



Outrage over plan to use 'race' for rating students in American school

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Washington, Oct. 16 (ANI): A new policy by American educators to set student goals in math and reading based on their 'race' has been slammed by education analysts, who have called it an "ill-advised" plan that is destined to fail.

By 2018, Florida's Department of Education wants 90 percent of its Asian students to be reading at or above grade level, compared to 88 percent of white students, 81 percent of Hispanic pupils and 74 percent of African-American children, while in math, state educational officials want that figure to be 92 percent for Asian students, or 18 percent higher than that of African-American students and 11 percent higher than their American Indian counterparts.

"Separate but equal is not. I understand that this is recognition that students are beginning at different places and that's honest but I think it is, at best, ill-advised to set different learning standards for students based on the color of their skin," Fox News quoted Kris Amundson of Education Sector, an independent education think tank based in Washington, as saying.

Amundson, a former chairwoman of the Fairfax County School Board in Virginia, said the plan "sends the wrong message" to children, adding that the lower standards for minorities closely reflects what President George W. Bush once dubbed the "soft bigotry of low expectations."

"It's better to say 80 or 90 [percent], or whatever your number is, and then acknowledge that schools aren't hitting targets because of certain populations. That's more honest than creating a system where everyone gets a trophy," she said.

Neal McCluskey, an education analyst at the **Cato Institute**, said that the final outcome of the plan would be that some children won't get the same educational attention due to the color of their skin.

"If you're an African-American or Hispanic student, the first message is: 'I don't have to do that well.' There's clearly a negative message being sent to kids based on what racial or ethnic groups they belong to," he said.