

To: Dr. Thacker and PHM Board of Trustees
From: Strengthen our Schools PHM District

July 21st, 2021

Dear Dr. Thacker and Board of Trustees,

Strengthen our Schools is a rapidly growing group of parents and PHM community members which seeks to ensure that every child who attends a PHM school is treated as an individual of inherent worth and afforded the opportunity to maximize their potential.

Dr. Thacker has recently issued a public statement which says that "**PHM is not teaching CRT**". We do not believe this is an accurate statement. We believe that it uses the term "CRT" in the narrow sense of the academic legal theory historically taught in graduate school, which obscures what is actually taking place in the PHM curriculum.

Through the materials released to the public via recent FOIA requests, we have been and continue to be alarmed at some of the what the district has incorporated (or intended to incorporate) into its "Social Emotional Learning" (S.E.L.) curriculum which have (1) associated negative characteristics with particular races, (2) referred to the idea that hard work results in achievement as a myth, and (3) equated incredibly mainstream political slogans such as "Make America Great Again" as equivalent to the KKK and Neo-Nazis on a "Pyramid of White Supremacy".

We see these events as evidence that despite the recent public statement to the contrary, PHM curriculum is being infiltrated by the tenets of a deeply divisive political philosophy under the guise of "anti-racism" that has come to be associated with the term Critical Race Theory (CRT).

Specifically, we see the following practical aspects of CRT in the SEL curriculum:

1. Promoting the idea that a person's identity is primarily defined by the groups that they may be perceived as belonging to rather than as individuals.
2. After dividing people into such groups portraying them as uniformly "oppressors" or "oppressed". This leads to negative stereotyping of certain groups.
3. Smearing of anyone who objects to this stereotyping as a racist themselves.

We believe that it is morally perverse to stereotype any group of people based on their biological traits. Instead, every PHM student should, in all circumstances, be treated as an individual and judged by the content of their character and actions and never by their perceived group associations. Similarly, students should not be held accountable or made to feel responsible for the actions of others with whom they may share certain biological or historic traits.

Finally, we want to be clear that we are not afraid of exposing and studying our nation's failings. At the same time, we stand against false and dishonest attempts to reduce the complexities of history in order to portray our country as irredeemably flawed or wicked. A fair and just reading of history requires that we also teach the incredibly unique and wonderful accomplishments of our nation as well.

In light of the above we call on the school board to take the following actions:

1. Commit to removing all curriculum and internal training materials that stereotype the members of any race, gender, religion, disability, political party or other perceived group and to

preventing such curriculum from being re-introduced.

2. Commit to the promotion of the ideal that each person should be treated as an individual and not as a representative of their perceived groups.
3. Commit to a honest teaching of history that promotes the great foundational ideals of our nation. Specifically, the concepts of inalienable individual rights, freedom of speech, equality under the law, economic freedom, personal property, and limited government. As is true for all nations, the United States has at times deeply failed to live up to these ideals - and these failures should be taught. But the tremendous progress that has been made towards these ideals should also be taught.
4. Commit that the PHM curriculum, its teachers, administrators, and consultants will not promote the view that the United States is fundamentally flawed and that its foundational principles should be replaced by socialism, communism, or any other system where people are seen primarily as members of oppressor / oppressed groups.
5. Increase transparency about what is being taught at PHM through the following:
 - a. Immediately publish all S.E.L. materials being used by the district and commit to providing these prominently on the PHM website. Commit to updating this site within 30 days of any changes in such curriculum going forward.
 - b. Make the names of all textbooks and other materials being used by teachers available prominently on the PHM website no later than October 1st, 2021 school year. Commit to keeping this up to date within 30 days of any changes going forward.
6. Provide access to all training materials used for both teachers and administrators on the PHM website by November 1st, 2021. Commit to keeping this up to date within 30 days of any changes going forward.
7. Whenever a controversial contemporary topic is going to be taught, commit that both sides of the topic will be fairly represented. In such discussions the emphasis should be on teaching students how to evaluate evidence and arguments with logic.

In closing, we want to acknowledge the great work that so many of the teachers and administrators at PHM do. We love our school district, and we are here to support any teacher or administrator who is seeking the best for all our children.

At the same time, we want to make it clear that our confidence in the current oversight of this issue has been broken. In order to restore the PHM triangle of success, the board must take action to bring

Students, Parents, and Teachers back together again. Going forward, we will be watching what is happening within our schools much more closely and we will hold you accountable. We will not tolerate the introduction of racial stereotyping, segregation, or political activism into our schools.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

 7/21/2021

George J Bashura III and Parent Committee of Strengthen Our Schools-PHM District