

November 16, 2022

The Honorable Mike DeWine  
Governor of the State of Ohio  
Riffe Center, 30th Floor  
77 S. High St.  
Columbus, Ohio 43215



Dear Governor DeWine:

Today, Parents Defending Education released an explosive investigation into five philanthropic foundations and their role in promoting divisive race and gender ideology in public schools.

**Columbus City Schools** received **\$1,790,000** from the Wallace Foundation in 2021 to participate in the philanthropy’s “Equity-Centered Principal Pipeline,” intended to “produce school leaders capable of advancing their own **district’s version of equity.**” The district’s Transformation and Leadership page lists its top priorities for the initiative, which includes establishing **affinity groups. Affinity groups separate participants—teachers, administrators, and even students—by race** to discuss certain topics. Any form of racial discrimination, including in the form of affinity groups, is **immoral and unconstitutional**, as Parents Defending Education has **argued in [federal court.](#)**

The Wallace Foundation pledged \$8.2 million to Columbus City Schools over a five year period to implement the principal pipeline initiative. To further this effort, the district also partnered with the Battelle for Kids, a nonprofit that claims its “core values and dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion at the center of everything we do.” This includes “surfacing and addressing practices, structures, and policies that cause inequities to take root and persist.”

At the same time, **less than half of Columbus City Schools students are achieving basic proficiency** in reading and math. Just 40 percent of elementary students, 34 percent of middle school students, and 39 percent of high school students tested at or above proficiency in reading. In math, 36 percent of elementary students, 30 percent of middle school students, and 17 percent of high school students are performing at or above proficiency in math.

This report just scratches the surface. The role woke foundations play in promoting harmful ideology in our public schools merits further investigation. You can find our Cracked Foundations report on this [webpage](#), which includes more information on Columbus City Schools for your consideration.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Best,

Nicole Neily, Executive Director, PDE Action

Alex Nester, Political Director, PDE Action