
SENATE BILL 6275

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Senators Nobles and C. Wilson

1 AN ACT Relating to identifying African American studies curricula
2 for students in grades seven through 12; creating new sections; and
3 providing an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the
6 contributions, achievements, culture, characteristics, and issues of
7 people of African descent is American history and that African
8 American studies is an interdisciplinary academic field that
9 encompasses the history, politics, culture, contributions, and
10 achievements of people of African descent in the United States and
11 throughout the African diaspora. The legislature acknowledges that
12 this field of study expands the educational lens to include
13 multicultural approaches to learning as well as new and enhanced
14 historical narratives. The legislature recognizes that seeing
15 themselves represented through a multidimensional and asset-based
16 educational program has a positive impact on the identity, self-
17 worth, academic engagement, and sense of belonging of African
18 American students, and that students of all backgrounds and
19 ethnicities deserve to learn about the contributions of African
20 Americans to the United States and to the world.

1 (2) (a) The legislature acknowledges that legislation enacted in
2 2020 directed the office of the superintendent of public instruction
3 to convene a work group to develop recommendations for integrating
4 African American history, examinations of racism, and the history of
5 the civil rights movement into existing social studies curriculum
6 provided to students in grades seven through 12. The legislation
7 specified that the work group must review pertinent curriculum that
8 is available to school districts, and must include recommendations
9 for the professional development needed to support educators in
10 providing the instruction to students.

11 (b) The legislature recognizes that legislation enacted in 2021
12 directed the office of the superintendent of public instruction to
13 engage community members and key interested parties to develop a
14 clear definition and framework of African American studies to guide
15 instruction in grades seven through 12, develop a plan for aligning
16 African American studies across all content areas, and identify
17 related professional development opportunities.

18 (c) The legislature further finds that because the traditional
19 education system has focused so heavily on a eurocentric worldview,
20 more work needs to be done to thoughtfully and thoroughly prepare
21 public schools and educators in Washington to offer this rich field
22 of African American studies to its students.

23 (3) Therefore, the legislature intends to direct the office of
24 the superintendent of public instruction to convene a work group to
25 identify African American studies curricula in use in high schools
26 and colleges throughout the country and to report the list of
27 curricula to the legislature. The goal of the legislature is that
28 public schools in Washington will select a curriculum from the list
29 and use it to offer African American studies to students in grades
30 seven through 12.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) As used in this section, "African
32 American studies" means an interdisciplinary approach, with the
33 rigors of scholarly inquiry, to analyze the history, culture, and
34 contributions of the people of African descent in the United States
35 and throughout the African diaspora.

36 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
37 convene a work group to identify African American studies curricula
38 and other instructional methods and materials for students in grades
39 seven through 12.

1 (3) In identifying curricula and other instructional methods and
2 materials, the work group must:

3 (a) Review the report supported by funding under section
4 501(4)(o), chapter 334, Laws of 2021;

5 (b) Connect with faculty at historically black colleges and
6 universities; and

7 (c) Survey high school and college African American studies
8 courses and programs, including by connecting with faculty at
9 historically black colleges and universities.

10 (4) At a minimum, the membership of the work group must include:

11 (a) A representative from each of the following entities:

12 (i) The Washington state commission on African American affairs;

13 (ii) The educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability
14 committee;

15 (iii) A statewide organization representing teachers;

16 (iv) A statewide organization representing principals;

17 (v) The educational service district serving the most students;

18 (vi) A community education group;

19 (vii) A faith-based community organization;

20 (viii) The national urban league; and

21 (ix) The national association for the advancement of colored
22 people; and

23 (b) At least one individual who meets each of the following
24 requirements:

25 (i) A dean of education from a state institution of higher
26 education;

27 (ii) A student leader in a public middle or high school; and

28 (iii) A family member or guardian of a public school student who
29 is invested in the leadership of the school.

30 (5) By December 1, 2024, and in accordance with RCW 43.01.036,
31 the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall report
32 to the appropriate committees of the legislature with a summary of
33 the activities conducted by the work group and with the list of
34 identified African American studies curricula and other instructional
35 methods and materials for students in grades seven through 12.

36 (6) This section expires August 1, 2025.

37 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Black education matters.

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