
OLR Bill Analysis

SHB 7082 (as amended by House "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

SUMMARY

This bill adds African-American and black and Puerto Rican and Latino studies to the required programs of study for public schools and requires all local and regional boards of education ("boards") to include these topics in their curriculum beginning with the 2021-22 school year. As with other courses required under existing law, the State Board of Education (SBE) must make curriculum materials available to help boards develop their instructional programs.

The bill also requires SBE to review and approve, by January 1, 2021, a black and Latino studies high school course. Under the bill:

1. the State Education Resource Center (SERC) must develop the course,
2. SBE must make course curriculum material available,
3. boards may offer the course beginning with the 2021-22 school year, and
4. boards must offer the course beginning with the 2022-23 school year.

For the school years 2022-23 to 2024-25, SDE must conduct an annual audit to ensure that the black and Latino studies course approved under the bill is being offered by each board of education. SDE must annually submit a report on the audit to the Education Committee.

*House Amendment "A" (1) adds the provisions related to Puerto

Rican and Latino studies; (2) requires SERC to develop, and SBE to approve, a high school course in black and Latino studies; and (3) requires SDE to audit and report on the local implementation of the course. It also eliminates the provisions requiring (1) an African-American studies course to become a high school graduation requirement and (2) SBE, by July 1, 2020, to develop and adopt a model curriculum for grades kindergarten through eight that includes African-American studies within the various subject matter areas.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2019, except (1) the requirement that SBE approve, and SERC develop, the course are effective upon passage and (2) the addition of African-American and black and Puerto Rican and Latino studies to the required courses of study is effective July 1, 2021.

§§ 1 & 2 — AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND PUERTO RICAN AND LATINO STUDIES AS PART OF THE REQUIRED COURSES OF STUDY

The bill adds African-American and black and Puerto Rican and Latino studies to the required program of study for public schools. By law, the required program of study includes the arts; language arts, including reading and writing; mathematics; physical education; science; and social studies, including citizenship, economics, geography, government, and history. Also included are career education; consumer education; and health and safety, including human growth and development, nutrition, and first aid.

The bill requires all boards to include African-American and black and Puerto Rican and Latino studies in their curriculum beginning with the 2021-22 school year. In developing and implementing the new curriculum, the bill allows the boards to use existing and appropriate public or private materials, personnel, and other resources, including curriculum material that SBE must make available under the bill. The curriculum must meet SBE-approved statewide subject matter content standards. The bill allows boards to accept gifts, grants, and donations, including in-kind donations for the development and implementation of the curriculum.

Under current law, SBE must assist and encourage boards to include

African-American history and Puerto Rican history, among a number of subjects, in their instructional program. The bill broadens this requirement to include African-American and black studies and Puerto Rican and Latino studies rather than just African-American history and Puerto Rican history.

§ 3 — HIGH SCHOOL COURSE

The bill requires SERC to develop the one-credit high school course in black and Latino studies. In developing the course, SERC may use (1) existing and appropriate public or private materials, personnel and other resources, including persons and organizations with subject matter expertise in African-American, black, Puerto Rican or Latino studies and (2) the SBE curriculum materials the bill requires.

SBE must review and approve, by January 1, 2021, the black and Latino studies high school course that SERC develops. Under the bill, SBE must approve the course if, following a review, it determines that the content is rigorous, aligned with state-approved curriculum guidelines, and in accordance with the SBE-approved subject matter content standards.

By January 15, 2021, SBE, in consultation with SERC, must submit to the Education Committee a description of the black and Latino studies course, which includes the scope and sequence and course objective, and a report on the course's development.

§ 4 — HIGH SCHOOL COURSE PHASE-IN

For the 2021-22 school year, the bill allows any board of education to offer the state-approved high school course in black and Latino studies. By the 2022-23 school year, the bill requires each board to offer the state-approved high school course in black and Latino studies.

BACKGROUND

SERC

SERC is a quasi-public agency that provides professional development, special education services, and other educational services to local school districts (CGS §§ 10-357a to -357g).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 35 Nay 0 (03/25/2019)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 37 Nay 8 (05/13/2019)