



EVERY HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL SHOULD SAY THIS

DENNIS PRAGER

If every high school principal gave the following speech, America would be a much better place.

To the students and faculty of our high school:

I am your new principal, and honored to be so. There is no greater calling than to teach young people. I would like to apprise you of some important changes coming to our school.

First, this school will no longer honor race or ethnicity. I could not care less if you are black, brown, red, yellow or white. I could not care less if your origins are African, European, Latin American or Asian, or if your ancestors arrived here on the Mayflower or on slave ships.

The only identity this school will recognize is your individual identity—your character, your scholarship, your humanity. And the only national identity this school will recognize is American. This is an American public school, and American public schools were created to make better Americans.

If you wish to affirm here an ethnic or racial identity—or a national identity other than American—you will have to attend another school. This includes after-school clubs. I will not authorize clubs that divide students based on identities such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or whatever else may become in vogue in our society. Those clubs cultivate narcissism—an unhealthy preoccupation with the self—while the purpose of education is to get you to think beyond yourself.

This school's clubs will be based on interests and passions—clubs that transport you to the wonders and glories of art, music, astronomy, languages you do not already speak, and more. If the only extracurricular activities you can imagine being interested in are those based on ethnicity, race or sexual identity, that means that little outside of yourself really interests you.

Second, I do not care whether English is your native language. My only interest in terms of language is that you leave this school speaking and writing English as fluently as possible. The English language has united America's citizens for over 200 years, and it will unite us at this school. Furthermore, I would be remiss in my duty to ensure that you will be prepared to successfully compete in the job market, if you leave this school without excellent English-language skills. We will learn other languages here—it's deplorable that most Americans only speak English—but if you want classes taught in your native language rather than in English, this is not the right school for you.

Third, because I regard learning as a sacred endeavor, everything in this school will reflect learning's elevated status. This means, among other things, that you and your teachers will dress accordingly. There will be a dress code at this school.

And you will address all teachers by their title, not by their first name. They are your teachers, not your pals.

Fourth, no obscene language will be tolerated anywhere on this school's property. By obscene language, I mean the words banned on radio and television, plus epithets such as the b-word, even when addressed by one girl to another, or the n-word, even when used by one black student to another. It is my intent that by the time you leave this school, you will be among the few your age to distinguish between the elevated and the degraded, the holy and the obscene.

Fifth, we will end all self-esteem programs. In this school, self-esteem will be attained in only one way—the only way self-esteem can be attained—by earning it. One immediate consequence is that graduating classes will have one valedictorian, not eight.

Sixth, and last, I am reorienting the school toward academics and away from politics and propaganda. No more time will be devoted to racism, sexism, Islamophobia, homophobia, global warming, tobacco, or gender identity. No more classes will be devoted to condom-wearing and teaching you to regard sexual relations as no more than a health issue.

And there will be no more attempts to convince you that you are a victim because you are not white or male or heterosexual or Christian. This school will have failed if any of you graduate without considering him or herself inordinately lucky—lucky to be alive and lucky to be an American.

Now, please stand and join me in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our country. As many of you do not know the words, your teachers will hand them out to you.

I'm Dennis Prager.