



State of Arizona
Department of Education

Tom Horne
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

August 3, 2010

John Carroll, Ed.D.
Tucson Unified School District
Interim Superintendent
1010 East 10th Street
Tucson, Arizona 85719

Dear Dr. Carroll:

It has been brought to our attention that the TUSD is declining to end any of its ethnic studies courses, despite the passage of H.B. 2281, which prohibits courses that, among other things, “are designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group” or “advocate ethnic solidarity instead of the treatment of pupils as individuals.” Arguably, all TUSD Ethnic Studies courses are designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group. However, in particular, we have received numerous complaints about the Mexican-American/Raza Studies course, with respect to violations of this statute.

Teachers and former teachers have reported, among other things, as follows:

1. The whole inference and tone was anger. (They taught students) that the United States was and still is a fundamentally racist country in nature, whose interests are contrary to those of Mexican-American kids.

Individuals in this (Ethnic Studies) department are vehemently anti-Western culture. They are vehemently opposed to the United States and its power. They are telling students they are victims and that they should be angry and rise up.

By the time I left that class, I saw a change (in the students). An angry tone.

2. A teacher describes how the TUSD administration intimidated him by removing him from his class, and calling him a “racist,” even though he himself is Hispanic. This tactic, he writes:

...is fundamentally anti-intellectual because it immediately stops debate by threatening to destroy the reputation of those who would provide counter arguments.

Unfortunately, I am not the only one to have been intimidated by the Raza studies department in this way.

3. A teacher reports: TUSD uses tax payer funded programs to indoctrinate students, based primarily on ethnic divisions, in the belief that there is a war against Latino culture perpetrated by the white, racist, capitalist system.

TUSD has hired a group of radical socialist activists who promote an anti-capitalist and anti-Western Civilization ideology. They use ethnic solidarity as their vehicle of delivery. A climate of outright intimidation has stopped many from standing up to this group for fear of being labeled racists.

Impressionable youth in TUSD have literally been reprogrammed to believe that there is a concerted effort on the part of a white power structure to suppress them and relegate them to a second-class existence. This fomented resentment further encourages them to express their dissatisfaction through the iconoclastic behavior we see—the contempt for all authority outside of their ethnic community and their total lack of identification with the political heritage of this country.

4. I have, during the last two years been attacked repeatedly here at Tucson High by members of the Ethnic Studies department because I question the substance and veracity of their American History and social Justice Government classes. I have been called racist by fellow Tucson High teachers, members of the Ethnic Studies department, and students enrolled in the departments' classes. These charges come simply because I ask the department to provide the primary source material for the perspective they preach. The teachers of these classes not only refuse to stop the name calling but openly encourage the students' behavior. The curriculum advanced in these classes openly attacks the founding fathers...

5. I heard him tell his students that America is a "Meritocracy" in which Latinos have no opportunity. I heard him tell his students that the U of A is a racist organization because only 12% of students are Latino and they do not support the Latin students there. I heard him tell students that they need to go to college so they can gain the power to take back the stolen land and give it back to

Mexico. He personally told me that he teaches his students that Republicans hate Latinos.

6. Augustine Romero, who is in charge of the Ethnic Studies program for the district, was asked in television program why the course uses the word “Raza” (which means “the race” in Spanish) rather than just Mexican-American studies. This was his response.

...so that our students could recognize and connect to their indigenous side, just like the word “dine” for the Navajo translates to “the people,” like the word “O’odham” for the Tohono O’odham translates to “the people.” The word “Yoeme” for the Yoeme people translates to “the people.”

It was an attempt to connect to our indigenous sides, as well as our Mexican side.

This would appear to us to be an admission, not only that the course violates the provisions of H.B. 2281, but that it was intended to do so by those who designed and implemented it.

It is my understanding that the District denies these charges. The best way to determine the nature of these classes is to videotape them. Please consider this a formal request to video tape the Ethnic Studies courses, and in particular, the Mexican-American/Raza Studies course, in their entirety, in the coming semester. To protect privacy of students, the videos should focus on the teacher alone. The videos should be of all classroom hours, and not selected.

It is our expectation that, when the law takes effect on December 31st, the Department of Education will announce that TUSD is to have ten percent of its entire budget withheld, until it complies with H.B. 2281. At that time, you will have the right to appeal to an administrative law judge. If you agree to this video tape, it will be helpful evidence to the administrative law judge. If you refuse, we will offer that refusal as evidence to the administrative law judge that the school district has deliberately hidden facts that would show that the district is in non-compliance with H.B. 2281.

Sincerely,


Tom Horne