

In Denver suburbs, parents grapple with equity platform, school board politics

Pandemic teaching exposes Douglas County, Colorado's, school board politics for many parents

By [Matt Leach](#) , [Matt Wall](#) | Fox News

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DOUGLAS COUNTY, Colo. – *This is the first in a two-part series on school board politics in Denver suburbs.*

Douglas County, Colorado, parents told Fox News that school board politics forced them to mobilize for the future of their children's education.

"I think with the pandemic, we were stuck at home with our kids, we had to get more involved in our education, listening to Zoom calls, classes, things like that," said Christa Gilstrap, one of the parents. "Parents started realizing, 'Wait, what is happening?'"

"It doesn't really matter who the president is, so much for my day-to-day life, but it really matters who my school board, who my governor is," she continued.

Debates around school board politics in places like Loudoun County, Virginia, have dominated the national conversation, but they are similarly playing out in other communities all across the country, including in Douglas County.

SAN DIEGO-AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT MAY BAN CRITICAL RACE THEORY



The Douglas County school board unanimously passed an equity policy in March, which the district said "will ensure every DCSD student and staff member has access to equitable and rigorous educational opportunities" and will aim to correct any inequities in the school district.

Parents expressed frustration to Fox News over the new policy. Some were concerned that the platform could open the way for teaching critical race theory elements in the district. Others worried the platform would ultimately promote division among student groups. "We just anticipated that our children were going to school just like we did, we're going to learn reading, writing and arithmetic," Douglas County parent Matt Cassady told Fox News. "Everything is going to be

fine, they're not teaching indoctrination, nobody's talking about their skin color, nobody's talking about their sexual orientation."

"But come to find out, while we weren't paying attention, it appears that they are," he continued.

The [equity policy](#) will not change the curriculum to include critical race theory, the Douglas County School District states.

"The policy has raised concerns from some members of our community who have asked if this will change DCSD curriculum to incorporate Critical Race Theory," the website states. "DCSD is not changing its curriculum. All instruction in DCSD is, and will continue to be, aligned with Colorado Academic Standards."



Fox News attended a school board meeting late last month where many voiced support for the policy.

"As a social worker and parent, I specifically want to express my gratitude for the board's equity policy," a parent said during the public comment period.

"I'm excited about the potential in this equity policy and its ability to address gaps in our district," she continued. "This policy can create rich opportunities for staff development and opportunities for all of our students to flourish."

Gilstrap, who attended nearby Littleton Public Schools, said she understood the value of educational equity but wished the district would prioritize local issues.

"I think we can all agree that every student in the district should have an equal and equitable educational opportunity," she told Fox News. "I completely support that. I recognize that there are some, some issues society-wide that we need to address. But I also want them to focus on Douglas County."

"Douglas County School Board cannot change the world," Gilstrap added.



For parent Will Johnson, the question about who is in charge of his children's education is simple: "What it comes down to for me, and I think for so many other parents, is who owns the education and the moral formation of our kids? Is it the parents or is it the state?"

Douglas County School District superintendent Corey Wise refused multiple interview requests from Fox News.

<https://www.foxnews.com/us/denver-suburbs-parents-equity-platform-school-board-politics>