

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5574

As of January 14, 2026

Title: An act relating to instruction on Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history in public schools.

Brief Description: Providing instruction on Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander history in public schools.

Sponsors: Senators Nobles, Trudeau, Cortes, Frame, Kauffman, Liias, Lovelett, Lovick, McCune, Orwall, Riccelli, Stanford, Torres, Valdez and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/18/25; 1/14/26.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires school districts to adopt a policy ensuring that instruction in Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Latino American, and Black American history is included in one or more required social studies courses when the district reviews or adopts its social studies curriculum during its regular review cycle.
- Requires school districts to provide instruction in grades K-12 on this history, particularly when the topic aligns with existing frameworks for U.S. and Washington State history beginning in the 2029-30 school year.
- Directs school districts to submit an annual report that this instruction is planned, ongoing, and systematic.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background: Learning Standards. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must develop, and periodically revise, state learning standards that identify the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be able to do based on the student learning goals. OSPI has adopted learning standards for 14 topics including social studies.

OSPI must include a screening for biased content in each development or revision of a state learning standard and ensure that concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion are incorporated into each new or revised learning standard.

In 2025, OSPI was directed to post a schedule for the revision of the state learning standards. According to the schedule, OSPI will start reviewing the social studies learning standards in January through July 2026, with final adoption in January through July 2028.

Ethnic Studies. In 2021, OSPI was directed to identify existing state learning standards that address the knowledge and skills that all public school students need to be global citizens in a global society with an appreciation for the contributions of diverse cultures. These state learning standards must be periodically updated to incorporate best practices.

OSPI must identify and make available ethnic studies materials and resources for use in grades K-12. Public schools with students in grades 7-12 are encouraged to offer an ethnic studies course, and public schools with students in grades K-6 are encouraged to incorporate ethnic studies materials and resources.

Inclusive Curricula and Instructional Materials. In 2025, the Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA), with OSPI, updated a model policy and procedure to require that school districts, within available materials, adopt inclusive curricula and select diverse, equitable, inclusive, age-appropriate instructional materials that include the histories, contributions, and perspectives of historically marginalized and underrepresented groups including, but not limited to, people from various racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds; people with differing learning needs; people with disabilities; LGBTQ people; and people with various socioeconomic and immigration backgrounds.

School districts must amend their policy and procedures to conform with the WSSDA model policy and procedures.

John McCoy (lulilaš) Since Time Immemorial Curriculum. The John McCoy (lulilaš) Since Time Immemorial curriculum (curriculum) is maintained by OSPI and includes curricular resources for students in early learning programs, elementary, middle, and high school.

Beginning in 2015, school districts were required to incorporate curricula about the history, culture, and government of the nearest federally recognized Indian tribe or tribes when reviewing or adopting social studies curriculum. Districts are directed to use the curriculum to fulfill this requirement and may modify that curriculum to incorporate regionally specific

elements.

State Board of Education. The State Board of Education (SBE) must adopt rules to implement and ensure compliance with the state's statutory program of basic education.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): Learning Standards. By September 1, 2028 or after OSPI adopts revised social studies learning standards, whichever comes later, then each school district must adopt a policy ensuring that instruction in Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Latino American, and Black American history is included in one or more required social studies course when the district reviews or adopts its social studies curriculum during its regular curriculum review cycle. The policy must align with the revised social studies learning standards and the inclusive curricula and instructional materials policies.

Each school district must post the adopted policy on its website within 30 days of school board approval.

Instruction. Beginning in the 2029-30 school year, each school district must provide instruction in grades K-12 consistent with the policy it adopted, particularly when the topic aligns with existing frameworks of U.S. and Washington State history.

When providing this instruction, school districts may use ethnic studies materials and resources or other existing and appropriate public or private materials, personnel, and resources, provided they align with the revised social studies learning standards and state law. A school district may accept gifts, grants, and donations, including in-kind donations, related to this instruction.

Beginning June 30, 2030, each school district must provide an annual report to SBE, OSPI, and WSSDA, that the district is offering the instruction required under this section, and that the program of instruction is planned, ongoing, and systematic.

Nothing in this act supersedes the use of the John McCoy (Iulilaš) Since Time Immemorial curriculum. This act is supplementary to, and does not supersede, the ethnic studies materials and resources for public school students.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on December 19, 2025.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Early Learning & K-12 Education) (Regular Session 2025): PRO: Anti-Asian hate and discrimination has recently proliferated in this state, especially during the pandemic. The root of this problem stems from improper education that misrepresents or does not represent this community. This bill gives hope to the 12 percent of Washingtonians that identify as Asian American, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander. These students are made to feel foreign and are the targets of racism, bullying, and hate. This bill makes these students visible and makes sure history involving these groups are included in history frameworks. This bill does not create any new graduation requirements or separate curriculum. High school students are owed the opportunity to understand the complex world and deserve an education that reflects and uplifts them. Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders have lived in this country for many years and have contributed to this state in many ways. Students are more engaged and succeed more in school when they see themselves in the curriculum. This bill will foster inclusion and empathy and create learning environments where students can thrive.

OTHER: It is important for students to learn and understand the history and contributions of various ethnic groups. Last year, a bill passed that directs OSPI to screen learning standards for biased content and ensure these learning standards take into account diversity, equity, and inclusion. That bill addresses in part what this bill is aiming to do. This learning standard review process includes public comment and engagement. When there are new curriculum requirements, there needs to be thoughtful consideration of this additional workload such as sourcing new materials and updating lesson plans. This bill should be strongly encouraged instead of imposing new requirements.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Senator T'wina Nobles, Prime Sponsor; Angelie Chong, Make Us Visible Washington; Devin Cabanilla, Filipino American National Historical Society; Amasai Jeke, UTOPIA Washington; Scarlett Luo, Make Us Visible Washington; Zedeeka Fulay; Judy Kusakabe, Make Us Visible; Vivian Song; Maricres Castro, Filipino American Scholarship Fund; Michael Cho; Noelle Cho; Josie Cho; Alex Hur, Communities in Schools Washington; Lily Nop.

OTHER: Nasue Nishida, Washington Education Association; Casey Brown, Association of Washington School Principals.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Adrianna Suluai, UTOPIA Washington; Jesse Robbins; Devon Chong; Mary Hilton; Sarah Karim; Sirichanh Sisavatdy, Lao Senior Outreach; Vita-Grace Cabanilla, The Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS); Julie Mayer; Jason Moon; Sompasong Keohavong; Rachtha Danh, International District; Christina Billingsley; douglas chin, OCA Asian Pacific American Advocates - Greater Seattle; Brian Vangalder; Grace Go; Kimberly Chinomso; Jinmo Nam; Jaden Hong; Mary Ann Vargas, Northwest Kidney Centers; Joseph Hwang; Kristina Chu; Veteran The Anh Nguyen, Nguyen's Foundation LLC; Rey Pascua, CAPAA.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony On Proposed Substitute (Regular Session 2026):

PRO: Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Latino American, and Black American communities have been an essential part of Washington State history. They have shaped the state's economy, culture, and democracy and play a defining role. Washington is a diverse state and students need to learn about the complicated truths of the state's history. History is not political. Too often, history regarding these communities are minimized, simplified, distorted, or left out. Students of color often feel like they have to look for the history of their communities in footnotes and in the margins of history books, which makes them feel disconnected from their education. There is a troubling rise in hate, harassment, and bullying toward these communities. It is painful when students are mocked or made to feel like they don't belong. Stereotypes are harmful including the myth of the model minority. This bill will help make sure the stories and histories of these communities are embedded and woven into the existing history taught in school. The bill does not require a new course or curriculum requirement. Social studies state learning standards already require instruction on how different cultures and ethnic groups have shaped history. This bill will strengthen what is already being taught and can build off free resources that are already available. This bill gives hope and will help counter the hate, bias, and fear toward these communities. It will help students gain empathy, critical thinking skills, and a deeper sense of belonging. Every student deserves to see themselves in their history courses. Education is liberation and can heal and make students feel proud. This bill will make schools safer and more welcoming of all students.

CON: Some people of color are celebrating violence against Jews and make it seem like Jewish communities do not exist. This is causing racism and hatred toward these communities. Stop making it seem like these communities are bigger victims than they are, stop excluding others, and stop crying about internment camps and hate crimes.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Senator T'wina Nobles, Prime Sponsor; Angelie Chong, Director of Make Us Visible Washington; Devon Chong; Erin Jones; Scarlett Luo, Make Us Visible; Vivian Song; Angela Bahng; Maricres Castro; Ping Ping; Filma Fontanilla , WEA/Soundview Uniserv Council; Olivia Kang, Make Us Visible WA / College Student Advocate; Mindy Dong, MUV WA/Student; Roz Thompson, Association of Washington School Principals; Sadie Meredith; June Nho Ivers, Seattle Council PTSA; Nicholas Oh; Samantha Mark.

CON: Tara Pines.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education):

No one.