

ABC's *Good Morning America*

08/19/22

8:00:35 a.m. [TEASE]

14 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Controversial Move; Teacher Uproar]

CECILIA VEGA: Teacher uproar. One school district's controversial move the lay off white teachers before minority ones regardless of tenure. Could the policy's attempt to correct past discrimination cause even more? What both sides are saying this morning.

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8:07:32 a.m. [TEASE]

6 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: 8:11; Minneapolis Teacher Uproar]

VEGA: Coming up in our *GMA* morning menu, how race is playing a part in some teaching jobs in Minneapolis. The reaction this morning.

(...)

8:12:36 a.m.

2 minutes and 51 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: GMA Cover Story; Teacher Uproar; Anger in Minneapolis Over Potential Race-Based Layoffs]

VEGA: Now, we're going to turn to the story about the teacher uproar in Minneapolis. A new city contract with the teachers union says that, in the event of layoffs, white teachers could be let go, regardless of seniority in order to keep minority teachers in the classroom. Ike Ejiochi is back with this one. This sparked some serious controversy there. Ike, good morning again.

IKE EJIOCHI: Hey, good morning, Cecilia. That's right. The efforts to diversify teachers in Minnesota, it's been ramping up this year in the state legislature paving the way for this new policy and debate just weeks before the school year begins in Minneapolis. Now, critics say that the policy's effort to diversify — well, the policy's effort to actually reverse discrimination could actually be discriminatory. This morning, the Minneapolis School District is sticking with its controversial policy to lay off white teachers before minority ones, regardless of tenure. Previously, district-wide layoffs used to be handed out based on seniority. In March, the Minneapolis teacher's union negotiated a contract with the district that states non-white people can be exempted from layoffs in order “to remedy the continuing effects of past discrimination.”The district telling ABC News the contract “aims to support the recruitment and retention of teachers from underrepresented groups.” That remedy now prompting legal concerns.

UPPER MIDWEST LAW CENTER's JAMES DICKEY: The Supreme Court has been really clear on this issue that just having a policy to prefer one race over another in terms of layoffs is clearly a violation of the 14th Amendment.

EJIOCHI: Special interest groups say, in 2020, students of color and Native Americans made up 35 percent of Minnesota's K through 12 population, but only four percent of the more than 63,000 teachers in the state were people of color.

METRO STATE UNIVERSITY's PAUL SPIES: But in Minneapolis, there's that gap between the diversity of students and the diversity or lack of diversity of their teacher. This is not about trying to pit one racial group of teachers against another. [SCREEN WIPE] This is about serving students the best.

EJIOCHI: Several black educators in Minneapolis in agreement with the contract.

LINDSEY WEST: When they see somebody who looks like me and maybe looks like them, they feel a greater sense of connection and belonging in that community.

"FORMER EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL" TRA CARTER: I would say that we would first have to start hiring more educational professionals of color and start hiring more licensed teachers of all colors.

EJIOCHI: Others believe the policy will do more harm than good.

STATE REP. JEREMY MUNSON (R-MN): There's different ways that we should be hiring, but we should not be implementing hiring decisions based on the color of people's skin.

EJIOCHI: Now, the policy isn't expected to go into effect until next year. As of now, there's no pending legal action, but legal experts say there could be a challenge to the policy in court in the near future. Amy?

AMY ROBACH: Alright, Ike Ejiochi, thank you for that. And we should mention we have an exclusive interview on *GM43* with president and vice president of the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers, so stay tuned for that.