



Ethnic Studies for All Students: Reaffirming our commitment to Ethnic Studies in Los Angeles Unified *Adopted August 25, 2020*

Author, Board Member Gonez

Co-sponsored by Board Member George McKenna, Board Member Mónica García, Board Member Scott Schmerelson, Board Member Nick Melvoin, Board Member Jackie Goldberg, Board Member Richard Vladovic

Whereas, What we teach our youth about their ancestral legacies, and culture is essential in the fight for racial justice and equity; and the promise of full inclusion of the legacies of ethnic and cultural groups who have contributed to the development of our country has not yet been realized;

Whereas, The Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District passed the “Supporting Ethnic Studies in the Los Angeles Unified School District” resolution (Res-023-14/15) in 2014, which made Ethnic Studies a graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2019, but the resolution was never implemented and the requirement has not yet been realized;

Whereas, As of the 2019-20 school year the District has offered University of California A-G approved Ethnic Studies courses at approximately 100 high schools but just 12,000 students throughout the District having completed the course since their initial offering in the 2014-15 school year;

Whereas, Students of color from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds make up approximately 90% percent of the student population in the District;

Whereas, The District values equity and strives to make intersectional racial and social justice a reality in the District schools and the Board of Education has a commitment to diversity and inclusion;

Whereas, Research shows that Ethnic Studies curriculum in high schools leads to an increase in GPA across disciplines, high school graduation rates, college-going rates, and a sense of belonging (Stanford University Center for Education Policy Analysis, 2016);

Whereas, Studies show that Ethnic Studies curriculum helps to narrow the opportunity gap for students of color as well as benefit white students;

Whereas, California Education Code Section 51204.5 prescribes the inclusion of the legacies of ethnic and cultural groups who have contributed to the history, economic, political, and social development of California and the United States, with particular emphasis on portraying the role of these groups in contemporary society;

Whereas, Racism, Eurocentrism, white supremacy, anti-Blackness, and anti-Indigeneity persist in the current curricula that our students are taught from an early age;

Whereas, Prolonged exposure to curricula that normalizes and perpetuates white supremacy, colonialism, and the erasure of minority groups can be alienating and traumatic for students of color and contribute to the opportunity and achievement gaps we see today;



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Whereas, Support for Ethnic Studies as a subject has grown in recent social and political movements calling for racial and economic equality across the nation; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Board declares the need for further expansion of Ethnic Studies in LA Unified throughout all grade levels and reaffirms its commitment to establishing the completion of one Ethnic Studies course as a high school graduation requirement,

Resolved further, That, to accomplish this objective, the Board directs the Superintendent to

- (1) provide more support to educators to further integrate Ethnic Studies into the PreK-8 curriculum,
- (2) ensure that, by the 2022-2023 school year, all high school students will have the opportunity to take at least one ethnic studies course at their high school, and
- (3) report back to the Board within 180 days with a strategic action plan to fully implement Ethnic Studies as a graduation requirement by the 2023-2024 school year, with input from students, families, educators, labor partners, and organizations representing BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities – including the Gabrieleno-Tongva and Fernandeño-Tataviam Bands of Mission Indians, the original peoples of the lands on which LAUSD resides;

Resolved, That the Superintendent will evaluate approved instructional materials across grade levels and, before the start of the 2021-22 school year, ensure that at least one required text in all English Literature/Language Arts and Reading Comprehension classes is authored by a BIPOC author and centers on his/her/their life experience; and be it finally,

Resolved, that Superintendent directs all schools to affirm ethnic studies principles immediately by increasing literacy across all grade levels and by including principles of self-determination, humanization, critical consciousness, anti-racist perspectives and BIPOC voices in the core curriculum, including but not limited to, history, English, economics, and civics.