



South Carolina's ProTruthSC is concerned about ongoing revelations around the South Carolina Department of Education's adoption of materials from the explicitly partisan "edutainment" organization PragerU.

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The [ProTruthSC Coalition](#) continues to be alarmed by the formal adoption of materials from the politically-biased "edutainment" organization PragerU by the South Carolina Department of Education. We are also deeply concerned with recent statements on the partnership made by Superintendent of Education Ellen Weaver.

Superintendent Weaver has responded to criticism of the partnership by saying teachers are not "required" to use the materials and by [suggesting the problem can be solved by educators using their "professional discretion"](#). However, Weaver's own descriptions of both the PragerU materials and of Board of Education Regulation 43-170 suggest she is intentionally using her office to expose students to specific partisan and ideologically-motivated viewpoints, while censoring other viewpoints, including those of historically marginalized groups.

Weaver has explicitly presented the PragerU materials as an antidote to what she calls "woke" teaching materials, which she alleges, without evidence, have been promoted in schools. For example, in her PragerU interview, Weaver says, "Our higher ed education colleges are way more focused on woke politics, sadly, than on giving our teachers those foundational skills that they need to have to be a good teacher." Although the term "woke" originated in the American Black community, often in reference to being on alert for systemic racism, when Weaver uses the term it is often in conjunction with explicitly partisan language ("woke leftists," etc.). Using the term in this way is, in itself, a rhetorical attack on historically marginalized communities and on an approach to history and education that accurately represents diverse viewpoints and experiences that are relevant to all students.

Weaver has consistently declined to give specific examples to support this kind of statement, but in [statements promoted by Moms for Liberty](#) and other ideologically-motivated groups, she has also used phrases like "woke left nonsense" to describe content she alleges is being taught in South Carolina's K-12 schools. In

exchange, she suggests that supposedly “conservative” materials from PragerU be used.

This is clearly an assault on the vital educational norm of providing balanced instruction, from a public official holding an office that has traditionally been largely nonpartisan. The proper response to any kind of perceived bias in educational materials presented as fact (if such bias exists) would not be to add additional biased information, but to seek out instructional materials that are factually sound.

PragerU does not provide these. The organization has proudly [presented itself as a “conservative nonprofit”](#) which “promotes... values” rather than as an educational institution that promotes factual and balanced information. And [its foundational donors include billionaires in the hydraulic fracking industry and other rightwing activists](#) with a clear incentive to present a biased narrative around climate change, history, and current events.

As [the South Carolina Association of School Librarians](#) has already pointed out [in its statement on the partnership](#), some of the videos still featured on the PragerU website in connection with the partnership include examples of rightwing talk show host Stephen Crowder (with an ambiguous tone that might be an attempt at humor) [inciting students to “grievous bodily self-harm” while wearing a shirt featuring firearms](#), an ahistorical [Frederick Douglass making apologies for slave owners](#) that the real Douglass would never have made, and founder Dennis Prager telling students that if they do not believe in a specifically Judeo-Christian conception of God, they cannot know that “murder is wrong”.

Although Superintendent Weaver has stated that the Department removed some resources from its website (perhaps in reaction to widespread criticism), all of the above videos still appear on the document linked to the page of PragerU’s website featuring the interview with Weaver, and therefore have the imprimatur of an official Department approval. That document, which Weaver indicates in the video was created in collaboration with Department employees, is entitled “[South Carolina Standards Aligned With PragerU Content](#),” though many of the videos are objectively unrelated to, or even in conflict with, state academic standards (see the SCASL statement for several specific examples).

These videos are unacceptably biased, and frequently contain counterfactual statements and messages that, due the partnership, are being formally presented by the state’s public education agency as appropriate for school children. What’s more, while the State Board regulation promoted by Weaver has already been used to ban

books statewide, and explicitly gives the Board and Department roles and responsibilities in overseeing the selection of publicly-funded instructional materials, Weaver herself entered into this formal partnership with PragerU without any transparent or public process. Indeed, Board members have expressed that they are in the dark, themselves, about the partnership and process by which it was created. One member [explicitly called the materials “indoctrination” during the last Board meeting](#), and called for a review.

Despite this, there is nothing currently on the upcoming January 7 Board agenda addressing these concerns.

The South Carolina Department of Education and State Board should not be able to have it both ways: allowing educators the “discretion” to choose content only when it pleases those on one end of the political spectrum, while making it easier and easier to censor ideas about systemic racism, gender, and diversity, is an unacceptable government overreach that prioritizes one worldview over all others.

South Carolina public schools serve students from many faith traditions, and from many family backgrounds and compositions. These students’ own life experiences reflect the diversity of our state, our country, and our world. Every student deserves equal access to truthful and relevant information; they do not deserve to be subject to one-sided and nakedly partisan propaganda while the state bans instructional materials many students and parents actually want and need to access.

ProTruthSC and its partners stand with students, parents, and educators seeking a nonpartisan, authentic, transparent, and truthful approach to academic content and instructional material selection.

The ProTruthSC Coalition is a growing grassroots coalition of organizations and concerned citizens from across the Palmetto State and beyond. The founding members of the coalition are the E3 Foundation, the Lowcountry Black Parents Association, the ACLU of South Carolina, and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. For more information, visit ProTruthSC.org.

Statements from education advocates on the partnership follow.

Craig Logan, E3 Foundation

The E3 Foundation stands firm in its commitment to the integrity of public education in South Carolina.

We reject and oppose the South Carolina State Board of Education's partnership with PragerU. This decision is not only troubling—it is dangerous. PragerU, a right-wing organization, has no place in the classroom. Its material lacks academic merit, disregards educational standards, and fails to meet the rigorous demands of professional educators. This partnership represents a clear shift toward indoctrination, not education, and undermines the integrity of public education in South Carolina.

As we continue to advocate for the rights of students, parents, and educators, we call on the South Carolina State Board of Education to reconsider this dangerous partnership. It is our collective responsibility to protect the quality and truthfulness of the education our children receive. The future of South Carolina's students deserves better.

Jamie Gregory, South Carolina Association of School Librarians ([link to our statement](#))

The South Carolina Association of School Librarians (SCASL) is deeply concerned about Weaver's promotion of a partisan, ideologically motivated resource as part of South Carolina's public education system, as well as her disparaging comments about higher education, labeling it as "woke." Any partnerships formed by the South Carolina State Department of Education must adhere to the established approval process for educational resources, ensuring transparency and opportunities for public input. School librarians are uniquely qualified to curate instructional materials that are unbiased, appropriate, and designed to foster inquiry and curiosity in students.

Jennifer Rainville, Education Policy Attorney, SC Appleseed Legal Justice Center

Time and time again, PragerU has been proven to not be educational material built to strengthen our student's core needs in the classroom. It is unapologetically a content-creating machine for one political viewpoint. Its materials contain reimagined, false narratives about our history with a clear political leaning. Political propaganda should never have place in the classroom with the exception of history lessons exploring the dangers that it has posed in the past. South Carolina students deserve a curriculum that inspires a love of learning and critical thinking skills that prepares them to meet their full potential both academically and professionally.