



This is regarding Senate Bill 155 to prohibit the use of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in schools statewide.

DEI is one of many practices being used in Ohio schools today that contribute to the mental health crisis we see in adolescents/children. While DEI is an organizational framework said to “create an inclusive environment where everyone, regardless of their background, feels valued, respected, and has an equal opportunity to succeed,” it actually is causing division, inequality, and exclusion in schools.

One of the many practices that has come out of DEI is the use of lenient disciplinary practices. Many schools have adopted restorative practices in some form:

- Restorative Discipline,
- Transformative Justice/Discipline,
- Positive Behavior Instruction System (PBIS), and
- Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

This adoption followed President Obama’s Dear Colleague Letter, and they have continued using these practices despite President Trump rescinding this letter in 2018.

While the theory behind restorative practices sounds good, it doesn’t deliver in execution. Restorative practices, while aimed at rehabilitating offenders and fostering a sense of community, have raised significant safety concerns. In practice, the focus is on reconciliation and giving offenders multiple chances, which compromises the safety of other students and teachers by not holding the offending student personally accountable for his/her disruptive or violent behavior. A tragic example of the dangers of restorative practices is that of the 2018 shooting by Nikolas Cruz at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Nikolas Cruz had a history of disruptive and violent behavioral issues that were not adequately addressed due to the district’s use of restorative practices.

Schools need to be prohibited from using DEI and all the well-sounding derivatives (Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Critical Race Theory (CRT), and Restorative Justice practices) and return to traditional disciplinary practices that clearly define expectations, hold students accountable for disruptive behaviors, and are consistently applied to all students.

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