

Scott Woods, Principal
Urbana Middle School
1201 S. Vine Street
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Dear Mr. Woods,

Are you sexist? I hope that you aren't. Sexism is a horrible thing that plagues our country. So, think about it. Is separating our classes sexist? Well, separating classes may not be seen as sexist, but if you think about it, it is.

Some assume that all people in each sex learn the same way. Ask children how they feel and you will soon discover that practically all of them disagree with those beliefs. All of the kids in my class, in fact, all of the kids that I know, would persistently insist that Separate Gender Classrooms are hazardous learning environments. Grouping all of the people of one sex together, and then separating the two groups is sexist. Many girls like video games. They may not want to talk about their feelings like other girls do, and they may hate shopping and painting their nails and doing each others makeup. I am a girl and I feel the same things as listed above. I know that being with lots of girls wont make me feel differently about my opinions, but I can't speak the same way about others who think the same way as me. If they were with girls that would mercilessly berate the way they like things that boys like, they would change their opinions to fit in. Is that really something you would enjoy in our school?

A point that the supporters of Separate Gender Classrooms bring up is that a child's grades actually improved after his school separated. They say that his grade went up from a B- to a B. I find this utterly ridiculous. Not only that a B grade is their idea of a miracle, but the notion that one child's improvement proves that all children will improve is laughable. Everyone learns in different ways. Yes, some people, such as that one child, will improve, but they are the minority. You do things for the benefit of the many, not for the benefit of the few. If most kids grades stay the same, and some kids grades even suffer, why would you continue with that procedure for that single handful of children?

Separate Gender Classes are also showing children that they don't have to understand someone else's point of view. If they don't understand other genders, how will they react to their opinions once they are in a non-sexist school? I understand how people who support Separate Gender Classrooms feel, and how they think that people belonging to certain genders usually feel a certain way, but I

would have to disagree. Everyone is different, and that doesn't mean that they have to learn the way people think that they learn best.

A long time ago, many people also believed that races learned separately. We obviously know now that this is false. So why would we believe the same thing about genders? Sexism is virtually the same thing as racism; the only thing that is different is the innocent victim. Should we make children suffer bias, and reinforce gender norms? I think not. The reason that we go to school is to learn, not to get punished for how we are.

So, Mr. Woods, I'll ask you again. Are you sexist? Will you support Separate Gender Classrooms and risk everything, or will you continue with the simple task of doing what is right, and leaving things the way they have peacefully remained for decades?

Sincerely,

Lillian H.