

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
93rd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2021

A Bill

SENATE BILL 707

By: Senator Elliott

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO CREATE THE CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PRACTICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE; AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO CREATE THE CULTURALLY RELEVANT AND
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PRACTICES ADVISORY
COMMITTEE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 10, Subchapter 1, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-10-135. Culturally Relevant and Inclusive Education Practices Advisory Committee.

(a) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall establish and appoint members to the Culturally Relevant and Inclusive Education Practices Advisory Committee for the purposes of:

(1) Strengthening culturally relevant education practices; and
(2) Supporting anti-bias education and appropriate responses to bias.

(b) The committee shall include without limitation a geographically, ethnically, and religiously diverse representation of:

- (1) Teachers;
- (2) Curriculum specialists;
- (3) Principals;
- (4) Superintendents;



- (5) Advocates;
- (6) Institutions of higher education;
- (7) Parents and legal guardians;
- (8) Members of the General Assembly; and
- (9) Community-based organizations.

(c) The committee shall provide recommendations to the division during the 2021-2022 State Board of Education review and approval of the history and social studies academic standards for content to be added to the history and social studies academic standards, including without limitation:

(1) The historical underpinnings of the Holocaust and other genocides in the context of how increased lower levels of hate, ridicule, and dehumanization led to larger acts of violence and state-sponsored discrimination and violence;

(2) Slavery and other forms of historical dehumanizing injustices and discrimination;

(3) Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and other types of discrimination;

(4) The ignored and untold history and the indigenous peoples of North America; and

(5) The untold histories of other groups that historically have been underrepresented in American and world history.

(d) The committee shall provide recommendations for the issuance of division guidelines for public school district personnel and staff regarding the provision of age-appropriate anti-bias education to students, including without limitation:

(1) Recognition that anti-bias and anti-discrimination education is the work and responsibility of all staff members within a public school district;

(2) An emphasis on diversity and building a community of empathy, respect, understanding, and connection;

(3) An examination of how lower levels of hate, ridicule, and dehumanization lead to larger acts of violence, discrimination, and violence;

(4) An acknowledgement of:

(A) Inequity on the individual level, including without limitation:

(i) Biased speech; and

(ii) Harassment;

(B) Injustice at the institutional and systemic level, including without limitation discrimination; and

(C) The harmful impact of inequity and injustice on the community, historically and today;

(5) Responses to various forms of racism, bigotry, and discrimination that:

(A) Are school-based and classroom-based

(B) Are student-centered and have been proven effective;

and

(C) Promote empathy, respect, understanding, and

connection;

(6) Updates to the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts that emphasize the causes and ramifications of the Holocaust and other genocides;

(7) Meaningful professional development related to culturally relevant and inclusive education practices; and

(8) Updates to policies governing:

(A) Teacher preparation programs;

(B) Teacher licensure; and

(C) Professional development requirements for the renewal of teaching licenses.

(e) The committee shall provide recommendations under subsections (c) and (d) of this section to the following:

(1) The Governor;

(2) The state board;

(3) The division;

(4) The Chair of the House Committee on Education; and

(5) The Chair of the Senate Committee on Education.