

CLASSROOM CENSORSHIP

We have been fighting government censorship since our inception, and many of these fights take place in the classroom. Censorship is the suppression of words, images, or ideas that are deemed “offensive,” and happens whenever people succeed in imposing their personal views on others.

Government censorship is unconstitutional. In 1969, the US Supreme Court ruled 7-2 in the ACLU’s case *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* that students do not “shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate.”

HIDING THE TRUTH:

A NON-EXISTENT ISSUE:

Bills seeking to ban “divisive concepts” are a solution without a problem.

WASTE OF TAX DOLLARS:

Bills that prohibit discussions on “race, sex, religion, creed, nonviolent political affiliation, social class, or class of people” are striking examples of government censorship and could be subject to a legal challenge. If the state loses in court, it will have to foot the bill.

REWRITING HISTORY:

The real problem these types of legislation present are:

- Whitewashing history
- Perpetuating white supremacy
- Denying educators and students the right to free speech

Teachers need more resources and students need access to counselors, after-school programming, and therapists. **Vote no on classroom censorship and work on the real issues facing Kentucky's teachers and students.**

Knowing the full truth about history should be uncomfortable. There is a lot of good in America’s history, but there are also the ugly facts of slavery, white supremacy, sexism, homophobia, economic oppression, and more.

From slavery to worker exploitation, Kentucky has its own complicated history that we must understand to create a better future. In Kentucky alone, at least 169 Black people were lynched. Fulton County had one of the highest rates of lynchings in the entire south. In 1865, Kentucky refused to ratify the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery and continued to refuse until 1976. In the early 20th century, at least five people died in “Bloody Harlan,” when coal miners fought coal operators and law enforcement to get decent wages. These examples are a tiny fraction of our history and should be on the table for discussions in classrooms.

“The American people have this to learn: that where ~~justice is denied~~, where ~~poverty is enforced~~, where ~~ignorance prevails~~, and where any ~~one class is made to feel that society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob, and degrade them, neither person nor property is safe.~~”

– Frederick Douglass

1886 speech on the 24th anniversary of ~~Emancipation~~, Washington, D.C.