

NCAC PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Actors' Equity Association
American Association of
School Administrators
American Association of
University Professors
American Association of
University Women
American Booksellers for Free
Expression
American Civil Liberties Union
American Ethical Union
American Federation of Teachers
American Jewish Committee
American Library Association
American Literary Translators
Association
American Orthopsychiatric Association
American Society of Journalists &
Authors
Americans United for Separation of
Church & State
Association of American Publishers
Authors Guild
Catholics for Choice
Children's Literature Association
College Art Association
Comic Book Legal Defense Fund
The Creative Coalition
Directors Guild of America
The Dramatists Guild of America
Dramatists Legal Defense Fund
Educational Book & Media Association
First Amendment Lawyers Association
Free Speech Coalition
International Literacy Association
Lambda Legal
Modern Language Association
National Center for Science Education
National Communication Association
National Council for the Social Studies
National Council of the Churches
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Teachers of English
National Education Association
National Youth Rights Association
The Newspaper Guild/CWA
PEN American Center
People For the American Way
Planned Parenthood Federation
of America
Project Censored
SAG-AFTRA
Sexuality Information & Education
Council of the U.S.
Society of Children's Book Writers
& Illustrators
Student Press Law Center
Union for Reform Judaism
Union of Democratic Intellectuals
Unitarian Universalist Association
United Church of Christ
Office of Communication
United Methodist Church,
United Methodist Communications
Women's American ORT
Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance
Writers Guild of America, East
Writers Guild of America, West

Statement on the Removal of “We The People” Posters

Feb. 28, 2017

Carroll County Public Schools' (CCPS) recent removal of posters representing the diversity of women living in the United States because of some complaints that they were “anti-Trump” will only serve to stifle discussion of the increasingly important issue of citizenship and American identity.

The posters, created by artist Shephard Fairey, depict American women—including a Muslim-American and an African-American—in the colors of the American flag and contain captions such as “We The People Defend Dignity” and “We The People Stand With Each Other.” They were created for “a nonpartisan campaign dedicated to igniting a national dialogue about American identity and values through public art and story sharing.”

The mere act of displaying the “We The People” posters does not constitute partisan political activity. The posters do not advocate for or against President Trump, the Republican Party, or their policies, nor do they call on viewers to take political action in support of or opposition to a specific cause.

What the posters do, through their depiction of a variety of women, is further the goals of CCPS Policy IGAA by emphasizing promoting values such as heritage and diversity. They encourage their viewers to think critically about social issues such as ethnicity, religion, and the complex relationships between self-identity as a minority and self-identity as an American.

In order to encourage civic education, it is crucial that our schools promote such critical thinking about social questions. The “We the People” posters can serve as a catalyst for difficult yet profound discussions and help students further explore the meaning of American identity.

By removing the “We the People” posters, CCPS has demonstrated to teachers that discussion of multifaceted, complex issues such as citizenship is subject to censorship. Out of fear of discipline, teachers may choose to avoid such conversations, dealing a blow to civic education and intellectual development. The losers, as always, will be the students.