

# EDUCATION (EDU)

Resolution EDU-22-10

## **TEACHING THE TRUTH IN HISTORY AND ENDING CENSORSHIP TO ENSURE THE INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS**

WHEREAS, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) has long sought to confront and eliminate societal and institutional prejudices undermining the advancement of African Americans, and urged that we teach the full context of American history;

WHEREAS, NBCSL has a long history of passing resolutions to encourage training and cultural development in the United States, including Resolutions CYF-20-34 A RESOLUTION ON ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES, EDU-18-12 A RESOLUTION ON MINORITY MALE TEACHER RECRUITMENT, YTH-14-01 A RESOLUTION DECLARING YOUTH VIOLENCE AS A PUBLIC HEALTH EPIDEMIC AND SUPPORTING STATEWIDE TRAUMA-INFORMED EDUCATION, HHS-14-28 A RESOLUTION ON ELIMINATING HEALTH DISPARITIES, and EDU-13-34 FACILITATING SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS;

WHEREAS, there are efforts to censor certain topics of educational history related to race in our schools;

WHEREAS, teachers should be all are trained to provide an appropriate educational experience including discussions around race, numerous events in American History such as slavery, the civil rights movement, and native American genocide that are crucial parts of our collective history;

WHEREAS, censoring the discussions that students have about culture, race, and history would be detrimental to all students, as school should be preparing them for the diverse environment that they must be prepared to meet challenges and opportunities find themselves in after they graduate;

WHEREAS, students in school now will compete on a global scale, making it more vital for them to attend classes that will prepare them to engage various cultures and appreciate our history and contributions, and to be educated about various cultures and history, and without such education they will struggle to move forward in a global and multicultural environment that they will find themselves in;

WHEREAS, discussions of race and the history of racism is critical to education of American students, and discussions of race have existed as an academic and legal construct in America's higher education institutions for more than four decades and has contributed to our understandings and solutions to our societal challenges;

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WHEREAS, it is beneficial to identify, analyze, and explain institutional racism in modern American society with a goal of counteracting its effects and providing important context to students;

WHEREAS, educational constructs including that referred to as Critical Race Theory, enables a means of understanding challenges that Americans face with regards to disparities and trauma caused by generations of race-based violence, while forming a united front against the unacceptable and continuing impact of systemic racism, and is critical to the education of American students;

WHEREAS, an orchestrated disinformation campaign driven by divisive organizations have elevated Critical Race Theory to the national media, has mischaracterized and rebranded the educational construct known as CRT as a means of advancing their objective of censoring the academic study of race in our schools;

WHEREAS, according to the latest Race in America report from the Pew Research Center, 58% of Americans believe race relations in the US are in poor state;

WHEREAS, Civics knowledge and skills enable individuals to participate in a democracy and navigate civic remedies when rights have been infringed upon;

WHEREAS, this year, more than twenty-one states have introduced legislation aimed at banning discussion on race in public schools or withholding funding from institutions who include Critical Race Theory in its curricula, with fundamental misunderstandings of how these issues are taught in our schools and the impacts these laws would have; and

WHEREAS, by banning discussions of race in America's public schools, these states further perpetuate systemic racism and slow the healing and reform needed to combat centuries of racial injustices and are antithetical to a learning environment.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) will advocate for the legislative defense of teachers to educate our students, and thus inform our society, as it relates to discussions about race and its historical and current impact, using an age-appropriate methodology for which they are trained in our American public education system;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL will send a signed letter to U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, the members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, and the members of the House Committee on Education and Labor, addressing NBCSL commitment and benefits of ensuring American children are provided an accurate and untampered education of our nation's history;

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BE IT FURTHER, that NBCSL recommends that our educators should be fully trained in areas of cultural competency and resources should be allocated to ensure this training;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the NBCSL promotes civics education lessons on how to participate in the democratic process and civic remedies when such rights are infringed upon should be included for K-8, as well as types of lessons that are appropriate for grades 9-12, and will utilize our Education Policy Committee and the Children, Youth, and FAMILY SERVICES Policy Committee to review State Social Studies Standards applicable to Civics Education; and

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, state, and local government officials, school boards and agencies as appropriate.

**SPONSOR: Senator Raumesh Akbari (TN) and Senator Brenda Gilmore (TN)**

**Committee of Jurisdiction: Education (EDU) Policy Committee**

**Ratified in Plenary Session: December 2, 2021**

**Ratification certified by: Representative Billy Mitchell (GA), NBCSL President**