



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on November 5, 2010

## Teachers in Ariz. District Fight for Return of La Raza Program

Earlier this year, a public school district in Arizona eliminated a radical taxpayer-funded La Raza studies program that was accused of igniting “racial hostility.” According to a group of teachers in Arizona, however, closing the program was “unconstitutional and restricts free speech.”

*The Examiner* [writes](#), “The Tucson Unified School District’s Mexican American/Raza Studies program was eliminated earlier this year when the state enacted a measure — HB 2281 — to stop funding ethnic studies curriculums that advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government.”



The controversial program was instituted in 1998 in order to promote the “Chicano agenda.” Originally named Mexican American/Raza Studies division, the program was renamed to Mexican-American Studies” last year in order to appear less radical.

History teacher John Ward targeted the program’s curriculum last year, noting that it continues to promote victimization mentalities within the Mexican American community and blames middle- and upper-class whites for the alleged plight of the Mexican American.

According to *The Examiner*, “Kids were taught that the southwestern United States was taken from Mexicans because of the insatiable greed of the Yankee who acquired values from the corrupted ethos of western civilization, the teacher wrote in a newspaper opinion piece obtained by Judicial Watch, a group devoted to investigating government corruption, according to officials at Judicial Watch.”

The same program taught students that New Mexico, California, Arizona, and parts of Texas and Colorado were Aztlan, the ancient homeland of the Aztecs, thereby still belonging rightfully to the descendents of the Aztecs.

Ward also asserted that students were taught that Mexicans were discouraged from taking high school courses by “white teachers,” who did not believe that the Mexican students were capable of succeeding.

“The curriculum engendered racial hostility, irresponsibly demeaned America’s civil institutions, undermined our public servants, discounted any virtues in Western civilization and taught disdain for American sovereignty,” Ward stated.

Furthermore, many of the teachers in the program were not certified to teach.

As a result, Arizona passed HB 2281, a bill that “does not ban ethnic studies programs outright, but does bank programs that teach ‘ethnic solidarity’ or resentment against ethnic groups,” explained Tucson Unified School District Superintendent Tom Horne.

According to KGUN9 News, “In helping to pass HB 2281, which places restrictions on ethnic studies,



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Arizona superintendent of schools Tom Horne frequently cited *Occupied America* [a textbook written by La Raza author Rodolfo Acuna that targets whites and Americans as racists] as an example of why the law is necessary.”

Graphic: Logo of Metro La Raza



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