



COUNTY OF AMHERST



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For Immediate Release

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Discussion of Equity Lesson Taught in Amherst County Public Schools

During their May 18, 2021 meeting at 7pm, the Amherst County Board of Supervisors will discuss an equity lesson recently taught in Amherst County Public Schools. The School Superintendent, Dr. Arnold, and the School Board Chair, Priscilla M. Liggon, have been invited to participate with the Board in the discussion.

The Board of Supervisors presented Dr. Arnold and the School Board with a list of questions to review before the meeting. The questions have been included below.

Community members in attendance will be allowed to speak during this time. In addition, comments made on the live stream will be shared with the Board after the meeting. This discussion is for informational purposes only.

The Lesson being discussed can be found on the Amherst County Public Schools website: <http://www.amherst.k12.va.us/front-030521>

To watch the meeting on YouTube, visit: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZQOX_fj6WayGu_Hp8eZNVA

To watch the meeting on Facebook, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/CountyOfAmherst>

Additional information may be obtained from Joy Niehaus at jlnehaus@countyofamherst.com or (434)-946-9400.

Questions for Dr. Arnold and the School Board.

1. What is your motivation behind the social justice & equity lessons? What are you trying to accomplish?
2. What are the concepts you are teaching?
3. What proof do you have that these concepts are correct? Or that they will achieve the outcome you seek?
4. How are you assured that the concepts being taught will not have unintended outcomes? (e.g., closing schools for COVID has led to increased child suicide; teaching white children they are inherently racist or responsible for the racism of others will lead to what? etc.)
5. What grade levels and age groups are receiving the lessons?
6. Who developed the Social Justice and Equity lesson plan?
7. How was it selected for presentation? And, by whom?
8. What alternatives did you consider?
9. Were any portions of the presentation modified?
10. How were parents notified of these lessons? When?
11. What was their reaction? Have you shared their response with the public or the other parents?
12. Did the School Board modify its plan to address parental concerns? How?
13. Why is wealth equality being taught? If it is one element of a political ideology, why does it receive a special all-must-attend class instead of being one of many philosophies taught in a political science or civics class?
14. Why is race being taught as a determining factor of right/wrong? Are children being taught to see themselves as all equal Americans or as part of an identity group entitled to special treatment or special distrust?
15. Why is truth being taught as subjective and unknowable?
16. How have the students reacted to the lessons?
17. At least one student has reported to others he was told not to share the lessons outside the class. Is this secrecy part of the instruction?
18. How many students attended the alternative lessons or none at all?
19. Are there any state or federal requirements to provide these lessons? Are they attached to funding?
20. Are there differences in the ways in which white children are taught differently than children of color?
21. Do you have any training programs that advocate such an approach? Is there a culture or practice of such among teachers?
22. As a county school division, what are we putting into place with regard to gender-neutral restrooms?
23. Has any policy guidance come down from federal or state authorities? If so, how are you obliged to follow it?
24. Do you have any policies or customary practices regarding how children who claim to be transgender are to be treated? What training do teachers receive on this issue?
25. Are parents informed of such student declarations?