



MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

# RESOLUTION

## IN SUPPORT OF CIVIL RIGHTS, ACADEMIC FREEDOM, AND IN OPPOSITION TO CENSORSHIP

**WHEREAS**, civil rights shall be those guaranteed by law and the constitution, including but not limited to the areas of equal protection of the laws, employment, education, housing, and public accommodations; and

**WHEREAS**, recent proposed legislation that bans Critical Race Theory, provides for censorship of educators, and gives students an inaccurate and incomplete account of the history of the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, the Revised School Code gives each board of education powers and assign responsibilities such as setting the curricula and courses taught in the schools; and

**WHEREAS**, Critical Race Theory sees the role of law historically upholding racial discrimination as well as other discrimination by gender, social class, and sexual orientation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Michigan Department of Education Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice has advised the State Board of Education at its August 10, 2021, meeting that

- “Critical Race Theory” is not part of the Pre-K-12 curriculum in Michigan public schools; and
- race and racism are integral parts of our country’s history, and should most assuredly be part of a comprehensive Social Studies curriculum; and
- educators have not just the right but the responsibility to teach the breadth of U.S. history, and U.S. history includes race and racism; and

**WHEREAS**, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects teachers and students who have First Amendment rights to freedom of speech in the classroom; and

**WHEREAS**, people in the U.S. are a collection of many different cultures, ethnicities, languages, and races with a rich and varied history, good and bad; and

**WHEREAS**, academic freedom is fundamental to fact-based, historically accurate knowledge delivered by trained educational professionals; no facts, ethnicities, languages, races, and cultures should be removed from history; and

**WHEREAS**, SB 460 bans Critical Race Theory and the 1619 Project curriculum and HB 5097 censors classroom speech and classifies race and gender variables as “stereotypes.”

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Michigan Civil Rights Commission supports academic freedom in Michigan public schools and is strongly opposed to SB 460 and HB 5097, any and all legislation that promotes censorship and book banning; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that copies of this resolution be sent to the Honorable Governor Gretchen Whitmer, the House Speaker, the House Minority Leader, Dr. Michael Rice, State Superintendent, the State Board of Education, the House Education Committee, the House School Aid and Department of Education Appropriations Subcommittee, the Senate Majority Leader, the Senate Minority Leader, the Senate Education and Career Readiness Committee, and the Senate K-12 and Department of Education Appropriations Subcommittee.



Passed on the 22nd day of November 2021, by the  
**MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Stacie Clayton, Chair

Gloria E. Lara

Zenna Faraj Elhasan, Vice Chair

Portia L. Roberson

Richard Corriveau