

2 September 2021

PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHER'S REVELATIONS PROMPT CONCERNED PARENTS TO TAKE ACTION, DEMAND INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION

ENGLEWOOD, NJ – In June of this year, a teacher at the Dwight-Englewood School stepped forward to announce her resignation and make jarring allegations about the school's embrace of a "regressive and illiberal orthodoxy" she found "damaging to our students' intellectual and emotional growth."

Dana Stangel-Plowe's exposé, posted on the website of the non-profit Foundation Against Intolerance and Racism ([link](#)), made national and international headlines. In a four-minute video, Stangel-Plowe described how the Dwight-Englewood Diversity/Equity/Inclusion agenda had affected the school's curriculum, divided students, created an atmosphere of intolerance and self-censorship, and forbade faculty from challenging the administration's stance. In documents shared by Stangel-Plowe, several faculty members expressed dismay at parents' resistance to the ideology and expressed the intention to further incorporate it into their classrooms and curricula. Other faculty made disquieting statements, such as "we need more co-conspirators" and one suggestion that the school pursue a "targeted deprogramming/de-radicalization strategy toward identitarian white boys."

Stangel-Plowe also alleged that on multiple occasions, Head of School Dr. Rodney De Jarnett had stated that he would fire and replace all faculty members with "people of color" if he could.

The alarming allegations, and the failure of the school to address any of them in the following months, prompted a group of Dwight-Englewood parents to take action.

In an email sent to over 1,500 parents and alumni, the group expressed concerns about the school's increasingly activist and ideological path. A brief survey at the end asked how many others shared the group's concerns and invited their comments. By the time the survey window closed, 73% of respondents had expressed that they too shared concern about the school's direction. 24% did not. 3% stated they were undecided.

Some respondents criticized the group's decision to be anonymous. They may be unaware that language recently added to the school's tuition contract expressly states that dissenting parents run the risk of having their children expelled from school for challenging the school's "anti-racist" dogma and other tenets.

The letter prompted a hasty response from Head of School De Jarnett which announced, in an all-school email, an "important DEIB (Diversity Equity Inclusion & Belonging) initiative" that will "provide the community the opportunity to freely express their views." The email stated that the initiative would be handled by PSB Insights, a consultancy known to offer several services -- including crisis management. This was seen as an obvious attempt to redirect the discussion internally.

Parents and alumni followed up with the school community, sharing the results of the survey, including the comments, and listed specific demands to bring the school into a more positive and unified future.

In light of the administration's perfunctory response, parents now further demand that the Board conduct an independent investigation to determine if school leadership has created a

hostile learning environment and abandoned its ethical responsibility to foster a positive, constructive learning environment for all of its students. An independent investigation, with full transparency, would also determine whether the Board is fulfilling its fiduciary duty to Dwight-Englewood School as the school works to build a more positive and unified community going forward.

The comments submitted by parents and alumni were on par with the survey results, with a majority expressing dismay at the school's leadership and ideological direction. The reactions suggest that parents and alumni should demand an independent investigation to determine if the school has created a hostile learning environment and abandoned its ethical, fiduciary responsibility to foster a learning environment for its students. A full accounting is attached to this document. Here is a sample:

"What you describe is part of a misguided cultural tsunami and I applaud you for challenging D-E to defy its influence."

"I agree with you 100%"

"Thank you for raising this issue."

"I have seen this worsening over the past few years. It is at a critical juncture. My children are afraid to express their thoughts and opinions in school because they are fearful of retribution. Thank you for creating an anonymous way for us to express views. It is sad it has come to this."

"I have two kids who recently graduated from DE and, I am an alum myself. I have written several emails to Algrant, DeJarnett and the President of the Board - similar (although not as eloquently written) - to this letter. GOOD FOR YOU!!! Keep it going!! I'm devastated at how much DE has changed over the past 4-5 years and how it's lost its mission to create critical thinkers and to promote an inclusive community! I'm going to pass this letter around to several parents who supported me in my fight."

"I don't like how children are being overly sensitive to race etc. it prevents them from connecting to each other on a deeper level and builds up barriers that otherwise wouldn't exist."

"My daughter has been incredibly uncomfortable this past year in DE. Happy to discuss further. Thank you for doing this!"

"Thank you for stepping up and bringing this to light. Yes, we too have been waiting for an answer from the school."

"Thank you I have been waiting for someone to step up to the plate & bring DE back to the great school it used to. Be & should be"

"Want my child educated, not subjected to having a divisive morality proselytized to them."

“The school current policy can be perceived as polarizing and divisive, instead of recognizing and learning from history, and constructively build a productive society. The "freedom" of speech and respectful exchanges of thoughts are being limited. Equally concerning - we came here seeking 1) the focus of academic rigor and excellence. 2) growth of our child by quality of his merits and characters. Unfortunately both are overwhelmed and overshadowed by this movement of "political correctness". Being 1st generation immigrants, and victim of prejudice, we are sad to say, the direction the school is taking is not really addressing the inequality, but rather unintentionally dividing an already fragile society. This does not teach our children fair and critical thinking, but rather instructing them a conclusion that is really resonating. We continue believing DE, and hope DE could adjust its course to reflect "what is right", not "what sounds right".”

“We are new to the school and horrified at what we are learning about this administration. No one mentioned anything about the change in curriculum or approach. We got a much different sell on the school. We would not have accepted and joined the school if we had known. This needs to be fixed and changed, and we thank you for your efforts. You have friends in court.”

The initial letter and the survey results letter follow. Survey results have been unedited, except for the removal of names and any identifying details so as to protect individuals from retribution.

Parents are currently coordinating how to move forward. Any interested parties are invited to contact concernedparentsofde@protonmail.com

(A) INITIAL SURVEY EMAIL SENT TO PARENTS, ALUMNI AND PROSPECTIVE PARENTS. FOR LOGISTICAL REASONS, THE EMAIL WENT OUT OVER THE COURSE OF A FEW DAYS:

To Dwight-Englewood Parents, Alumni, & Prospective Parents,

This letter is written to the parents, alumni & prospective parents of Dwight-Englewood School (“D-E”) concerning the direction of the School’s Diversity, Equity & Engagement (DEE) program and its effect on the overall community. D-E has long been respected for its rigorous academics, community values, and inclusivity. In our view, the school culture has begun to devalue the diversity of thought, open-minded inquiry, civil discourse and a foundational sense of common humanity that drew many of us to it in the first place. In recent years, the school has instead been overemphasizing differences between groups of people, teaching in an increasingly one-sided and pessimistic way, and encouraging students to concur with a pre-ordained set of specific, narrow conclusions about complex cultural and political issues. The magnitude of this shift was brought to light in June, when a popular teacher at the school resigned, explaining her specific reasons as she did so. Her allegations and supporting evidence can be found here: <https://www.fairforall.org/profiles-in-courage/dwight-englewood-whistleblower/>

Like the rest of you, we have waited for a response from the administration to these allegations. None has been forthcoming. This is why we concerned parents are reaching out to all members of the D-E community to bring this issue front and center immediately. We believe that students should learn to engage with intellectual empathy with a range of sources and perspectives, grounding this approach with an emphasis on our common humanity that heeds Martin Luther King’s celebrated dictum that people should be judged by the content of their characters. D-E should rededicate itself to the goal of graduating students who truly think for themselves and engage with their peers with grace and openness.

The current DEE program does not explore diversity broadly, examining our complex history and culture, which is rich in both successes and failures, missteps and great leaps for humankind. Instead, the program focuses almost exclusively on a negative and narrowly tailored set of conclusions, assigning students permanent stations based on their immutable characteristics and reducing nuanced and beautifully complex identities into simplistic binaries like oppressor and oppressed, white and black, etc, with little room to engage with different perspectives. D-E’s current program also sows the seeds of division within our community by highlighting perceived differences while ignoring common ground. This divisiveness flies in the face of the school’s oft-repeated goal, stated in the opening words of the mission statement: “as a community.”

Over the past few years, many of us have heard of incidents that we found disturbing. A white student, who was assisting the video teacher in filming black students for their affinity group’s presentation to the school, was told to leave the room because she was white. They said her presence made them uncomfortable, even though these video clips were being made for (and were later shown at) a school-wide assembly. Another white student was reduced to tears by a teacher who insisted that the student was racist because of her skin color. When a colleague heard what happened and expressed concern for the student, these concerns were ignored.

Further insight into the student climate at the school comes from the student newspaper, Spectrum (which is available to D-E community members). For example, in February 2018, a

student wrote:

“Recently, I was discussing a class assignment, a story about an Arab immigrant’s son, with a friend who is not white. I was also sitting next to someone who is not white. I asked the friend across from me, “Why does Akram want to leave America if he got an education, found a group of people he is comfortable with, and has enough money?” My friend across from me thought and shrugged his shoulders. “Yeah, I don’t know,” he replied.

The friend next to me coughed under her breath, “white privilege.”

This embarrassed me. I asked a question, and the friend beside me implied that my question was stupid, and I couldn’t ask questions like this.”

This anecdote, published in the school paper, reflects a learning environment in which students feel embarrassed to offer a different viewpoint.

As parents, we have stayed quiet until now. But thanks to Dana Stangel-Plowe’s revelations, we now know that this ideological approach has made serious inroads into the culture and curriculum at D-E. In middle school, books like *American Born Chinese* have been dropped, while Ibram X Kendi’s book, *Stamped: Racism, Anti-racism and You* has been swiftly added in order to promote the school’s regressive ideology, with no books expressing different opinions made available as a counterpoint. Academic requirements have been changed to make room for the ideological bootcamp of “Seminar” In this mandatory class for incoming freshmen, “antiracist” educators teach the pessimistic perspective that our nation is irredeemably racist and that the world is made up of oppressors and oppressed. Students who disagree learn to censor or silence themselves for fear of reprisal from the teachers that proselytize and social ostracism at the hands of classmates who have become disciples of these worldviews.

These revelations also reveal that some faculty members are activists first, educators second. One discussed the need to “do more explicit work with white students.” Another wanted a “targeted deprogramming/de-radicalization strategy toward identitarian white boys.” One tellingly commented, “We need co-conspirators.” That is not the talk of teachers. That is the talk of zealots.

There is a better, more affirming, more diverse, and more inclusive path forward that can build on D-E’s historic commitment to these values by committing to the precept offered by the National Association of Independent Schools in the Equity and Justice section of its Principles of Best Practice: “The school respects, affirms, and protects the dignity and worth of each member of its community.” D-E’s current path overlooks many members of its community. Its ideology, steeped in fatalism and pessimism, presents students with an often miserable and myopic view of the future that falls short of protecting the dignity and worth of each member of the community. Our school should be sending graduates out into the world with a sense of wonder, excitement, positivity and resilience. At this moment, individuals from private and public schools alike are stepping forward to shed light on these divisive approaches. They hail from all political persuasions, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, because this is not a partisan matter, but one of right and wrong. Of forward and backward.

It is understandable that many of you may not be comfortable signing a petition. We all want the

best for our children and the school can powerfully influence their futures. After Ms. Stangel-Plowe resigned, Dr. De Jarnett promised to address the issue but never did. Is he ignoring it? We must urgently act with our tuition dollars and donations and have our concerns addressed in specific terms.

This letter is being sent to the current D-E community and to those considering D-E for their families. We hope that you will respond to this email to let us know if you are concerned, as we are, with the direction of the school. If you feel this way, know that you are not alone and that you do not need to act alone. Moreover, we have created a way for you to anonymously learn and share information going forward.

Click on the link to take the survey.

(B) FOLLOW-UP EMAIL SENT TO THE ORIGINAL LIST:

Dear Dwight-Englewood Community:

As you know, we are a group of concerned parents and alumni of Dwight-Englewood School. We care about the school and the education our children are receiving. We chose D-E because of the school's many strengths and academic reputation. That reputation is being endangered by the embrace of a toxic and divisive ideology which has manifested itself in changes to the culture, curriculum, and hiring practices. We are concerned that the school's culture now stifles diversity by pressuring students and faculty into a spiral of silence.

Last month, we anonymously sent a letter to the community in order to express our concerns about the direction of the school in light of the revelations of a teacher's public resignation. With our letter, we included an anonymous survey, and we are following up now with the results.

We sent the letter and survey to 1,520 Dwight-Englewood parents and alumni over the course of a few days. We received 218 responses to our survey, a 14.3% response rate. Of those who responded, 73% expressed that they share our concern about the school's direction. 24% do not. 3% are undecided. That means that, in our community, at least 160 parents are concerned about the ideology that has pervaded our school. We also received many comments, which we share below, redacted in places in order to protect identities.

Some of the comments questioned why we reached out to parents anonymously. We would like to explain our reasons. First, the school's tuition contracts -- the ones all parents and guardians are required to sign -- say that the school can punish you for challenging the school's ideology. This wording has been added in the past few years and makes clear that questioning voices will not be tolerated. Specifically, families promise:

"...that they and the Student are joining the School whose stated mission is to embrace diversity, and, as a result, must recognize that the School is committed to individual, communal, and institutional efforts to be an anti-biased, anti-racist community....Parents/Guardians are expected to commit to this core part of the School's mission....Parents further acknowledge that the School reserves the right in its sole discretion to dismiss or otherwise discipline any student who does not meet the behavioral...standards....or whose conduct at any time or place interferes...or brings discredit to the School." -- D-E 2021-2022 Enrollment Contract, "Compliance of School Policies," (page 5).

While the dictionary definition of anti-racist as "opposing racism" is something we all support, the school has wielded its institutional power to enforce a rigid definition of what it defines as "anti-racist" based on the illiberal and race essentialist teachings of people like Ibram Kendi and Robin DiAngelo. This language seems to empower the school to retaliate against students and families for the mere act of questioning the school's ideological approach to achieving our shared goal of ending racism and intolerance. Fear of reprisal from those who wield institutional power is what has allowed this divisive and regressive ideology to flourish in our schools. As a result, there is little input from parents, and there is little transparency from the administration.

Also, as recent news reports have shown, the National Association of Independent Schools

encourages its member schools, including D-E, to include this ideology in their curriculum. Industry consultants, such as The Glasgow Group and Rosetta Lee, who promote the ideology, have suggested that they wish to punish dissent and have equated dissenting parents with the Capitol Hill rioters and Klan members. Our educational institutions no longer seem interested in rational discourse on controversial topics; our own D-E teachers have engaged in the rhetoric of ideologues who will not tolerate any questioning or scrutiny.

We have acted anonymously, not because we do not want a dialogue, but because, in this fraught environment, we rightfully worry about reprisals against our children. We decided that an anonymous survey would best allow us to protect our children while trying to engage the community in an honest and difficult conversation. We aimed to express our concerns and connect with those who share our concerns so that we can work constructively toward a positive and inclusive community for all D-E students and families.

Several people asked what we want and what our goals are with our letter and survey. Overall, we hope for a more unified and inclusive community for all of our students and faculty, regardless of the color of their skin or the viewpoints they hold. In any community, there are bound to be disagreements, and these disagreements should be embraced and not stifled.

Specifically, we have the following requests:

1. Amend the tuition contract to promise transparency and recognize that healthy, productive disagreement is essential to any diverse community. Our children and families should not face disciplinary action for expressing viewpoints that the school does not like. The school must affirm that it will not take any retribution or negative action against, or disclose the names of the families or children who question or express concern or dissent over the school's DEE programs and curriculum.
2. Define what the school means by asserting that it is an "anti-biased and anti-racist community." This phrase has been used at D-E to enforce the regressive ideology that holds that "the only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination." (Ibram Kendi). Is this what the tuition contract is asking parents to affirm? We fully support a pro-human approach to anti-bias and anti-racism at our school, and we reject this regressive ideology being taught as fact to our children.
3. Amend the school's diversity statement to include and affirm the school's commitment to open dialogue and viewpoint diversity. We note that our current diversity statement fails to mention ideological or viewpoint diversity. We also ask that the diversity statement be amended to emphasize our common humanity, and the fact that many of us do not choose to define our identity based on immutable characteristics like skin color. Students should be permitted to be their authentic selves and to form their own unique identity, and not encouraged by the school to embrace a socially constructed group identity. Students should be exposed to competing ideas and worldviews at our school as part of a complete education, and not taught to see the world through a narrow ideological lens.
4. Rebuild a unified and positive school culture by cultivating the character traits and values that D-E advertises on its website and on flags around campus: respect, honesty, judgment, community, courage, and commitment. To build true community among our diverse population, the school should also recommit to its ideals in D-E's "Profile of a Graduate" by providing a balanced curriculum and creating an open culture of viewpoint

diversity as a way to instill in our students the ability to “engage creatively and compassionately in the world [and] think clearly, decide wisely, and live honestly.”

Overall, we urge the school toward a true course-correction. The current plan of using a third-party crisis management firm to solicit feedback so that it can be quietly ignored -- standard procedure at other schools -- is not acceptable and will ultimately leave D-E on the wrong side of history, as it embraces an increasingly intolerant and illiberal orthodoxy while suppressing diverse voices and perspectives.

While it is true that parents unhappy with the school can leave and take our tuition dollars elsewhere, our aim is to improve this school and constructively approach the administration with our concerns. As it stands, the school is not delivering the product it advertises.

Please read the attached comments to see for yourself the current climate at the school. Ask yourself if it's what you signed up for, and if it's what you want for your child.

Signed,
Concerned Parents of Dwight-Englewood

(C) SURVEY RESPONSES, IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER. ANY IDENTIFYING INFORMATION (NAMES, GRADES) REDACTED TO PROTECT INDIVIDUALS EXPRESSING THEIR OPINIONS:

What is wrong with changes? God sent his only begotten son into the world to die for us so we can have redemption. We need to look deeply into our selves and find Christianity, love, honesty, & forgiveness for everyone in our community. Remember the quote from the Bible (John 3:16). I will also add that What is done in darkness will soon come to light. We must watch and pray as the COVID pandemic continues to engulf & divide us. God love is real and he is the only supreme being. Amen!

I could not have expressed my thoughts and feelings better then you have in your letter thank you so much for doing this

I agree with you 100%

What you describe is part of a misguided cultural tsunami and I applaud you for challenging D-E to defy its influence.

Not at this time

Thank you for raising this issue.

Na

This has to change or DE will see a mass defection.

My son's experience has been nothing like what was alleged in the letter by the former teacher. He has told me of rich conversations in the seminar classes, and has been open about his conservative views (which run more conservative than even his parents). He has never talked about negative feedback, but he has been pressed to defend some of his positions.

I need more information. When and where is your next meeting to discuss this? I would like to attend. Will attendees be asked to wear masks under their white hoods?

I am so grateful you are doing this for our community. I have been so disturbed about the direct of the school but haven't felt comfortable speaking up. Thank you for your courage

As a white person I acknowledge that I am privileged so it is easier to tilt the world towards equilibrium! Your efforts are ones to be discussed when equality is close or it exists! We are light years away from that! You need to read more about things ,live in more settings and meet more diverse people to understand this! I hope parents do not become tools to this political hiatus! School has to put diverse faculty and management in front of little brains to

make sure there is hope! It is not a doctrine, it is a process with mistakes and learnings! Discussing this should not even be an issue unless you have a weird political agenda! And a teacher that waited until the year all her kids graduated so she gets full amount of financial benefits from the school is very shady to say the least!

Black and brown children have felt targeted and marginalized in DE, in independent schools, and in life in general for years and years. My children deserve a safe place, as all children do. We have always had to teach our children to be strong and keep persevering. Teach your children to be more resilient and perhaps their fragile privileged egos won't be so easily bruised. It is very telling when being anti-racist is something that makes people uncomfortable. Please check your white privilege. Your ignorance and the lack of your ability to see how ridiculous your words are is truly disheartening. As an aside, on the likely chance you are thinking that my black and brown children don't get a say because they must be getting financial assistance or something, think again. We pay full tuition, just like you. My green is the same color as your green. My voice holds the same weight as yours, even if you don't think so. My beautiful and smart children add some much to the DE community, but I know that if ever I am not happy with DE I can leave and find another school that fits my family better. You too have that option, perhaps you should consider it and move on. This is a battle you will not win. The world is changing. Teach your children to deal with it.

I have additional academic concerns, specifically with the "integrated" approach to world history. I believe the root cause is the same as with diversity issues - school's attempted marketing strategies at the expense of well rounded education. Happy to discuss further if appropriate at this time.

Our children live in the real world and absorb the unrest, confusion, polarization and politics that surround all of us these days. They, too, understand how divided we are as a country and they, too, who are just learning to voice feelings and opinions as they struggle with all of the facets of growing up, are as reluctant as many of their parents to address these mixed feelings around their peers...the social pressure is enormous. How many of us, at this point in time, can say we are "facing the world with a sense of wonder, excitement, positivity, and resilience"? Of course that is the hope, but the reality of our fractious world can not be denied. Perhaps, in the end, it is up to us, individually as parents, to help give them the confidence and resilience they will need to be active, strong participants in our fragile democracy. May it be so.

I agree with you

I have seen this worsening over the past few years. It is at a critical juncture. My children are afraid to express their thoughts and opinions in school because they are fearful of retribution. Thank you for creating an anonymous way for us to express views. It is sad it has come to this.

I have [REDACTED] who [REDACTED] graduated [REDACTED] and, I am an alum [REDACTED]. I have written several emails to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] - similar (although not as eloquently written) - to this letter. GOOD FOR YOU!!! Keep it going!! I'm

devastated at how much DE has changed over the past 4-5 years and how it's lost its mission to create critical thinkers and to promote an inclusive community! I'm going to pass this letter around to several parents who supported me in my fight.

Who wrote this letter, it was not signed and what is there affiliation with the school
Does diversity also include thought? There are many intellectuals, who happen to be black, that talk about the real history and the actual data. Why not use their work?

I believe in and support the work that D-E is doing in the area of diversity and inclusion. Additionally, I am disappointed that my email address has been used without my permission in the sending of this communication.

I feel my kids are brainwashed in thinking everything in "racist" and "no racist" terms. I have to tiptoe around them when I have to even describe people because they think is offensive to even name the race of a person... I have always raised them to judge people only on their character. Under all our skin are the same bones! I have no idea where along the way their mentality changed, but I need to stop this negative change!

This is an excellent letter.

Your approach to sending this email is hurting positive dialogue and discourse with the school community. I would appreciate it if you emailed the group again clarifying who exactly has this opinion as "In our view, the school culture has begun to devalue the diversity of thought, open-minded inquiry, civil discourse and a foundational sense of common humanity that drew many of us to it in the first place." -- "our view" is vague, and clearly nobody has signed their name under the letter. I disagree with your approach in emailing parents and prospective parents and think the statement you made as "fact" (see below) is simply not true in our experience at all. I disagree with the actions the former teacher who resigned took, and think her opinion is one opinion that can be considered amongst many, but making statements that are opinions as "fact" is misleading and not helpful if you really want to have productive discourse to discuss these issues. Setting up a curriculum to discuss these sensitive issues will be a work in progress. So many black and non-white students over the years have also been subject to "disturbing" incidents as you discussed-- and the school is made aware and is addressing them. I am confident that [REDACTED] is thinking about these interests and will move forward in the best interests of the community. Actions like these are thwarting his ability to think and move forward in an efficient and effective way. The statement you say as "fact" but is opinion is below -- and please understand that OUR experience has absolutely explored diversity broadly, rich in successes and failures, and has given my child self confidence and pride in her own diverse background. Her class last year was a wonderful accepting community of kids who supported one another and listened to each other. OPINION not FACT; "The current DEE program does not explore diversity broadly, examining our complex history and culture, which is rich in both successes and failures, missteps and great leaps for humankind. Instead, the program focuses almost exclusively on a negative and narrowly tailored set of conclusions, assigning students permanent stations based on their

immutable characteristics and reducing nuanced and beautifully complex identities into simplistic binaries like oppressor and oppressed, white and black, etc, with little room to engage with different perspectives. D-E's current program also sows the seeds of division within our community by highlighting perceived differences while ignoring common ground. This divisiveness flies in the face of the school's oft-repeated goal, stated in the opening words of the mission statement: "as a community." "

The allegations are not consistent with our perception or child's experience.

I have not witnessed any of these allegations in my experience as a member of the dynamic and inclusive community

Seems like the school has shifted from relatively neutral to progressive activist in a few short years. Every class (including STEM) and communication sounds infused with (left) politics. As a result, the school's misdirected efforts for inclusion have silenced debate and encouraged ostracism at the expense of our children's education and social health. Thank you for asking these questions, and please share the feedback from your survey.

As a parent of non-white students I find your letter the opposite of community. It shows your fear of a loss of privilege and a fear of true engagement. Stating that racism existed and exists in this country is not "fatalistic"; it is a hard truth. It also is required if we want to get better in the future.

N/A

I don't like how children are being overly sensitive to race etc. it prevents them from connecting to each other on a deeper level and builds up barriers that otherwise wouldn't exist.

I agree with your email 100%

You can use my name in your petitions. My daughter has been incredibly uncomfortable this past year in DE. Happy to discuss further. Thank you for doing this!

These are similar concerns that I have been feeling in the past year especially the part "faculty members are activists first, educators second"

The issue is intellectual debate has been extinguished with faculty presenting their own views as gospel instead of teaching children the tools to evaluate formulate & grow into their own intellectual skin.

I thing [name redacted] was the driving force behind many of this and [REDACTED] should be held accountable stable

Thank you!!!

Thank you for stepping up and bringing this to light. Yes, we too have been waiting for an answer from the school. My son [REDACTED] graduated and my daughter is going into [REDACTED] and they feel very uncomfortable.

Thank you I have been waiting for someone to step up to the plate & bring DE back to the great school it used to. Be & should be

I am both curious and concerned that those of you who wrote this letter DID NOT attach your name to this correspondence. I am deeply concerned that this letter alleges that DEs attempts to foster a more equitable experience for both staff and students focuses primarily on the “unfair” treatment of white students with absolutely no mention or understanding of what anti-racism is truly about. I find it hard to believe that DE leaders are categorizing students into groups defined as the oppressed and the oppressor. Please demonstrate real evidence of those alleged practices. Anti-racism work is hard! It’s ok for white people to sit in discomfort as they learn the facts about systems of oppression and how they have benefited from structural racism. This does not mean that THEY are responsible- should be blamed- or described as a racist. What it means is that white people have a RESPONSIBILITY to acknowledge- listen and act to undo belief systems, bias, and systems that foster inequity. Alarmingly- you have not mentioned the students, teachers, and/or faculty of color who have serious and confirmed experience where bias and racist remarks made silenced or made them feel uncomfortable!!! I would like to know your solution- approach. On another note- this teacher had no problem sending her children to DE on reduced tuition- celebrated prom And graduation openly before releasing her resignation to national news source/ seems ego centric to me. I hope you will identify who you all are and what you hope to gain. I will join in a conversation as soon as that is more clear. Please make the results of this survey available to everyone!

You write that the school has yet to address the resignation. I was under the impression that the new DEI hire was in part to address that situation. I am not sure if that is true, but if so, this letter seems to leave out an important point. Further, I have heard rumors -- unconfirmed! -- from other parents that the teacher who resigned was going to get terminated for cause so she tried to jump the gun by going to the media. Again, I am not sure if that is true. These two things are part of the reason why I marked "undecided."

We are concerned. Thank you for raising this issue!

I don't think "American Born Chinese" is a good book for young adults as it fosters unnecessary stereotypes among minds that are not mature enough to understand the satires behind it. It was probably a good idea to drop that book from the curriculum.

This is the Board's responsibility too!

I happen to agree with what the school leaders are doing. Why hide behind this anonymity if you believe in the merits of this argument you are making?

I just wish this kind of activism stays out of the educational system. This is a private institution, those who have, in my view, misplaced concerns are free to leave. The so called popular teacher waited for seven years until her children are out from this very same school to make this outrageous allegations as if the rest of us the parents and our children are misguided individuals incapable of making our own judgement on topics and selecting appropriate fora to express ourselves. Witnessing this effort is utterly disappointing, knowing that adults are ready to drop their children's welfare just to push forward a strange agenda. Perhaps, instead, you could focus on spending more time with your children and let them express themselves at home and discuss their impressions with an open mind... you may experience some enlightening...

If what is written in the letter as well as the supporting evidence is true I am very interested in trying to have this changed

Want my child educated, not subjected to having a divisive morality proselytized to them. The school current policy can be perceived as polarizing and divisive, instead of recognizing and learning from history, and constructively build a productive society. The "freedom" of speech and respectful exchanges of thoughts are being limited. Equally concerning - we came here seeking 1) the focus of academic rigor and excellence. 2) growth of our child by quality of his merits and characters. Unfortunately both are overwhelmed and overshadowed by this movement of "political correctness". Being 1st generation immigrants, and victim of prejudice, we are sad to say, the direction the school is taking is not really addressing the inequality, but rather unintentionally dividing an already fragile society. This does not teach our children fair and critical thinking, but rather instructing them a conclusion that is really resonating. We continue believing DE, and hope DE could adjust its course to reflect "what is right", not "what sounds right".

Those topics should not be the focus of education at DE. I have not heard of any cases that are described in the email or in the resignation letter. If those are true, this would be disturbing, indeed.

We are very concerned. We have children in [REDACTED] and are worried about the new "curriculum." This feels like it is teaching our children how to be racist and causing friction within the community. Thank you for this.

Yes

I see you...

We are new to the school and horrified at what we are learning about this administration. No one mentioned anything about the change in curriculum or approach. We got a much different

sell on the school. We would not have accepted and joined the school if we had known. This needs to be fixed and changed, and we thank you for your efforts. You have friends in court.

How can I get involved?

thank you for putting this together

I'd like to know what the faculty thinks about these changes and if they have been contacted by your group.

The feedback I've gotten from my child is that this whole thing is overblown, and that she considers [REDACTED] to be an unreliable narrator. While I'm sure that, as in any school, there's some uncomfortable negotiation of political issues both between teachers and kids, and between kids and each other (as there was many years ago when I was a high school student), my sense is that there's simply no serious issue to address with the administration.

Absolutely agree with everything in your email but not sure this is the popular opinion and there is no freedom of speech at DE so we chose to move our kids out of state ..truly hope you are successful in your efforts

This is very very disturbing to me and I do not plan on tolerating it. I am personally fed up with the pervasive wokeness at this and other schools.

Would ask that [REDACTED] hold an open parent forum explaining the nature of the curriculum, hear his views on CRT and the 1619 project and take questions.

Anonymity is not the answer. If you believe you are right, you should come forth and not hide in the shadows. I find your method of conducting this survey disgusting and cowardly. The teacher who resigned did the right thing by coming forth publicly. You did not and I will sign my response. [name redacted]

At times students and faculty are uncomfortable with “facts” of history. Discussions should (are) not focusing on making some “feel” bad about their past - but understanding that history has happened and that it has an impact on current day. Certain teachers and students (and parents) in our community are reacting (internalizing) to knowing that the facts of history are uncomfortable.... And don't want to feel this uncomfortable feeling. Most minorities feel this every day... and have to navigate these feelings. I believe that now that everyone has to address these feelings - some are wonder why they have to... as they never had to before. We need to keep explaining to them that our intent is not to make them feel bad ... but that we can't deny the facts of history.

1. Was the white student taking videos one of [REDACTED] children? If yes, isn't it a bit disingenuous to reference the incident without also disclosing this fact? 2. If you blackball me from the anonymous information sharing group, you will be engaging in the same sort of selective conversation you accuse the administration of having. 3. Sending this letter to prospective families seems to indicate a motive different than the one stated and will only devalue the school and its education more 4. If you're really concerned about inequities in the treatment of students, perhaps the privileges afforded to the most wealthy and connected among them should also be addressed, 5. I will look forward to continuing this open and fully

inclusive conversation (anonymously) with you in the future. How will I be contacted? My email address is [EMAIL REDACTED] 6. If you are truly concerned about this issue, perhaps you should also send this email to alums. Seems like they should be involved in the conversation about how they experienced their education .

Sorry, [REDACTED] here again. One last comment about these concerns which I agree, should be addressed by the administration. If there's one thing I think DE is bad at, it's communicating about the right things at the right time. Here's my comment: Last year, the DE BIPOC community approached the administration with a list of requests around making the school feel more inclusive for them. It was concise and specific. I would suggest that you do the same thing. What are you asking for here? For seminar to not exist? For white students to be able to stay in whatever room they want? For faculty and staff to behave or not behave in certain ways? For [REDACTED] to step down? It would be easier to understand the goals of this group if they were articulated. Thanks so much and I'll look forward to hearing from you all again soon!

This is an issue I have been thinking about how to address in the education non-profit sector in which I have worked my entire career. Significantly, a large number of polls demonstrate the extent that those embracing anti-racist ideology and the policy positions growing out of it are actually out of touch with the majority of Black and Brown Americans. There are so many complexities in this area that our kids must understand, and I say this as a life-long liberal Democrat.

I am not yet concerned as I do not have first hand knowledge that what you are alleging indeed occurs. My first hand accounts do not align with the representations in your email. As such I will not play a game of forcing an opinion on this topic just because someone said it to be the case. Too often that seems to be how this current world operates. Statements need to be factual and verified via independent research. The article referenced is based on the viewpoint of one teacher who had planned to resign many months prior to issuing the statement. One statement from a teacher who was already on the way out for other reasons can't be the sole basis of a shift in curriculum. As for the comments by the students regarding their experience, no student should feel uncomfortable in their skin. That should not be tolerated whether white, black, yellow or purple. I am more concerned about this and how the school addressed the issue. We all have a choice. I know I do. If the school doesn't meet the educational needs I want for my child. I will simply remove my child and place her elsewhere. I will continue to monitor and observe from my child's experience to make that determination. Thank you.

These are important conversations to have, but it doesn't work when we choose to remain anonymous. If I believed strongly that the school is going in the wrong direction, which I do not, then I would engage in direct and consistent communication with the administration about my concerns, as opposed to sending letters like this without my name on it, which - let's be honest - are aimed more at stirring up anger than solving problems. If DE isn't meeting our or our children's needs and expectations, there are other schools.

Our son who is open, interested and engaged in learning about diversity and equity has still been made to feel he is a "problem" because he is white. We have discussed looking at other schools because we do not believe that DE is fostering a positive conversation about these important issues and is instead dividing what was a strong community when we first joined it [REDACTED] years ago.

Thank you for the email and survey. Starting in the spring of 2020 and during the 2020-2021 academic year, my [REDACTED] son told me multiple times that he will not write or discuss what he is questioning or thinking. He has said, "I will only tell them and write what they want to hear. I can not ask questions or state what my prospective is as I am concerned I will be incorrectly be called a racist." My son took the majority of his zoom classes, seminars, assemblies, etc. from my office. Too many times I heard some teachers and speakers (leading the discussion) "lecture" only giving a one-sided prospective and ignoring facts and other prospective of the topic. All of this took place BEFORE [REDACTED] disclosed her reasons for resigning from the school. Events like this and my son feeling that he cannot think freely in school are the leading reasons we have begun to look for other schools.

Administration of upper school needs to be more buttoned up, more professional and more decisive.

As relatively new parents to the school, with remote learning driving the bulk of our kids' experiences, it's hard to ascertain/understand some of what you describe. We think the school did an incredible job over the last 18 mths doing their best to educate and care for our kids in incredibly trying times. We would need more time to effectively understand what you outline in your letter.

I can relate to this letter, my children had to keep silent during class discussion and weren't able to voice their opinion on various subjects (politic, history etc.) due to fear of being judge by teacher and other classmates.

This is a divisive letter that was not sent to parents of color which makes clear your own questionable and troubling agenda

In agreement allegations made by former teacher should be addressed throughly by DE leadership. Curriculum should pivot back to expanding our children's minds and encouraging them to think freely without consequence.

WHO ARE YOU ? AND WHERE DID YOU COME FROM ?! YOU DO NOT REPRESENT THIS PARENT OR ANY OTHER PARENT FOR THAT MATTER ! THE BLACK AFFINITY GROUP OR BLACK PARENT AFFINITY GROUP IS NOT GOING ANYWHERE . HOW DARE YOU ADDRESS THE WHOLE SCHOOL IN REGARDS TO THIS MATTER ?! WHERE WERE YOU WHEN THE BLACK KIDS WERE EXPERIENCING RACISM AT DE ?! YOU DO NOT HAVE THAT KIND OF POWER !

YOU CANNOT STOP GROUPS FROM COMING TOGETHER YOU DONT LIKE IT LEAVE !

Thank you for addressing this. I believe DE trying to be inclusive are excluding many families, faiths and beliefs.

Your understanding of what is actually happening at the school is flawed. The truth is much more nuanced and complicated than your letter suggests.

I don't believe the school needs to issue a statement about one teacher's resignation and that teacher's opinions on why she had to leave the school. Some parents received the email, other parents did not. I do not feel this is the right platform for one parent to send mass emails on her views and opinions. If a parent has concerns around the DE program, they should take it up with the school's administration.

Thanks for doing this!!

It is concerning to me that one individual has the access, and decided to send an email like this to the entire community. This feedback is not about the content of your email but the usage of parent email distribution list. I certainly did not consent to one parent's usage of contact information in this format. If everyone start sending surveys or other content as he/she deems necessary, can you imagine what that would be like? Do you want to be on the receiving end? I am open to discussing, and parents voicing concerns but you have no right to send a mass email like this. If you and some want to weaponize politics please keep it out of the DE community. Do not use our children as the excuse. If you don't agree and want your child/children to be part of the DE learning community, I believe you have the choice of not being here.

Thank you for speaking up

influencing and motivating our kids to learn educational subjects (like traditional math, science, history, etc, and modern subjects related to technology) is the school's role. influencing and teaching our kids about culture, religion, being an upstanding citizen, etc. is our role as parents. I don't agree at all with what that teacher said when she resigned.

How did you get my email? Please confirm.

Thank you for bringing this to light.

Thank you for taking action on behalf of our children

Unless you are willing to put your actual name on your email, or the name of the organization you represent, I will not engage with you. Also, your "survey" is poorly constructed and does

not provide room for respondents to express their support of the school or to provide additional comment.

My child had an experience similar to situations you highlighted in your email. The experience was very upsetting and traumatic at the hands of a teacher. As a parent, I have felt the culture change over the last 7 years. So much that I advise my child to be measured when responding especially in the class of the above mentioned teacher. I am thankful that my student was older and I was able to have this be a teachable moment. I came to DE by choice because I fell in love with the school. But I have to be honest, if I had a young child I would think twice sending them to DE at this point in time.

We should only be interested in pursuing the truth.

Did you send out your letter after reviewing [REDACTED] letter from last night?

I do not like the idea of villainizing the administration; though I do agree that developing an oppressor/oppressed presumptual dynamic is harmful to ALL. Is there a place for those of us who see the value to certain arguments made on both sides of this divisive issue? Where is that place?

I think you are doing very important work

I am grateful for this letter and everything that it stands for. Thank you.

This is not a right way to proceed with this matter.

As an immigrant, there was a great sense of pride and joy to be able to live in USA. There is no racism involved when a student wants to do well, learn from history, discourse, do better. Families are scared to speak aloud. Laziness is rewarded, children are being taught to hate themselves for being born white. To say that black people are oppressed is the most racist thing. Instead of the celebrities, athletes, etc always saying that things are unfair, de-fund the police (the most ludicrous) they should be a part of the solution. Adopt a school, set up mentorships, give back in a meaningful way. DE is going in a scary direction and this is not what we signed up for. Thank you for taking the time to bring this to light.

We are new to DE-the statement from the teacher caused many concerns, as it was a reason we left the school we were previously attending

A loving, caring tone of inclusivity, on both sides, is the model I seek.

Your survey is open to everyone in the world. I am not a D-E parent.

I vehemently disagree with your stance. I'm an alumni of de. I've sent [REDACTED] of my children to Dwight. I applaud their stance on highlighting systemic racism. Your message is a bit tone deaf. Your own stories of the Arab student incident highlights the exact reason why

what the school is doing is progress in the right direction. You are uncomfortable. Imagine what minority groups feel daily. You lack the understanding that your “discomfort” is less than what minority groups feel daily in their lives. Race and social issues transcend wealth. Opportunity, liberty and life are being taken away daily from those who are not in the right social/race group. The fact that highlighting this makes some uncomfortable only highlights why Dwight taking a stance on this issue is so critical. What you deem radical is actually necessary for change in our society today and tomorrow. By highlighting the realities within our country systems, inherent in our culture and embedded within our history, will only ensure self awareness will occur. Knowledge is power. You are now more self aware. However uncomfortable you are, perhaps even this exercise will show you that only someone with privilege could even take this course of action. Because the truth is only someone who feels empowered to say whatever they want without repercussion could take this action. As a minority, I have always had to be self aware and ensure I’m cognizant of my actions. I hope you have to be more self aware. Perhaps tomorrow will be a better place. Because this does feel like an oppressor rationalizing why they are not the problem. Dwight’s change of curriculum actually only enforces why I think Dwight as always has been a forward thinking school. Race and discrimination is an uncomfortable discussion. The fact that we are having this uncomfortable discussion is in fact progress. But I stand on the side of Dwight. They are doing their best to navigate a tough time in education. There will always be some who are not happy but if they shift the needle enough, tomorrow’s adults will be armed with a better perspective. I hope they can explore their new agendas. I’m sure they will adjust as they develop this curriculum. But I find it very telling that this change is causing so much emotion from some. I think we all have a choice. If Dwight is not providing the education you want your child to have, then you have a choice to change schools. I will not. I am a supporter of the school and a product of the school. I can assure you they have been a proponent of cultural diversity and ahead of the curve compared to our peer private schools since i attended back in the early 90s.

Coming from a former socialist country, we are deeply concerned and see the resemblance and danger of one sided propaganda and are aware of the results it can lead to.

So glad this is finally happening.

<p>We have reached out to [REDACTED] several times about this and even caught him in person with little to no response. I think it is absolutely disgusting how the school handled it and I commend you for you reaching out to the community. We value the education our children have received thus far but as they continue to progress through the school, we do have several concerns about the idealogy.</p>				
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<p>My daughter was a [REDACTED] this past year and she read the letter. She feels there is some divisiveness, but that it's not rampant. Some of her friends feel the same way. I understand DE is progressive, but to me it has gone overboard.</p>				
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<p>We are new to the school beginning September but feel this conversation is a very important one</p>					
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As a white male, my son sometimes feels like he can not freely express his opinions in class. There is definitely a "party line" on these complex racial issues and diverging opinions and debate are not really encouraged.

Not at this time

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For inquiries, please contact:
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