

The Delray Democrat

Letters by Our Members¹

Your article on the Disney-DeSantis dispute highlights many blunders committed by DeSantis. The first was to direct the legislature to dissolve the Reedy Creek Special District.

After DeSantis was apprised that this would burden taxpayers with \$1 billion in Disney debt, he directed the legislature to pass another law, this one undoing the dissolution, renaming the district, and allowing him to name the new board. At a publicly noticed meeting the day before that law took effect, however, the old board signed agreements that preserved Disney's control over development.

The new law specifically provided it would not affect contracts in existence at the time the law was passed. Since the contracts between Disney and the old board were signed the day prior to passage of the new law, they were arguably enforceable.

The new board sued, claiming the right to reject the agreements, and DeSantis directed the legislature to pass yet another law, this one allowing an incoming board to adopt or reject contracts signed less than 3 months prior to its naming. Disney now argues the new law actually moots the old board's suit by providing the same relief sought by the suit. How many Mulligans does DeSantis get?

Michael K. Cantwell, *Sun-Sentinel*, July 18, 2023

Slavery wasn't so bad? Fight this degradation.

Shame on Paul Burns (Florida's K-12 education chancellor), Commissioner of Education Manny Diaz and every school board member who supports Governor DeSantis' Straight, White, Christian dogma.

It's bad enough they've committed the equivalent of book burning. It's shameless that they try to justify the ashes. Slaves developed skills that could "benefit" them?

The Republicans did what they had no ethical right to do. They usurped the authority of professional educators who for decades determined school curricula based on a principle espoused from Socrates to John Dewey: What is worth knowing?

The answer was universally accepted science, literature and factual history with the objective of developing critical thinking. But critical thinking is a threat to dictators like DeSantis. Thus his racist, homophobic and populist legislation. Years ago, I created the first Black Literature

¹ [The Delray Democrat](#), August 2023, page 10.

curriculum in Newtown, Connecticut.

Students developed empathy and a desire to create a more just nation. Florida students deserve the same opportunity.

We must repudiate this degradation of education by all means necessary, or else the Class of 2024 will graduate with honors in propaganda.

June S. Neal, *Sun-Sentinel*, July 25, 2023

Thank you for your excellent, unapologetic editorial which rightfully criticizes Gov. DeSantis and the Republican-dominated board of education for their attempts at re-writing Black history.

Their rationale is indeed an embarrassment. Do they really think we will accept that enslavement came with benefits, or that teaching slavery factually might make White students 'feel bad?'

I've never heard a student make such a statement after studying slavery, but, as a high school and college teacher, I did witness students develop empathy and, often, a desire to make this a better country.

History never blames those who came after the fact. Instead, it offers us tools to strive for a more perfect union.

DeSantis has anointed himself Educator in Chief, then used that authority to dish out racist propaganda.

The only thing that will hurt Florida's students is the Great White Lie the Republicans have substituted for an education.

June S. Neal, *Palm Beach Post*, July 26, 2023