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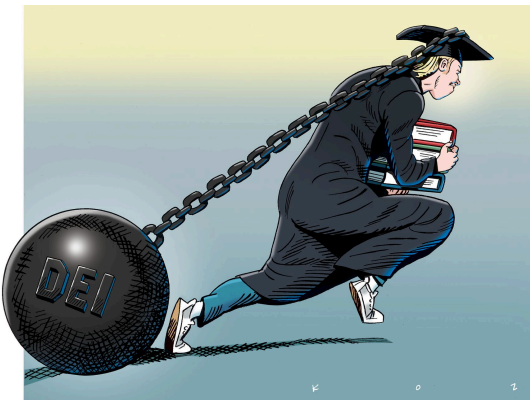
OPINION | COMMENTARY

## *Inside the Woke Indoctrination Machine*

After watching 100 hours of leaked video, we now fully grasp the danger of this ideology in schools.

By Andrew Gutmann and Paul Rossi

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Last spring we exposed how two elite independent schools in New York had become corrupted by a divisive obsession with race, helping start the national movement against critical race theory. Schools apply this theory under the guise of diversity, equity and inclusion programming. Until now, however, neither of us fully grasped the dangers of this ideology or the true motives of its practitioners. The goal of DEI isn't only to teach students about slavery or encourage courageous conversations about race, it is to transform schools totally and reshape society radically.

Over the past month we have watched nearly 100 hours of leaked videos from 108 workshops held virtually last year for the National Association of Independent Schools' People of Color Conference. The NAIS sets standards for more than 1,600 independent schools in the U.S., driving their missions and influencing many school policies. The conference is NAIS's flagship annual event for disseminating DEI practices, and more than 6,000 DEI practitioners, educators and administrators attended this year. Intended as professional development and not meant for the public, these workshops are honest, transparent and unfiltered—very different from how private schools typically communicate DEI initiatives. These leaked videos act as a Rosetta Stone for deciphering the DEI playbook.

The path to remake schools begins with the word “diversity,” which means much more than simply increasing the number of students and faculty of color—referred to in these workshops as “Bipoc,” which stands for “black, indigenous and people of color.” DEI experts urge schools to classify people by identities such as race, convince them that they are being harmed by their environment, and turn them into fervent advocates for institutional change.

In workshops such as “Integrating Healing-Centered Engagements Into a DEIA School Program” and “Racial Trauma and the Path Toward Healing,” we learned how DEI practitioners use segregated affinity groups and practices such as healing circles to inculcate feelings of trauma. Even students without grievances are trained to see themselves as victims of the their ancestors’ suffering through “intergenerational violence.”

The next step in a school’s transformation is “inclusion.” Schools must integrate DEI work into every aspect of the school and every facet of the curriculum must be evaluated through an antibias, antiracist, or antioppressive lens. In “Let’s Talk About It! Anti-Oppressive Unit and Lesson Plan Design,” we learned that the omission of this lens—“failing to explore the intersection of STEM and social justice,” for instance—constitutes an act of “curriculum violence.”

All school messaging must be scrubbed of noninclusive language, all school policies of noninclusive practices, all libraries of noninclusive books. Inclusion also requires that all non-Bipoc stakeholders become allies in the fight against the systemic harm being perpetuated by the institution. In “Small Activists, Big Impact—Cultivating Anti-Racists and Activists in Kindergarten,” we were told that “kindergartners are natural social-justice warriors.”

It isn’t enough for a school to be inclusive; it also must foster “belonging.” Belonging means that a school must be a “safe space”—code for prohibiting any speech or activity, regardless of intent, that a Bipoc student or faculty member might perceive as harmful, as uncomfortable or as questioning their “lived experience.” The primary tool for suppressing speech is to create a fear of microaggressions.

In “Feeding Yourself When You Are Fed Up: Connecting Resilience and DEI Work,” we learned techniques, such as “calling out,” that faculty and students can use to shut down conversations immediately by interrupting speakers and letting them know that their words and actions are unacceptable and won’t be tolerated. Several workshops focused on the practice of “restorative justice,” used to re-educate students who fall afoul of speech codes. The final step to ensure belonging is to push out families or faculty who question DEI work. “Sometimes you gotta say, maybe this is not the right school for you. . . . I’ve said that a lot this year,” said Victor Shin, an assistant head of school and co-chairman of the People of Color Conference, in “From Pawns to Controlling the Board: Seeing BIPOC Students as Power Players in Student Programming.”

With the implementation of diversity, inclusion and belonging, schools can begin to address the primary objectives of DEI work: equity and justice. NAIS obligates all member schools to commit to these aims in their mission statements or defining documents. Equity requires dismantling all systems that Bipoc members of the community believe to cause harm. Justice is the final stage of social transformation to “collective liberation.” The goal is to remake society into a collective, stripped of individualism and rife with reparations.

In sessions such as “Traversing the Long and Thorny Road Toward Equity in Our Schools,” “Moving the Needle Toward Meaningful Institutional Change,” “Building an Equitable and Liberating Mindset” and “Breaking the White Centered Cycle,” we learned that the only way to achieve equity and justice is to eradicate all aspects of white-supremacy culture from “predominantly white institutions,” or PWIs, as NAIS calls its member schools, irrespective of the diversity of a school’s students. Perfectionism, punctuality, urgency, niceness, worship of the written word, progress, objectivity, rigor, individualism, capitalism and liberalism are some of the characteristics of white-supremacy culture in need of elimination. In “Post-PoCC Return to PWI Normal,” DEI practitioner Maria Graciela Alcid summarized: “Decolonizing white-supremacy-culture thinking is the ongoing act of deconstructing, dismantling, disrupting those colonial ideologies and the superiority of Western thought.”

DEI was “another thing to put on the plate, and absolutely now, it is the plate on which everything sits” said teacher Gina Favre, describing her school’s transformation.

No longer are private schools focused primarily on teaching critical thinking, fostering intellectual curiosity, and rewarding independent thought. Their new mission is to train a vanguard of activists to lead the charge in tearing down the foundations of society, reminiscent of Maoist China’s Red Guards.

The danger, however, goes far beyond private schools. The same framework called diversity, inclusion, belonging, equity and justice has gained influence in public education, universities, corporate workplaces, the federal government and the military. For the sake of our children and our nation’s future, it must be dismantled.

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