Obnoxious Classroom Curricula

by Phyllis Schlafly June 3, 2011

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Elementary school curriculum isn't just about the three R's any more. Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmetic now have to make time for lessons in gender diversity and for nosy questionnaires that lead kids into teen sex and illegal drug usage.

Students in all grades at Oakland, California's Redwood Heights Elementary School were given two days of gender diversity lessons designed to teach them that gender is not confined to the "binary concept" of two options. The lessons promoted "gender neutrality," the concept that no distinctions between male and female should be legally allowed.

These lessons were taught by an anti-bullying group called Gender Spectrum and paid for by a $1,500 grant from the California Teachers Union. The course featured all-girl geckos and transgender clownfish.

The major message was that "gender identity" means people can choose to be different from the sex assigned at birth and can freely "change their sex." According to Gender Spectrum, "Gender identity is a spectrum where people can be girls, feel like girls, they feel like boys, they feel like both, or they can feel like neither."

Kindergartners were introduced to this new subject by asking them to identify toys that are a "girl toy" or a "boy toy" or both, and whether they like the color pink. They were read a story called "My Princess Boy."

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Fourth-graders were told that if someone were born with male "private parts" but identified more with being a girl, he should be "accepted" and "respected." They were taught "gender fluidity," which means a boy might be a boy one day and a girl the next.

The Oakland School District personnel were apparently proud of this course because they allowed Fox News to audit and report on these lessons. District spokesman Troy Flint said that gender identity lessons are required by school board policy and supported by federal, state and local law as a means to support "equity" and a safe classroom environment.

The lessons seem more likely to confuse the kids about who they are and, indeed, Gender Spectrum boasted that its goal is to confuse the children and make them question traditional ideas about who is a boy and who is a girl. It is not surprising that many parents were upset when they heard about the two-day course.

Some of the bills now pending in the California State Assembly indicate that these gender neutrality notions may become the new normal curriculum in California public schools. Gender Spectrum is determined to make children think that boy and girl don't mean anything anymore, and that it's no longer normal to believe people are born male or female or have different roles.

The California State Assembly is considering changes to 34 statutes by redefining gender to include a person's own "gender expression," and passed AB 887 on May 17, which prohibits any discrimination against the "transgendered." Among its predictable effects is that employers can be forbidden to require men to dress like men.

We wonder why anyone is surprised at this Left Coast nonsense, because university women's studies courses have for years taught that the obvious differences we observe between males and females are not a natural occurrence but are a social construct due to conditioning by parents and traditional social norms.

It's a misunderstanding of the feminist movement to think it was ever about equality for women; it always advocated the interchangeability of men and women and an end to what they lambaste as gender "stereotyping."

Memorial Middle School in Fitchburg, Massachusetts featured another type of classroom atrocity: requiring pupils to answer nosy questions that are not only intrusive but designed to lead the kids into unacceptable behaviors. The survey, called the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, was created by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which also provided the funding for it to be administered.

One question asked: "The last time you had sexual intercourse, what one method did you or your partner use to prevent pregnancy? ... A. I have never had sexual intercourse; B. No method was used to prevent pregnancy; C. Birth control pills; D. Condoms; E. Depo-Provera (or any injectable birth control), Nuva Ring (or any birth control ring), Implanon (or any implant), or any IUD; F. Withdrawal; G. Some other method; H. Not sure."

Here are a couple more leading questions: "During your life, how many times have you used methamphetamines (also called speed, crystal, crank, or ice)?" "During the past 30 days, how many times did you sniff glue, breathe the contents of aerosol spray cans, or inhale any paints or sprays to get high?"

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment makes such interrogation of students illegal without prior parental consent, which the school did not have. Some parents have appealed to the Rutherford Institute, and we wish them success in stopping the school from asking elementary school children such nosy questions.