



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

Good afternoon, Superintendents and Principals,

As we are gearing up for the 2021-22 academic year, and we eagerly await welcoming students back to our classrooms, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has received questions from many of you regarding Indiana's Academic Standards and Critical Race Theory. As you know, in recent weeks, Critical Race Theory has become a national, state, and local topic of discussion, and IDOE has developed this [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) document](#) to help answer your questions. IDOE encourages parents, teachers, and educational stakeholders to collaborate in local discussions if questions or concerns related to the implementation of Indiana's Standards or curriculum adoption arise.

In Indiana, K-12 schools are required to teach the [Indiana Academic Standards](#) and the [Indiana Employability Skills Standards](#). Neither set of standards include Critical Race Theory. Critical Race Theory is not designed for elementary, middle, or high school students. Additionally, the State of Indiana will not support, condone, or fund anything that alienates, discriminates, or negatively divides students based on race or background.

However, we fully support Indiana's racially and ethnically diverse communities and believe all Hoosier students benefit from learning a full and factual account of our country's historical events, shortcomings, and progress. IDOE also encourages efforts to highlight a diverse set of historical figures who are role models for Indiana's students, including the following (just to name a few):

- Charles "Buster" Hall, legendary Tuskegee Airmen;
- Madame C.J. Walker, the first self-made Black woman millionaire in America;
- Ellen Ochoa, first Hispanic American woman to go to space;
- John Leslie "Wes" Montgomery, American jazz guitarist; and
- Oscar Robertson and Leroy Keyes, some of the greatest athletes who played in Indiana.

As Indiana's educators work to help our students recover from the impact of COVID-19, we are intensely focused on Indiana Academic Standards that lead to college and career readiness. Indiana is dedicated to closing persistent learning and educational attainment gaps for our most at-risk students, including racially and ethnically diverse students, low-income students, students with special needs, and English learners. IDOE and Hoosier educators must be laser-focused on helping all students — working together, not divided — to achieve their full potential.

As always, thank you for all you do for students.

Dr. Katie Jenner
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