



**CITY OF NEW HAVEN
BOARD OF ALDERS**

Darryl J. Brackeen, Jr.
Alder, Ward 26

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Connecticut General Assembly

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Education:

My name is Darryl Brackeen, Jr., and I represent the 26th ward on the New Haven Board of Alders, in the City of New Haven. As a product of the public-school system, an educator, a father of two, and a local elected leader, I stand in favor of H.B 7082 concerning the inclusion of African American studies in the public-school curriculum. Connecticut's public schools should be required to have an African American curriculum taught to students as a prerequisite for graduation.

The public-school system is where students learn a significant portion of their view of the world and the history of the world. African American history is discussed in schools to commemorate MLK's birthday and is confined to February as Black History Month. African and African American history extends beyond slavery, MLK, the civil rights marches, or the voting rights act of 1965. African American history goes beyond and should be taught as a curriculum over the course of a school year, where students of all races and ethnicities can learn and appreciate the richness of African and African American cultures, from Africa to America and their many contributions that helped to shape and build our society – not only in America, but worldwide.

I applaud all Connecticut teachers who include African and African American history as part of their regular lesson plan. However, improvement and more effort need to be made to include African American studies into the public schools' curriculum. Several students and parents have expressed to me that they were taught about slavery before any other part of black history. All public-school students should be required to study, learn, and understand the beginnings of African people beyond slavery, segregation, or the negative stereotypes seen on television and social media. African Americans have contributed much to U.S History and America, in science, finance, math, art, politics and technology, Just as it is a requirement to teach U.S & World History and World Civilization to students in public schools, I believe it is vital to include African and African American history as a requirement in the public schools curriculum. It is essential for every public-school student to learn, understand and appreciate the richness and contributions of African and African American heritage; to realize humanity, humility, and their own perceptions and privileges as they make choices in life.

I urge you to support H.B. 7082, an act concerning the inclusion of African-American studies in the Public-School curriculum, by passing this Bill making it a requirement.

Thank you,

Darryl J. Brackeen, Jr.
New Haven Alder, Ward 26
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