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A Win for Equity

Texas Board to Adopt Curriculum Standards for African American Studies Course in Historic Vote

San Antonio, April 16, 2020 -

IDRA applauds the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) for its preliminary approval today of the proposed curriculum standards for a state-approved African American Studies course. With the unanimous vote, the SBOE takes a step in the right direction to create excellent and equitable schools in which all students learn about the rich contributions to this country that African Americans have made in all disciplines.



"At a time when the nation is divided and students feel disconnected from their schools, a more inclusive and accurate version of history is as critical as ever to building a more connected and cohesive society," said Celina Moreno, J.D., IDRA President & CEO. "Today's vote gives us hope that past debates over whether to adopt a racist Mexican American Studies textbook or exclude from history standards African American heroes like Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall will be left in the past."

Researchers at the Stanford Graduate School of Education and the University of Arizona found that students who participated in ethnic studies courses had higher attendance rates, standardized test scores, GPAs and graduation rates. A 2019 study also showed

improvement in self-identity and a reduction in prejudice. Many Texas student leaders have attested to these benefits, joining to advocate expansion of Mexican American Studies courses and adoption of the new African American Studies curriculum standards.

"The study of African American history by all students provides opportunities to address the issue of race and racial inequalities in the United States," said Dr. Paula Johnson, director of the [IDRA EAC-South](#). "The important conversations that will result from this course offering are long overdue and are necessary for our society to understand and address historical disparities."

Dr. Johnson is a member of the San Antonio African American Studies Course Curriculum Advisory Team under the leadership of SBOE trustees Aicha Davis and Marisa Pérez.

IDRA and its allies in the [Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition](#) continue to call on the SBOE to prioritize multiculturalism and cultural relevance when developing the entire core curriculum for a more representative Texas public education system.

Photo: Students from Dallas ISD testified before the State Board of Education in November.

Highlights from the November 2019 Public Hearing on the New African American Studies Course

African American Studies Course Will Have a Significant and Positive Impact on Students Across Texas - IDRA testimony presented by Morgan Craven, J.D., IDRA National Director of Policy, Advocacy and Community Engagement, before the Texas State Board of Education, November 13, 2019



Texas State Board of Education Public Hearing on Proposed New African American Studies Course - Testimony by the Texas Legislative Education Equity Coalition (TLEEC), November 13, 2019

Video: Students and advocates testify at hearing for African American Studies course in Texas

IDRA Services

IDRA provides training and customized technical assistance that supports educators in offering **African American Studies** and **Mexican American Studies** courses in Texas public schools.

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We are committed to the IDRA valuing philosophy, respecting the knowledge and skills of the individuals we work with and build on the strengths of the students and parents in their schools.