

# Multicultural Education

## Budget Language

\$200,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2024 and \$200,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for the office of the superintendent of public instruction to provide statewide coordination towards multicultural, culturally responsive, and anti-racist education to support academically, socially, and culturally literate learners. The office must engage community members and key interested parties to:

- (i) Develop a clear definition and framework for African American studies to guide instruction in grades seven through twelve;
- (ii) Develop a plan for aligning African American studies across all content areas; and
- (iii) Identify professional development opportunities for educators and administrators to build capacity in creating high-quality learning environments centered in belonging and racial equity, anti-racist approaches, and asset-based methodologies that pull from all students' cultural funds of knowledge.

## Proviso Purpose

This funding is designed to support OSPI in coordinating statewide efforts to advance multicultural, culturally responsive, and anti-racist education. The initiative aims to cultivate learners who are academically, socially, and culturally literate. To achieve this, it emphasizes the importance of professional development opportunities for educators and administrators, ensuring they can create the necessary learning environments to meet these goals.

## Services Provided

OSPI partnered with Delbert Richardson of Global Unspoken Truths to host the American History Traveling Museum (a national award-winning mobile exhibition) at OSPI. This exhibition is designed to be immersive and interactive, featuring artifacts and hands-on activities that engage visitors in learning about key historical events and figures in black history. The museum is comprised of four components:

1. Mother Africa, which highlights the significant contributions that Africans have made worldwide;
2. American Chattel Slavery, which analyzes a particular mindset and method of enslavement that recognizes certain people as property to be bought and sold, enabling the Atlantic Slave Trade for over 300 years;
3. Jim Crow Era, which explores how laws and other government actions upheld a racial caste system designed around white superiority;
4. Still We Rise, a 40-foot display of everyday items invented or improved by African Americans.



Designed to serve a broad public audience, the traveling museum is informative and engaging, combining visuals, texts, and physical artifacts to tell a story. During this temporary installation at OSPI aimed at supporting the learning of OSPI's state-level education leaders, Mr. Richardson facilitated discussion, provided historical context, and encouraged systems thinking as staff toured the exhibits.

In addition, OSPI also partnered with Equitable Development, LLC, to facilitate a statewide African American Studies Professional Learning Community (PLC) for P–12 educators in Washington State. The PLC consisted of six bi-weekly virtual sessions held from March 27 to June 5 2025, each lasting 90 minutes. These sessions brought together over 40 educators from the Seattle area, spanning elementary to secondary levels, to explore how to integrate African American Studies into their teaching.

The goal of this PLC was to seed a statewide community of practice that supports long-term, sustainable integration of African American perspectives across disciplines. PLC members focused on inquiry, project- and place-based learning, as well as culturally responsive classroom strategies. Facilitators and speakers prioritized community-building and storytelling, as well as educator agency and reflection, to support PLC members in carrying forward these modeled strategies into their own pedagogical practices.

## Criteria for Receiving Services/Grants

Unspoken Global Truths was selected to provide professional learning for OSPI staff through temporary installation of the American History Traveling Museum on-site at OSPI's office in Olympia. Criteria considered in selecting this contractor and their award-winning learning resource (the traveling museum) included a combination of specialized African American Studies content, mobile design, and central use of interactivity and storytelling. Participation in professional learning through the traveling museum was open to all OSPI staff and especially encouraged staff who in turn provide professional learning to the education community.

Equitable Development, LLC, was selected to lead the current phase of African American Studies work, which focused on professional learning for educators. This contractors' strengths included previous involvement in the African American Studies Workgroup, subsequent creation of a framework and recommendations, and connection with the network of experts that advise this work. Additional criteria in selecting this contractor included their expertise in developing, adapting, and facilitating professional development that is both specific to African American Studies content and provided in service to the Washington education community. Participation in professional learning provided by Equitable Development, LLC, was marketed most directly to K–12 educators, but additional members of the education community such as central office staff also participated.

## Beneficiaries in the 2024-25 School Year

|                             |                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Number of School Districts: | 17                                                                                                                                   |
| Number of Schools:          | 17                                                                                                                                   |
| Number of Students:         | 0 direct student beneficiaries (though educators who participated in Equitable Development's PLC collectively served 1,840 students) |
| Number of Educators:        | 48                                                                                                                                   |
| Other (OSPI staff):         | 110                                                                                                                                  |

## Are Federal or Other Funds Contingent on State Funding?

No

## State Funding History

| Fiscal Year | Amount Funded | Actual Expenditures |
|-------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 2025        | \$200,000     | \$183,335           |
| 2024        | \$200,000     | \$62,216            |
| 2023        | \$200,000     | \$190,089           |
| 2022        | \$200,000     | \$185,772           |

## Number of Beneficiaries Per Fiscal Year (e.g. School Districts, Schools, Students, Educators, Other)

| Fiscal Year | Number of Beneficiaries          |
|-------------|----------------------------------|
| 2025        | 192 (+1,840 students indirectly) |
| 2024        | 86                               |
| 2023        | 1                                |
| 2022        | 1                                |

## Programmatic Changes Since Inception (If Any)

Funding during previous fiscal years was used for staffing and contracting with Connector Consulting to facilitate development of a definition of African American Studies, a framework, development of a content alignment plan, and identification of professional learning opportunities. This contractor provided their final report in December 2023.

## Program(s) Evaluation or Major Findings

Global Unspoken Truths' professional learning via the American History Traveling Museum generated significant interest from OSPI staff. One hundred and ten staff members participated,

including those in cabinet-level positions. Participants completed a survey to share their reactions, learning, and next steps. Key findings revealed common emotional responses such as hopefulness, excitement, overwhelm, and anxiousness, with some frustration noted. Participants found the stories relevant, inspiring, thought-provoking, and unifying, emphasizing cultural awareness and validation, as well as a desire for deeper community engagement. Participants identified actions for change including advocacy, collaboration, sharing, education, volunteering, and speaking out, with notable responses about exposing children to diverse cultures and committing to fact-checking media. Themes of strength and perseverance highlighted the resilience of marginalized groups, with personal reflections on resilience seen in family histories and community leaders. Attendance increased when divisions or departments used existing meeting times to allow participants to attend, and it is recommended that cabinet leaders consider this approach for future events.

The African American Studies Professional Learning Community (PLC) successfully fostered a strong sense of community, provided practical and adaptable teaching strategies, and emphasized the joy and beauty within African American history. It empowered educators to integrate African American perspectives into their teaching and highlighted the importance of place-based learning and culturally affirming practices in building inclusive classrooms. The use of the African American Studies framework allowed educators to adapt content to their specific grade levels and disciplines, making the learning both accessible and meaningful. The PLC also modeled a liberating learning environment that intentionally avoided centering dominant narratives, instead affirming Black experiences and voices. Participants described the sessions as healing, empowering, and deeply impactful, with many noting that the experience was unlike any other professional development they had attended.

## Major Challenges Faced by Program(s)

Many educators who participated in the PLC were new to African American Studies, and while they found the PLC valuable, they expressed a strong desire for more time, broader outreach, and sustained support to continue the work.

## Future Opportunities

This proviso was consolidated going forward into section 501(4)(a) of the budget. Multiple provisos were added to the statewide program section of the budget, and the total amount appropriated in FY 26 and FY 27 is less than the total previous funding of the individual items consolidated, which may impact this work moving forward.

To expand the impact, future efforts should prioritize broader geographic outreach and inclusion of educators from diverse regions and backgrounds. To scale effectively without compromising community, programs might offer intensive workshops followed by smaller learning communities throughout the school year. Additionally, integrating culturally responsive discipline strategies and aligning them with evolving educational policies can ensure that these

programs remain relevant and supportive of inclusive, student-centered learning environments. These steps can help embed culturally affirming education practices more deeply and sustainably across educational systems.

## Other Relevant Information

This work builds on the 2020 legislation that established the now concluded [African American Studies Workgroup \(ospi.k12.wa.us\)](https://ospi.k12.wa.us/).

## Schools/Districts Receiving Assistance

[Click here to see a list of all OSPI grant recipients in the 2025 Fiscal Year.](#)

## Program Contact Information

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