



PARKWAY NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE REPORT

Student Newsletter



In March, Commissioner Omar Sabir visits Academy leaders and encourages them to register to vote in the May 17th Primary Election.

Inside the Issue

SCHOOL FUNDING ON TRIAL & WHY IT MATTERS

Class President Eva Murphy gives us an update on the Pennsylvania school funding trial

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Academy leaders interviewed History teacher Amanda McCaw to understand the root causes of this global crisis and what Parkway students can do to help

CRITICAL RACE THEORY ?

Academy Leader Damani Morgan breaks down Critical Race Theory

THE CHIPS ARE TOO DARN HIGH!

by Rin Brown & Jhadae Sterling

The price of everything is going up, but why? INFLATION, MY BROTHER!

Inflation describes one of the concepts of economics most talked about by adults. To break it down, inflation is a rise in prices relative to money available. In other words, you can get less for your money than you used to be able to get.

Most people usually refer to inflation when they talk about the prices of items, like cars, houses, and stocks. But inflation also affects things like a bag of chips, getting your hair done, or getting a suit or dress made for prom. When inflation rises but people's paychecks don't, this means that people have to spend more of their hard earned money to buy the same things that they used to be able to buy for less. Inflation changes the ratio of money towards goods or services; more money is needed to get the same amount of a good or service, or the same amount of money will get a lower amount of a good or service. Economists defined certain customer goods and services to be able to measure inflation. There can be positive and negative effects of inflation.

TO LEARN MORE, CHECK OUT OUR SEGMENT ON INFLATION ON THE PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE REPORT BROADCAST. Visit the Parkway NW website or Youtube Channel & Don't forget to subscribe!!





Supporters of a lawsuit challenging Pennsylvania's school funding system participate in a rally on the steps of the Capitol Building in Harrisburg when the trial began in November | Maddie Hanna & Kristen A. Graham for the Philadelphia Inquirer, 2022

PA FAIR FUNDING TRIAL

by *Academy Leaders*

Does Pennsylvania so severely underfund public education that it violates the state constitution?

That's the question pressing many legislators, families, and educators across the Commonwealth. Stakeholders across the Pennsylvania believe that the current funding system is both inadequate and inequitable.

In 2014, a lawsuit was filed in Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court against the state arguing that Pennsylvania unfairly distributed state funding among its school districts. According to a Children First report, the lawsuit does not ask for a specific amount of money towards education, but asks the court to rule Pennsylvania's current school funding system unconstitutional and appoint the General Assembly to create a funding system that fair, adequate, and predictable and enables all children to meet state academic standards and one that does not discriminate against low-wealth school districts.

There is a great deal at stake for Philadelphia schools and families as state education funds are supposed to bridge the gap between wealthy and poorer school districts. In 2016, state legislatures even passed a law, Act 35, to use a fair funding formula to ensure that every school district receives state funding based on student and community needs. However, nearly five years later, and most of the money in the education budget is not distributed through the Fair Funding Formula. This results in the inequitable distribution of funds: Some school districts get short changed, while others receive larger sums than they need.

What's the problem? Part of the blame can be attributed to a longstanding and outdated practice called Hold Harmless.

Hold Harmless has been challenged by education advocates, activists, educators, students, and families. It rewards declining enrollment with funds, while growing enrollment is not fully funded. A 2021 report from Public Citizens for Children and Youth, identifies that 80 percent of Black and Brown students attend growing school districts. But, Hold Harmless only guarantees that shrinking districts don't lose money. According to the Pennsylvania House Appropriations Committee, led by Senator Vincent Hughes, over 100 of these shrinking districts receive more than double their fair share of state funding, while the 100 poorest districts, serving black and brown students, are shorted \$533 million.

Currently, a Children First report ranks Pennsylvania 45th in the nation for the state's share of funding K-12 education. This is not right, and its time for a change! The people of Philadelphia deserve a revision of the Fair Funding Formula into a Full Funding Formula which will hopefully provide true equitable distribution of funds to all Pennsylvania students.

As far as the trail goes, closing arguments were made on March 10th and now the legal process will take months before Judge Renee Cohn Jubelirer issues a final ruling on the case. But regardless of the outcome, the losing side is expected to appeal, resulting in the case going up to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

It's real out here. Stay informed.

April 2022

THE RUSSIA -UKRAINE WAR



by Starre Nkpagayee

"This situation has affected America as a whole because Vladimir Putin is essentially threatening the whole world."

Starre: What is the Russian invasion of the Ukraine about?

Ms. McCaw: On February 24 of this year, 2022, Russia, under the leadership of Vladimir Putin, invaded Ukraine. Now, Ukraine has been an independent, sovereign nation since 1991, and Ukraine and Russia have a complex history. They were both once part of the Soviet Union. Now even though Ukraine has been an independent nation since 1991, they were essentially only independent on paper. And this is due to the fact that Russia continued to have their hands heavily in the Ukrainian government.

Starre: Why is it important to Parkway students?

Ms. McCaw: This situation has affected America as a whole because Vladimir Putin is essentially threatening the whole world.

Starre: What can we do to help?

Ms. McCaw: Support charitable organizations, donating money, or other resources to help over 3 million refugees that been displaced since the war began over a month ago.



by Damani Morgan

Critical Race Theory is an academic and social movement used by student activists to examine the core idea of race and law in the United States. The understanding of it can differ as far as popular books and critics. Critics usually argue that Critical Race Theory leads to negative dynamics, such as a focus on group identity over universal, shared traits; divides people into "oppressed" and "oppressor" groups. Critics also argue that CRT is used to advocate discrimination towards whites in order to achieve equity. The Critics are incorrect.

CRT originated in the mid 1970's in the writings of legal scholars, including Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, and Kimberlé Crenshaw. According to these scholars, critical race theory is not a noun, but a verb. It is a way of thinking about America's history through the lens of racism. They developed it in response to what they viewed as a lack of racial progress following the civil rights legislation of the 1960s.

It centers on the idea that racism is systemic in the nation's institutions and that they function to maintain the dominance of white people in society. This plays a big role in why some people don't want it being taught in schools. Students can learn about the racially segregated schools, underfunding for black school districts, redlining and more. As of today, the states of Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Tennessee have banned Critical Race Theory in learning curricula. SHM.