

What can we learn from other states?

California's law:

“highlighting the contributions of minorities in the development of California and the United States” and helping students become “global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures.”

Critical Ethnic Studies (also called "Liberated" Ethnic Studies) Guiding Principles state that curriculum objectives should:

- Critique empire and its relationship to white supremacy, racism, patriarchy, cisheteropatriarchy, capitalism, ableism, anthropocentrism, and other forms of power and oppression at the intersections of our society
- Challenge imperialist/colonial hegemonic beliefs and practices on the ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized levels
- Connect ourselves to past and contemporary resistance movements that struggle for social justice on the global and local levels to ensure a truer democracy. ("Truer democracy" is a Marxist term referring to Communism and the abolition of private property.)

What was missing?

- Civil Rights leaders (Martin Luther King, John Lewis,)
- Importance of the family in sustaining cultures.
- Relationship building between people
- Understanding of liberty, capitalism, importance of private property for prosperity of all people, natural rights, etc.
- Consequences of a lawless society, communism and totalitarianism
- Diversity of thought and questioning
- Conflict resolution which in turn leads to peace and empathy in communities
- Accurate history that sparks progress in civilized society

OPINION

California's Ethnic Studies Follies

A proposed curriculum magnifies differences, encourages tribal loyalties and advances ideological group think.



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► **Academic Standards (K-12)**

- Arts
- Computer Science
- English Language Arts
- **Ethnic Studies**
- Health Education
- Mathematics
- Physical Education

Ethnic Studies

Key Provisions 53E-4-204.1

- ❖ Utahns of “diverse ethnicities” ...or from diverse backgrounds and experiences
- ❖ Increase cultural awareness of and focus on the character traits described in Section 53G-10-204
- ❖ Focus on shared identity and unique cultural differences
- ❖ Each individual student has unique characteristics
- ❖ The common elements that Unite Utahns
- ❖ Respect for distinct socio-cultural identities
- ❖ Cultural histories within the context of United States history and global histories

53G-10-204 Civic and Character Education Law:

Through an integrated curriculum- Students shall be taught in connection with regular school work:

- Honesty, integrity, morality, civility, duty, honor, service, and obedience to law;
- Respect for and an understanding of the Declaration of Independence and constitutions of the United States and of the state of Utah
- Essentials and benefits of the free enterprise system;
- Respect for parents, home, and family
- Other skills, habits and qualities of character which...better prepare students to...accept responsibility for preserving and defending the blessing of liberty... secured by the Constitution.

Questions we should be asking:

- ❖ Do we know what Critical (Liberated) Ethnic Studies is?
- ❖ What messages will we be sending about other Utahns? (Jewish Community in California)
- ❖ Can Utah educators and students be exploited through curriculum vendors?
- ❖ What common elements unite Utahns?



RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ The Legislature can consider deciding to what level the curriculum establishment process should be uniform from district to district and the appropriate degree for teacher autonomy and accountability.
- ✓ USBE can consider requiring local governing boards to have an official process for filing concerns with curriculum and classroom content.
- ✓ USBE, in collaboration with LEAs, should complete formalization of expectations for balanced content, unbiased teaching, and neutrality.

Curriculum and Teacher Training in Public Education



KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ One of the greatest risks of student exposure to potentially questionable content lies within the materials selected and how they are presented in the classroom.
- ✓ **Utah Code** is unclear on who should make decisions regarding the appropriateness of addressing emerging social issues in classrooms and whether such decisions are the purview of local control, USBE, or the Legislature.
- ✓ Local governing boards could consider stronger processes to ensure teaching content is more deliberately aligned with standards and community values.
- ✓ **Utah Code**, *Administrative Rule*, and LEA Code of Conduct policies lack comprehensive guidance and training concerning educator neutrality.

“Ethnic Studies courses will shed light on the richness of the history of the many different peoples who make up (Utah) today...

Put simply, these courses will help us better understand each other. And as we learn more about each other, we will be able to work together much more closely to forge a unified strong (Utah).”

Lee Ohanian - Hoover Institute