



**Saint Paul**  
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

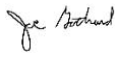
**Independent School District 625**  
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DATE: February 22, 2022

To: House Education Committee Members

From: Joe Gothard, Superintendent 

RE: HF3434

On behalf of the St. Paul Public School Board of Education, I am writing to voice our support for HF3434. I'm proud to report that the St. Paul School Board adopted a policy in December to require that Ethnic Studies become a basic course requirement for Saint Paul's high school diploma starting with the graduating class of 2025. In addition, all 10th graders will be scheduled to take Ethnic Studies in school year 2022-2023. This was a culmination of work led by our student leaders, who engaged their fellow students and community at numerous meetings and forums, after reviewing the research and pedagogy to advocate for this policy change. The course was also piloted in three high schools, where 93 percent of students who participated in the pilot recommended the course.

The high school requirement is an interdisciplinary course that examines students' identity, heritage, culture, and communities in relation to various power structures, forms of oppression and inequalities that have an impact on their lives. With an emphasis on stories and lived experiences of people of color in the United States, the course explores the collective struggles, resilience, and triumphs of their communities.

In addition, St. Paul is in the process of reviewing and updating our curriculum K-8. We have established an Ethnic Studies Community Collaborative Group, who will meet quarterly to collaborate on the Ethnic Studies course curriculum and programmatic activities. This is a direct partnership with SPPS so that the course will be reflective of the needs and wants of the community we serve.

The district has also identified the following long-term goals:

- Continue to support student recruitment and enrollment district wide through data-driven results
- Increase programing staffing at relevant school sites and district level
- Collaborate with other districts programs to disrupt systems of inequity and institutional racism to support student learning and development, and provide all students with support and opportunity to succeed
- Establish partnerships with outside research organization for thorough program and course evaluation
- Establish partnerships with Colleges/Universities on CIS/Concurrent Enrollment for CES Course
- Continue to development and offer new elective courses for Ethnic Studies Department
- Embedded Ethnic Studies Teaching and Pedagogy across at all SPPS grade levels and content area.
- Expand CES course offerings to middle school sites
- Work towards an Educational Pathway to "Grow Our Own Educators" in Ethnic Studies with accredited Colleges/Universities.
- Continue to collect data in all aspects of the program to inform improvements and to support our district mission to inspire students to think critically, pursue their dreams and change the world.

We are excited about advancing this work with our students, educators and community.