

EDUCATION (EDU)

Resolution EDU-23-31

ADVOCATING FOR HONESTY IN EDUCATION

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) values nurturing, learning, and teaching environments; supports and respects educators as trained professionals; and is committed to ensuring that all students can thrive regardless of their ZIP Code, color or background;

WHEREAS, NBCSL supports education that values honesty about who we are; integrity in how we treat others; and courage to do what's right by listening to, learning from, and respecting diverse viewpoints;

WHEREAS, NBCSL values educators, who through pedagogically sound, age-appropriate curricula and teaching standards help students understand our collective past, spark curiosity and critical thinking, and prepare all students to meet the challenges of our multicultural present and future;

WHEREAS, various State Department of Education's where NBCSL members reside outline curriculum and teaching standards that deliver high-quality curricula that teach the full sweep of U.S. history, and equip teachers and students to develop their understanding of the world and their ability to make meaningful change in it;

WHEREAS, many communities across the country have faced misguided attacks on the instruction occurring in schools, when they are simply teaching the full truth of our country's history in accordance with district and state curriculum standards through research-tested pedagogical approaches;

WHEREAS, studies show that students enrolled in Black and ethnic studies courses that include the experiences and narratives of Black, Indigenous and other People of Color (BIPOC) and LGBTQ people, honor their cultural assets, and provide students with tools to critique inequality develop strong relationships with teachers and gain benefits in terms of school engagement and persistence in academic attainment;

WHEREAS, a diverse faculty and staff reflective of the demographics of the community, country, and world, provides significant value to Black, Indigenous and other People of Color (BIPOC) students, white students, educators, school staff, and administrators;

WHEREAS, continuing professional development and guidance for educators that is culturally responsive, anti-bias, anti-racist and includes historically excluded perspectives enables educators to foster safe school spaces and promotes academic attainment for students;

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WHEREAS, NBCSL will center educational equity, by building a shared understanding of U.S. history and actively engage our members alongside students, educators and families, thereby ensuring that all students have what they need to thrive and succeed academically; further promoting NBCSL's mission of developing, conducting and promoting educational, research and training programs designed to enhance the effectiveness of its members, as they consider legislation and issues of public policy which impact the general welfare of constituents within their jurisdictions, whether they are Black, brown or white.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) stands steadfast in its commitment to foster an inclusive, culturally responsive educational environment where every student, educator, and community member is treated with dignity and respect, and condemns racism, sexism, and all forms of bigotry in our schools and community;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NBCSL stands behind curricular materials in our members' states and localities, which meet their respective state academic standards, and that the NBCSL further shall:

- 1) Stand by the right of students to learn — and expert educators to teach — an inclusive curriculum that covers our country's whole history and encourages students to think critically and develop their own views and voice about current events;
- 2) Support culturally responsive education that centers students' diverse history, cultures, families, and communities, thereby allowing students to see themselves reflected in the classroom, have strong relationships with their educators, and understand the world in which they live;
- 3) Support the study of the social, political, economic and historical perspectives of our nation's diverse racial and ethnic groups, which helps foster cross-cultural understanding among all students, and aids students in valuing their own cultural identity while appreciating the differences around them;
- 4) Encourage members to work in partnership with educators, students, and the community to review curriculum in their respective districts in order to ensure it reflects a true history of this nation and the world we live in, and works to dismantle systemic racism and racial inequity in our schools;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NBCSL stands with educators who teach in a truthful way that represents the full scope of this country's history and present reality; and that NBCSL further shall:

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- 1) Support and defend educators' use of teaching materials that incorporate diverse perspectives and that represent and acknowledge the experiences of all students;
- 2) Support educators who teach on their state academic standards are not punished for teaching accurate information;
- 3) Support the training, expertise and professional judgment of educators, and respect pedagogical approaches that engage students around difficult questions in an inclusive, critical, and age-appropriate way;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NBCSL commits to educational equity, and that NBCSL further shall:

- 1) Reject the idea that educational equity is a zero-sum proposition in which some students lose opportunities to help other students succeed, and instead, work to provide all students across race and place with a world-class education;
- 2) Support safe, welcoming, and effective schools, in which every student — regardless of their race, gender, zip code, language, country of origin, religion, sexual identity or orientation, ability or disability, or family's income — has a chance at academic success;
- 3) Support learning environments are free from discrimination, harassment and identity-based bullying

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NBCSL encourages state policymakers and their membership to continue working to collaborate alongside educators, students, and community partners to ensure that all students – no matter their color, ZIP code, or background – have a well-rounded education that imparts honesty about who we are, integrity in how we treat others, and the courage to do what's right --demanding that schools have the resources to meet every child's needs with well trained and supported teachers and curriculum that helps them understand the past and prepare for the future.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

Resolution ID: EDU-23-31

Sponsored by: Rep. Juandalynn Givan (AL)

Policy Committee: Education (EDU)