



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

Office of the President

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Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified Board of Education
1301 East Orangethorpe Ave.
Placentia, CA 92870-5302

Dear Board Members:

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students of the only CSU in your service region and the largest undergraduate university in the state, I write to discourage you from passing a ban on Critical Race Theory or any limits on teaching diversity, equity, and inclusion in our classrooms and communities.

The reasons for this stance are many, but as an attorney and defender of the First Amendment (especially in our public schools), I will begin with the most obvious: such a ban impedes academic freedom and epitomizes the sort of content-based censorship that flies in the face of our nation's democracy. Proponents of this CRT ban also aim to leverage the divisiveness of what has become a lightning rod term — Critical Race Theory — to muzzle any cross-cultural teaching and social justice discussions, including those that are already embedded in our K-12 curriculum. Connecting CRT to any and all discourse about race, inequity, diversity, and inclusion is not only an obvious attempt to garner partisan support for educational gag orders (and for the ignoring of our nation's history), but also a deliberate attack on the cross-cultural educational experiences that public academic institutions must purvey in order to replace historic institutional bias with inclusivity and care. And finally, attempts to dictate which perspectives do or do not add value to this robust exchange of ideas underscores the fundamental reason the right to free speech is enshrined in our constitution: if it is taken from one, it can be taken from all.

As you know, Cal State Fullerton is a top choice for students graduating from PYLUSD, and every year hundreds of your students become our students. We are proud that at CSUF, these students — and all Titans — will have an academic journey replete with classes and curriculum grounded in our nation's entire history. This includes exposure to CRT, Ethnic Studies, social justice, and the tenets of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We believe (and the data suggests) that this journey will be all the more impactful and transformative for students who do not have to wait to get here to experience the proven benefits of such exposure, experiences, and curriculum.

And finally, just as your graduates come to us, we send our graduates to you. Indeed, as the No. 1 producer of K-12 teachers in Orange County, we at Cal State Fullerton are honored to populate the classrooms and offices of the PYLUSD with Titan teachers and administrators. We are also proud that they come to you with the education to effectively explain and include CRT as well as Ethnic Studies in their classrooms as well as promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice for all.

Sincerely,

Framroze M. Virjee, J.D.
President

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY