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**SENATE BILL 5574**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Nobles, Trudeau, Cortes, Frame, Kauffman, Liias, Lovelett, Lovick, McCune, Orwall, Riccelli, Stanford, Torres, Valdez, and C. Wilson

AN ACT Relating to instruction on Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history in public schools; adding a new section to chapter 28A.655 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.230 RCW; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) The contributions of generations of Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander communities have enriched and strengthened this state and nation. Washington is the proud home of the seventh largest Asian American population and third largest Pacific Islander population in the nation, which make up nearly 12 percent of our state's population. Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander residents have made valuable contributions to all areas of Washington, including in government, business, arts and sciences, medicine, law enforcement, and the military;

(b) Yet, Washington state has seen an increase in hate crimes and violence against historically marginalized groups, two-thirds of which are based on race or ethnicity. According to local and national surveys, there has been a particularly significant rise in Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander youth experiencing bullying and racism;

(c) Regardless of one's background, every student in Washington state has a right to feel safe at school and in their communities;

(d) Teaching students about Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history and contributions is an important response to the hateful rhetoric and violence the Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander community has experienced in recent years, and a preventive measure to guard against such rhetoric and violence in the future. For Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students specifically, it will bolster their mental health and sense of belonging in the state they call home. For all Washington students, this education would foster a stronger sense of community and shared history, underlining the struggles and values that connect all of us as Americans;

(e) Consistent with RCW 28A.655.300, the legislature recognizes the importance of public school students being global citizens in a global society with an appreciation for the contributions of diverse cultures. Research has shown that using historically accurate curricula that are inclusive of historically marginalized and underrepresented groups helps address lack of representation or misrepresentation; and leads to positive changes in students' attitudes, values, empathy, participation, academic performance, and attendance rates;

(f) Too often, Asian Americans are viewed as either the "model minority" or "perpetual foreigner," or both and omitted from ethnic studies, United States history, and Washington history curricula and instruction altogether. For Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, many of these traditionally overburdened communities have been defined, excluded, and underserved by systems and institutions for decades.

(2) Accordingly, and with the support of Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander community-based organizations, the legislature intends for education regarding the history of Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders be mandatory in Washington's common schools.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.655 RCW to read as follows:

(1) By September 1, 2028, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall adopt Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history learning standards as part of the state social studies learning standards and shall identify available curricula and other instructional materials that are aligned to those standards for use by school districts and collected in collaboration with leaders of Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander community-based organizations and the statewide association of educational service districts. For purposes of developing the learning standards, Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history includes, but is not limited to, the history of Americans of East Asian, Southeast Asian, South Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander descent.

(2) The history learning standards adopted under subsection (1) of this section must include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

(a) A focus on the history of Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders in the state, the region, and the United States, including incorporated and unincorporated territories of the United States; and

(b) The local, regional, and national contributions of:

(i) Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders towards advancing civil rights from the 19th century to the present day;

(ii) Individual Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders in government, the arts, humanities, and sciences; and

(iii) Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander communities to the economic, cultural, social, and political development of the United States.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.230 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Beginning in the 2029-30 school year, school districts shall provide instruction in grades K-12 on Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history when the topic aligns with the state social studies learning standards adopted under section 2 of this act and is included in existing frameworks of United States history and Washington state history. This instruction must include the topics identified in section 2(2) of this act.

(2) When providing instruction on Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history, school districts are encouraged to use the curricula and other instructional materials identified by the office of the superintendent of public instruction under the provisions of section 2 of this act, ethnic studies materials and resources as made available under RCW 28A.300.112, or other existing and appropriate public or private materials, personnel, and resources, provided that they align with the state learning standards adopted by the office of the superintendent of public instruction under section 2 of this act.

(3) A school district may accept gifts, grants, and donations, including in-kind donations, related to instruction on Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history.

(4) Beginning June 30, 2030, and by each June 30th thereafter, each school district shall provide a report to the state board of education, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, and the Washington state school directors' association, that the district is offering the instruction required under this section, and that the program of instruction is planned, ongoing, and systematic.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall establish an Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history advisory committee to:

(a) Advise, assist, and make recommendations to the office of the superintendent of public instruction regarding the (i) implementation of learning standards regarding Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander contributions, history, and perspectives, and (ii) identification of Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history curricula and other instructional materials described under section 2 of this act;

(b) Develop a framework to support the teaching of Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history in grades K-12, including identifying educational programs, professional development, and teacher training opportunities; and

(c) Submit a report to the office of equity in accordance with RCW 43.18A.030.

(2) The Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history advisory committee must meet the requirements in RCW 43.18A.020 and be composed of representatives from the Washington state commission on Asian Pacific American affairs established in RCW 43.117.030, at least five community organizations working with the Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander communities, state agencies, educators with experience teaching Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history in public high schools and institutions of higher education, and any other relevant entities the office of the superintendent of public instruction identifies.

(3) To ensure that the advisory committee has diverse and inclusive representation of those affected by its work, advisory committee members must be compensated as provided in RCW 43.03.220.

(4) Advisory committee members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they are elected officials or are participating on behalf of an employer, governmental entity, or other organization.

(5) This section expires June 30, 2028.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Nothing in this act supersedes the use of the John McCoy (lulilaš) since time immemorial curriculum developed and required under RCW 28A.320.170(1)(b). This act is supplementary to, and does not supersede, the ethnic studies materials and resources for public school students referenced in RCW 28A.655.300 and 28A.300.112.

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