



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Reports of TUSD book ban completely false and misleading

Tucson, AZ, Jan. 17, 2011 – Tucson Unified School District has not banned any books as has been widely and incorrectly reported.

Seven books that were used as supporting materials for curriculum in Mexican American Studies classes have been moved to the district storage facility because the classes have been suspended as per the ruling by Arizona Superintendent for Public Instruction John Huppenthal. Superintendent Huppenthal upheld an Office of Administration Hearings' ruling that the classes were in violation of state law ARS 15-112.

The books are:

Critical Race Theory by Richard Delgado
500 Years of Chicano History in Pictures edited by Elizabeth Martinez
Message to AZTLAN by Rodolfo Corky Gonzales
Chicano! The History of the Mexican Civil Rights Movement by Arturo Rosales
Occupied America: A History of Chicanos by Rodolfo Acuna
Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire
Rethinking Columbus: The Next 500 Years by Bill Bigelow

NONE of the above books have been banned by TUSD. Each book has been boxed and stored as part of the process of suspending the classes. The books listed above were cited in the ruling that found the classes out of compliance with state law.

Every one of the books listed above is still available to students through several school libraries.

Many of the schools where Mexican American Studies classes were taught have the books available in their libraries. Also, all students throughout the district may reserve the books through the library system.

Other books have also been falsely reported as being banned by TUSD. It has been incorrectly reported that William Shakespeare's "The Tempest" is not allowed for instruction. Teachers may continue to use materials in their classrooms as appropriate for the course curriculum. "The Tempest" and other books approved for curriculum are still viable options for instructors.

The suspended Mexican American Studies classes were converted last week to standard grade-level courses with a general curriculum featuring multiple perspectives, as per the directive by the state superintendent. Students remained in classes with their teachers, who are now teaching general curriculum.

TUSD

As the district has taken action to comply with the order from the state, the goal of the district has continued to be to prevent disruption to student learning. Books used as instructional materials in the former Mexican American Studies classes were collected only from classrooms in schools where the courses were taught. Again, all the books are still available to students through the TUSD library system.

In one instance, at Tucson High Magnet School, materials were collected from a filing cabinet while students were in class though teaching did not stop during the process.

Tucson High Magnet School Principal Dr. Abel Morado acknowledges that the gathering of materials could have been accomplished outside of class time in all instances.

“We had a directive to be in compliance with the law and acted quickly to meet that need,” says Morado. “Part of that directive is communicating with teachers, students and parents, and collecting materials. We regret that in one instance materials were collected during class time.”

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