

Ethnic Studies
School of Language, Culture, and Society
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Dear Oregon State Legislators:

We are writing to wholeheartedly urge your support of House Bill 2845 to implement Ethnic Studies in Oregon's public K-12 schools. As educators in Ethnic Studies ourselves, we have all observed first-hand the powerful impact such curriculum can have on our students and firmly believe that statewide implementation of Ethnic Studies will add much to the quality and effectiveness of Oregon's public K-12 schools.

The benefits of Ethnic Studies curriculum are multifold. As more and more public schools incorporate Ethnic Studies into their curriculum, evidence of its positive effects on attendance, academic performance, and graduation rates mounts as well, particularly for students from historically underrepresented groups in K-12 curriculum. San Francisco's public high schools, for example, saw significant gains in attendance and grades after they implemented Ethnic Studies curriculum across their district ("[Stanford Study Suggests Academic Benefits to Ethnic Studies Courses](#)"). As our own state continues to struggle with disparities in academic outcomes and graduation rates, Ethnic Studies holds tremendous potential as a tool to help address these disparities. Such curriculum provides teachers a vital means of engaging students and connecting their school learning to their lives beyond the classroom. As a matter of both retention and academic accuracy, we cannot overstate the importance of seeing diverse community histories reflected in curriculum for all students.

By emphasizing a multifaceted understanding of US history, culture, and society, Ethnic Studies provides an effective means of honing all students' critical thinking skills as they consider multiple viewpoints and analyze complicated histories and narratives in grade-appropriate ways. Moreover, almost every term, we hear students of all backgrounds voice their frustration that they were not presented with Ethnic Studies curriculum earlier in their K-12 courses. Earlier exposure to Ethnic Studies would be helpful to all of our students regardless of major or future plans, and can help prepare students of all ages for the increasingly diverse culture and society in which we all live.

In short, while we do not speak on behalf of our university, as both faculty in Ethnic Studies and as concerned Oregonians, we strongly encourage your support for HB 2845. We believe Ethnic Studies will provide our public K-12 schools an important tool as we all work towards achieving more equitable academic outcomes for all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

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