathy, and cooperation, in a setting where students feel known and cared for. Students become intrinsically motivated to contribute productively to a community they are invested in, rather than feeling coerced into compliance (often ineffectively) through harsh punishments.

To read more about why SEL and caring communities matter in school, refer to the Bibliography.







A year ago when I first met with the curriculum director at H-D, I specifically asked if the school does any SEL surveys. She said no but told me there would be a survey later that spring to gauge the safety of the school district. She said it was harmless and nothing for me to worry about. When the survey came out, I looked into it and discovered it was a school climate Panorama survey. When I questioned the survey, my emails were ignored. I have since asked the district superintendent about the purpose of the survey, how the results are reported back to the school, cost to conduct and interpret, and what the district has done with the data reported from the survey. I have not yet heard back. Parents do have an option to opt-out but it is not widely publicized.

I have also emailed the middle school and high school principals and the district librarian to discuss the possible removal of some books with explicit content. I have been emailed by the high school principal, saying he passed along my concern to the superintendent and will have discussions after spring break in our district. I look forward to hearing from them!

I think we can all agree we want our children to grow up to be positive contributors to society. I also think we can agree that school is not a place for indoctrination, but a place for unbiased education. And lastly, I think we can all agree that our public schools are not doing a good job of teaching reading, writing, and math, as many of our students are falling behind, way behind. We all need to do better. Our children deserve more!

Sincerely,

Angela Horner

Angela Horner  
618 1st Ave SE  
Hampton, IA 50441  
512-627-4571  
angie\_marie13@hotmail.com