

# Civil Rights Attorney and Child Advocate Areva Martin Speaks on Florida's Curriculum to Teach Black History in Schools

*Civil rights attorney and child advocate Areva Martin gives her thoughts on Florida's education standards.*

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, USA, July 26, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Areva Martin, Esq. is one of the nation's leading voices in media, covering topics such as law, race, politics, pop culture,

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*Areva Martin, Esq.*

celebrity and breaking news. Martin regularly serves up legal commentary on network and cable shows as well as host her own award-winning web-based, in-depth current affairs talk show, called “The Special Report With Areva Martin.” She also has a weekday show on KBLA Talk 1580, called “Areva Martin in Real Time,” based in Los Angeles. In opining on Florida's Black History curriculum, she explains “Florida's education standards build on a tradition of lying about racial terror.”

Martin weighs in on the controversial topic, making headline news. Below is her expert opinion.

"As a [civil rights](#) advocate, as an attorney, and as a Black mother, I am appalled at Florida's new education standards; but, I am not surprised.

Florida's actions are in line with America's long history of erasing well-documented episodes of racial terror, but that doesn't negate the impact of the lies. The attempts to rewrite history endangers the education of students and perpetuates the trauma of the original acts, particularly for descendants of slaves. The good news is that this effort vastly underestimates the power of the young people in this country to unearth buried truths and to right historic wrongs.

Many outlets have rightly focused on the outrageous assertions, in the new middle school standards, that slavery somehow brought skills and personal benefit to the Blacks who endured its inherent atrocities. But the new standards are rife with other mischaracterizations, distortions and outright lies.

For example, when teaching about events such as the 1920 Ocoee massacre or other racially motivated massacres, the new rules require instruction to include "acts of violence perpetrated against and by African Americans." This approach deliberately dilutes the documented facts behind America's many decades of the use of racial terror to strip Black people of power and progress and drive them out of their homes, businesses and communities.

I am all too familiar with this well-worn strategy as I have been representing the survivors and descendants of one such episode: the burning and destruction of Palm Springs Section 14 in the 1950s and 1960s, perpetrated by city fathers in a ruse to take over the land the victims lived on. Despite a criminal investigation by the California Attorney General that concluded the acts were a "city-engineered holocaust," Palm Springs successfully lied about that history for decades, aided and abetted by local media. The erasure furthered the trauma experienced by the victims and their families.

However, the Section 14 survivors and descendants are finally finding their voices and getting the platform they deserve to share their stories and seek justice. The tenacity and commitment of those victims, with whom I have had the privilege to work closely, is mirrored in what I see happening among the younger generations in this country.

While America's older generations tend to dismiss Millennials and Gen Z as lazy and entitled, a closer look reveals a new generation of passionate activists and changemakers who will not accept the lies. Just look at what happened in Tennessee earlier this year, when duly-elected House representatives Justin Jones and Justin Pearson were removed from their seats for having the audacity to support young Tennesseans, speaking out about gun violence. That effort to suppress the truth was turned upside down when both representatives were returned to their seats with even greater support and political influence.

Back in Florida, the Florida Board of Education's rejection of an Advanced Placement African American Studies course for high school students, claiming it lacked educational value, is a clear indication of their unwillingness to acknowledge and confront the full truth of American history. By doing so, they deny students the opportunity to understand the deep-rooted injustices faced by African Americans throughout history. But they underestimate the young people.

This is a critical moment in time for each of us to stand with those young people in their efforts



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to confront the destruction of false narratives.

Providing a comprehensive history should not involve whitewashing the past nor ignoring the immense struggles faced by marginalized communities. Instead, we should approach history with nuance and honesty, acknowledging both achievements and injustices.

In a time when our country is grappling with its legacy of racial discrimination and injustice, it is essential that we confront our history with courage and honesty. Attempts to revise history to fit a particular political agenda only deepen divisions and hinder progress towards a more inclusive society.

Florida's false narrative minimizes the atrocities of slavery and undermines the struggle for civil rights and racial justice—but it won't be the final word. Simply study the power, commitment, and action of the new generation for the evidence." -- Areva Martin, Esq.

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