

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 27, 2021

The Honorable Miguel Cardona
The Secretary of Education
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Cardona,

We write today to express our deep concern over the proposed new grant priority for the American History and Civics Education program under the Department of Education which promotes Critical Race Theory integration into civic and history teachings.

Civics and history are two subjects that are vitally important to our children's intellectual growth and education. Through civic education, students learn the foundational principles of our democracy, about our coequal branches of government, and our unalienable rights enshrined in the Constitution. A strong civic education should empower students to be well-informed and active citizens. Furthermore, American history helps children develop a sense of patriotism and pride in the United States of America. Students should learn about the uniqueness and greatness of the American systems and the challenges we have overcome as a nation.

It is therefore counterproductive and even dangerous to allow our vulnerable school children to be taught the falsehoods prevalent in the 1619 Project or in Ibram X. Kendi's *How to Be an Antiracist*. Ibram Kendi's book argues that the entire American system is corrupted from top to bottom by racial prejudices and that these prejudices account for all differences in societal outcomes. This book is antithetical to the American Dream, which has given millions of Americans the freedom and ability to control and write their own future. In fact, the American Dream has drawn millions of individuals to America's shores and created the most prosperous nation in human history. Moreover, the 1619 Project is a racially divisive, revisionist account of history which intends to "reframe U.S. history by marking the year when the first enslaved Africans arrived on Virginia soil as our nation's foundational date." The 1619 Project is in fundamental opposition to our true foundation date in 1776.

While schools obviously have a crucial role to play in helping make students aware of the negative consequences of slavery, and the significant contributions that Black Americans provided to our society, we do not believe that our schools should be promoting Critical Race Theory while educating our children. Critical Race Theory has troubling and concerning consequences when it comes to training, grading, and teaching. Critical Race Theory commits to an unremitting attack on Western institutions and norms in order to dismantle all aspects of society. Simply put, the teachings of Critical Race Theory want to reject the principles established in our Constitution and our individual God-given rights, and instead divide individuals into competing racial identity groups while doing little to help minority students advance.

Our educators should not be encouraging ideologies that undermine the value of individual liberty and America's founding ideals while further embedding the concept of systemic racism in our children's

education. Instead, our educational institutions should focus on lessons aimed at embracing the true founding values of our country.

Therefore, we strongly oppose awarding grants based on the criteria stated and urge you to reconsider *Proposed Priority 1—Projects That Incorporate Racially, Ethnically, Culturally, and Linguistically Diverse Perspectives into Teaching and Learning* issued by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education for the American History and Civics Education program.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Doug Lamborn in blue ink.

Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Jeff Duncan in blue ink.

Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress