

Critical Race/Gender Theory & Social Studies Standards in Nebraska

In 2019, the social studies standards were updated. Also in 2019, the Nebraska state board of education (SBOE) approved an *Equity Lens* (a pseudonym for CRT) as their primary goal, and updated their *Nondiscrimination and Equitable Educational Opportunities in Schools Position Statement*, essentially removing any references to equality and replacing this with equity. The *Equity Lens* is “designed to help board members consider groups and individuals who may be impacted by their decisions and remember to commit to equity throughout the decision-making process.” (<https://www.education.ne.gov/boardreport/september-2019/>).

The Nebraska standards for social studies appear fairly benign. What is most concerning to parents is the growing body of resources and available support material currently promoted by the Nebraska Department of Education that is advocacy rather than education. Advocacy has its place; we maintain that the schoolroom is not that place. The following are just a few examples being promoted as Social Studies resources:

1. Courageous Conversations <https://www.education.ne.gov/socialstudies/courageous-conversations-resources/>. The very first resource provided is from the **Afterschool Alliance – “Tough Conversations Webinar Tool List.”** This then provides a long list of other resources, one of which connects you directly to the Human Rights Campaign resource: <https://welcomingschools.org/resources>.

Resources for Gender and LGBTQ+ Inclusive Schools: *“Welcoming Schools provides educators with the tools and training they need to embrace teachable moments, interrupt bias-based bullying, support transgender and non-binary students, and be prepared to answer important questions about LGBTQ+ and gender topics with students and families.” “...create affirming and welcoming school climates...”* (‘Affirming’ in this context means to “affirm” the child’s gender change with pronouns, names, clothing, etc.- with or without parental knowledge or consent)

“Welcoming School’s teacher-friendly lesson plans were designed to help educators create classrooms and schools that are free of gender stereotypes and gender norms that limit all children. A key focus of our program is to provide comprehensive resources for educators to teach about transgender and non-binary people and to affirm all students’ identities across the gender spectrum”

2. Social and Emotional Learning <https://www.education.ne.gov/socialstudies/social-and-emotional-learning/>. This page provides several resources for educators and students. One of the listed options is GLSEN, which is the Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Educational Network. The GLSEN website shows a school calendar with ‘student led’ days and weeks of advocacy and commensurate resource pages:

“GLSEN believes that every student has the right to a safe, supportive, and LGBTQ-inclusive K-12 education.”

Solidarity week: *“...cisgender LGB people can always learn more ways to advocate for the needs of transgender or non-binary people, and white LGBTQ+ can...be allies to LGBTQ+ people of color.”*

Day of Silence Student Pledge: *“I’m participating in GLSEN’s Day of Silence, a national youth movement highlighting the silencing and erasure of LGBTQ+ people in schools.”*

3. Elementary Social Studies-Tools and Resources

<https://www.education.ne.gov/socialstudies/elementary-social-studies-tools-and-resources/>. One of which is *PBS Learning Media – Elementary Social Studies*. It doesn’t take long to find this suggested video, for children in K-2, which discusses the diversity of families they interview. You can guess the make-up of these families. <https://nebraskapublicmedia.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/II20-families-are-diverse-video/lets-learn/>

Oregon was the first state in the United States to institute CRT (and CSE) into their K-12 curriculum in 2009. California jumped on the CRT/CSE bandwagon in 2013, while Washington and Illinois were more recent. The parents, grandparents, and concerned citizens of Nebraska do NOT want our state to be next; however, the Nebraska Department of Education, under the leadership and direction of the current State Board of Education are nonetheless promoting an agenda of indoctrination rather than education in Nebraska’s classrooms.