

January 2025

Ethnic Studies Information Nights

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WESTERN PLACER
Unified School District

Agenda

- Presentation
- Break
- Questions and Answers



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Why Ethnic Studies?

- To provide curriculum to promote belonging and address the district mission
- To teach students about local history
- Based on District Data
- Assembly Bill 101
- Research



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Ethnic Studies Curriculum

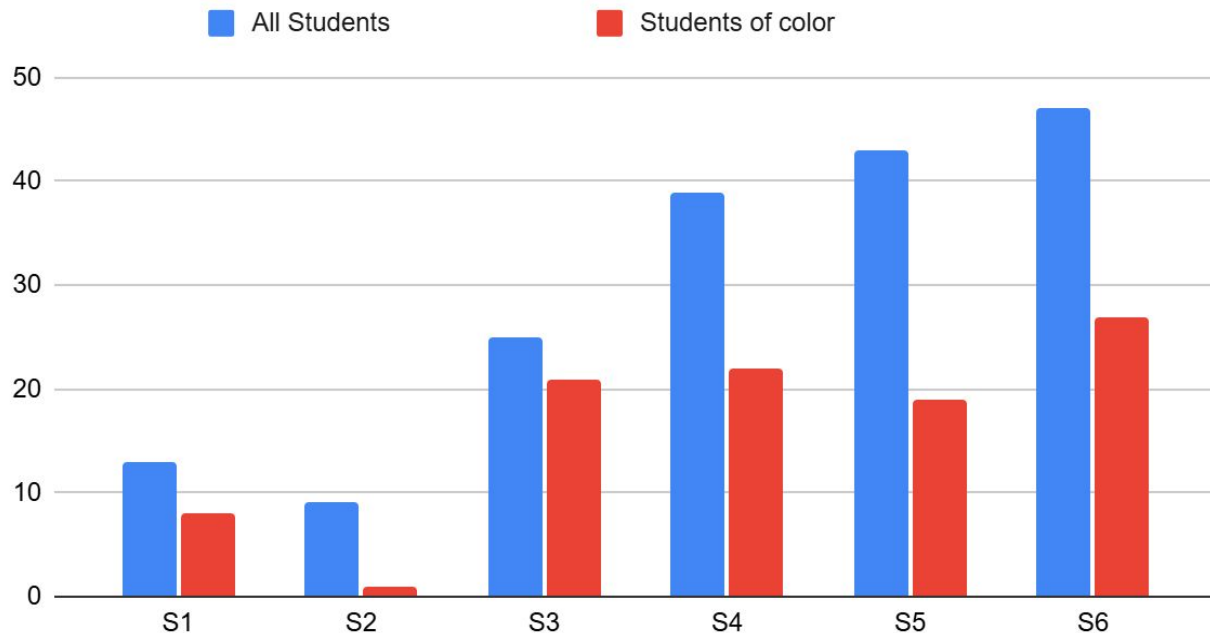
- Explores diverse perspectives and experiences to help all students understand each other better
- Teaches about differences and challenges in society, but also finds common ground
- Aims to make school more engaging and meaningful for everyone



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District Data

All Students
(High School) and Students of color



S = Statement

S1 - Students perceive themselves as engaged with their school and education.

S2 - Students feel they receive support and personal attention from their teachers.

S3 - Students believe that their school fosters a culture of respect and fairness.

S4 - I feel safe during school.

S5 - I feel safe from harm while in my classes.

S6 - In my school there are clear rules against hurting other people.

Why is this data important?

Our data shows all students need stronger school connection and safety, with our students of color experiencing an even greater need for support.



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Assembly Bill 101

- 10.8.21 - AB 101 signed into law
- Must offer a semester long Ethnic Studies course beginning in the 2025-2026 school year.
- Ethnic Studies becomes a graduation requirement for the class of 2030.



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Research - Ethnic Studies

The research shows that ethnic studies helps “foster cross-cultural understanding among students of color and white students, and aids students in valuing their own cultural identity while appreciating the differences around them.”

Christine E. Sleeter and Miguel Zavala. 2020. “What the Research Says About Ethnic Studies” in Transformative Ethnic Studies in Schools: Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Research. New York, NY: Teachers College Press. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/ch1.asp#link2>.



The What of Ethnic Studies?

What is Ethnic Studies?

What Ethnic Studies is *not*.

Who will teach Ethnic Studies?



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Ethnic Studies is:

- Learning about different cultures and histories often left out of regular history classes
- Understanding experiences of diverse groups and challenge stereotypes
- Exploring how race, gender, and class shape people's lives and society
- Discovering often-overlooked contributions of people from various backgrounds
- Developing skills to engage positively in our diverse world



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Ethnic Studies is *not*:

- Intended to demonize or shame any one group of people
- To promote one opinion or political idea



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Who will teach ethnic studies?

- Credentialed Teachers with a social science credential



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The How of Ethnic Studies?

- Ethnic Studies will be offered as an elective course during the 2025-2026 school year.
- Once it is a required course for students (class of 2030), it will be taught in the 9th grade year. This will begin in the 2026-2027 school year.



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Ethnic Studies Units

1. Course Overview
2. Introduction to Ethnic Studies
3. Culture and Identity
4. Origins, Movements, and Migration
5. Societal Structures and Their Effect
6. Social Movements and Community Organizing
7. Final Project



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Course Overview

- This course explores history through diverse perspectives, focusing on the experiences and achievements of various ethnic and racial groups in our nation, state, and local community
- Students will learn about different cultural traditions and examine how various communities have contributed to and shaped our society, helping them better understand and appreciate our diverse population
- Through studying multiple viewpoints, including local history, students will develop skills to engage positively with different communities and become more informed, active members of our multicultural society



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Introduction to Ethnic Studies

- In the first week, students learn what ethnic studies means and work together to create classroom guidelines for having respectful discussions.
- Students will practice how to listen to and discuss different viewpoints respectfully, even when they disagree.
- The class will build a supportive environment where students learn to work together and engage in thoughtful discussions about history and culture and their local community.



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Culture and Identity

- Students explore what shapes a person's identity, including family background, cultural traditions, and both local and larger community influences.
- Through ongoing discussions, students reflect on their own background and experiences to better understand themselves and their classmates.
- Students will create a personal statement essay they can use later for college or job applications, focusing on how their individual experiences have shaped who they are.



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Origins, Movements, and Migration

- Students learn about different groups' experiences coming to America, including the unique perspective of Native Americans who were already living here.
- Students study how migration and movement of people has shaped American communities over time, including Lincoln and Placer County, focusing on challenges faced and achievements made.
- Students research and create a visual project about migration stories - this could be based on their own family history, local community stories, or other historical examples.



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Societal Structures and Their Effect

- Students learn about challenges different groups faced through history in America and in our local area, while also studying how these groups overcame obstacles and made important contributions to society.
- Through research projects done in teams, students examine specific historical events and connect them to local community history.
- Students develop research and presentation skills while working together to share what they've learned about important historical events and their impact on our community.



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Social Movements and Community Organizing

- Students will learn about various social movements throughout American history, exploring how different groups worked together to create positive changes in their communities, including their local community.
- Students will study key figures from history who helped improve conditions for workers, women, and various communities, with a focus on lesser-known leaders who may not appear in typical textbooks.
- Through research projects, students examine how peaceful organizing and cooperation between different groups has helped shape our society and our local community, and strengthened American democracy over time.

Final Project

OPTIONS:

1. Students will learn to research, analyze, and raise awareness about important social movements through projects like podcasts, infographics, or poems while developing skills in public speaking, persuasion, and critical thinking.
2. They will explore current events to understand issues affecting different groups, write reflections, and discuss how these issues impact communities and the role of local organizations.
3. Students will take action by either writing letters to officials or speaking at a school board or city council meeting about important community issues.

Ethnic Studies Content

The four main ethnic groups covered in this course content are:

- African American
- Latino/Latina American
- Asian American
- Native American

This course will also include information about these groups within the context of the City of Lincoln and Placer County.

Ethnic Studies Student Input Survey

High school students had the opportunity to complete a survey in November to give feedback on this course.

The results of this survey will help teachers develop lessons.



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Ethnic Studies Family Input Survey

We want your input! An Ethnic Studies Input Survey will be sent out to families next week.

This will be sent through ParentSquare, so be on the lookout for this message with the survey link.



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Approval Process

The course outline will be presented to the WPUSD School Board at two separate meetings this spring.

Meeting #1 - Information Item

Meeting #2 - Action Item



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Questions?

Thank you!

Scott Pickett

Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services

spickett@wpusd.org

Jennifer Clementson

Educational Services Specialist

jclementson@wpusd.org

Western Placer Unified School District

Educational Services Department

916.645.6350



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