

Amanda Carson
Brunswick School District
LD 618

My name is Amanda Carson, and I am a School Counselor at an elementary school in Brunswick. I oppose LD 618: An Act to Eliminate Critical Race Theory, Social and Emotional Learning and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion from School Curricula. When reading the stipulations of this bill, it is clear that the writer(s) are not educated on the matters and teachings of CRT, SEL, or DEI. CRT is a university or graduate level course not taught in grades below the post-secondary education level; therefore, there is no merit to debate these teachings as they do not occur in public schools Pre-K-12. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is a subject I teach, as a School Counselor, in grades 3-5, and includes none of the prohibited topics outlined in this bill. I teach the students about empathy, respect, self-esteem and self-awareness, conflict resolution, understanding perspectives, and a host of other topics meant to teach them ways of being inclusive, open-minded, and respectful members of their communities. We talk extensively about the fact that no one will think exactly the same about every matter, but everyone deserves to be respected. To find a problem with the teaching the importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is absurd - I would be interested to know what the writer(s) and supporters of this bill fear so deeply about these topics, as I imagine they believe they should be given equitable treatment and opportunities in the world. But that's the core issue - fear. Fear of what? Loss of dominance? Loss of identity? To let one's fear dictate the lives of others shows weakness, lack of information, and cowardice. The prohibitions outlined in this bill are a reflection of how its writer(s) and supporters are taking in this information, not a reflection of how this information is presented. I should say now, that I am a cisgender, White, heterosexual female, and I do not feel threatened, guilty, or bad about myself because I am continuing to grow and learn about the basic respect and inclusion of people similar to and different from me. As human beings, we must remain open to both contradiction and affirmation of our values and beliefs, and doing so does not diminish our importance or standing in this world. Whatever the writer(s) and supporters of this bill fear, which I gather from the bill is something quite opposite of the reality of these teachings, should be examined with scrutiny and alarm. This is not movement forward. I would invite any of you to sit in a class I teach and listen to the kindness and curiosity exhibited by students. The writer(s) and supporters of this bill would do well to research the topics they so vehemently oppose before writing nonsensical falsehoods simply to coddle their own fears. Thank you.