

**JOINT RESOLUTION BETWEEN THE MSD WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL BOARD
AND THE WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP EDUCATION ASSOCIATION IN SUPPORT OF
STUDENTS' FREEDOM TO LEARN AND EDUCATORS AS PROFESSIONALS TO TEACH,
AND IN OPPOSITION TO INDIANA HOUSE BILL 1134 AND ANY SIMILAR LEGISLATION**

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan School District of Washington Township values responsive teaching and affirming environments; supports and respects educators as trained professionals; and is committed to ensuring that all students can thrive regardless of their race, zip code, gender, or any relevant social factor.

WHEREAS, classrooms are a space that fosters human development where students practice empathy, learn how to think critically, and develop advocacy skills.

WHEREAS, the School Board for the Metropolitan School District of Washington Township (School Board) and the Washington Township Education Association (WTEA) stand against censoring the truth of our history and the lived experiences of students,

WHEREAS, the School Board and the WTEA oppose any and all legislation that seeks to discount the work of civil rights leaders and activists who have stood up to racism, gender discrimination, and other societal inequities in efforts to make our world a more equitable place.

WHEREAS, the School Board and the WTEA believe our community is stronger when every student has the freedom to engage in authentic, relevant, and meaningful learning experiences that empowers them to use their voice and evoke positive changes within their communities.

WHEREAS, the Indiana Department of Education outlines curriculum and teaching standards that positions educators to teach U.S. history and cultivate a lens of critical thinking within students.

WHEREAS, the School Board and the WTEA value our educators, who through researched-based pedagogy, age-appropriate curricula and teaching standards develop learning experiences to meet each student's evolving academic and social emotional needs.

HISTORY OF BILLS LIKE HB 1134:

WHEREAS, HB 1134 has become Indiana's version of a nationwide and politically motivated legislative reaction to unfounded accusations that critical race theory (CRT) is being taught in Indiana's public schools;

WHEREAS, on July 2021, MSDWT issued a statement regarding the stance of the School Board, WTEA and others on the teaching of critical race theory, emphasizing in the statement the importance of affirming the identities, histories, and experiences of each learner;

CURRICULUM IMPLICATIONS OF BILLS LIKE HB 1134

WHEREAS, HB 1134 requires the posting of information necessary to identify specific curricular resources and a summary of educational activities disaggregated by grade level, teacher, and subject on a public website before the resource is used or the activity is conducted by a public-school employee;

WHEREAS, HB 1134, by requiring the posting of curricular materials before the school year even starts, imposes an onerous burden on public schools and fails to recognize or honor the current system that public schools all over the state have in place to address parental concern over curriculum, materials, or instruction—a system that through public testimony in both the House and Senate education committees

(HB 1134 and SB 167, respectively) demonstrated that even when parents had or have issues with curriculum, materials, or instruction, the public school and public school teacher worked or work with the parent(s) to find alternative materials for their child;

WHEREAS, HB 1134 is inconsistent with Elevate, MSDWT's Teaching and Learning vision that encourages teachers to be responsive practitioners who implement instructional practices and curricular content based on data and the evolving needs of students.

WHEREAS, HB 1134 calls for the suspension or revocation of a teacher's license based upon willful or wanton violations of unworkable prohibitions that are based on subjective, ill-defined, and vague concepts which are likely to be selectively applied;

DIVERSITY TRAININGS:

WHEREAS, HB 1134 prohibits the School Board or Superintendent from having any of its employees engage in any kind of training that could be interpreted as divisive—calling into question any forms of professional development centered on cultural competency, diversity and/or racial inequalities,

WHEREAS, HB 1134 will harm current MSDWT partnerships and professional learning experiences that support our District's Strategic Plan to eliminate racial disparities.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROVISIONS

WHEREAS, HB 1134 severely limits the professional judgment of school employees to support the social emotional needs of students.

To effectively meet the goals of MSDWT's District Strategic Plan and advance equitable achievement:

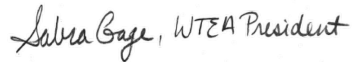
1. Students should have relevant, engaging learning experiences where the censorship of history or topics pertinent to their lives is not sanctioned by Indiana law.
2. Educators need the autonomy to make curricular discussions based on data, research, and the voices of students.
3. Educators must analyze racial disparities exhibited in data, and have critical conversations about race and professional development opportunities to develop strategies or actions that address disproportionality.
4. Educators, school counselors, and social workers should not be restricted from supporting the emotional needs and well-being of students. Mental health is a national concern and schools must be equipped to provide the resources that students need to address issues relating to the same.

HB1134 will significantly impact the strategies of our District Strategic Plan and our vision for Teaching and Learning, Elevate. While MSDWT seeks to recruit and retain high-quality and highly-trained educators (DSP Priority #2 Goal), a teacher shortage already exists in the State of Indiana which will be exacerbated as a result of HB1134 undermining the teaching profession. For these reasons, the School Board and the WTEA stand together in support of students' freedom to learn and educators as professionals to teach, and in opposition to Indiana House Bill 1134 and any similar legislation.

NOW THEREFORE, we, the MSD Washington Township School Board and the Washington Township Education Association, state that we unequivocally oppose HB 1134 and we urge Legislators to vote NO to HB 1134 and any other similar legislation.

ADOPTED this 15th day of February, 2022.

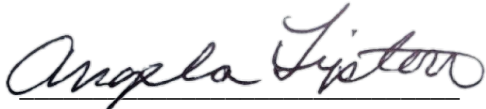
WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

 Sabra Gage, WTEA President

Sabra Gage, President



Anthony Dean, Vice President



Angela Tipton, Secretary

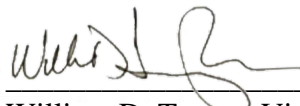


Victor Schleich, Treasurer

MSD WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
SCHOOL BOARD



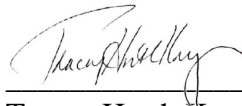
Donald B. Kite, Sr., President



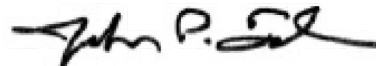
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