

EOGOAC

April 20, 2021

10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Theme/Goal: Ethnic Studies

Members in Attendance:

Frieda Takamura, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
Representative Sharon Tomiko Santos, House of Representatives
Carrie Basas, Office of Education Ombuds
Dr. Jim Smith, Commission on African American Affairs
Representative Lillian Ortiz-Self, House of Representatives
Tyson marsh, alternate for Dr. Jim Smith
Bill Kallappa, Governor's Office of Indian Affairs
Tennille Jefferies-Simmons, alternate for Chris Reykdal

Staff and Public Attendees: Heather Rees, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Maria Flores, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Members Not in Attendance:

Superintendent Chris Reykdal, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Nicole Sutton, alternate for Bill Kallappa
Vacant, Senate Ranking Minority Member
Sean Heans, alternate for Carrie Basas
Rodrigo Renteria Valencia, Commission on Hispanic
Senator Lisa Wellman, Senate
Fiasili Savusa, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
Senator Bob Hasegawa, Senate
Lydia Faitalia, alternate for Fiasili Savusa
Representative Alex Ybarra, House of Representatives
Erin Okumo, alternate for Frieda Takamura

Minutes

Agenda item: Introductions, agenda overview, and approval of meeting minutes

Facilitator: Maria Flores, Executive Director CISL

Agenda item: Introduction/Background

Facilitators: Heather Rees, Research Analyst, CISL, OSPI

Discussion:

- Defining ethnic studies: Most individuals define it by what it is not rather than what it is.
 - Takes into consideration differing points of identity
 - Explicitly anti-racist
- Multicultural education is a broader definition of culture
- History in the U.S.
 - Developed as a reaction to the eurocentrism of other disciplines
 - Further work stemmed from student-led protests at universities and created ethnic studies departments.
 - Recently there is active movement to bring ethnic studies into the K-12 education system.
- Approaches
 - Dedicated ethnic studies class versus embedded in core content.
- Researched benefits
 - With varying approaches typically used it is hard to group benefits.
 - Primary benefits are academic engagement, academic achievement, and personal empowerment.
 - Ethnic studies without cultural relevance does not have the same positive outcomes.
- Washington's work on ethnic studies
 - Creation of having a focus on cultural competency in pre-service and professional development via ESSB 5044
 - Curriculum
 - "Encouraged" to offer an ethnic studies course
 - Since Time Immemorial (2015)
 - Holocaust education
 - Workgroups
 - Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee (2019-20)
 - African American Studies Workgroup (2020)

EOGOAC April 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes

- Issues/complications
 - Dilution of the original intent
 - Interdisciplinary in nature which can conflict with K-12 education that tends to be siloed in nature.
 - Education preparation and professional development – It can be harmful when a teacher is not prepared to teach the content.
 - Political push back
 - EOGOAC - The minute you go into ethnic studies, the minute you go into racial equity, then that's when we start seeing the divide, as we saw this year and we've seen in the last five to six years and beyond. That, I think is a big struggle. To try to define that, in the midst of opposition and now more than ever, I think our students need to see us do that.
 - EOGOAC - I think we need to keep in mind the reality that this whole ethnic studies issue is a wedge issue between and amongst our different communities of color.
 - EOGOAC – Certain organizations previously were deliberately picking off Asian subgroups to promote an anti-disaggregated data agenda. We are seeing in the ensuing years there has been a strengthening of this effort. The Group of Four, a Seattle effort, recognizes that no one ethnic group is able to successfully address the needs of its community without the support of all the other ethnic communities. That was true 40 years ago and it's true today, and once we start picking apart or allowing others to it allows any group to create a wedge.
-

Agenda item: Washington Ethnic Studies Now

Presenters:

- Tracy Castro-Gill, Executive Director
- Amanda Hubbard, CEO

Discussion:

- Work and overall Washington Ethnic Studies Now organization stems from the Seattle Public Schools Ethnic Studies Advisory Group.
- Built an ethnic studies framework for all core content for Seattle Public Schools.
- Put on an ethnic studies summer institute in 2019 and was free to all educators in Seattle Public Schools, and those outside the district could register for a small fee. Had around 200 educators attend.
- 501 C4 and C3 status as a non-profit
- Created a Washington State Ethnic Studies Assembly in 2020 that was open to anyone who wanted to participate.
- The bulk of the work that is done is around community and professional development built around their frameworks.

- The frameworks are: Student-centered, positions educators as learners, asset-based, cyclical, iterative and critical, flexible and responsive, and have an emphasis on pedagogy.
- All frameworks will be done by the end of April 2021 and will be completely shareable.
- WAESN Vision: Ethnic studies in every classroom in Washington state taught by anti-racist educators committed to centering the history and lived experiences of black, indigenous, and people of color.
- EOGOAC – How do we prepare the teaching staff that are already in schools? Have you thought about expanding your work and incorporating higher education?
 - Yeah that's something that we have worked on in the past. We've worked with Dr. Tasha Levy who teaches black studies at the College of Ethnic Studies at the University of Washington (UW). Dr Gonzales Guzman who's in a teacher prep program at the UW has worked with using his expertise in Latinx history in the Pacific Northwest. We're just turning a year old this month as an official nonprofit and so bringing those scholars back into our work is on our radar as we build the capacity for the work.
- EOGOAC – What is your affiliation now with Seattle Public Schools (SPS)?
 - We have several contracts with schools for professional development. The SPS ethnic studies program is in limbo because they don't have a program manager. There is a plan to partner with the district in the future.
- EOGOAC – Are there other school districts that you have worked with that have adopted your curriculum?
 - There are other schools districts we are working with but the framework is not shared with the district until the professional development is completed. This is built into the agreement with the contracted schools.
 - As part of the Seattle Education Association we are written into the SPS contract as a professional development resource for schools to be in contact with and contract with for ethnic studies.
- EOGOAC – What has been your relationship with the legislative task force that was created around ethnic studies?
 - Initially our frameworks were used as a model and we have a member on the advisory committee. We have now reconnected since leadership was taken over by Dr. Vero Velez.
- EOGOAC – For the professional development training and the curriculum have you received approval through OSPI or another organization for clock hours? What entity has reviewed the curriculum for alignment with Washington state standards and supplying this information to school districts?
 - Just received the C3 status in order to start giving clock hours for next school year. The approval as a provider is via the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).
 - There is no professional body or organization has reviewed it. We are not concerned with aligning with the Washington Education Standards.

- We have something similar to what you might call standards, but we personally are not calling it standards. In terms of the standards that exist, we don't think ethnic studies has anything to do with diversity and cultural competence or inclusion. It's our belief and assertion that ethnic studies criteria far exceeds the rigor and anti-racist value of any existing standard or standards that are labeled diversity, equity, inclusion, or cultural competency.
 - Educators are the largest audience, but on the weekends there are broader roles for participants. After each module for professional development feedback is given to keep building it to be better.
 - 40 people created the framework with 29 being BIPOC and 11 white authors.
 - The framework is proprietary so was not shown.
 - There are three levels to the framework: Definition of each of the themes, essential questions, and elements of liberation.
 - EOGOAC – What does it mean for collaboration between you and the legislative workgroup?
 - No one came to us to ask for advice on what is currently happening and we had to push to have our CEO as part of the advisory committee.
 - Part of the restructuring of the advisory committee was due to our advocacy to say that BIPOC voices were not being included on the committee and our organization was being boycotted from participating.
 - EOGOAC – To comment on the previous question, I think that that has been my ongoing concern with the various strands of efforts and using ways to get around the policy committee. If you do it there can become a disconnected and uncoordinated effort around promoting both professional developments, as well as curriculum development when something can be applied in a uniform fashion across the state. Now different districts may choose to adopt specific curriculum or specific professional development and that becomes a matter of local control. I think the quality that has to be assessed in a fairly uniform fashion, according to standards, is the conventional and commonly accepted way of understanding whether or not we are the type of education that the legislature, superintendent's office, and state board are working towards. We need to coordinate strands otherwise we will have left and right hands that don't know what the other is doing.
 - Ethnic studies is a movement of the people and is guided by community and by the students and families that we work in partnership with and so centralizing it in a traditional fashion, is not something that ethnic studies is. That is antithetical to what ethnic studies is, but I am really excited that we are in an authentic partnership now with the ethnic studies advisory committee. And so I think that we are advocating for the same thing, even if we're seeing it from two different perspectives, but we are in collaboration.
-

Agenda item: African American Studies Workgroup

Presenters:

- Anthony Shoecraft, Facilitator
- Brooke Brown, Member
- Jerry Price, Program Supervisor, Social Studies, OSPI

Discussion:

- Legislative charge
 - Develop recommendations for integrating, in a regular and ongoing basis, African American history.
 - Review of pertinent curriculum that is available to school districts and include recommendations for professional development.
 - Report finding and recommendations
 - Recruitment for the group involved 25 percent of these groups: Educators, administrators, higher education, and community-based organizations.
 - The real point of the group was to have conversations focused on disrupting the culture of white supremacy. It was to vet the foundational components to discern what the real intent was and to see whether OSPI was trying to just check a box or not.
 - From the beginning of the process was laying out what it was and wasn't and focusing on building relationship, clarity, and understanding with those who have been historically tokenized and excluded.
 - Recommendations have been posted in the legislative report.
-

Agenda item: Lunch Offline

Agenda item: Public Comment

Comments:

- Randy Spaulding
 - Mastery based learning workgroup is continuing with the passing of a legislative bill in the 2020 session.
 - EOGOAC has been engaged in a recognition system and accountability. State Board of Education is looking at how to better reflect the goals of basic education, opportunities to learn, and equity across the educational system.
- Trenise Rogers
 - The statue of liberty was built in the image of a black woman to commemorate the end of the civil war.

- I wish we could avoid the word ethnic studies and just use American History and be able to encompass all the attributes of all ethnicities and attributes of society.
 - American History is the forced history by the winners.
 - White parents may keep their students from participating in these classes and how are we going to address this?
 - Training needs to not only be given to teachers but also substitutes for ethnic studies.
 - Victoria Moreland
 - Diversifying the educator workforce event on June 4, 2020 around the levers of change to advance equity. Will be showing the work of grantees on many levels.
 - Emijah Smith
 - Ethnic studies and African American/black studies should not be confused as the same thing. We need to promote black studies across the state.
 - When applying these studies to discipline, I am looking to see how we can provide legal support to families around suspensions. As well as taking into consideration a majority of suspensions are black and brown bodies.
-

Agenda item: Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee (ESAC)

Presenters:

- Brooke Brown, Facilitator
- Denisha Saucedo, Facilitator
- Dr. Vero Vélez, Facilitator
- Jerry Price, Program Supervisor, Social Studies, OSPI

Discussion:

- Legislative charge for ethnic studies
 - Advise, assist and make recommendations
 - Develop a framework
 - Identify existing state learning standards
 - Public schools with students in grades seven through twelve are encouraged to offer an ethnic studies course. Public school with students in grades kindergarten through six are encouraged to incorporate the materials and resources identified.
 - Consider the need for piloting and professional development.
- Year one of the committee
 - Established in 2019
 - Went through extensive process for recruiting members and reached out to appointed members via the legislation.

- Went through the proposed timeline, and a review of current work and resources that currently exist.
- Appointees were primarily to support 7-12th grade. Focused more on middle and high school teacher recruitment. This changed later on.
- EOGOAC – We might want to consider the role that principals and school boards have in the whole process. When considering communities, especially the impact of white parents, we need to consider professional development and its impact in having a well-rounded approach.
- Second Year
 - Brought in co-facilitators Dr. Velez and Brooke Brown
 - Added initial members for K-5 because of added work for the committee
 - Expansion of membership to better reflect geographic and ethnic diversity
 - Statewide model as the focus of the work.
 - Provided training from XITO institute to align understanding of ESAC committee
 - A consideration for the committee is understanding that ethnic studies has to be implemented when the committee is done and be in the community. The process needs to be aligned to be community base and meeting these needs are pivotal to the work and be representative of the committee's process.
 - It is important to center the relationships around the work and reimagine how the work can be done.
- Centering pedagogy
 - Culturally responsive/relevant
 - Put students lives, culture, and funds of knowledge at the center of the curriculum.
 - Community responsive
 - It recognizes the importance of building relationships with families and communities. Those relationship drive how we prepare young people to analyze and act on community needs.
 - Anti-Racist and anti-colonial
 - Encourages a critique of racial oppression at the institutional, interpersonal, and internalized levels.
 - Decolonization
 - It allows for the systemic critique of colonialism and centers healing as key to restoring the belief that we are all academically capable.
 - Ethnic studies should not be siloed within one content area but rather applies across the curriculum.
 - Four components that ESAC was developing
 - Identity
 - Civic action
 - History
 - Power (This is a start, we are heading to humanity, joy, and futures.)
 - This framework can also be applied to administrators.

- Highlighting on going support on various levels of understanding and how to scale it.
- Standards – In doing alignment to standards we are aligning to standards that ethnic studies have been directly opposed to. There are ways to work around this and reimagine this. This is a point of tension for ethnic studies and considering implementation.
- The fear of the educator and being able to use what they are given is huge. This determines whether it is used and whether it is done correctly. They need to have their implementation centered in their community and not whether they agree or disagree.
- EOGOAC – Are there people from the principals and state board as part of the group?
 - Yes
- EOGOAC – I know that many groups work in silos and getting people to work in the same direction around implementation is needed. Will you be talking about the piece of educating the public? This can often become a political issue when it comes to the public and can get derailed.
 - Yes, the charge of the committee was narrow, but we have been trying to expand the understanding that the professional development needs to happen at multiple levels. This creates a platform that allows the work to happen. The framework is never completed but is always evolving. Often things get conflated and so we need to be clear around ethnic studies.
- Challenges and opportunities
 - Pedagogical
 - Receiving and responding to Feedback
 - Tension of embedding ethnic studies
 - Multiple approaches to the work
 - Inherently transformative and transdisciplinary
 - Structural
 - Traditional recruitment process is not community-based
 - Lack of resources due to work not being funded
 - Relational and that was hard to build via zoom
 - Recommended framework, resources, materials, and PD have to be statewide
 - Language of the legislation is incongruent to ethnic studies
- Requests to EOGOAC for assistance
 - Advocacy and long-term support – Include sustainable funding and high-quality professional development
 - Statewide structure for the work and community partnerships
 - Openly license and available resources for school districts
 - Continued development of strategies and resources to support understanding
- EOGOAC – African American studies as well as ethnic studies are not the same. Everybody needs to understand that the whole purpose of this is to help everybody

understand that ethnic studies and the things that we're trying to communicate through ethnic studies is in every one of the content areas. Throughout history and throughout the educational process when you think about the contributions from science or math or literature and everything else it should all be incorporated with ethnic studies. If we look at it from that perspective, I think there's a way that we can be very meaningful as we continue to move forward.

Agenda item: SBE Ethnic Studies Resolution

Presenters:

- Bill Kallappa, Board Member, State Board of Education
- Randy Spaulding, Executive Director State Board of Education

Discussion:

- This work began with Margarita who is a senior student on the board. She did a panel on modern day racism in education and the board members heard clearly that a graduation requirement was necessary but not sufficient around ethnic studies.
 - The intent is to build a framework for graduation to identify curriculum across the spectrum that has ethnic studies and under a culmination of the three years.
 - Currently anticipating that because it touches multiple areas, we will need a legislative bill and not just a board ruling.
 - Resolution is student driven
 - Quote from resolution, "Our curriculum and the stories we tell through them should be both a mirror and a window. We should be able to see our own experiences mirrored in our education but also have a window into the experiences of other students unlike ourselves."
 - Board will be doing the training by Washington Ethnic Studies Now
 - The requirement that will be put into place will be done concurrently with other work that is currently happening. This work is not meant to happen separately.
-

Agenda item: Debrief

Facilitator:

- Heather Rees, Research Analyst, CISL, OSPI

Discussion:

Next Steps on Ethnic Studies

EOGOAC April 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes

- Hear from other districts who are currently implementing including what they did and how it's working. Specifically want to hear back from communities of color.
 - Look into how districts got buy in from the community.
 - Professional development at all levels and includes all roles seen in schools.
 - Funding is going to be pivotal in avoiding only solving a half the problem or delaying work.
 - Review models of where Since Time Immemorial (STI) is working (Yelm SD, North Thurston SD, Muckleshoot and Highline, Spokane and Spokane PS, Lummi and Bellingham, Nisqually and NTSD and YCS, Cape Flattery) and the key element of building relationships between the tribes and school districts.
 - Revisit/review the role, concept, and content of standards.
 - Include looking at statutory obligations and where legislative change is needed.
 - Guide for implementation considerations.
 - Public relations – Educating the public on what ethnic studies is and is not.
 - Threat to power and privilege
 - What can ethnic studies do for all students?
 - How not to make this a wedge issue between and within communities of color.
 - Reaction to critical race theory
 - Make sure perspectives from Eastern Washington are represented.
-

Agenda item: Next Steps, Final Announcements and Conclude Meeting

- Reviewed items for next meetings agenda.

Meeting concluded at 3:30pm

Minutes Taken By: Robin Howe