

MARK E. GREEN, M.D.

7TH DISTRICT, TENNESSEE

CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY

COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

2446 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-2811

305 PUBLIC SQUARE
SUITE 212
FRANKLIN, TN 37064
(629) 223-6050

128 N. SECOND STREET
SUITE 104
CLARKSVILLE, TN 37040
(931) 266-4483

August 14, 2023

Dr. Jean Luna-Vedder
Director of Schools
Clarksville-Montgomery County School System
621 Gracey Avenue
Clarksville, Tennessee 37040

Dear Dr. Luna-Vedder:

It has come to my attention that the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System (CMCSS) hosted its annual ENGAGE professional development conference in July, which included a seminar titled, “The World Needs More Purple People.” Parents and community members are concerned that this seminar disseminated the hateful tenants of Critical Race Theory (CRT) to our children’s educators.

The presentation’s slideshow taught that even everyday language can cause trauma; for example, phrases like “make this for your mommy.” Further, it claimed that even the mere mention of “Christmas” is traumatic, because according to this seminar, being a Christian makes you “privileged,” while being any other religion makes you “oppressed.” This troubling and divisive presentation also claimed that being either white, male, or middle class means you are “privileged,” while being a person of color, a woman, or “nonbinary, trans, or gender queer” makes you “oppressed.”

The seminar also provided educators with a CRT informed reading list that included “Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man,” the “SAFE SPACE – A Guide to Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual KIT and Transgender Students in Your School,” “The Racial Healing Handbook,” “Just the Facts about Sexual Orientation and Youth,” and “I Take My Coffee Black.”

This type of divisive indoctrination is completely unacceptable. Elementary and secondary schools are not a place for forcing political ideology upon educators and students; telling them that using words like “mommy” or “Christmas” could cause trauma is utterly ridiculous.

The Clarksville-Montgomery County School System owes parents transparency and answers. Parents must know what kind of learning environment CMCSS is fostering for their children. Tennessee parents want their kids to learn the fundamentals: reading,

writing, and arithmetic. They certainly do not want their children to be indoctrinated with pseudo-history and radical social justice theories.

In fact, the State of Tennessee passed a law prohibiting K-12 schools from teaching these divisive ideologies in our public schools. The district's decision to host, and financially support, this conference demonstrates that despite this prohibition, many administrators are intent on forcing these theories onto students—a clear violation of state law. I'm concerned by the lack of action CMCSS has taken and its failure to unequivocally renounce this seminar and the racist ideology of CRT.

Considering the above concerns, I trust you will investigate this matter and provide prompt responses to the below questions:

1. What are the official titles of those who wrote the materials for the seminar “The World Needs More Purple People?”
2. Was the entire ENGAGE professional development conference optional or just the individual seminars? What type of personnel were required to attend the ENGAGE conference?
3. Are the teachers who attended “The World Needs More Purple People” seminar being encouraged by the district to include learned ideas and themes into their lesson plans?
4. Were parents notified about this specific seminar? If so, in what format were they notified?
5. Has CMCSS started an investigation into why and how this seminar was selected? What is the district's finding thus far?
6. Have any parents reached out to you personally or to the Montgomery County School Board regarding this seminar? If so, how did you respond?
7. How were CMCSS funds used to support the ENGAGE professional development conference? How is such support consistent with either the spirit or letter of Tennessee's laws prohibiting CRT, gender ideology, or similar propaganda from our public schools?

I look forward to hearing back from you no later than September 1, 2023.

Respectfully,



Mark E. Green, MD
Member of Congress