

2017-10-17_post by [Kim Lawrence Gilmartin](#) – Is Jeffco committed to teaching “white guilt” in our K-12 classrooms

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[Kim Lawrence Gilmartin](#)

Oct 16

Is Jeffco committed to teaching “white guilt” in our K-12 classrooms?

Having grown up in our post-60s world, I have admired the words of Martin Luther King, who professed his “dream,” that we should all be judged by something other than the color of our skin. Specifically, MLK spoke to a group of civil rights marchers in DC: “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the **content of their character.**” Of course he was right, which is easy for most of us to recognize today in retrospect. Skin color should have absolutely zero bearing on the world we live in.

And so it’s worth asking another question of my fellow citizens in Jeffco Colorado: Did you know that our new Jefferson County Schools Superintendent, Jason Glass, has taken a stance that advocates Jeffco schools should teach our kids about “**white privilege?**” In fact, Glass believes our children need to know the “importance of examining their whiteness: It’s impossible to see the privilege and dominance associated with white racial identity without acknowledging that whiteness.” That’s verbatim from the article “[Why Talk About Whiteness](#)” which Glass recommended in a list of “[educator resources](#)” he sent to EVERY teacher in our school system. He provided these “resources” for use in our classrooms to “address” hate and racism in America. And we are paying Glass over \$1,000,000 in tax dollars over the next three years for this kind of “leadership.” Most people are not aware of this; but I think you should be.

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New Jefferson County Superintendent Jason Glass

Not only are these types of articles inappropriate, in terms of pushing a political ideology into our children’s classrooms, but it could lead to the devolution of student achievement. (There’s an extremely alarming example playing out right now in at least one other formerly high performing school district: Edina, Minnesota. This article, [“Racial Identity Policies Are Ruining Edina’s Fabled Schools”](#) is jaw-dropping.)

If you dig into this list of resources, it appears Glass thinks our students should identify first and foremost by RACE. As pre-adult learners, born into a society today that we all hope will recognize the quality of one’s character, students are being asked to identify themselves first and foremost by the color of their skin.

“I am white” or “I am not white”, is apparently the primary question, before, “I can do long division” or “I am a person endowed with rights and brimming with human value.” At what point did judging ourselves and each other by the content of our characters, not the color of our skin, become a bad idea?

A child of any skin pigmentation is amazing and worthy by virtue of being a child loaded with potential, and all the more so when developing talent at art or math or athletics. What does that child’s skin pigmentation have to do with anything?? Yet, by publishing these “resources” to the teachers, we the taxpayers are promoting and institutionalizing the very racist behaviors that MLK hoped to rid our country of many decades ago.

Below is the preamble of a lesson Superintendent Jason Glass recommends for teachers of *Kindergartners*. [“For young white students, explorations of fair and unfair, just and unjust, can go a long way in advancing anti-racist white identity.”](#) What, to your five year old and his or her buddies, does fairness have to do with anyone’s skin color; and why isn’t Glass emphasizing a foundation for the three R’s instead? Isn’t that what we’re paying for with our tax dollars?

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But it’s not just the obsession with race that concerns me when reading an article such as “[Why Talk About Whiteness](#),” it’s the Jeffco school district’s endorsement of this low-level standard. For example, the author, Emily Chiariello, equates the book “The Hunger Games” with the work of Shakespeare. Indeed, this author (a former teacher) is on board with the preposterous idea that “The messages embedded in the classics are all around us—in the media, . . . so isn’t reading them in classic literature redundant?” Oh, yes. The Kardashians, Harvey Weinstein, and The Family Guy are just like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Tolstoy, Fitzgerald, or Nabokov. This author recommends students engage in a comparison between *Romeo and Juliet*, a work deemed masterful for hundreds of years, with *Romiette and Julio*, the modestly successful teen fiction recasting the classic tale in a dumbed-down form, like *West Side Story*, only without the great music. Indeed, teen fiction itself translates to an extremely low reading level by the standards of even just 40 years ago, let alone 100. Without a doubt, we are establishing in our children, and future generations, the soft bigotry of low expectations.

Speaking of recommended literature, Jason Glass’s resource list is overflowing with other objectionable recommendations from the [Anti-Defamation League’s website](#) (ADL). For example, “[The Hate U Give](#)”, (for ages 14–18) is about a Muslim boy who is shot fatally by a police officer. [Sparkle Boy](#) (for ages 4–8(!)) is listed under the LGBTQ People & Homophobia section. [Hillary Rodham Clinton: Some Girls are Born to Lead](#) (ages 4–8) is hailed as describing Clinton as “brave, brilliant and unstoppable.” It is safe to say that we now know how Jason Glass wants our children to think about Hillary Clinton, don’t we?

About 95% of the articles listed in Glass’s educator resource list come from the websites [Tolerance.Org](#) and the aforementioned ADL (who incidentally recently published an article on the constitutional rights of public school students [not to participate](#) in the Pledge of Allegiance or National Anthem.) Tolerance.org is wholly owned and managed by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC). Let’s be clear. The Southern Poverty Law Center, the “civil rights watchdog group” that ABC and NBC prominently cite, has become a dangerous joke. It’s a joke because the idea that Christians are members of a “hate group” merely because they advocate for orthodox Christian principles and the liberty to live those principles is so intellectually and ideologically bankrupt that it’s barely worth addressing.

The SPLC is a \$328 million “non-profit” organization that unethically [ships millions of dollars overseas](#) without actually accomplishing much other than libel and defamation of good women, men, and organizations. Claiming to have 75 lawyers litigating on behalf of the poor, with a CEO earning a third of million a year, it actually spent only 61K on legal services in 2015 according to its publicly available tax records. The SPLC is little more than a piggy bank of fraud filled with indulgences purchased by virtue signaling ignoramuses.

SPLC’s main contribution to public discourse includes libel in the form of a “hate group” listing and map. SPLC labeled as a “hate group” the human rights heroine Ayaan Hirsi-Ali, a black, African-born woman, feminist, former Muslim, and author of a book speaking out against female genital mutilation, among other things. That’s right, she is a “hate group” all by herself. Ben Carson, the black American, born in poverty and raised by his single mother to become a

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groundbreaking pediatric neurosurgeon, and a candidate for the American presidency, and now Secretary of Housing and Urban Development—yep, he was placed on the SPLC’s “Extremist Watch List” until “[intense criticism](#)” forced SPLC to reverse course. Indeed, SPLC’s reckless hate designations [led directly to an attempted murder](#) by a deranged man misled by its accusations.

The SPLC has become so unhinged and so far removed from impartiality that the Washington Examiner reported in 2014 that the FBI had quietly cut ties with the organization. **Now why would Superintendent Glass find the SPLC a good and valuable source for teaching materials for your kids and mine?**

Didn’t Glass just state in his new “Jeffco Generations” plan that “This is the time to put these (political) divisions behind us and for Jeffco to come together around a common understanding and direction for our schools”?

I could go on for pages, giving examples from the “resources” Glass is recommending to our teachers, but let me highlight another especially concerning one. Glass suggests teaching our kids about “[Swastikas and other hate symbols](#).” Now certainly no thinking, caring and considerate person would want to support swastikas and hate symbols, but the focus on it assumes that there is an epidemic that needs to be addressed. Glass’s recommended article listed on the ADL website repeats the trope that we’ve seen an “increase in anti-Semitic incidents, including the display of swastikas on school and college campuses, sidewalks, places of worship, ... and other places.” Jeffco parents, have any of you seen an increase in the display of these hate symbols locally? Shortly after the election in November, there were reports, especially in liberal parts of the country, that swastikas and hate symbols were appearing; but many of those cases were debunked as anti-Trump demonstrations by enraged and bitter voters with an ax to grind. Do we really need to continue this charade in Jefferson County? Glass publishes this pabulum without the slightest nod toward the kind of critical thinking we want our kids to learn.

Mark Twain is credited for saying, “A lie can travel around the world and back again while the truth is lacing up its boots.” That appears to be occurring here too, with Glass’s assistance. Much of these criminal hoaxes have been proven false. In [Colorado Springs](#), a black man posted anti-black flyers outside a black church. [In DougCo](#) a lesbian couple spray painted “Kill the Gay” on their own garage and hung a noose on their door. Examples across the nation are legion, such as horrifically racist, anti-Semitic, anti-gay graffiti spread around [Oberlin college](#) by Obama supporters. And the black preacher [in Virginia](#) imprisoned for faking racially animated arson and graffiti on his own home.

So the question is, why is our new million dollar superintendent placing such a focus on making your children, even the youngest of them, view life in Jeffco through the lens of race? Is it that bad here in Jeffco that we need to be obsessed with all things racial? Will this help our students improve in reading or writing, in math or in science? Does this type of unbalanced, historically ignorant indoctrination belong in our schools at all?

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As I mentioned earlier, just take a look at the school district of Edina, MN to see that students’ performance tanked as a direct result of the schools having shifted educational focus from traditional curricula to [social justice advocacy](#).

With all of this in mind, I think again of the speech MLK gave more than 50 years ago. Do we really want to foster racial division by putting a focus on it? We need to teach children of all walks of life that your race doesn’t matter. I suspect many parents believe as I do, that it is what you do with your life, what you learn, how you apply yourself that is going to make the difference. We need to teach our children to look beyond skin color.

Jason Glass was hired by the current Jeffco Board of Education. That Board was elected in large part on what we have learned was a lie—as proven by their subsequent hiring of Glass—that the previous superintendent was paid too much by the prior Board. The Board then proceeded to hire Glass and pay him the highest salary of any superintendent in Colorado. And we now see the political ideology that will begin seeping into our schools as a result.

As a community who cares about what our children are learning, we can do something about this. We can take action against such shortsighted policy madness by a so-called expert educator. Let’s help restore balance to the board this November. We can do that by voting for Erica Shields and Matt Van Gieson.