



April 20, 2022

Dear Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

The MN Ethnic Studies Coalition brings together more than two dozen organizations who work to ensure that all Minnesota K-12 students have access to Ethnic Studies courses, principles and curriculum. **We write in strong support of the Ethnic Studies provisions** within the House Education Finance Omnibus bill (HF 4300, Davnie).

Minnesota's student population is increasingly diverse: thirty-four percent of Minnesota students are students of color, compared to 24 percent a decade earlier.¹ However, the curriculum offered in our schools does not yet reflect the diversity of the student population.

Studies have shown that when students' experiences and backgrounds are reflected in their curriculum, they become more engaged in learning and achieve better educational outcomes. For example, [in a study of three San Francisco high schools](#)² over five years, enrolling ninth grade students in an Ethnic Studies course resulted in a 21 percent increase in attendance and significant increase in student GPAs. Graduation rates and college enrollment were also markedly higher than comparable students who did not take Ethnic Studies. Other studies have found similar positive educational outcomes from enrollment in Ethnic Studies courses.³

Students of all racial and ethnic identities benefit from Ethnic Studies. Ethnic Studies invites students to more deeply explore the many diverse cultures and histories within our state and country, and in doing so gain a better understanding of themselves and their classmates. Ethnic Studies equips students with the knowledge and perspectives to live and lead in an increasingly globalized world.

The House Education Omnibus bill includes **several key provisions that will ensure that all Minnesota students can benefit from Ethnic Studies** as part of their education. The House Education Omnibus bill would:

1. Ensure access to Ethnic Studies instruction for all K-12 students, including the creation of an Ethnic Studies high school graduation requirement;
2. Create an Ethnic Studies Advisory Task Force composed of a diverse array of educators, students, and community experts to advise MDE on Ethnic Studies content and standards;
3. Require school districts to conduct an Ethnic Studies needs assessment in order to develop Ethnic Studies courses that align with the unique needs of each student population; and

¹ <https://www.startribune.com/as-minnesota-students-become-more-diverse-teachers-remain-mostly-white/498947601/>

² <https://edsource.org/2021/research-finds-ethnic-studies-in-san-francisco-had-enduring-impact/660856>

³ A comprehensive summary of research related to Ethnic Studies and student educational outcomes can be found in "What the Research Says About Ethnic Studies," published by the National Education Association and the Center for Enterprise Strategy.

- Allocate funding for implementation of Ethnic Studies and for a competitive grant program for schools to develop and implement Ethnic Studies courses.

Two of Minnesota’s largest school districts – Minneapolis and St. Paul – have passed Ethnic Studies graduation requirements out of recognition of the value that Ethnic Studies offers their entire student bodies. It is time for all Minnesota students to gain access to the benefits of Ethnic Studies curriculum.

We urge your support for the Ethnic Studies provisions within the House Education Finance Omnibus bill, and we thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

The MN Ethnic Studies Coalition

Asian American
Organizing Project



CAAL



Climate Generation



Coalition to Increase
Teachers of Color and
American Indian
Teachers in MN



Education for Liberation
Minnesota



Education Evolving



Education Minnesota



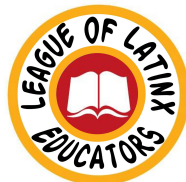
Ed Allies



ISAIAH



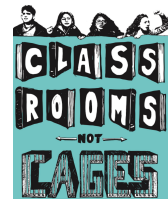
League of Latinx
Educators



Minneapolis Federation
of Teachers 59



Minnesota Educators
Against ICE



Minnesota Zej Zog (MN
Zej Zog / MZZ)



Saint Paul Promise
Neighborhood



Unidos MN
UNIDOS MN



Voices for Racial Justice



Youth 4 Ethnic Studies



YoUthROC

