

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6066

As Passed House:
March 6, 2020

Title: An act relating to ethnic studies materials and resources for public school students in grades kindergarten through six.

Brief Description: Expanding ethnic studies materials and resources for public school students in grades kindergarten through six.

Sponsors: Senators Hasegawa, Kuderer, Nguyen, Stanford, Saldaña and Wilson, C.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/24/20, 2/25/20 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/6/20, 64-33.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Specifies that the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must identify existing state learning standards, rather than adopt Essential Academic Learning Requirements and grade-level expectations, that address the knowledge and skills that all public school students need to be global citizens in a global society with an appreciation for the contributions of diverse cultures.
- Requires the OSPI and the existing Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee to identify ethnic studies materials and resources for use in all grades, rather than only for grades 7 through 12.
- Directs the Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee to consider the need for piloting ethnic studies materials and resources and professional development, and adds educators with experience in age-appropriate ethnic studies curricula to the committee.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Paul, Vice Chair; Bergquist, Callan, Harris, Ortiz-Self, Rude, Stonier, Thai, Valdez and Ybarra.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Steele, Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Volz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Caldier.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Corry.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Legislation adopted in 2019 (i.e. Substitute Senate Bill 5023, enacted as Chapter 279, Laws of 2019), directed the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to complete two tasks by September 1, 2020. First, the OSPI must adopt Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) and grade-level expectations that identify the knowledge and skills that all public school students need to be global citizens in a global society with an appreciation for the contributions of diverse cultures. The term "state learning standards" is often used to refer to EALRs.

Second, the OSPI must identify and post on its website ethnic studies materials and resources for use in grades 7 through 12. Public schools with students in grades 7 through 12 are encouraged to offer an ethnic studies course that incorporates the materials and resources identified by the OSPI.

The legislation also directed the OSPI to establish an ethnic studies advisory committee composed of a majority of educators with experience in teaching ethnic studies from public high schools and institutions of higher education, including educators representing the state commissions on African American affairs, Asian Pacific American affairs, and Hispanic affairs. The committee is directed to make recommendations regarding the identification of ethnic studies materials and resources for use in grades 7 through 12 and for use in elementary school. In addition, the advisory committee is directed to develop a framework to support the teaching of ethnic studies to students in grades 7 through 12. The advisory committee expires June 30, 2021.

Summary of Bill:

By September 1, 2021, the OSPI must identify existing state learning standards, rather than adopt EALRs and grade-level expectations, that address the knowledge and skills that all public school students need to be global citizens in a global society with an appreciation for the contributions of diverse cultures.

The OSPI is required to identify ethnic studies materials and resources for use in grades kindergarten through 6, in addition to grades 7 through 12, and the deadline for making these materials and resources publicly available is extended by one year to September 1, 2021.

Public schools with students in grades kindergarten through 6 are encouraged to incorporate the materials and resources.

In addition to other duties, the Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee must consider the need for piloting ethnic studies materials and resources and professional development. Educators with experience in age-appropriate ethnic studies curricula are added to the membership of the committee. The expiration date of the committee is extended by one year to June 30, 2022.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Ethnic studies is the history of everyone. If students were given the opportunity to have ethnic studies in schools, there would not be such a great divide in this country. Through ethnic studies, students learn the concepts of power, privilege, and oppression in relationship to their identities, while acknowledging their ancestral roots. In an ethnic studies course, students may study literature from various genres and historical periods that exhibit the rich contributions of women, African Americans, Japanese Americans, Mexican Americans, and many more groups. Through ethnic studies, students learn to value what they have and appreciate what they are given. They also learn empathy and compassion. Some students do not know that the term "immigrant" does not mean illegal. Schools should prepare students to enter a diverse world where issues of race and gender are more relevant. They should learn about all the obstacles this great nation has overcome and challenges it will face in the future. They should learn about the rich perspectives of people who look like them and those that do not. All students deserve the tools to navigate reality. If the state wants a different outcome, it must do something different.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Denisha Saucedo, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.