



PARENTS DEFENDING EDUCATION

ACTION

Let's Talk About: Parental Rights and Transparency

- **What are parental rights and what is education transparency?** Parental rights is a concept enshrined in many Supreme Court decisions, as well as state and federal law. Parents have the right to direct the care and upbringing of their children. This issue is closely tied with education transparency. Parents and taxpayers have the right to know what public schools teach students. Therefore, schools should publicize course curricula, learning materials, and certain financial information.
- **Why are parental rights necessary?** The family is the fundamental building block of society. Parents play the most fundamental role in raising children. Unfortunately, parental rights are under attack across our country. Classrooms are become politically polarized. And more than [5 million American children](#) attend school districts that have Transgender or Gender Nonconforming Policies that say that schools can or should hide a student's gender identity from his or her parents. Schools have silenced and sidelined parents who speak up about classroom politicization. Parental rights and education transparency are key parts to fixing these problems.
- **Examples:** Look at Parents Defending Education's [Indoctrination Map](#) for examples from your state to share with your local advocates and lawmakers.

Opponents of parental rights and transparency in education may use these phrases, so we broke them down for you.

When they say...	They mean...
Public education should be left to the experts.	People with college degrees are the only ones fit to determine how schools should educate children.
Teachers can act <i>in loco parentis</i> .	Teachers are trustworthy members of the community and they are certified to handle these issues. Kids spend eight hours each day at school, and we can trust teachers to make the right decisions for them.
"Transparency" just means that teachers will have to spend hours photocopying	Teachers spend eight hours a day in a classroom, plus time before and after school grading papers and

and posting pictures of textbooks online.	preparing lessons. Teachers don't need any extra burdens.
Christian and/or conservative parents shouldn't determine classroom instruction. Remember the Scopes trial!	The First Amendment protects us from government-instituted religion. As a government entity, schools can't and shouldn't promote one religious or political ideology. It seems that parental rights advocates want to push their ideas on all of us.
Children can tell their teachers sensitive information—like their gender identity—that they might not feel comfortable telling their parents.	Abusive or overly strict parents may hurt their children if they discover that their child identifies as another gender. Unfortunately, kids may not be safe in their own homes.

If they say...	You can say...
What does “parental rights” even mean? This seems like a fabricated issue.	Parents have been repeatedly excluded from their children's classrooms. For example: The Biden Administration and the National School Boards Association collaborated on a letter that requested federal law enforcement intervention in school board meetings. And more than 5 million children attend school districts with policies that school staff can or should hide a child's gender identity from his or her parents. (Use Parents Defending Education's Indoctrination Map for more examples.)
Wouldn't additional transparency requirements burden teachers?	Teachers do have a lot on their plates! That does not make transparency any less important. It may save teachers time in the long run if schools are transparent about curricula and finances on the front end. School districts should create policies that outline how parents can review curricula, learning materials, and contracts with third-party vendors. The school should also provide opportunities for community input.
“Parental rights” advocates are homophobic and transphobic. They hid their bigotry under the guise of “parental rights.”	Parental rights advocates span the political spectrum and come from various backgrounds. “Parental rights” covers a wide variety of topics. Most registered voters—Republicans, Independents, and Democrats alike— support legislation that would require schools to inform parents if their child decides to live as another gender identity at school. It's wrong to generalize parents as “bigots” and dismiss their concerns.
Why do Christian and/or conservative parents get to dictate what kids can learn at school?	First of all, it's not just Christian/conservative parents who are concerned about the American education system today. Second, schools should consider a diverse range of perspective during the creation of lessons and school policies.

	Unfortunately, that's not happening. Students are being taught one narrative. That's what we're fighting against.
Parents are stoking a culture war in schools. They're seeking to ban teaching on racism and LGBT issues.	It's wrong to brand parents as racist and homophobic based on their opposition to the divisive race and gender ideology in schools. Parents oppose schools teaching kids that they are oppressors or victims based on their skin color. This type of ideology teaches that kids are different because of their race—what's more racist than that? Most registered voters oppose policies that say schools will hide when their child decides to live as the opposite sex in the classroom.