



New Jeffco Superintendent Widening the Great Divide

Author's note: A number of legislators have contacted me about a suggested curriculum put forth by our new school superintendent — and I was not the only one surprised by its one-sidedness. My resulting Opinion column appeared in the Courier newspapers on 9/20/2017:

Newly-seated Jeffco Public Schools superintendent Jason Glass certainly wasted no time in thrusting our students into the political mosh pit.

In [an August 28 letter](#) to Jeffco legislators, Glass provides a suggested response to “the Charlottesville violence,” whereby Jeffco’s curriculum and instruction team would regale our elementary school classrooms with such trendy zeitgeists as “White Anti-Racist Biographies,” “Why Talk About Whiteness,” “Challenging and Transforming American Values,” and “Confederate Monuments and their Removal.” The latter topic is particularly rich with irony, considering these are some of the same classrooms where teachers [sanctimoniously sent their students into the streets](#) to protest [alleged whitewashing](#) of U.S. history.

Cited among Glass’ resources is the infamous [Southern Poverty Law Center](#) (SPLC).

The SPLC is a [\\$328 million liberal leviathan](#) described by the Virginia-based Media Research Center as “an anti-conservative, anti-Christian hate group,” and [is notorious](#) for lumping legitimate conservative organizations such as the Family Research Council into the same category as neo-Nazis and the KKK. SPLC is the defendant in [at least one defamation lawsuit](#) and has recently [shunted millions of dollars](#) in tax-free donations to offshore havens in the Cayman Islands, British Virgin Islands, and Bermuda.

Predictably, Glass also lists the National Education Association (NEA) — the nation’s [largest labor union](#) — as a “resource.”

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, [99% of all NEA political contributions go to Democrats](#). The NEA also [provided the majority of funding](#) for Jeffco United, the [shady political committee](#) behind the Jeffco recall that ultimately resulted in the hiring of Dr. Glass. In their study

material, the NEA decries “post-election acts of racism and hate,” as if racism, hatred, and violence are unique to the Trump administration.

I wonder, did Glass issue a similar call for K-12 activism when [five Dallas police officers were murdered](#) at a Black Lives Matter rally by a gunman who “wanted to kill white people.” Did he publicly condemn the DHS-designated terrorist group Antifa for their brutishness during the [riots in Phoenix and Berkeley](#)? What about the attempted [mass-shooting of Republican congressmen](#) at a Virginia baseball field this summer?

The reason I ask is because Antifa, Black Lives Matter, and Alt-left hate crimes are mentioned nowhere in Dr. Glass’ syllabus; his fixation is clearly on “whites,” “whiteness,” the “Alt-right” and, of course, the ubiquitous “Nazis.”

The best indicators we have for the cumulative effectiveness of Jeffco Schools’ \$1 billion budget are the American College Test (ACT) and the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). These assessments cover just five sections: Reading, Writing, Math, English, and Science — there is no extra credit for political activism, social justice, or virtue signaling.

[Only one-third of Jeffco 11th-graders](#) currently meet ACT and SAT college and career benchmarks, a statistic no doubt compounded by the unacceptable number of elementary school students who [haven’t been getting what they need](#) to meet critical reading standards. One would hope the new superintendent would focus on fixing this first, rather than tasking his administration with creating a new, one-sided curriculum based on a single, divisive political event. If the district plans to push aside basic academics to make room for pushing political activism on our third-graders, then at least make it balanced. Better yet: allow us, the parents, to guide our children in these matters — without the distractions of such demonstrably partisan sources as the SPLC, NEA, and evidently, Superintendent Glass.

Columnist John J. Newkirk was Secretary of the Board of Education in Jefferson County, Colorado from 2013 - 2015. He has also served on the Colorado Commission for Judicial Performance (1st Judicial District) and the Colorado Association of Funders. He lives near Conifer with his wife and children.