



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAUGHT IN A CULTURE WAR

Parents across the nation are concerned about the education of their children which recently seems fixated on race, gender, and sexuality. It is understandable. We are all caught up in this culture war. We live in an era of “strong opinions, weakly formed,” according to author Carey Nieuwhof.

For centuries, our country has attracted people in search of the American dream. People around the globe understand that our values, traditions, behaviors—have fostered economic success here in America. E Pluribus Unum (*From Many, One*) remains the national motto, yet there is no longer a consensus about what that should mean. If you step into our public schools today, the many different cultures are on full display. This means even greater challenges on how, where, and when some parents want their children to learn certain subjects.

Humans are by nature tribal. We are initially drawn to people who look and act like us. Our nation is no longer united by a common language, faith, and ethics. So, the question that all Americans must contend with is: how do we best fulfill our destiny as a nation where all citizens can realize the benefits of equality of opportunity regardless of their national origin, the color of their skin, or their gender?

Our nation was forged from a Revolution that cost lives, possessions, and a way of life. My ancestors migrated here, including my Native American relatives, and in their way, contributed to the development of the county. They have been soldiers, teachers, preachers, farmers, bankers, builders, and much more. America was built by our immigrant ancestors including those forced by slavery to come to our shores. Bernard Baruch reminded us, “We did not all come over on the same ship, but we are all in the same boat.” Our progress is all the more remarkable when we grasp the progress of our nation is a melting pot of cultures.

Today our country is deeply divided politically. We see conflicts in our streets and across our media. We see the “us versus them” attitude that prevents citizens from working together to improve our communities, state, and nation. We must work collaboratively to find the best solution on hard issues now, rather than pass along our problems to future generations. Lack of critical thinking and leadership at the local, state, or national level, means our problems only grow larger.

True equality is not possible in a society where people are afraid to speak their minds. It should be acceptable to hold a different point of view. Anytime a voice is silenced, it eventually finds a place where it can be heard. Sadly, too many voices drown out those who offer possible solutions to real problems. Despite differences, we still have more in common than we can imagine. However, some people want to keep us focused on differences that divide us, rather than what unites us.

SUMMARY

Children should not be at the tip of the spear in our culture wars. Many educators simply wish they could teach their students and subjects without a political agenda.

Nothing brings us closer together as a state and nation than when we face adversity, whether it is a natural disaster or man-made catastrophe. "What unites us is far greater than what divides us," as John F. Kennedy said. Our great strength as a state and nation comes from our unity, which is the critical component of our perseverance.

In public education, our educators are caught in this culture war, stuck in the middle of a partisan divide. Educators are concerned when their freedom to teach is threatened by any curriculum which dictates a perspective that promotes a political agenda. Many educators simply wish they could teach their students and subjects without a political agenda.

Favorite children's author Dr. Seuss, a progressive humanist, was targeted by the left for a list of offenses that are constantly growing and changing. However, pornography is barely confronted in today's culture and is easily accessible to school-age children. And pornography is linked to human trafficking by social conservatives and feminists alike. We need to get our priorities straight.

There is another false assumption emerging by outside influences which we should find offensive, that scientific and mathematical ability is discriminatory. In other words, if you are of a certain race or gender, you cannot learn certain subjects. That view should be insulting to all citizens and rejected. All children are capable of learning when afforded an equal opportunity and access to an exemplary public education, without top-down mandates on our schools and teachers.

In states like Oregon and California, the concept of mathematics is under attack, with elitists adamant: "right and wrong answers perpetuate objectivity." Who knew that the very concept of a "right answer" in math is now a false construct and spreads a political ideology? Archimedes, the Father of Mathematics, must be rolling over in his grave. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has funded some of these programs. This pseudoscience effort has been labeled as another backdoor attempt to impose a national curriculum by several writers. Philosopher Tim Hansel offers this retort: "Is it objectively wrong to hold the view that some things are objectively wrong?"

Young children are now thrust into this changing landscape, being educated while the goal line is constantly moving. Right is wrong, wrong is now subjective, decisions are made by people who are not responsible for those choices. We can debate which issues are of greatest importance in the education of children, with literacy and math among the most critical skills. However, children should not be at the tip of the spear in our culture wars. We have to go in a different direction than this present narrative if we are going to keep public education and the American Dream alive for the next generation.

The majority of citizens still want what the first Americans wanted: a better life for themselves and their children. We must commit ourselves individually, and as a nation, to pass the baton of liberty to the next generation in this melting pot of cultures we call the United States of America. As David French wrote: "Every American—regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, religion or sexual orientation—can and should have a home in this land." We have to realize our future is a shared journey and dependent on all of us moving forward together. Our goal to fulfill our destiny as a nation should be to strengthen humanity, the one tribe we all belong to in America.

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JC Bowman is the Executive Director of Professional Educators of Tennessee, a non-partisan teacher association headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee. Permission to reprint in whole or in part is hereby granted, provided that the author and the association are properly cited. For more information on this subject or any education issue please contact Professional Educators of Tennessee. To schedule an interview please contact communications@proedtn.org or 1-800-471-4867.