

From: Crystal Freemon <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 6/11/2021 9:28:43 AM
To: Jason Golden <[REDACTED]>; angela durham <[REDACTED]>; Brad Fiscus <[REDACTED]>; Daniel Cash <[REDACTED]>; Eliot Mitchell <[REDACTED]>; Jennifer Aprea <[REDACTED]>; Jay Galbreath <[REDACTED]>; Candace Emerson <[REDACTED]>; Rick Wimberly <[REDACTED]>; Nancy Garrett <[REDACTED]>; KC Haugh <[REDACTED]>; Eric Welch <[REDACTED]>; Sheila Cleveland <[REDACTED]>;
Cc: [REDACTED]; Jennifer Mason <[REDACTED]>@williamsoncounty-
[REDACTED]
Subject: Leaders in Education

WARNING: THIS EMAIL DID NOT ORIGINATE FROM WCS - Do NOT reply, click links, or open attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning. As you prepare for your board retreat tomorrow, I had a few thoughts I'd like to share. I was thinking about the three groups of parents that have emerged in the district right now.

First, there is a large number of parents like myself, who fully support district DEI efforts and the curriculum. We are parents who are very thankful for an amazing school district but have seen that there is still work to be done in our schools and our community. We are grateful that WCS has chosen to take a leadership role in the community. We look forward to hearing the report from the Fosters and learning how we can be better in the future.

Secondly, there is a very loud but relatively small group of people who are pushing a political agenda and following a very coordinated national playbook meant to influence and even bully our educators. Many of them don't have children in the district. They've been featured in the Epoch times and spoken on Glen Beck. They have even started a [GoFundMe](#) for a 1st-grade child allegedly harmed by discussions of race in a WCS classroom which is interesting since those discussions are a part of the 2nd-grade curriculum, while the 1st-grade discusses Cinderella and Dr. Suess.

If you haven't already, I urge you to check out [Parents Defending Education](#) (a better name would be "Parents Defunding Education, or Parents Attacking Education). They list the local Moms For Liberty group as one of their foot soldiers on their "indoctrination map". Please be aware of their resource pages. It acts as a guide for attacking school districts, guiding local parents to start campaigns to combat local DEI efforts within school systems. [This page](#) even encourages people to "Look at the social media pages of teachers and administrators at your school. They are often quite proud of what they're doing and sometimes post incriminating statements or materials." They also have a form to submit "incidents" and a coordinated litigation effort. It also appears that [Parents Defending Education \(and MFL\) has ties to the Koch brothers](#), and we've all been there before.

But the interesting thing is that even with all this guidance and outside political influence. They haven't gotten very far. The Dear Mr. Golden pages are still the same voices being shared over and over. The same misguided voices showed up on multiple listen & learn sessions. Most parents are not jumping on board. Most parents want educators, not politicians, making decisions for our students.

That leads me to the third group of parents, who I don't think we should forget about. Those are the ones you aren't hearing from, and it's the largest group by far. It's not that they don't care...they are just focused on other things. But I believe that the vast majority of these parents aren't paying attention BECAUSE THEY TRUST OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM. They trust you guys to do the right things to develop the best education for all our kids. They trust you to be the educators. Just remember that when it may sometimes feel you are hearing from the loud minority. That doesn't mean the others don't care...they just trust you.

I've been closely following this school board for over 7 years now. My oldest has gone from Kindergarten through 9th grade in WCS. And I trust (most of) you too. I've seen our school system face these outside influences before. I've seen you all be leaders throughout a global pandemic. I have studied the Wit & Wisdom curriculum pretty thoroughly and love that WCS is being leaders in implementing the best tools for teaching our kids. I appreciate that Dr. Allen and his staff are being leaders in working with Wit & Wisdom to make it even better. That's what I've come to know and expect from WCS, and I am grateful for it.

Thanks,
Crystal Freemon
District 3, [REDACTED]

--



Crystal Freemon
Crystal Freemon Photography
[REDACTED]
www.crystalfreemonphotography.com
Spring Hill, TN



Get your own  email signature

Mr. Golden,
I found the tone of your email and blatant disregard for my child's well-being extremely concerning. Whether the topics were first grade material or not, someone, somewhere in your school district taught them to my child. And she will now be in 2nd grade, where according to this curriculum, she would be taught these things yet again.
I had a wonderful conversation with {elementary principal}, as always. I have expressed appreciation for the support given our family on multiple occasions. That support has absolutely nothing to do with the issue at hand and I find it disgusting that you would bring it up as if it had any bearing on my ability to speak on behalf of my children. My husband and I work very hard to support our family and to keep our children in this school district. Need I remind you that this was a COVID year? My husband, like so many others, lost his job twice this year due to COVID. I have been working side jobs to help, while raising my special needs daughter, who had a major surgery in November to remove a tumor from her spine and detether her spinal cord. As a result, she had to relearn to walk. This, is why we needed the support, which quite frankly, sir, is none of your business.
In sending my email, I am simply trying to shed light on the absolute hell that we have been living due to this curriculum. I am not your enemy. I am a concerned parent, who's taxes pay your salary. May I suggest that in the future, you learn to show some compassion towards those you are tasked with supporting as part of your role in this school district.

M

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----- Original Message -----

On Thursday, June 10th, 2021 at 3:30 AM, DearMrGolden wrote:

> To the Elected Officials of Williamson County,
>
> I'm sure by now everyone has heard the testimony (via letter and video: <https://youtu.be/4ivOQXDcL9A>) of the parents of the WCS 2nd Grader who was negatively affected by Wit & Wisdom. Did you realize there are more children affected? How many more families are afraid to come forward for fear of repercussion? For this reason, I have withheld this family's identifying information, although Mr. Golden and the school board are in receipt of the original letter with the mother's name and district. I trust that information is in safe keeping.
>
> In a recent conversation, the mother confided to me that they were struggling with the expense of counseling sessions for their child. I have set up a GoFundMe (<https://gofund.me/5197d99e>) to help them with this burden. No child and no family should ever have to experience this as result of curriculum taught in school. I hope you will consider giving.
>
> More parent testimony can be found on Instagram @dear_mr.golden.
>
> I also encourage each of you to attend our "Let's Talk Wit & Wisdom" presentation on Tuesday, 15 June, 10 am, at the Harley Davidson in Cool Springs. We will present our findings, the culmination of 1000+ hours of investigation, on this curriculum that is causing such a stir in Williamson County.
>
> Respectfully,
>
> Robin Steenman

> Sent with ProtonMail Secure Email.

>

> ----- Original Message -----

>

> On Wednesday, June 9th, 2021 at 5:33 PM, M <> wrote:

>

> > Dear Mr. Golden and Board Members,

> >

> > I am writing to inform you of my experience this year with Williamson County Schools. When we moved to TN, we were told WCS was the best place to send our children. Our first couple of years have been amazing. This year, I have seen a change in my children that has been extremely disturbing. The content of my daughter's (a junior) AP English class has been incredibly racially charged. To the point where my daughter has brought multiple assignments and reading excerpts to me questioning her value as a person.

> >

> > Most notably, my 7 year old (first grader) has shown the most tragic changes. We went from a normal functioning, sweet child to one who will literally crumble at the slightest challenge and word. My daughter started coming home asking very pointed questions about who she is and if she is a bad person. She came home extremely upset. She told me "Mom, I'm white. My friend is brown. I need to apologize to him for being white because white people have done bad things to people with brown skin." This was a result of several books that were presented to the class from the Wits and Wisdom curriculum. This curriculum has destroyed my daughter's self esteem and created a world in which she is fraught with anxiety and is now in treatment for OCD caused by the constant thoughts being represented by this material. What you don't see is that these children are impressionable. They will take what you say and turn it over and over in their minds until it consumes them. It starts other conversations in their minds about themselves, their self worth, their identity and those they spend time with. My child doesn't sleep, we don't sleep. She is extremely anxious, to the point that some days she can't go to school. She has struggled making friends and feels alone. She has outbursts of extreme anger and tells us "she doesn't deserve anything because she is bad". This IS NOT the climate that we create or things that we teach our children in our home. Children her age ARE NOT equipped to emotionally work through the subjects and curriculum that are being presented. We are now having to obtain counseling to help my daughter work through these awful thoughts and feelings of self hate that border on suicidal. A 7 YEAR OLD. Let that sink in. A 7 year old should not come home and be able to describe acts of the civil war as if they had been there experiencing it. A 7 year old should not be made to feel that she had any part in the oppression of others simply because she was born with white skin.

> >

> > Now moving forward, I have a special needs daughter that will be moving up to kindergarten this coming school year. She most certainly is not equipped to work through the Wits and Wisdom curriculum or the climate which is being created in your schools. If the Wits and Wisdom curriculum is allowed to stand in your schools or ANY type of CRT remains whether in name or the teaching of ideals, I will be pulling my children from your school system. This curriculum destroys our children's innocence and lies to them about who they are and their value to this world and has NO PLACE in the classroom.

> >

> > Sincerely,

> >

> >

> > M

□

School you taught at last year: *

 ▼

Grade level you taught last year: *

K

1

2

3

4

○ 5

Tell us something about Wit & Wisdom that you especially liked or saw that benefited student learning during the first year of implementation. *

Your answer

7:17 ↵



AA

🔒 docs.google.com



As you are aware, some adjustments

were made at certain grade levels in response to your feedback. Please use this opportunity to share if there are specific areas of concern you continue to have after adjustments were made. (If there are no concerns, please reply "none".) *

Your answer

*Thank you for your feedback
and wishing you the happiest
summer break!*



Submit

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7:17 ↖



AA

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Glows and Grows of Wit & Wisdom

Thank you so much for your feedback throughout the year that helped guide us in improving the Wit & Wisdom curriculum. Your feedback throughout the year, through the principals and coaches, helped us make

adjustments to enhance the learning experience for all students. Now that we have completed the first year of implementation, we wanted to give each of you the opportunity to tell us the glows and grows of this curriculum.

Please complete by Monday, June 8th.

Thank you in advance.

* Required

Name (Required to provide ongoing support): *



[REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
[REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
[REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
[REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];
[REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Jason Golden <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Fw: Dear Mr. Golden

WARNING: THIS EMAIL DID NOT ORIGINATE FROM WCS - Do NOT reply, click links, or open attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Elected Officials of Williamson County,

This is a letter sent Tuesday morning to Mr. Golden from a Sumner County ELA teacher of Wit & Wisdom. It's unfortunate that our teachers in Williamson County are so afraid to speak up. Why is that? Shouldn't it be of grave concern if our teachers are silent for fear of losing their job? Shouldn't it be of equal concern that the parents of Williamson County must overcome so many challenges to have their voices heard? Who else can advocate for the students? I hope the answer isn't SEIU and SCORE. I can only hope that the rumored recent teacher survey on the subject of Wit & Wisdom was anonymous. Otherwise, it is invalid.

Respectfully,

Robin Steenman

Sent with [ProtonMail](#) Secure Email.

----- Original Message -----

On Tuesday, June 8, 2021 10:40 AM, <@.com> wrote:

Dear Mr. Golden,

I am writing to you as a concerned parent and educator. I have taught English/Language Arts for 20 years. For the 2020-2021 school year in Sumner County, I had to teach Wit and Wisdom to eighth graders. I was appalled at the lack of thought that went into choosing this curriculum to be put on Tennessee's list of curriculums to be adopted by Tennessee schools. It is clear that this was a "money" deal and not a "let's do what is best for our students" deal! The following are many of the issues that surround this curriculum.

Problems with this curriculum:

- *Scripted curriculum. (Scripted curriculums were made for teachers who need help. You can't tell me your entire county is full of teachers who need help.)
- *Curriculum is not objective.
- *This curriculum does have "Critical Race Theory" built into it.
- *This curriculum does not teach students the concepts on the level they need to know them. It teaches students on the emotional surface.
- *The pacing of this curriculum is not accurate.
- *Teachers are not able to let students read entire texts because of inappropriate content. (As an ELA teacher, we want to read entire texts! Why choose a curriculum where teachers can't read the entire text with their students?)
- *This curriculum **FAILED** twice before Commissioner Schwinn revamped the review process of state curriculums and had it brought back to be on the list for the state of Tennessee.
- *The texts assigned to the curriculum are not developmentally appropriate for the grade level they are assigned to. Many texts contain content that is too mature for the grade level it is being used with.

Examples of how texts are inappropriate:

- *These are examples of what students read in the 4th grade. As a parent and/or grandparent, are you o.k. with this?
 - Hatchet – The main character Brian is going to see his dad, and his plane crashes. his parents' recent divorce weighs heavily on him, as does "The Secret" that his mother is having an **affair**. He must live with this secret. In his despair of being stranded and not being found, Brian also tries to commit **suicide** with the hatchet his mom had given him for a gift.
 - Subjects addressed – **secrets, suicide**
 - Walk Two Moons - addresses **sex** (This book is told through the perspective of a 13-year-old. Why is it a nine and ten-year-old classroom?)
 - George vs. George – A book about George Washington and King George III
 - *Quoted from the book that a 4th grader will be reading:
 - "getting **drunk, chasing women**" (pg. 22)
 - "Each side told a different tale about Lexington and Concord. Rebel newspapers reported that bloodthirsty redcoats burned houses, drove **naked women** into the streets, and **butchered** old men and infants. The King was told that rebel savages broke the rules of war by ambushing his army. Then they scalped fallen British infantry and cut off their ears." (pg. 30)
 - "Meanwhile, the redcoats were trying to terrorize rebel supporters into giving up. Besides constantly stealing food and horses, they burned entire towns and villages, looted or seized people's houses, **raped** and **murdered** innocent civilians, and set fire to crops and timberland." (pg.48)
- *6th Grade – Inappropriate content with mythology. The book Ramayana talks about a father **lusting** over his daughter. The word **lusting** is typed in this book for sixth graders to read.
- *7th Grade – This grade reads The Canterbury Tales. Parts had to be eliminated due to specific **sexual content** that students would have been reading.
- *8th Grade - All Quiet on the Western Front. Parts had to be eliminated due to specific **sexual content**.
- *There are books in every grade level that address dark topics. Students stay on these topics for weeks at a time.
- *Students are not mentally ready for many of the topics that are brought up in their grade level.
- *The topics are not developmentally appropriate.

It is extremely concerning that those in charge do not see the problem with what this curriculum will do to our students in the counties that have chosen to use this. This curriculum is stealing our children's innocence! Does this matter at all to you and those making the decisions? Are our children not important enough? I pray the decision you make to get rid of this curriculum spreads across to Sumner County, and we will also choose to do right by our students and get rid of this!

Sincerely concerned parent and teacher,

E