



ISSUE REPORT CHERRY CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT

The information below is a general overview of the concerns of parents, teachers and community stakeholders who are part of the [Cherry Creek Parent Advocacy Network \(CCPAN\)](#).

- The Cherry Creek School District has repeatedly denied they are teaching the information below
- Teachers have reached out to the Cherry Creek & Colorado Parent Advocacy Networks with concerns about what is being taught and how it is being taught
- Academic performance has suffered and rather than addressing the issues, the district has lowered standards
- Students have reported they feel compelled to subscribe to these ideologies or they fear suffering a bad grade or retribution
- Teachers have reported they fear not being renewed if they do not comply with the Office of Equity, Culture & Community Engagement’s Diversity, Equity & Inclusion initiatives that force teachers to view everything through a “lens of race”

We believe that the Cherry Creek School District leadership has failed to provide a safe and appropriate learning environment and has adopted divisive ideologies that are harming rather than helping our children. We have repeatedly asked district administration and our Board of Education to return to its long-held “dedication to excellence” in offering a rigorous, non-political, and equal academic education. The District has responded by blocking our communications, limiting our access to communications that should be available under the Colorado Open Records Act, and collaborating with activists in our community to discredit us in social media and during public comment at Board of Education meetings.

Our intent with this overview is to highlight lowered academic standards and performance, the systemic issue of mishandling sexual/physical assault and harassment cases, and the alarming curriculum and practices being used in the district.

LOWERED ACADEMIC STANDARDS & PLUMMETING PERFORMANCE

We were disappointed that, in March of 2022, district leaders announced their decision to remove the academic honor of Valedictorian beginning with the Class of 2026. They shared that the title of Valedictorian inflicts “harm” on other students. In addition to removing this honor, the district has moved

towards a policy of “equity in grading” by “leveling down” academic standards, eliminating requirements and grading for homework, and have even discussed the elimination of Advanced Placement courses and the International Baccalaureate Program. [CLICK HERE TO READ THE LETTER](#)

A review of the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) statewide assessment of academic performance has shown a frightening reality. In 2023, more than half of our student population in grades 3-8 did not meet basic expectations in English Language Arts or Math. These unacceptable failure rates were present before COVID, indicating district practices have been failing to educate our children for almost a decade in these critical academic areas for years. [CLICK HERE FOR CCSD'S CMAS RESULTS](#)

FAILURE TO PROVIDE A SAFE & APPROPRIATE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In addition to more than half of our kids not meeting basic expectations academically, they also struggle to feel safe in their learning environments. Beginning in April of 2022, the public was made aware of the district’s mishandling of multiple sexual/physical assault and harassment cases. Students and parents came together across the district to convey their concerns and request the district evaluate their practices and policies. Their outreach has been ignored. The district continues to employ a variety of practices that do not protect our children from harm. [CLICK HERE TO REVIEW NEWS STORIES & RADIO BROADCASTS CONCERNING THESE CASES](#)

HIDDEN GENDER TRANSITION PLANS

A district administrator has also admitted to using Gender Transition Plans that instruct educators and staff to change the name and pronouns of any student that requests a change without the knowledge, approval, or consent of the child’s parents/guardians. This is a direct violation of the [Federal Education Rights & Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#). Kids are routinely asked unwelcome, offensive, and personal questions about their sexual orientation. Students have shared that they have experienced harassment and shaming for their gender, sexuality, and race. They have shared that they are pressured to change sexualities. Children who are white have shared that they feel ashamed of being white and feel like they are inherently bad, solely for their skin color. By forcing our children to view each other through the lens of this kind of instruction, we don't make life easier for them or lighten their load. We are instead forcing complex, unrefined, and unbalanced ways of thinking on young developing minds. This hurts all our children and creates in them the division we see in adults all around us. [CLICK HERE TO REVIEW EVIDENCE COMPILED ON THE HIDDEN USE OF GENDER SUPPORT AND TRANSITION PLANS](#)

PROMOTING DIVISION

We were disturbed to learn that district administration and the Board of Education set a goal in February of 2019 as part of the district’s “Systemic Racial Equity Transformation,” which required all “new to Cherry Creek School District educators” attend the Pacific Education Group’s *Beyond Diversity & Courageous Conversations* professional development training sessions. This curriculum has been flagged by civil rights organizations for promoting and emphasizing a regressive and divisive ideology. This ideology assumes that America was founded on white supremacy and asserts that racism is at the heart of every disparity in society and our schools. This ideology requires people to see themselves not as

individuals, but as representatives of a group of oppressors or oppressed – all depending on the color of their skin. [CLICK HERE TO REVIEW THE HANDOUTS FROM THIS COURSE & SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION](#)

They teach lessons such as the 8th grade Language Arts assignment at Infinity Middle School, asking students to identify WHY their favorite hobby is racist. For 12th graders at Smoky Hill High School, a class titled, “Math and Social Justice” is offered to twist statistics where students “use the power of mathematics to explore Social Justice topics”. An Overland High School English teacher compelled students to respond to a video about the tragic story of Emmett Till by demanding they be enraged and repeatedly say an expletive word while declaring that he flipped a desk in another class because his students were not enraged to his satisfaction. The Cherry Creek Education Association (Teachers Union), in collaboration with the Assistant Superintendent of the Office of Equity Culture & Community Engagement, Michael Giles (now Superintendent of Schools in Adams/Arapahoe 27J), created a weeklong Black Lives Matter School Week of Action curriculum for children in grades K-12 in February of 2022 where children were asked to pledge allegiance to the 13 Principles of Black Lives Matter and participate in “Power & Privilege” exercises that would separate children into “privileged & marginalized” groups based on immutable characteristics. [CLICK HERE TO REVIEW CONTROVERSIAL CLASS LESSONS](#)

As parents and community members, we encourage the school district to teach the complicated truth about America, including its flaws and failures. However, we also encourage the inclusion of America’s unparalleled success and progress on issues of race and equality. By omitting the progress of racial equality and implementing these unbalanced concepts, school curriculum and lessons promote ignorance and intolerance in the place of critical thinking and authentic learning.

Our hope is that the Cherry Creek School District leadership will honor teachers, parents, and our children by being transparent with curriculum and accountable for their failures. The district’s practice of ignoring parental and taxpayer concerns must end. We trust that, through increased awareness, our community will demand accountability so that all children will have a safe and fulfilling educational experience.

Sincerely,



Lori A. Gimelshteyn, Executive Director

[Cherry Creek Parent Advocacy Network](#)

[Colorado Parent Advocacy Network](#)

“Together we will restore the parent’s voice in education!”