



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 8, 2011

Texas Schools Instituting Mandatory Arabic Language and Culture Classes

It seems that it was a well-kept secret. Residents in the Mansfield Independent School District in Texas found out just this Monday evening that the district had decided to force some of their children to take Arabic language and culture classes.

As for the impetus behind the move, as they say, just follow the money: The program is a condition for receipt of a federal grant. CBSDFW.com provides some detail, [writing](#):



The Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) grant was awarded to Mansfield ISD last summer by the U.S. Department of Education.

As part of the five-year \$1.3 million grant, Arabic classes would be mandatory at Cross Timbers Intermediate School and Kenneth Davis Elementary School. The program would also be optional for students at T. A. Howard Middle School and Summit High School.

And FLAP has caused quite a flap — and rightly so. First, many parents are angry about being kept in the dark for so long. For example, CBS quotes a father, Joseph Balson, as saying:

Why are we just now finding out about it? It's them [Mansfield ISD] applying for the grant, getting it approved and then now saying they'll go back and change it only when they were caught trying to implement this plan without parents knowing about it.

Then there are the perils of teaching Arabic "culture." As many have pointed out, Islam is so thoroughly woven into the culture that it is impossible to teach the latter without also transmitting many of the tenets, social codes, and norms of the former. And in today's America, where the extra-constitutional "separation of church and state" is taken to an extreme in which students may not pray before football games and a [fifth grader is told](#) that his dance has "too much Jesus," this rubs many the wrong way.

Moreover, would students learn Arab culture, warts and all, or a whitewashed version? Remember that today's politically correct environment dictates that foreign cultures must be portrayed in only the most positive light. Reporting on this phenomenon as it relates to Islam, *The Examiner's* Leah Fabel [wrote about](#) a warning issued by director of the American Textbook Council Gilbert Sewall:

[T]he word jihad has gone through an "amazing cultural reorchestration" in textbooks, losing any connotation of violence. He [Sewall] cites Houghton Mifflin's popular middle school text, "Across the Centuries," which has been approved for use in Montgomery County Schools. It defines "jihad" as a struggle "to do one's best to resist temptation and overcome evil."

And considering that we haven't resisted the temptation to self-flagellate and haven't overcome the evil of those who attack our own culture, the above is even more troubling. Students today learn little about civics and our Constitution, and what they do learn about the United States and the West often isn't



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very flattering. Thus, the picture painted for them is of enlightened, ethereal foreign cultures whose beneficence could benefit us all if only our ugly, intolerant Western culture would stop oppressing them. Given this, why would today's youth take pains to protect and preserve our culture? Why would they not spit it out of their mouths and imbibe the supposedly sweet nectar of foreign fruits?

This story also underlines the need to shrink the federal government. When Uncle Sam collects an exorbitant amount of our tax money, it's only natural that the states will start competing for how much of it they will get back. And then they will be marionettes, as "He who pays the piper, calls the tune." So while we don't want Arabic forced on us, the real problem is that we've been speaking Big Brother's language for far too long.



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