

From: Beth Prospero [Redacted]
Sent: Saturday, July 10, 2021 1:04 PM
To: Timothy Clare; Jack Stark; Paul Kenney; James Pillen; Elizabeth O'Connor; Robert Schafer; Robert Phares; Barbara Weitz
Subject: CRT

Non-NU Email

To the members of the Nebraska Board of Regents:

I understand you have an opportunity to determine whether students will continue or begin to have the opportunity to learn Critical Race Theory going forward. I don't know whether this is a potential ban on actual CRT, or a wider discouragement of learning anything to do with racial discrimination against non-white American residents. I assume Nebraska students have been learning these things for years, but political actors who are neither historians or educators have suddenly convinced masses of people that it's dangerous to teach actual history to our students. This is dangerous, and I think you all know that.

I am a white American who realized about two years ago that I had no idea what happened to Black Americans between the end of the Civil War and passage of the Civil Rights Act. I decided to read a few books from wonderful historians and Black scholars. I learned about Sam Hose and the Tulsa Race Massacre. I learned about Red Zoning and how New Deal benefits were hardly extended to brown Americans. I don't feel guilty; I didn't create these situations and laws, although I do recognize how I've benefited from them. I'm not ashamed to be white; rather I feel more passionate that the benefits I've experienced as an American should be more equitable and attainable for those who've been denied access, and that mainly includes Black folks. Is my attitude such a bad thing? Is that so scary that we need to prevent my daughter from being taught those same ideas? It doesn't even mean one has to be more Democratic or Republican; it just means we all deserve to learn our country's full and accurate history, because it helps us live in better harmony. Unless you honestly feel that brown people need to be segregated and treated as less than white people, I can't imagine why history is dangerous. Nobody wants to make students feel bad, we just want them to understand truth and repercussions.

We would be horrified if Germany suddenly decided it's dangerous to teach students about Nazi atrocities. They've taken the stance that learning about them is the best way to prevent more from happening, and the vast majority of their residents understand this even as their own grandparents may have participated in the Nazi party. In an America where neo-nazis are becoming bolder and gaining bits of power, do we really want to cater to their ideas of downplaying harm that America has done to its Black citizens?

America is a great country, including the south. We have a rich and beautiful history, but there are some warts. Nobody ever improves at anything without acknowledging their flaws. Please consider this as you vote as to whether students are allowed to learn whatever your elected officials have suddenly decided Critical Race Theory is. Do right by your students and right by your country.

Thank you

Beth