

Critical Race Theory Comment

Joye McClure <fullofjoye2@yahoo.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 12:30 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Graduation Caps

To all our Educators, School Board, and others...

Children are not racist and they don't see color. This is an attempt to teach color, race, and DIVIDE our young. It is indoctrination. It is not your place to teach! An overstep of your job description. Whatever happen to teaching good old Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic????????? This will further confuse, complicate their ideals we have taught them as parents. Our kiddos get enough mixed signals from all the "crap" thrown at them from the world; school, government, social media, news, etc.

It is our place as guardians, parents, to love, teach morals and values, guide, get along with our fellow man and so much more; not yours.

*Joye McClure
Parent of a 9th and 10th grader at SHS*

Graduation Caps

Paperless Post

Yahoo Mail Stationery

public comment: critical race theory

Anne <teachercmann@hotmai.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 1:12 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

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Critical Race Theory--is it the word critical or the word race that so scares people? Critical as in critical thinking-- shouldn't we all want our students to think critically. I certainly do. Or is it that talking about race is uncomfortable? Uncomfortable because we all know, despite our high ideals of liberty and justice for all, that racial inequities are still so so pervasive?

I am not well versed in CRT, but I know racial inequities exist and are embedded in policies and systems in ways I often don't even recognize. I know we as a country, at all levels, need to recognize this and make systemic changes.

I know school districts need to have these conversations as well. I know we in SPS need to have these conversations. I understand there are some in the community who want to stop conversations about race, who are scared of the term CRT. I am not sure they understand CRT, but something in the name scares them enough to try to stop it rather than to understand. Our job is to educate them as we do our students not to back off these critical conversations.

We all say we want our district and our schools to be safe, welcoming places for ALL of our students and their families. Making that happen starts with our school board.

Anne Goff

Critical Race Theory - need for education, not fear

Kelley E <edwards.kelley@gmail.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 2:14 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

What is about *Critical Race* Theory that is so frightening to some people? Teaching our students to be critical thinkers is one of our fundamental jobs as teachers. The word *critical* shouldn't be so scary. And racial inequities exist. Saying they don't won't make them go away. Not talking about them won't make any of us feel better, especially not community members of color. I understand that *race* is uncomfortable for a lot of people to talk about, but it doesn't need to be scary either.

I am not an expert at understanding all the principles of Critical Race Theory, but I do know that racial inequities exist and are embedded in policies and systems in ways that many of us, myself included, often don't even recognize. It is culturally normalized. I know that as a country, at all levels, we need to un-normalize the structures that hold up the racial inequities, and we need to have the brave conversations and take the brave positions that will lead to transformation and eventually to healing.

All school districts, including our own, need to have these conversations.

I understand there are some in our community who want to stop conversations about race and who are frightened by the term CRT. I am not sure they understand CRT, and if not, our job is to educate them as we do our students, not pull back from these critical conversations.

We all want our district, all of our schools, and each of our classrooms to be safe and welcoming places for ALL of our students and their families. Making that happen starts with our school board.

Thank you for your attention,
Kelley Edwards

Public comment, board meeting June 14, 2021 (a kind comment)

Nancy Willard <nwillard@embracecivility.org>

Sun 6/13/2021 3:11 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

Cc: Todd Hamilton <todd.hamilton@springfield.k12.or.us>; Taylor.Madden@springfield.k12.or.us
<Taylor.Madden@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Hello Springfield board, Todd, and Taylor,

I do understand that massive protest about teaching Critical Race Theory is coming your way. Apparently to be expected. And likely to spread throughout the state.

Some suggested language in response. "Critical Race Theory is a theory that underlies university-level studies. It is not K-12 curriculum. Springfield Public Schools will commit to teaching a fact-based portrayal of history that allows students to gain accurate understandings. We are also dedicated to achieving a higher level of equity and inclusion in our schools to ensure the success of every student. To this end we will not be referring to people, facts, or situations as racist or involving racism."

This last point seems to be of particular importance. I strongly suggest avoiding using any language in any of your school publications that refers to racism, racist, anti-racist, homophobia, or anti-homophobia. These appear to be trigger words to this crowd. I also strongly advise against calling any student a "bully." These kinds of labels divert the attention from behavior.

I do not know if you can possibly educate these folks, but one of the key underlying perspectives of CRT is that these are problems at the systems level — which seeks to avoid individual condemnation.

I have seen other districts use terms such as "anti-racism." My perception is that this increases the anger and protests.

Best of luck.

Nancy

Public Comment Business Meeting - June 14, 2021

Heather Huerta <h.huerta@ymail.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 4:28 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

We are writing IN SUPPORT of Springfield High School & particularly of the teacher(s) who put together the homework assignment on privilege. We're a biracial Springfield family & these sorts of conversations & assignments build a more & more just, equitable, & safe community for *all* of our children & families. When parents say they don't want their children 'exposed' to teachings on race & racism at school we respond with -- we don't want our brown children exposed to actual racism.

The anger, intolerance, & hate speech coming from the group against 'Critical Race Theory' in our schools ((as if that's even what is happening)) is precisely why we need to be having more of these conversations, more of these assignments -- not less. These adults were let down by an education system that taught them one side of history. Let's not continue to let down our children in this way.

To you the board we'd like to say -- there is no excuse for giving in to hateful rhetoric. Please don't let a loud group of racists be the only ones you listen to just because they're loud. That's not leadership. Our children need you to be braver than that. Our teachers need you to be braver than that. Our community needs you to be braver than that.

Sincerely,

Heather Millehrer-Huerta & Antonio Huerta

Critical Race Theory

Donna Riddle <donna.riddle@gmail.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 4:37 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

I very much appreciate the work the School District has done to address racism and support success for all students. Systemic racism needs to be addressed and a continuing examination of how to minimize the disparity of expectations based on race and income needs to occur.

I have seen first hand winners and losers being taught differently in classrooms. Those expected to be winners are coached and given clues to give the correct response, while those seen as losers are not heard even when they say the right answer. This happens in kindergarten and first grade and continues. Teacher expectations have a dramatic effect on student achievement. More training is needed to counteract the long standing bias towards the poor and people of color.

I support a curriculum that explores racism as a reality that permeates our lives.

I appreciate the creation of the new diversity coordinator position. Thanks for taking this small step.

Donna Riddle

Public Comment: critical race theory June 14th

Cody Rosenberg <codyeuler2012@gmail.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 7:33 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Hello...

We need to talk about race. Talking about race is important. It's more important now than ever before. I know it's not the most comfortable thing to talk about, but it's the not-talking-about-it that has brought our country to this place of deafness and blindness to the experiences of our BIPOC community as they deal with systemic racism on a daily basis.

Talking about race right here, right now, is about the most important thing we can do for this generation of students. They are not afraid to talk about race. They are not afraid to confront the ways in which the systems of this country have denied the BIPOC community their equitable access to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I should know. I just spent the entire year co-teaching a class focusing on Black U.S. History.

Critical Race Theory is just a name for the notion that we should talk about race and racism and not shy away from our ugly past. It's not about blaming, shaming, or making white people feel guilty for the vicious racism and violence of our ancestors. It's about LOOKING at it. It's about KNOWING our country's real history. Our country is not perfect and to continue to educate our students with this false narrative should be a crime. The truth is, our nation was founded and built upon genocide, slavery, and racism.

Critical Race Theory allows us to look at ourselves and re-examine how we became who we are as a nation... and have PRIDE in the fact that, with this re-examination, we can collectively strive to do and be better as a nation moving forward.

We need to talk about race and racism in the classroom. Knowledge is power.

Cody Rosenberg

P.S. - I want to remind you of Todd Hamilton's public statement shortly after the murder of George Floyd below (bolding and underlining is mine)

"Dear SPS Colleagues and Families,

As the nation reacts to the death of George Floyd and the continued use of force against Black Americans, each of us in Springfield Public Schools stands in solidarity with our students, staff, families and community members of color. Thousands of students pass through our schools on their way to adulthood and community. We believe public schools have an obligation and an opportunity to guide children forward to take their place in a society that places kindness, humanity and equity at the forefront of every human interaction.

We are committed to being allies and advocates in the continued education of each child and adult and to increase awareness of the destructive ways racism manifests. We have a lot of learning to do and you have our word that we will do this. To support conversations now, when our

schools are closed by a pandemic, we are sharing resources for ongoing learning: see the links at the bottom of this letter.

For our students, staff, and families of color, we stand with you. **We commit to creating and sustaining equitable, safe and welcoming schools. We know that racism persists in direct and indirect ways and we will address it. Please know that we see and hear you.** We stand with you and will work to eradicate the sources of fear that have taken hold of everyday actions that should be safe.

We are committed to providing access to resources and curriculum that provide insight and encourage reflection. **We believe that our students will lead us all forward and into a more equitable and fair future if we provide an education that inspires a just view. This requires that educators and administrators understand and model patterns of challenging bias, listening to all students, and respecting and appreciating what every child brings to us.**

You can expect to see a reflection of this statement in our district. From daily acts of listening, to **teaching that reflects and is relevant to children of color, we aspire to be allies within our communities.** We invite you to talk with us about your children and their experiences.

Sincerely,

Todd Hamilton
Superintendent"

Critical Race Theory in Springfield Public Schools

Holle Schaper <hollebauer@gmail.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 7:43 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Good evening, School Board Members,

I am writing in support of a curriculum that explores racism as a reality that permeates US history and culture. I really appreciate and respect that the school board has chosen to devote the past year to learning more about systemic racism and in doing so chose to create an official position for a diversity administrator. It is important not to lean in to the fear of the changing demographics of our city and to continue to support the goal of equity for all people in our society.

Thank you,
Holle Schaper

CRT comment

Carmen De La Cruz <95carmendelacruz@gmail.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 9:06 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

As an educator, I want to encourage my students to be critical thinkers and I strive to model that in my own personal philosophy. I understand that talking about race can lead to uncomfortable feelings. It is uncomfortable because racial inequities are still very prevalent. I unfortunately am not as well versed in Critical Race Theory as I would like. I wish I was more educated in CRT as a student. I do, however, acknowledge that racial inequities exist and are systemically embedded in our society. In order for systemic changes and progress to be made people need to recognize the issues at hand and acknowledge the uncomfortable truths about race. This issue of racial inequity is so much larger than our school district, but it is important for the proper education on this subject to take place with our students, staff, and community. It saddens me to hear that there are community members who, for whatever reason, feel the need to stop the education of CRT in our schools. In the effort to keep our schools a safe and welcoming place for ALL students and their families, I encourage the school district to continue to provide and facilitate education and conversations in connection to Critical Race Theory.

Public comment: (CRITICAL RACE THEORY)

Monica Tapia <1974monicastella@gmail.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 9:34 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Public Comment:

Critical Race Theory is critical. We want to be able to teach our students (and ourselves) how to think critically. It is important and necessary. As a mother of children in Springfield schools I want my children to hear this message, and not just at home. I want them to engage in conversations with peers in a safe place, guided by educators. I want them to be prepared for the world that awaits them. As a BIPOC SPS teacher, I hope to be able to guide my students through this process, teaching them to evaluate the world around them.

We all say we want our district and our schools to be safe, welcoming places for ALL of our students and their families. We must do our part to make sure that happens.

Monica Tapia

(SPS grad, mother and teacher)

Public Comment: Board Meeting-June 14, 2021

COLLEEN HUNTER <ckhunter13@aol.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 10:35 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Members of the School Board and Superintendent Hamilton;

My comment today is being made as a retired elementary school teacher who served fourth grade students in SPS from 2005-2017, just prior to my retirement after 38 years as a public school teacher. During my tenure in SPS, there were no social studies curriculum materials adopted and hence the items available for my use as a teacher were very outdated, as well as not being representative of the true history and geography of our country and state. Legislative bills passed and signed into law during the past 3 years, call for implementation of curriculum for students including history of the indigenous peoples in our state and genocide of that population as well as others in national and international history. This was all prior to the Black Live Matter movement during the last year, which makes my request for teacher involvement much more important. I hope and am asking that the next social studies curriculum adoption include input from many of the people who will be using it with students in Springfield Public Schools. It is imperative that teachers be part of the process for choosing adopted materials, not only to comply with recent state laws but in order to increase students' knowledge and understanding of the history of peoples and their treatment in our state and beyond. Please make the educators part of the important process of adopting curriculum materials. Thank you for your work on behalf of the students and families in the Springfield Community.

Sincerely

Colleen Hunter

Member of CAPE

(Community Alliance for Public Education)

Teaching about race and systemic racism in an English 10 classroom

Pauline Pham

Sun 6/13/2021 10:38 PM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

To the Springfield Public Schools Board of Education,

Recently, there has been a lot of discussion about a writing assignment created by the English 10 team, that I am a part of, at Springfield High School. The assignment gained a lot of attention on various social media groups, and like many things on these platforms, it was taken completely out of context, grossly misrepresented, and therefore misunderstood by many within our community. The purpose of this letter is to defend the merits of this assignment and to encourage further discussion on how our district can support work that focuses on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The objective of this writing assignment was to allow students to select a topic of injustice present in American society and to make a powerful statement about what they want people to feel/think/do about the injustice while using persuasive appeals (ethos, pathos, and logos). The entirety of the assignment is driven by student choice; they are allowed to select their own topic, develop their own claim, conduct their own research, and most importantly, articulate their own thoughts and ideas in writing. However, as part of best practices, we did provide some general topics and guidelines because most students benefit from those supports. What came from this persuasive essay was a variety of fascinating topics, ranging from Indigenous rights to veterans experiencing homelessness to mental health in LGBTQIA communities.

Traditionally, we have done this assignment to coincide with Springfield's MLK March where students can participate in a speech tournament. We typically offer and support up to 12 different topics of injustices, and students are required to include the MLK quote that serves as the march's theme for that year. Additionally, students actually present their speeches in small groups or in front of the class. Unfortunately, much of this assignment had to be condensed due to the limitations of this school year. However, we have seen some of our student's best work and performances come from this assignment. Based on past student surveys, this assignment usually ends up being a favorite, because students are allowed to let their passions and interests drive their writing. That is our goal as English teachers: to help students discover their voice.

Of the five topics students were given the option to choose from this year, racism was one. Attached to this topic were 4-5 video/article resources that students could use to help guide their research and understanding of the topic. We provided, as an option, a video created by King5 News of Seattle as part

of their award winning series examining racial injustice and inequity called, Facing Race. This video provides a very broad overview of systemic racism and was meant to help students narrow the topic of racism into something more specific of their choosing, for example, racial inequities in healthcare or racial discrimination at work. Because of this video, many people accused the assignment of being politically biased, having a leftist agenda, and pushing Critical Race Theory in our classes.

The controversy over this writing assignment and the optional video is part of a larger national debate on whether CRT should be taught in K-12 public schools. To be clear, we are not teaching CRT in English 10 at SHS. And to be even more frank, neither myself nor my colleagues are even close to being qualified to teach CRT as it is an academic field within legal studies typically taught at the collegiate level. However, we *are* giving students the opportunity to learn about systemic racism and about our country's history from the perspectives of historically marginalized peoples. Those goals do coincide with some of the basic tenets of CRT, and you will also find them in ODE's standards for ELA and Social Sciences.

Educators have a responsibility to prepare students for the real world, and sometimes that includes exposing them to the beauty and ugliness of our world. We want them to become free-thinking and well-informed individuals, so they can contribute to our world in a positive and meaningful way. Teaching our students about race and systemic racism is an integral part of healing a divided nation, bringing our diverse communities together, and making sure history does not repeat itself. It's a challenging road, but it must be taken. Luckily, SPS has many educators who are committed to this work, and we hope that you will continue to support us in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Pauline Pham
Learning Specialist & English 9/10 Teacher

Please consider this email as confidential...

June 14, 2021

Springfield School Board
Springfield Public Schools
640 A St.
Springfield, OR 97477

RE: College-Bound High School Student Opportunities

Springfield School District Board Members:

I'm writing to you today in regards to opportunities afforded to college-bound high school students and my daughter, Payton. Payton, now a Sophomore at Thurston High School, has been a determined student since the day she walked into Kindergarten at Ridgeview Elementary. Usually a quiet observer, she surprised everyone when on the first day of school she informed me that I could "just drop her off here", referring to the curb in front of the school because she was fully capable of walking into school on her own. Later in the day, she told her teacher, Mrs. McKee, it was her birthday and when Mrs. McKee asked her if she was excited to be six, she matter-of-factly informed her new teacher that she was, in fact, turning five. And she was. We had petitioned for consideration of Early Entry because of her precocious nature and ability to quickly learn new content. This decision has been one of the best parenting decisions we have ever made. She has thrived on the challenge provided as a result of entering her a year earlier than her chronological age would have placed her. Her teachers along the way have agreed.

Payton is the kind of student every teacher dreams of. She stays out of trouble, completes all of her assignments on time, seeks out support from teachers when she doesn't understand a concept, accepts responsibility for her own learning, and never misses a day of school—literally not a single day of her entire educational career. I say these things with complete confidence, not because she is my daughter, but because these are traits that I, as an educator, find incredibly admirable. These are characteristics teachers work day in and day out to instill in our students.

Unfortunately, Payton has reached a point in her educational career that she's struggling to appreciate the value of these characteristics because although she has gone above and beyond to achieve by having already earned 17 of the 24 required credits to graduate, the options for earning college credit while still enrolled as a student at Thurston High School are narrowly focused. She wants to utilize her time remaining at Thurston High to complete the 7 remaining credits she needs for her diploma while dual-enrolling in college courses through LCC. We are being told that this is no longer a realistic option, as Juniors will be required to maintain full high school schedules beginning in the fall of 2021. This pigeon holes her into taking strictly the College Now and AP courses offered at THS and prevents her from, instead, enrolling in college courses that match her desired post secondary area of study: Criminology.

Throughout her school career, she has maintained exceptional grades, performed well on standardized tests, cultivated meaningful relationships, participated in extracurricular activities, and demonstrated a remarkable ability to persevere, even when circumstances or policies have hamstrung her. Now, though, we are fighting as parents to help her continue to appreciate what these skills and personal traits mean from an internal perspective since the school district is sending the message that she needs to simply stay in her lane and wait for June 2023 before she makes notable gains toward her post secondary goals. The perseverance and work ethics her father and I have worked to instill in her for the past decade and a half—not to mention her mental and emotional well-being—are being compromised by the narrowly focused perspective of the district. She's asking: *Why? Why do I have to wait to graduate? Why don't they want me to expand my learning by taking courses that directly match my interests and aspirations? Why are they hamstringing me?* And, you know what? We don't have an answer.

This past weekend, my husband and I's alma mater, Marshfield High School, graduated four students in their 2021 class who earned both their high school diploma and Associate's Degree. These students were able to do this because they weren't restricted to a handful of College Now and AP courses at the high school. They dual-enrolled at MHS and SWOCC. These students are set up for success as they walk out of their high school because their district believed in them and afforded them the opportunities to personalize their learning tracks. I was lucky enough to do the same when I was at MHS. I transferred to WOU with my college credits I'd earned while still in high school and was in the classroom teaching by the time I was 20. I was an Elementary Principal at 22. Payton is easily as smart, determined, and capable as me. Probably more so.

So, I implore you to reconsider the requirement for students to maintain full time schedules at the high school. Allow her to dual-enroll at THS and LCC so that she can take coursework directly related to her area of study. I don't want to see her walk out of THS with a fist full of college credits that don't specifically match her desired outcome. And, above all, I don't want her to realize that dropping out so she can earn a GED on her own timeline and move along her educational path at her own pace is an option. Help us keep her at THS while supporting her academic, emotional, and mental well-being through a dual-enrollment option.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christina Cox".

Christina Cox

Cc: Todd Hamilton, Superintendent

Hello,

My name is Payton Cox, and I attend Thurston High School here in Springfield, Oregon. In the coming week, I will have completed my sophomore year with an overall 3.75 GPA. For those of you who don't know me, let me briefly introduce myself. I am a young student who works hard for what she wants, as my parents raised me to. I have never missed a day of school in my life. I'm involved with Thurston's varsity dance team and musical program and have been for my entire high school career. I have recently joined the visual arts program, which I have found to be very enjoyable. When I complete my educational career, I plan to be a criminologist--to look at the psychological side of a criminal--someone who can help the community by helping take dangerous people off the streets.

The restrictions that have been placed on students such as myself cause nothing more than burnout. Even if I were to utilize the College Now and AP courses that are offered at Thurston High School, I won't have the flexibility in my schedule to acquire the necessary courses to get ahead on a degree. Instead, I'll have earned an assortment of credits that will transfer, but won't actually work out for a degree. This means I will be doing nothing but what feels like wasting my own time and causing unnecessary stress. So instead of making a student feel as if they're unwanted and trapped, give them the flexibility to personalize their own educational program.

In the fall, I will be entering my junior year. Juniors this coming year will be required to have a full eight-period schedule. I have already earned seventeen of the twenty-four credits required for graduation. By the end of a school year, I will have earned twenty-five, assuming a full schedule. And, yet, I will be relegated to spend yet another year waiting to graduate. Why? I earned the required credits. I have exceeded the community service hours required to earn my

cord. I'm current on my Personalized Learning Requirements. What am I waiting for? The district to collect the year of ADM funding for me warming a seat?

I have aspirations to go to college, earn my degree and start giving back to my community. Holding me back from moving ahead with my post secondary goals does nothing to motivate me to return to Springfield after college and reinvest my skills and passions. Clearly, my proactive nature and hardworking ethics aren't valued here. And, isn't that one of the primary goals of a school—to aid in the development of a person's ability to productively participate and give back to society? How does keeping me at Thurston High earning random credits another year accomplish that?

While I understand the district has to answer to ODE—and has their own policies as a result—this is simply another one of those ideas that looked good on paper, but doesn't translate to real life applications. I would like to take a moment to point out where other things look good on paper, but not in real life. For example, I recently completed the Oregon Drivers Training Institute Drivers Ed program. One key point that my instructor stressed was following distance. The handbook recommends approximately four seconds of following distance. This seems like a brilliant idea, right? It could prevent crashes and even save a life by giving you enough time to bring your car to a stop. But let me remind you of the reckless drivers who are among us. That four seconds of following distance that I created as a responsible driver is only then destroyed when another driver cuts me off because they didn't plan ahead to get into the exit lane that I was in.

In my case, Springfield Public School District—along with ODE—is that reckless driver. You are cutting me off. My potential has been held back by an idea that looked good on a piece of paper. So I ask you: Why? What does holding students back accomplish? Demonstrate your

commitment to equity by allowing students like myself to graduate once we've met the graduation requirements. Let us move forward in our path to becoming responsible, productive citizens. And--let us help you by opening up resources that the other students so desperately need.

As I finish, I'd like to leave you with something that I want you to carry with you while you reconsider this blanket policy: Malala once said, "I raise up my voice-not so I can shout but so those without a voice can be heard... we cannot succeed when half of us are held back." Please stop holding us back.

Thank you for your time.

CRT

CAROLINE CARNEVALE <carolinecrnvl@yahoo.com>

Sun 6/13/2021 1:54 PM

To: Board <board@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Please do not implement CRT in your schools it IS Racist

Important: Please do not reply or forward this e-mail if this communication constitutes a decision or deliberation toward a decision between and among a quorum of a governing body which could be considered a public meeting. E-mails on district business are governed by public records law.

Public Comment: Board Meeting –June 14, 2021

Anthony Reed <anthonytylerreed@live.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 6:43 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

I would first like to commend the board on the efforts made to expand their understanding of social justice issues. Learning how systemic racism affects our schools and community as well as how white privilege informs our views are great examples of the boards commitment to equity and inclusion. Next I would like to thank all of the teachers in our school district that are making efforts to adapt the curriculum to make spaces for our students of color. The elementary school teachers that are finding books that have characters that look like our students, middle school teachers that use creative ways to include an array of cultural backgrounds in their examples and the high school teachers that are making a safe place for our students to have discussions about race and racism in our country. I am proud of the steps our district is currently taking and will continue to take to make our district more equitable and inclusive.

Thank You,
Anthony Reed

Sent from my iPhone

CRT June 14

Carol Halbert <smileyface_carol@yahoo.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 7:09 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Dear Board and District Leaders,

I am a parent of two biracial students in the district. I was born and raised in this community, with my mother and grandmother as teachers in the district. I love my community and yet I see the need for change so that our brown and black families are heard, respected and safe.

Critical Race Theory is an explanation of what has happened in this country to establish the power of white people. The deed to our home here in Springfield, built in 1953 states that "no person of color shall dwell in the home unless they are the help." When I read that, I cannot deny that there were forces keeping people of color from building an equal opportunity for themselves. The ripple effect is a still a barrier to our families and students today.

So now there is an opportunity for our district that cannot be missed to ensure dignity and respect are guiding the curriculum and education of our students. Critical Race Theory is not something to be afraid of.

Sincerely,
Carol

Public Comment :Board Meeting-June 14, 2021

Irene Henjum <irene.henj@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 7:52 AM

To:public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Dear Board Members,

I want to thank the board for your work addressing the issues of racism and equity. I appreciate the creation of the Diversity Administrator. It has come to my attention that far right groups are distributing talking points and literature attacking "critical race theory". This group of people is very misinformed about issues addressing racism in society. They are uncomfortable with changing demographics and are resistant to examining issues of systemic racism because frankly, they benefit from a system that ignores racism. I support our schools examining and addressing issues of systemic racism so all of our students can feel safe and thrive in our schools. Attacks on "critical race theory" are nothing more than right wing scare tactics and should be treated as such by the board.

I urge you to allow live public comment at board meetings, it is just good government practice.

Thank you for your service and your time.

Irene Henjum
1211 M Street
Springfield, OR 97477

Public Comment: Board Meeting - June 14, 2021

Jennifer Potter <jpotter583@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 7:58 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Dear Members of the School Board,

Thank you for your efforts this year to educate yourselves about racism, which is, unfortunately, a reality in our society. I applaud the creation of the position of a diversity administrator.

There is a lot of discussion recently about schools teaching "Critical Race Theory," or CRT. There is pressure coming from the far right wing in our country to ban schools from teaching CRT. While I doubt that anyone in Springfield is currently teaching CRT, I do think that acknowledging the reality of racism, and the effect that it has had throughout the history of our country, is important. It affects us all, no matter the color of our skin.

Please recognize this tactic for what it is, a wedge issue driven by the far right.

Also, once again, I encourage you to allow live public comments at board meetings.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Potter, Ward 3, Springfield

Public Comment: CRT June 14 from Springfield Resident

Andrea Smith

Mon 6/14/2021 8:32 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

Dear SPS School Board,

I write this email with both grateful thanks and deep concern. My grateful thanks is for you, our SPS School Board and the leadership and hard work of our teachers and leaders in Springfield Public Schools. We have been able to do incredible things in the face of many hardships over the past year. In the face of a pandemic, devastating wildfires and a social reckoning, the SPS leadership has shown that they will not be swayed by negative minority voices, no matter how loud and aggressive. However, recent actions by a small group of community members has led me to write this email out of a grave concern for our students and their feelings of safety, care and concern when they are at our Springfield schools.

Recent commentary on social media has been vilifying the work of teachers from complaints about students only being in school for two hours to complaints about our teaching of state standards related to inequality, social justice and critical thinking. I know also from social media that these complaints are going to be brought to the school board and therefore I wanted to be able to voice my thoughts and concerns.

As a resident of and teacher in Springfield, I want to know that the young people in our community are being taught to think critically, articulate their opinions and be willing to listen to alternative viewpoints. The English Language Arts assignment that has seemed to cause so much concern in our community is designed to do these exact things. I believe that this Board also displays these skills and I hope that these minority voices are listened to and that the Board can critically examine the reasoning behind these comments and articulate the importance of the role of schools to provide instruction to students using ODE Standards including the special resolutions on teaching about Holocaust & Genocide, Tribal History/Shared History, Ethnic Studies and all of the other Equity Initiatives. It is our job to ensure that students feel safe, respected and cared for when they are in our schools. It is also our job to educate and ensure that ALL students stories, histories, languages and cultures are represented and respected in the curriculum and social atmosphere of our schools. Please continue to fight for an uphold that values of our SPS schools that, All Students Belong.

Thank you for your time, your service and your support of SPS students and staff,
Andrea

Andrea Smith

9th Grade Transition Specialist

ASB/Leadership Advisor

Springfield High School

Office: 541-744-4380

Email: andrea.smith@springfield.k12.or.us

Pronouns: she/her/ella

Note: The information contained in this message may be privileged and confidential and protected from disclosure.

Please consider this email as confidential...

Public Comment for June 14, 2021 SPS Board Meeting

Elizabeth Utterback <elizabeth.utterback@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 9:21 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Hello school board members,

I am writing in support of the work that many teachers and education professionals are doing within Springfield Schools to support curriculum that explores racism as a reality that permeates U.S. history and culture.

When I was in elementary school in Southern California, I was taught incorrect and harmful information about the missions and their functions and interactions with indigenous peoples in the area. Additionally, the curriculum I was exposed to completely erased Indigenous peoples as if they went extinct. These views stayed with me until college when I took a course in Native American studies. I don't think folks should have to go to college to access correct information about our country's history. For these reasons I applaud the teachers and educational professionals that are constantly doing self-education to bring accurate and important information to the classroom in ways that complement the curriculum and make space for students of color.

It is my hope the board will continue efforts that support teachers in their work to make space for conversations and curriculum that tackle race and racism. Several SPS graduates are emerging community leaders in diversity, equity, and inclusion and with the board's support of curriculum that explores racism as a reality that permeates U.S. history and culture, SPS graduates will continue to lead the way in this important work in creating a more inclusive and equitable community.

Sincerely,

Lizzy Utterback

Ward 3 resident

Parent of former SHS student

Critical Race Theory

Vanessa Truett <vanessatruett@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 9:26 AM

To: Board <board@springfield.k12.or.us>; public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Dear Board,

I want to share my strong approval of the proposed CRT approach in Springfield Schools. I have two teenage boys who have been with Springfield for the entirety of their education. One is in SPED programs; the other not. I don't know when this framework became objectionable, in fact; I learned this paradigm in 1990 during my first term in a small Midwestern college.

Growing up in Eugene, admittedly I never really thought of many of the truths presented. It wasn't until I was in a predominately Black environment that I truly began to understand. Since then, CRT has informed all of my decisions, in personal and professional life as well as my service as an elected official on a school board.

My only concerns are surrounding the training and professional development needed to accurately disseminate this knowledge. I would hope CRT is part of any current licensure programs, but there will be some catch up for seasoned staff who are unfamiliar. I would also like assurances that this information is made accessible to SPED students in the format they best learn.

Our students, who make up the future of our community deserve the truth about our history. I am reminded of a book I read in 9th grade at South Eugene High School in 1986, Chinua Achebe's "Things Fall Apart." In it, he referenced an old proverb. "Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter."

Thank you for your time,

Vanessa Truett

Sent from my iPhone

Critical race theory

Amber Tamayo <Belvanclothing@outlook.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 9:35 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Good morning,

As a parent of SPS children and concerned community member I'm appalled that it would even be considered taking Critical Race Theory out of our curriculum because a few people feel uncomfortable talking about race and history. Imagine actually experiencing racism your entire life because of your skin color or because your culture is different than societal norm. So so many of children attending SPS are BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color) as are my children. I want them to know the actual history of America and how we have oppressed and suppressed BIPOC since the start of America. Was last year not an eye opener that something may be wrong with our society in bringing systemic racism to the forefront with the killing of George Floyd? Did we not just pass civil rights 57 years ago? Have people of color not had the same advantages as white people? These are conversations we need to have even if it makes people uncomfortable because it is important for my children as well as all children in SPS to grow up with the hope of equity, equality and dignity. Please do not let a few bullies with loud voices deter you from doing the right thing. Keep Critical Race Theory in SPS. That is literally the bare minimum in dealing with racism and inequities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Amber Childress

Public Comment: Board Meeting –June 14, 2021

Andrew Emmott <andrew.f.emmott@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 9:59 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

I hope my voice is one among many urging you not to take the loud opponents of "Critical Race Theory" seriously.

I feel this simple article lays out the details of the debate rather neatly: <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/what-is-critical-race-theory-and-why-is-it-under-attack/2021/05>

Opposition to CRT is, ultimately, an opposition to historical truths. CRT as an academic practice offers a way to explain unjust outcomes without requiring anybody involved to be explicitly racist; in other words it explains how we can have "racism without racists." Opposition to this idea is really an opposition to our best avenue for constructive criticism of our society without requiring anybody to feel shame.

One criticism of CRT is that it can lead to white children being exposed to self-damaging or self-demoralizing ideas but I think this is backwards. On the contrary, the truth is liberating. Meanwhile, the racism-free explanations for inequities in our society are in fact much more demoralizing than hard truths ever are. If there is no systemic racism in our society then we are forced to accept a brutal hyper-individualism where we lay the responsibility of everything at the individual's feet and refuse to acknowledge the responsibility of those with great wealth and power for any outcomes in society. This idea, the idea that if you are struggling at all it is because you are inferior to those around you and deserve no second chances, is far more demoralizing to everybody, regardless of color, than brutally honest history ever will be.

Preserving our children's dignity and prosperity is not a matter of holding them responsible for everything, but a matter of teaching them how power and responsibility really work in human civilization and I urge you to consider that those who protest this idea are misguided at best.

-Andrew

Public comment: Board Meeting June 14, 2021

Shaay Gallagher-Starr <shaaygs@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 10:27 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Dear Springfield School Board Members,

As a foster parent of children and teens who have attended school within the Springfield School District, I need to say 'thank you' to the continuing members for your ongoing efforts to guide our schools, and to the newly elected members for your willingness to join the endeavor.

Thank you for the work you've done and continue to do in order to understand systemic racism. I appreciate your participation in the trainings offered by the Oregon School Boards Association, and celebrate the formation of a diversity administrator position.

I fully support your continuing efforts to learn and grow as part of a more equitable community. I support a curriculum for our students that allows them the same opportunities to learn about the impacts of systemic racism in our country's history, and to recognize its current impact.

Equity, inclusion, honesty, and respect are the values that guided my voting during the special election in May. It appears, looking at the results of that election, that many of my neighbors were guided by similar values.

Unfortunately, it has come to my attention that a small but vocal contingent of people are organizing to "Stop Critical Race Theory (CRT) in Our Schools."

Sadly, this is a segment of our community that is so deeply uncomfortable with our community's changing demographics, so opposed to equity and inclusion, that they want to forbid discussions about systemic racism. They will try to tell you that those who talk about systemic racism "are the real racists," and that there is an agenda to control the minds of our youth through "teaching Critical Race Theory" in schools."

This is dangerous nonsense.

Please remember that this small group of far-right commentators does not speak for this community as a whole.

My foster youths benefit from your efforts to teach a realistic view of history, told from more than one perspective. They benefit from your efforts to build equity, even as we deal with a massive public health crisis.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of my kids and their fellow students. Please hold to your course, and continue to be guided by the values we share. Do not be intimidated by this small group of people espousing dangerous nonsense, no matter how vocal they become.

In community,

Shaay Gallagher-Starr

critical race theory

Julie Tjaden <julex@comcast.net>

Mon 6/14/2021 10:49 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Good morning,

Please, teach critical race theory to our children. We need to include everything in what we teach so our children can learn to think critically. Ignorance of the past has held us back.

Thank you,

Julie Tjaden 1035 N Street, Springfield, Oregon 97477

Public Comment School Board Meeting - June 14, 2021

Kyle Johnson

Mon 6/14/2021 10:59 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

 1 attachment

Johnson - Board of Education letter - Google Docs.pdf;

Attached.

Kyle Johnson
English Language Arts Teacher
Springfield High School
541-744-4700

Please consider this email as confidential...

To the Springfield Public Schools Board of Education,

Over the past few weeks, many community members and social media groups have expressed concern and confusion over a recent writing assignment created by English 10 teachers at Springfield High School, a team of which I am a part. Much of the confusion seems to stem from rumors, misrepresentations, and false information. I am writing this letter to add clarity on what this assignment is, and why it is important.

The purpose of the questioned assignment is to support a claim with relevant evidence and logical reasoning, using multiple credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic. The standards related to this assignment fall largely under Common Core State Standard ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1. Students are asked to use the rhetorical techniques ethos, pathos, and logos in their writing to express a claim on a topic of injustice that they choose. Students choose their own direction for this assignment. They develop their own claim, find their own relevant facts, and, in many cases, share their personal heart-wrenching experiences. While some general topics were provided for students to explore, many students ended up writing about original topics or subtopics of interest. For this assignment, students have written on everything from homelessness in Lane County, to their own experiences with stereotypes, to writing about their own daily struggles living in poverty. This writing task has been part of the English 10 curriculum for several school years now, and many students have expressed that not only is this one of their favorite writing assignments, but it allowed them to be seen and to share their own experiences in a manner that has not been provided for them at school before.

Typically, allowing students to write about a topic of injustice in English 10 has coincided with Springfield's MLK Jr. Celebration and March. This assignment allows students a further opportunity to share their message and voice with the larger community, should they decide to read their essay as a speech at the event. To dismiss this assignment is to dismiss the voices of our students and to deny them an opportunity to be heard, both in their classroom, and in their community, should they choose.

It is true that racism is one of the topics we discussed in our class as a possible topic of injustice for this assignment. Some optional resources were provided to help students further explore some topics for this assignment, but none of these videos or articles were required or presented to the whole class. One of the optional resources was a segment from Seattle King5's "Facing Race" series, which recently won the Scripps Howard Award, honoring the series for being among the best in American journalism. This allowed students, should they choose, to explore a complex topic with the help of a highly-regarded source. In this video, every fact and statistic includes a cited source, while also exposing viewers to award-winning journalism. However, due to this optional resource, there seems to be some misunderstanding in our community that English 10 classes are teaching Critical Race Theory (CRT).

CRT is not being taught in English 10 at Springfield High School, nor is it something our English 10 team has the expertise to teach. There seems to be some confusion that having any conversation around race is CRT, and that is simply false. Conversations about racism are

essential to Springfield High School becoming an anti-racist school, and our English 10 team will continue to facilitate opportunities for these discussions. What we are teaching and assessing students on are Common Core State Standards, while helping them find their voice in a complicated world. We are teaching them to make balanced arguments with ethos, pathos, and logos. We are teaching them to speak up for whatever they feel is an injustice in their world, and teaching the skills on how to do that.

Springfield High School students are among the most resilient in our area. We have a diverse student population with a variety of experiences around racism, sexism, poverty, immigration, and LGBTQIA+ issues. To deny students the opportunities to learn about these topics, write about these topics, and have their own experiences validated, is, quite frankly, another type of injustice. Thank you for supporting the work of our team, and thank you for respecting the voices and experiences of our students.

Sincerely,
Kyle Johnson
English Language Arts Teacher
Springfield High School

School Board Meeting Comment

Amy Cothron <amycothron@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 11:01 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Good evening,

I just wanted to make my voice heard and state that teaching critical race theory in your schools is essential. I know you've likely heard many comments to the contrary, but CRT is just teaching an accurate version of American History, over a watered down whitewashed version. Our kids deserve to learn accurate history over American Mythos, and come to conclusions on their own.

Regards,

Amy Cothron
Ward 5

Conversations on Race

Jerami Campbell <campbelljerami@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 11:21 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

As a long term member of the Springfield Community, I know how important it is to start and to continue difficult conversations about race and racism in our schools.

I went to Thurston Middle School as an 8th grade student in 2003. I learned about US History all the way through the Civil War. I could tell you that our country participated in slavery, but I would also probably tell you that racism no longer existed in our country because slavery had ended. Now that I am an adult and have learned more of our history, especially Oregon's, I have learned that racism is alive and well. There are a lot of people who are uncomfortable and who don't want to talk about it, I think it's safe to say that a majority of those people are white and they probably don't face the same level of discrimination and racism as our BIPOC community members.

Why don't people want to talk about race? Perhaps they are nervous and scared that they are going to be made to feel guilty. Perhaps they don't want to feel uncomfortable or realize that some of their own actions are unkind. Perhaps it's all of the above.

I know that our schools aim to help create students and citizens who are kind, welcoming, and respectful. If we don't hold conversations about race or racism in our schools, then we're missing the point. Springfield school district wants to create an equitable and inclusive school environment, in order to do that, all members will need to listen and some will need to sit and be uncomfortable.

CRT

Jennie Reed <jenniereed76@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 11:45 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Greetings,

I am writing because I am very concerned about the implementation of CRT in our public schools.

I understand that we want our children to all have an equal education and opportunities and I absolutely support this which is why I think it's a huge mistake to teach children to evaluate themselves and others based on race.

It is wrong to put children in a position where they have to judge themselves and their fellow students as either victims or perpetrators based on the color of their skin. Plain and simple, CRT is teaching racism which is the thing it purports to eradicate and is a huge disservice to all students and community members.

I implore Springfield public schools to put a stop to implementing this racist curriculum and find a truly inclusive way to bring our children together regardless of race, religion or socioeconomic status.

Let us remember the immortal words of MLK Jr.: **"I have a dream** that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the **content** of their **character**."

CRT teaches the opposite and must not be allowed to continue.

Thank you for your attention regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

--

Jennie Reed

CRT

oregonclean <oregonclean@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 11:48 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

Springfield School Board

Critical Race Theory has no place being taught in our Springfield Oregon Schools.

I oppose critical race theory.

Thanks
Miriam B

Public Comment: Board Meeting - June 14, 2021

Gf Dplmr <doppelmayrr@gmail.com>

Mon 6/14/2021 11:53 AM

To: public comment <public.comment@springfield.k12.or.us>;

This message is from a non-SPS email address. Please use caution and only click links and attachments if you are sure they are safe.

I am writing to you today as a 1999 Springfield High School graduate. I have heard of plans to protest "critical race theory" being taught in Springfield schools. My understanding of these critics is that they fear challenges to white supremacy and are opposed to equity in our schools. By ignoring the reality of U.S. history (slavery, the treatment of Indigenous Communities, Jim Crow laws, the development and purpose of systematic racism) we lose out on an opportunity to raise educated students who have an opportunity to work together to build an equitable society for all.

I admire the recent efforts of the school board to learn about the history of systematic racism as it exists in our society and the creation of the position of diversity administrator. I wish that such efforts had been underway when I was a student in Springfield schools. I earnestly hope that members of the school board will continue their efforts and not let fear by far right wing fear mongers deny our children the education they deserve.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ryan Doppelmayr

1999 SHS graduate

doppelmayrr@gmail.com

541-359-6130