



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 13, 2023

## School Board Uses “American Birthright” Curriculum, Incurs Wrath of Teachers’ Union

The Woodland Park, Colorado, teachers’ union has geared up its opposition to a curriculum installed to teach Americanism in the schools just in time for the November elections. Three of the five board members are up for reelection, and the union would love to regain control of the board.

[Wednesday night’s overflow crowd at a local hall](#) reflected the union’s success in making that curriculum an issue.

When Ken Witt was unanimously installed as superintendent of the Woodland Park school district in January, he knew it would be a temp job. He was hired to fill a vacancy for six months, giving the district time to find a full-time administrator.



kali9/iStock/Getty Images Plus

As the end of his initial six months approached, however, the school board extended his stay for another year, to May 2024.

In January this year Witt, with the board’s approval, installed the American Birthright teaching tool to counter the egregious progressivism that has taken over the once-red state. When that tool was offered to the Colorado State Board of Education, now controlled by progressives, it was rejected.

The tool, what its developer CivicsAlliance calls its “Model K-12 Social Studies Standards,” offers an outline rather than a full-fledged teaching tool to help teachers return to the standard educational models that were common just a few years ago.

As CivicsAlliance states:

We work to prevent this subornation of civics education and to dedicate ourselves to joint work to restore true civics instruction, which teaches American students to comprehend aspects of American government such as the rule of law, the Bill of Rights, elections, elected office, checks and balances, equality under the law, trial by jury, grand juries, civil rights, and military service.

American students should learn from these lessons the founding principles of the United States, the structure of our self-governing republic, the functions of government at all levels, and how our key institutions work.

The emphasis is on the word “should,” but, thanks to the Marxists that have infiltrated the highest levels of the U.S. Department of Education, traditional Americanist values have been replaced. CivicsAmerica explains:



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In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education issued *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future* (2012), a report which called for a “New Civics” to replace the traditional approach.

This new form of civics sidelines instruction on the responsibilities of American citizenship, and instead emphasizes identity politics, highly contestable forms of environmental activism, and a commitment to global citizenship.

The New Civics, or “action civics,” replaces classroom civics instruction with political commitment, protest, and vocational training in progressive activism.

It does so with the support of the Federal Government and through a host of private organizations such as Generation Citizen and iCivics.

The Marxist corruption of the nation’s education system ramped up with “The 1619 Project”:

Since 2019 the New Civics advocates have become much bolder. In August 2019, the New York Times launched “The 1619 Project,” which called for “reframing” all of American history (and civics) as the story of white supremacy and black subjection.

The 1619 Project’s advocates brag that tens of thousands of students in all 50 states have used its curriculum resources and that “five school systems adopted the project at broad scale.”

Not every advocate of action civics supports the 1619 Project, but the 1619 Project Curriculum already promotes action civics lesson plans.

Action civics is taking over our K-12 civics and history classrooms. Activists in states such as Massachusetts and Illinois now seek to impose action civics on teachers and students by state law and through mandates by state departments of education.

What constitutes the American Birthright curriculum? Simple, straight-forward traditional American values:

We believe American students should comprehend aspects of American government such as the rule of law, the Bill of Rights, elections, elected office, checks and balances, equality under the law, trial by jury, grand juries, civil rights, and military service.

American students should learn from these lessons the founding principles of the United States, the structure of our self-governing republic, the functions of government at all levels, and how our key institutions work.

But the Marxists and their fellow workers in America’s educational system have done their homework well:

America at large has suffered from the success of their malign efforts.

Too many Americans have emerged from our schools ignorant of America’s history, indifferent to liberty, filled with animus against their ancestors and their fellow Americans, and estranged from their country.



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The warping of American social studies instruction has created a corps of activists dedicated to the overthrow of America and its freedoms, larger numbers of Americans indifferent to the steady whittling away of American liberty, and many more who are so ignorant of the past they cannot use our heritage of freedom to judge contemporary debates.

We must restore American social studies instruction centered on liberty if we are to restore the American republic to good health.

That's what Woodland Park school superintendent Ken Witt intended to do. And for that he was excoriated at that board meeting.

He responded to those attacks:

Yes, this district adopted a traditional framework for civics and social studies — because we had to realign from courses such as “civil disobedience” and statements by the teachers’ union in Colorado that they disavow Capitalism, the free market which makes this nation the envy of the world, while they quip communist tropes.

Our community is tired of teachers believing they have the authority to determine what is taught. This is the responsibility of the people, through their elected representatives, the board of education.

The concept of teacher supremacy over the rights of parents, voters, and even representative democracy must be rejected.

It was a last-minute email that the district sent out to its teachers that generated the overflow crowd on Wednesday. Part of it was particularly galling to those who saw the threat to their evil agenda:

The addition of the American Birthright standard to supplement the Colorado Academic standards has improved the depth and breadth of WPSD civics and social studies instruction, to the irritation of those teachers’ union affiliates bent on fostering a hatred of America in our youth.

This was enough to galvanize parents and teachers from both sides of the issue to attend Wednesday night’s meeting. As for the three board members who are up for reelection — Mick Bates, Cassie Kimbrell, and David Illingworth — November 7 will determine whether Witt’s moves to return to a traditional educational agenda will continue, or not.



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