



The Great Parent Revolt

Description

USA: As overreach in classrooms by progressive school administrators, nonprofits and the federal government has reached new heights, parents are stepping up to fight back.



Moms for Liberty, Informed Parents of California, EdFirstNC, NJ Parental Rights, No Left Turn in Education and Parents Against Critical Theory are just a few of the hundreds of new parent groups that have emerged across the country in recent months. Many parents have become education activists because of schools' failure to bring children back into the classroom or their continued imposition of mask mandates.

Others are engaging because of the content being taught. Whether it's age-inappropriate sex education, critical race theory, or anti-American history, parents are seeing more of what their children are learning—thanks to COVID's virtual learning—and they don't like it. As a result, parents are organizing, speaking out, and pushing back, and they are having a noticeable impact.

Some of the most effective efforts have begun with individual parents who reached a boiling point and decided to speak out.

Mom and investigative journalist A.P. Dillon helped [expose](#) critical race theory training in Wake County, N.C., public schools. [Elana Fishbein](#) was a lone parent in Lower Marion, Pa., who [objected](#) to content in her children's curriculum, which, in her words, "described 'whiteness' as an entitlement to steal land, garner riches, and get special treatment on equity and race." That letter reached a national audience when Tucker Carlson invited her onto his Fox News Channel show.

Andrew Gutmann also made national news when he sent a [letter](#) to 650 families criticizing New York City's Brearley School, which his daughter attended, for its obsession with race and for "desecrating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr."

Meanwhile, the 11-minute takedown of a Putnam County, N.Y., school board by [Tatiana Ibrahim](#) has well over 1 million views on YouTube.

Individual parents speaking out have helped to kick off what is proving to be a rapidly growing parent revolt. They have helped to galvanize others who were either unaware of the bad content or too afraid to speak out. After Elana Fishbein appeared on Carlson's show, hundreds of parents across the country reached out to her on social media. And today No Left Turn in Education has 35 chapters across the country and is growing.

When Tina Descovich and Tiffany Justice finished their terms as school board members in Florida, they decided to form Moms for Liberty to teach parents how to serve as watchdogs of their local schools boards. When they established the organization in January of this year, they had intended it to serve as a statewide entity in Florida. But today, just over six months later, they have 65 chapters nationwide and have more applications for new chapters.

Wherever these parent groups have emerged, **they are finding creative ways to challenge the attempted progressive takeover of K-12 education.** Sloan Rachmuth, founder of [EdFirstNC](#), has held webinars and in-person events to educate parents on how the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction rewrote the social studies standards for K-12 based on critical race theory. Patti Hidalgo Menders, a mother of five boys in Loudoun County, Va., read aloud to school board members obscene passages from Tiffany D. Jackson's "Monday's Not Coming" and Gretchen McNeil's "#Murder Trending."

Educating parents is a critical part of the work. As Hannah Smith, a newly elected board member in Texas [explained](#), "There were a lot of people who had, by their own admission, just kind of fallen asleep. They just thought we've got these award-winning schools, we've got this awesome community, everything's going well. I don't need to show up at board meetings. I don't need to be worried about what's happening in the schools."

In addition to raising the alarm about what's happening in the schools, parent groups are challenging school boards through recalls — for example in [Loudoun County](#) and [San Francisco](#) — and by actively running candidates for school board, with some notable successes.

When the Carroll, Texas, Independent School District introduced a Cultural Competence Action Plan, which would require "social justice training" and establish a "diversity and inclusion" week, at the cost of \$3 million over 10 years, local father Cameron Bryan decided to run for school board and won. As Bob Lubke, from Civitas, has [written](#), "Historically, conservatives have not been as vocal about down-

ballot races. That's a mistake. Education is often the largest expenditure for state and local government. Local school board members not only make budget and policy decisions that impact the day-to-day operations of how our schools are financed and administered but also how our children are educated. Few local positions are as consequential."

With the growing anger over the indoctrination of their children, parents have become much more engaged in school board elections, and it is having an impact: In 2021, the number of board member recalls has more than doubled from previous years, according to [Ballotpedia](#).

Parents are also initiating lawsuits as an important tool in their fight against overly progressive schools. According to John Murawski at [RealClearInvestigations](#), about a dozen lawsuits and administrative complaints have been filed since 2018. A new wave of lawsuits is being driven by the recent surge of concern among parents over critical race theory and its implementation in schools.

The first lawsuit against CRT was filed on Dec. 22, 2020, in Nevada. Gabrielle Clark and her son William brought the suit on the grounds that the school violated William's free speech and due process rights. According to the No Left Turn in Education [website](#): "the Sociology of Change teaching in his civic classes required him to publicly reveal his race, gender, religious, and sexual identities, and then attach derogatory labels such as 'privileged' or 'oppressor' to those identities. Students were then asked to 'undo' and 'unlearn' their 'beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that stem from oppression.' William and his mother objected, and he was punished with a failing grade and his graduation was at risk."

The lawsuit was brought by a coalition of organizations, led by The Discovery Institute's Center on Wealth and Poverty, with support from the Upper Midwest Law Center, [Schoolhouserights.org](#), and others. According to CRT expert Chris Rufo, several more lawsuits are in preparation.

On June 20, Patti Hidalgo Menders, Scott Mineo and several others, represented by the Liberty Justice Center, filed a lawsuit against the Loudoun County School Board ([Menders v. Loudoun County School Board](#)). On June 23, 2020, LCPS published its Action Plan to Combat Systemic Racism. The plan included the creation of a Student Ambassador Equity Program, which was only open to "students of color" and those with "a passion for social justice." The lawsuit also states, "The 'Share, Speak-up, Speak-out' meetings in which Student Equity Ambassadors are entitled to take part are not an everyday opportunity for student/faculty engagement. Rather they are part of an explicit initiative to stifle speech under the guise of eliminating 'bias'."

While [26 states](#) have introduced or passed bills to reject the teaching of critical race theory, it will likely be the courts that ultimately decide whether it fundamentally violates American principles, and even in that process, the role of parents will be pivotal. As John Yoo, a law professor at the University of California, Berkeley, recently [said](#), "I think that what's going to happen is that there have to be more parents, more communities involved, challenging these kinds of efforts to use race explicitly in the schools or in their local governments, and those will generate the cases that get to the Supreme Court. And the Supreme Court can make clear, as I think it should, that race is just never to be used in the government and in state and local at all, for whatever reason, whether it's allegedly benign or it's for malign reasons."

The bottom line is that education in America will likely never be the same, thanks to the Great Parent Revolt of 2021, and that's good news. For decades, many parents have outsourced the raising of their children to the schools, trusting that administrators, school board members, and teachers would share

their values. We blindly believed that schools would care about our children as much as we do. We believed that if the teaching went astray, if the books were inappropriate, or if the civics and history were a little un-American, what we did at home would serve as a gentle correction and all would be well. The past two years have taught us how wrong we were.

Thankfully parents are reengaging in their children's education and reasserting their rightful place in decisions about curriculum and content. The question will be whether their efforts are strong enough and sufficiently sustained to win the battle against the radical tide of educators, nonprofits and federal education bureaucrats who are working to rewrite American history.

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