

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in **support** of H.B. 7082, AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

I am also writing in support of the following proposed amendments:

- That “The History of Race and The History of Racism in the United States” be added as curricular content;
- That racial bias trainings for social studies teachers and administrators be required;
- That the State Department of Education would create a curriculum-building and oversight committee that would include teachers, experts on critical race theory, and students.

I am a professor of Secondary English Education at Southern Connecticut State University and a resident of New Haven. In my work with pre-service teachers, I center the ways in which education must necessarily be anti-racist and anti-bias if we wish to correct the legacy of white supremacy in our schools and create a more just future.

Our school curricula have long centered whiteness and have been silent on issues of racism, oppression, and marginalization. This silence allows injustice in society to fester.

Black history is American history and should not be relegated to one month a year. Ethnic studies more broadly should be a central piece of the curriculum of all students - not left as an elective course or as “once-in-a-while” content.

The above amendments proposed by Students for Educational Justice are important because this work cannot be undertaken by educators who themselves have not been educated. Even well-intentioned educators may perpetuate harm if they themselves have not engaged in the difficult work of understanding concepts such as racism, white privilege, implicit bias, and others.

Elevating the voices of students and teachers as well as experts in the field of critical race theory and anti-racist pedagogies will be central to the success of this mandate. This mandate has the potential to be transformative IF we also include the supports needed to move it beyond simply a check-box for districts.

I look forward to seeing this bill move forward.

Sincerely,  
Meredith N. Sinclair, Ph.D.  
New Haven