



Ethnic Studies Commission: Policy Recommendations

Recommendations from the Commission | August 29, 2024

The following recommendations were prepared by Commission staff on behalf of the Commission chairs.

Introduction

Utah Code Subsection [63C-28-202\(1\)](#) requires the Ethnic Studies Commission to “make recommendations for recognizing the contributions of Utahns of diverse ethnicities in the state.” This includes policy recommendations to the Governor, legislative recommendations to the Legislature, and recommendations to the Utah State Board of Education on incorporating ethnic studies into core standards.

The Commission chairs solicited input and feedback from commission members and stakeholders. The recommendations to the governor, Legislature, and Utah State Board of Education are as follows:

To the Office of the Governor

Recommendation: *State agencies’ actions and policies should reflect the state’s various demographics when appropriate opportunities arise within the bounds of neutrality under H.B. 261.*

[H.B. 261, Equal Opportunity Initiatives](#), which passed in 2024, establishes a neutrality standard that prevents state agencies from prohibited discriminatory practices, assertions, and trainings. State agencies should ensure that no agency action or policy violates this neutrality standard.

To the Utah Legislature

Recommendation: *The Legislature should continue to examine the neutrality standard in H.B. 261 to strengthen positive outcomes and address any unintended consequences.*

To the Utah State Board of Education

Recommendation: *The Utah State Board of Education (USBE) should carefully consider the use of ethnic studies in core standards and curriculum to ensure a narrowly tailored incorporation of age-appropriate opportunities that naturally arise through education without pretextual effort in courses, programs, or activities where ethnic studies is not a primary focus.*

Recommendation: *The public education system should incorporate curriculum of people and cultures that reflect the state’s various demographics without commentary that seeks to violate the neutrality standard established in H.B. 261.*

[H.B. 261](#) also applies the same neutrality standard to prevent the public education system from prohibited discriminatory practices, assertions, and trainings. USBE should ensure that no state board, system, local education agency, or school action or policy violates this neutrality standard.