



## HELENA PUBLIC SCHOOLS STATEMENT ON CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is not part of the curriculum within Helena Public Schools (HPS).

In May 2021, the Montana Attorney General issued a binding opinion addressing the potential of CRT in Montana K-12 curriculum. The opinion forbids activities that the Attorney General defined as "racial segregation, race stereotyping, and race scapegoating." HPS does not permit such activities in practice or policy. Current curriculum is publicly available on the district's website at [helenaschools.org/departments/curriculum-and-instruction](https://helenaschools.org/departments/curriculum-and-instruction)

The Attorney General stated in his opinion that "when evaluating whether antidiscrimination protections threaten to chill the teaching of curricula that may offer great value to students, First Amendment case law takes into account a school's legitimate pedagogical interest in explaining and effectively and lawfully addressing racism."

HPS Policy 2015, *Curriculum Development, Content and Assessment Policy*, defines the process by which the Helena Public Schools Board of Trustees (Board) adopts curriculum. This policy requires that new curriculum be the subject of at least two noticed public meetings with opportunities for the public to see and comment to the Board before adoption. Any member of the public may address the Board regarding the proposed curriculum when it is presented.

Every school has a School Leadership Team (SLT), which includes both teachers and administrators. Implementing adopted curriculum aligned to state standards is a key component of the work of the SLT. Additionally, administrators conduct review of classroom lessons and conduct regular classroom walk-throughs.

To ensure that all parents, guardians, and students are informed about course expectations, high school classroom teachers develop a course syllabus that includes an overview of the course and an estimated timeline that identifies when course content will be covered during the semester. In addition to the use of textbooks, the syllabus should include any supplemental books to be used during the course. The course syllabus is to be distributed to students during the first week of the course and to new students as soon as they are enrolled in the course.

At the elementary school level, teachers share curriculum content in a variety of ways, including parent newsletters and parent-teacher conferences.