

Minnesota's Schools use Educational Equity — NOT Critical Race Theory

Across the country, people are asking school districts about critical race theory (CRT), which is not taught in K-12 schools. **CRT and educational equity are not the same and should not be used interchangeably.**

What is critical race theory?

Critical race theory (CRT) is a discipline and analytical tool that began in law schools in the 1970s as a tool to help law students think critically about the impact of historical and present-day racism on the legal system. In the 1990s, some colleges started using CRT to help aspiring school administrators and teachers better understand inequities with the goal of improving student performance.

Critical race theory is NOT taught in K-12 schools

Critical race theory is **not** taught in K-12 schools and has **never** been part of the K-12 curriculum in Minnesota.

Minnesota's K-12 social studies standards are not related to CRT. Minnesota's K-12 Academic Standards set statewide expectations for student learning. The state's social studies standards can be found at the [Minnesota Department of Education website](#). In Minnesota, standards must be adopted by the Minnesota Department of Education in consultation with stakeholders — educators, parents, and business representatives — and after public hearings. The social studies standards are in the regular 10-year review cycle process now.

Educational equity

Educational equity supports the mission of Minnesota's K-12 schools to help every child learn and follow their dreams wherever they live and whoever they are. We achieve equity when all students receive the help and resources they need for success. As the National School Boards Association (NSBA) states:

Public schools should provide equitable access and ensure that all students have the knowledge and skills to succeed as contributing members of a rapidly changing, global society, regardless of factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, English proficiency, immigration status, socioeconomic status, or disability.

The terms **equity work** and **diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)** have become commonplace in K-12 education as school districts revisit and renew their local efforts to close the achievement gap as required under the "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) legislation enacted in 2002 and now under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Minnesota's school boards are proud of the intensive educational equity work that school staff are undertaking to ensure that every student is respected, listened to, and supported. This commitment is fundamental to the K-12 mission and is essential for our students' success.

We hope you find this information helpful as questions arise about this topic.

Critical Race Theory

An analytical tool used in universities and colleges



Educational Equity

K-12 focus on supporting every student

