

## **Ethnic Studies Graduation Requirement Policy Proposal**

### **Justification for BP 6141.8 and Amendment to BP 6146.1**

Existing state law requires the California Instructional Quality Commission to develop a model curriculum in ethnic studies and submit it to the State Board of Education by December 31, 2019. In turn, the State Board of Education shall adopt, modify, or revise the model curriculum for approval by March 31, 2020. Existing law also encourages each school district to offer a course in ethnic studies beginning in the school year following the adoption of the model curriculum. Currently, over nine districts in California have ethnic studies as a graduation requirement. Ethnic Studies provides culturally relevant pedagogy that helps students develop inclusivity by fostering understanding of diversity, connecting students with their community, and giving them the tools to address racism in their community. In 2017, Dee and Penner analyzed the causal effect of taking Ethnic Studies and found that the course increased the GPA and attendance of at-risk students.<sup>1</sup> Many courses that students are required to take reflect dominant perspectives that can disadvantage students of color who feel disengaged from the content. Ethnic Studies is an approach to pedagogy and curriculum that helps students think more critically about race and ethnicity and helps ensure that they have the skills they need to be respectful and inclusive members of our diverse community.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0002831216677002>

## Instruction

### Ethnic Studies Education

The Governing Board recognizes the complexity of race and ethnicity in the construction of our nation and the need to present multiple narratives in traditional academic disciplines regarding the representation of minority groups in our society. Public schools are meant not only to promote *multicultural education*: to accurately reflect the contributions of all ethnic groups in a pluralistic American culture, but also to promote *ethnic studies education*: to provide all students a comprehensive understanding of the complex stories, narratives, histories, struggles, and triumphs of ethnic minorities in America.

The Board recognizes that these histories are often transnational, paradoxical, and representative of broader social, political, legal, and cultural contexts of power that have perpetuated disadvantages for ethnic minorities throughout American history. All students should have an understanding of these historical contexts and be able to critically and independently analyze its lingering effects for ethnic minorities in today's society.

Ethnic studies courses within this discipline will become a graduation requirement for all California State Universities by 2023-2024 academic year, with similar diversity requirements reflected in our California community colleges and the University of California system. With this in mind, the Board recognizes that it is especially important to prepare its students to succeed at the highest level within higher education.

### Definitions

“Ethnic Studies” is:

- A. The critical and interdisciplinary study of race and ethnicity with a focus on the experiences and perspectives of people of color within and beyond the United States; and
- B. Pedagogical content that humanizes and empowers all people by honoring narratives of historically marginalized groups, employing multiple disciplines and perspectives to critically analyze systems of oppression, and promoting action in solidarity to transform students' lives and communities.

### Requirement for Ethnic Studies Implementation

The district shall create ethnic studies courses to be offered to all students at each of its schools. The composition of any task force that is formed to develop Ethnic Studies curriculum must

represent the racial and ethnic diversity of our district. Furthermore, the development of Ethnic Studies curriculum must be done in consultation with Ethnic Studies practitioners who have experience teaching and creating Ethnic Studies courses. Ethnic Studies course instructors should have a strong understanding of ethnic studies as an interdisciplinary field of study.

In addition, the district shall renovate traditional academic disciplines and incorporate content and pedagogical practices based on the Ethnic Studies Curriculum Specifications in all applicable courses and instructional materials. This includes but is not limited to: English-language literature and art by ethnic minorities, discussions of race and ethnicity as social constructs across all disciplines, historical contributions of ethnic minorities, transnational narratives of war, colonialism, and imperialism for migrants in history, racialized legal frameworks regarding ethnic minorities in government, and globalization regarding political and ethnic economies.

### Ethnic Studies Curriculum Specifications

Ethnic Studies curriculum must:

- A. Include accurate information based on current and confirmed research;
- B. When appropriate, be consistent with the content and instructional shifts in the 2016 History–Social Science Framework, in particular the emphasis upon student-based inquiry in instruction;
- C. Promote the values of civic engagement and civic responsibility;
- D. Align to the Literacy Standards for History–Social Studies within the California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History–Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, as appropriate;
- E. Promote self and collective empowerment;
- F. Be written in language that is inclusive and supportive of multiple users, including teachers (single and multiple-subject), support staff, administrators, and the community;
- G. Encourage cultural understanding of how different groups have struggled and worked together, highlighting core ethnic studies concepts such as equality, justice, race, ethnicity, and indigeneity;
- H. Integrate core concepts into experiences for all ethnic groups in American society, with an emphasis on four core racialized groups as listed by the California Department of Education: Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Latina and Latino Americans;
- I. Include information on the ethnic studies movement, specifically the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF), and its significance in the establishment of ethnic studies as a discipline and work in promoting diversity and inclusion within higher education;

- J. Promote critical thinking and rigorous analysis of history, systems of oppression, and the status quo in an effort to generate discussions on futurity, and imagine new possibilities;
- K. Engage students in a student-centered approach by creating discussion spaces to discover their own identities within social, political, legal, cultural, and historical and cultural contexts, challenge or offer alternative narratives than ones presented, and share their family stories with their peers.

### Legal References

#### Education Code

\_\_\_\_\_ 89032

44560

60040

51226.7 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

#### Code of Regulations, Title 5

\_\_\_\_\_ 3935 Multicultural Education

#### Assembly Bill

\_\_\_\_\_ 1460

2016, Chapter 327

#### California Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_ Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Guidelines

### Resources/Links

\_\_\_\_\_ <https://centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/xchange/ethnic-studies-k-12/praxis/>

**Proposed Amendment to  
Huntington Beach Union High School District Board Policy 6146.1**

Instruction

High School Graduation Requirements

The Governing Board desires to prepare all students to obtain a high school diploma to enable them to take advantage of opportunities for postsecondary education and/or employment. Students shall receive diplomas of graduation from high school only after completing all requirements. A foster youth, homeless student, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, migrant student, newly arrived immigrant student, and special education students identified through their IEP, may be eligible for specific exemptions from the district's graduation requirements in accordance with Education Code 51225.1 and 49701. In order to receive a diploma of graduation, students shall complete the following requirements:

1. Total credits required: 220 (Including 155 credits from required courses; students may earn a maximum of 50 credits per semester.)
2. Required courses:

English*	40 credits
World History	10 credits
U.S. History	10 credits
U.S. Government	5 credits
Economics	5 credits
Mathematics	30 credits
Physical Science	10 credits
Biological Science	10 credits
Health	5 credits
Physical Education	20 credits

Visual & Performing Arts or  
World Language or  
Career Technical Education

10 credits

Ethnic Studies, for class of 2025 and beyond

5 credits\*\*

\* Students shall be enrolled in English each semester in high school regardless of total credits earned.

Students may be awarded up to one mathematics course credit for successful completion of an approved computer science course that is classified as a "category c" course based on the "a-g" course requirements for college admission. (Education Code 51225.3, 51225.35)

In order for a CTE course to be counted towards meeting graduation requirements, a CTE course shall be aligned to the CTE model curriculum standards and framework adopted by the State Board of Education.

The Ethnic Studies requirement shall be fulfilled through the successful completion of a qualifying course that meets the district's Ethnic Studies specifications in HBUHSD Board Policy 6141.8.

3. Complete all high school graduation requirements The Superintendent shall ensure that parents are properly notified of progress towards graduation and will establish procedures for parent involvement and consultation in instances where a student has not met the credit, or course requirements. Because the prescribed course of study may not accommodate the needs of some students, the Board shall provide alternative means for the completion of prescribed courses in accordance with law.

### **Exemptions from District-Adopted Graduation Requirements**

District students are required to complete graduation course requirements specified above, including the requirements imposed by Education Code 51225.3 and those adopted by the Board. However, a foster youth, homeless student, former juvenile court school student, child of a military family, or migrant student who transfers into the district or between district schools any time after completing the second year of high school, or a newly arrived immigrant student who is in the third or fourth year of high school and is participating in a newcomer program, shall be exempted from any graduation requirements adopted by the Board that are in addition to statewide course requirements. This exemption shall not apply if the Superintendent or designee makes a finding that the student is reasonably able to complete the requirements in time to

graduate by the end of the fourth year of high school. Within 30 days of the transfer or of the commencement of participation in a newcomer program, as applicable, the Superintendent or designee shall notify any eligible student of the availability of the exemption and whether the student qualifies for it. (Education Code 51225.1)

### **Retroactive Diplomas**

Any student who completed grade 12 in the 2003-04 through 2014-2015 school year and has met all applicable graduation requirements other than the passage of the high school exit examination shall be granted a high school diploma. (Education Code 51413) In addition, the district may retroactively grant high school diplomas to: (Education Code 48204.4, 51430, 51440)

1. Persons who departed California against their will while in grade 12 and did not receive a diploma because the departure interrupted their education, provided that they were in good academic standing at the time of the departure. Persons may be considered to have departed California against their will if they were in custody of a government agency and were transferred to another state, were subject to a lawful order from a court or government agency that authorized their removal from California, were subject to a lawful order and were permitted to depart California before being removed from California pursuant to the lawful order, were removed or were permitted to depart voluntarily pursuant to the federal Immigration and Nationality Act, or departed due to other circumstances determined by the district that are consistent with the purposes of Education Code 48204.4. In determining whether to award a diploma under these circumstances, the Superintendent or designee shall consider any coursework that may have been completed outside of the United States or through online or virtual courses.

2. Former students who were interned by order of the federal government during World War II or who are honorably discharged veterans of World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War, provided that they were enrolled in a district school immediately preceding the internment or military service and did not receive a diploma because their education was interrupted due to the internment or military service in those wars. A deceased former student who satisfies these conditions may be granted a retroactive diploma to be received by their next of kin. (Education Code 51430)

3. Veterans who entered the military service of the United States while in grade 12 and who had satisfactorily completed the first half of the work required for grade 12 in a district school. (Education Code 51440)

## **Honorary Diplomas**

The Board may grant honorary high school diplomas to: (Education Code 51225.5)

1. An international exchange student who has not completed the course of study ordinarily required for graduation, and who is returning to the home country following the completion of one academic school year in the district.
2. A student who is terminally ill.

### LEGAL REFERENCE: EDUCATION CODE

47612 Enrollment in charter school

48200 Compulsory attendance

48204.4 Parents/guardians departing California against their will

48412 Certificate of proficiency 48430 Continuation education schools and classes

48645.5 Acceptance of coursework 48980 Required notification at beginning of term

49701 Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

51224 Skills and knowledge required for adult life

51224.5 Algebra instruction

51225.1 Exemption from district graduation requirements

51225.2 Student in foster care defined; acceptance of coursework, credits, retaking of course

51225.3 High school graduation

51225.35 Mathematics course requirements; computer science

51225.36 Instruction in sexual harassment and violence; districts that require health education for graduation

51225.5 Honorary diplomas

51225.6 Compression-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation

51228 Graduation requirements

51240-51246 Exemptions from requirements

[51226.7 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum](#)

[HBUHSD BOARD POLICIES/ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS](#)

[6141.8](#)

# **Recommendation for Incorporation of Ethnic Studies as a Graduation Requirement**

Huntington Beach Unified High School District

August 4, 2020

We recommend that the Board approve the addition of a 5-credit ethnic studies graduation requirement into Board Policy 6146.1 on “High School Graduation Requirements.”

## **Background**

At the national, state, regional, and local level, momentum has been building in the movement to proliferate ethnic studies course offerings and incorporate ethnic studies as a graduation requirement. That momentum is particularly strong in California, which is one of the most diverse states and where disproportionality of student outcomes across demographic groups persists. Existing state law requires the California Instructional Quality Commission to develop model curriculum in ethnic studies and submit it to the State Board of Education by December 31, 2019. In turn, the State Board of Education shall adopt, modify, or revise the model curriculum for approval by March 31, 2020. Existing law also encourages each school district to offer a course in ethnic studies beginning in the school year following the adoption of the model curriculum. Currently, nine districts in California have ethnic studies as a graduation requirement.

## **Approaches to Implementation**

- *Three paths to fulfilling the proposed requirement*

The recommendation does not increase the total number of credits required to earn a high school diploma in our district and aims to provide maximum flexibility. Students graduating from SBUnified high schools will still be required to complete 220 credits overall, including 45 elective credits, and will have the option of fulfilling 5 credits of ethnic studies in one of three ways:

1. Completion of a new elective survey course on Ethnic Studies
2. Completion of a qualifying Ethnic Studies integrated English Language Arts, Visual and Performing Arts, or Social Studies course. Existing courses such as “Latin@ Literature” should be reviewed to ensure they are eligible to meet Ethnic Studies specifications. These proposed courses, and possible future courses such as “English 12” and “US History,” will simultaneously fulfill graduation requirements for ELA, Visual and Performing Arts, and/or Social Studies, the proposed ethnic studies graduation requirement, as well as UC/CSU eligibility requirements.

3. Completion of a Dual Enrollment course in Ethnic Studies that fulfills the specifications for Ethnic Studies as validated through an articulation agreement between HBUHSD and CSULB.

Building a robust menu of options as delineated above has the benefit of extending students' choice in determining which ethnic studies coursework is of most interest, allowing for at-level and advanced options, and providing the opportunity for a student to pursue a thematic ethnic studies strand by taking various ethnic studies courses over multiple years.

### **Timeline for Implementation**

#### **SY 2020-2021**

1. Secure Board approval for new ethnic studies graduation requirement.
2. Develop and execute a communication plan to inform all stakeholders.
3. Incorporate education about graduation requirement into 4-yr planning and high school course selection processes.
4. Determine mechanism for reflecting fulfillment of ethnic studies graduation requirement on student transcripts.
5. Conduct an analysis of district capacity and needs related to implementation. Secure additional resources as needed.
6. Design and execute a process to develop the ethnic studies graduation requirement course specifications.
7. Further develop the menu of ethnic studies course options by engaging in articulation meetings with Orange Coast College, Cypress College, or CSULB to expand students' access to Dual Enrollment offerings that meet with ethnic studies specifications.
8. Design and execute a process to develop the curriculum for specific courses:
  - Develop and engage a network of external educational partners with expertise in ethnic studies to contribute to curriculum development efforts.
  - Develop the pilot Ethnic Studies elective course(s).
  - Identify prospective instructors for English 1 course and develop the pilot curriculum.

District staff bear responsibility for preparing staff and families for the significant change of adding

an ethnic studies graduation requirement and for ensuring high-quality implementation. To this end, we are planning to undertake proactive steps on multiple fronts, even as we anticipate the

release of model curriculum.

### **SY 2021-2022**

1. Pilot two types of ethnic studies courses in at least one high school, including designing and executing a process for evaluating pilot courses in order to inform revisions and expansion for SY 2020-201:
  - “Ethnic and Social Justice Studies” (Explore options and develop a proposal for an appropriate offering for the Alternative Education setting.)
  - “English 9: Ethnic Studies and Social Justice Emphasis” (College Prep and Honors versions)
2. Implement coherent core-integrated options district-wide as applicable (“Mexican-American Literature”).
3. Review, and integrate as appropriate, ethnic studies model curriculum once released by the California Department of Education.

### **SY 2022-2023**

1. Offer “Ethnic and Social Justice Studies” and “English 9: ESJS Emphasis” (CP and H) at all four district high schools.
2. Continuing reviewing, and integrating as appropriate, ethnic studies model curriculum.

### **SY 2023-2024**

Continue review and revision of courses to ensure high-quality implementation.

### **SY 2024-2025**

Pending Board approval, ethnic studies graduation requirement in effect for all grades and for each year moving forward.