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# **LEGISLATIVE RESOURCE PACKET: SENATE BILL 116**

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*Written By:*

*Vinay Khosla, Senior Associate Chair*

**MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION**

2022 Legislative Session

[marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org)

# Document Overview

This document has three major sections which are as follows:

1. Comparable State Bills and Laws, pgs. 4-34
2. Maryland Counties' Policies, pgs. 35-44
3. Potential Advocacy Organizations, pgs. 45-47

## *Comparable State Bills and Laws*

Twelve comparable state bills/laws are described with relevant information and executive summaries of the bill's purpose and effect in the table on pages 5-6. The complete bill language of each is also provided in this document.

## *Maryland Counties' Policies*

Four counties are specifically brought to the fore in terms of policies and resolutions that are either similar, or adjacent, to the goals of the DELAC bill. The counties are Baltimore, Harford, Montgomery, and Prince George's.

**Baltimore County (BCPS):** A recent resolution was passed by the Board of Education to increase LGBTQ+ curriculum materials and content and foster inclusivity for individuals identifying as LGBTQ+

**Harford County (HCPS):** Two documents are provided. One deals with the broad goals of promoting diversity and inclusivity in classroom and academic settings through cognizant teacher efforts when developing lesson plans and curriculum. The other concerns more pointed goals to diversify curriculum, offer courses on ethnic/racial histories, etc.

**Montgomery County (MCPS):** The first document is the Board resolution on the development of a pilot program for an LGBTQ+ History course in MCPS schools which passed. There are also various course offerings that provide diverse perspectives and curriculum with regard to race and gender.

**Prince George's County (PGCPS):** High school social studies and ELA course offerings that provide diverse perspectives and curriculum with regard to race and gender through literary analysis and historical analysis

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### *Potential Advocacy Organizations*

There are a variety of potential advocacy organizations listed in this section. A focus on student advocacy will be paramount in highlighting the importance of the DELAC bill should it be introduced into the Maryland General Assembly. The starred organizations are these student organizations. While we should cast a wide net on potential advocacy organizations, students should be a primary focus.

The Maryland Student Coalition itself will provide a breadth of testimony as well in the form of written and oral testimony “packages” similar to those compiled for the support of HB753 in the 2021 Legislative Session.

**COMPARABLE  
STATE  
BILLS & LAWS**

## LEGISLATION SUMMARY

STATE	BILL #	YEAR	STATUS	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<b><i>COLORADO</i></b>	HB1192	2019	Passed	<i>Colorado's HB19-1192 tasks the state board of education with revising learning standards to include the history, culture, and social contributions of people of color, religious minorities, and LGBTQ people</i>
<b><i>CONN.</i></b>	HB7082	2020	Passed	<i>Connecticut's HB7082, Public Act 19-12 makes the state the first to mandate the offering of African American and Latino Studies courses in high schools. Connecticut will also similarly require Native American Studies courses in high schools beginning in 2023-24</i>
<b><i>DELAWARE</i></b>	HB198	2021	Passed	<i>This Act requires each school district and charter school to establish and implement a curriculum on Black History for students in grades K through 12. This Act incorporates contemporary events into discussions of Black History and the tools of experience</i>
<b><i>ILLINOIS</i></b>	101-0227	2020	Passed	<i>In this law, which took effect July 2020, public schools are prescribed to "study the roles and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in the history of Illinois and the United States."</i>
<b><i>ILLINOIS</i></b>	SB648	2021	Passed	<i>The Illinois TEAACH Act mandates the teaching of Asian American history and historical contributions in public elementary and high schools as well as the expansion of African American history requirements</i>
<b><i>KANSAS</i></b>	N/A	2021	N/A	<i>The Kansas Board of Education states that conflation of Critical Race Theory (CRT) with inclusivity and educational equity is dangerous and fallacious. Kansas is a more politically conservative</i>

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				<i>state</i>
<b>MASS.</b>	HD.4112	2021	Introduced	<i>The Massachusetts bill HD.4112 requires the establishment of a “cultural diversity curriculum to be implemented in elementary and secondary schools.”</i>
<b>NEW J.</b>	A4454	2021	Passed	<i>The New Jersey bill mandates instruction on diversity and inclusion, specifically along the lines of gender and sexual orientation; race and ethnicity; disabilities; religious tolerance; and unconscious bias</i>
<b>NEW Y.</b>	N/A	2021	N/A	<i>The New York State Board of Regents released a lengthy statement which encouraged districts to implement practices of inclusion, equity, and diversity as well as addressing the role bigotry and racism play in American life and society</i>
<b>OREGON</b>	SB739	2013	Passed	<i>Oregon SB739 seeks to present a “balanced representation of the relevant contributions to society by men and women of African-American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian-American and other racial groups in Oregon” in public school curriculums</i>
<b>WASH.</b>	SB5044	2021	Passed	<i>Washington SB5044 aims to dismantle institutional racism in the state’s public school system through broad curriculum reform</i>
<b>WYOMING</b>	HB0076	2018	Passed	<i>Wyoming HB0076 mandates changes to the curriculum to mandate Indigenous history</i>

*NOTE: Legislative and bill language for each of the above bills follows on pages 7-34.*

# CALIFORNIA AB2016<sup>1</sup>

Assembly Bill No. 2016

## CHAPTER 327

An act to add Section 51226.7 to the Education Code, relating to pupil instruction.

[Approved by Governor September 13, 2016. Filed with Secretary of State September 13, 2016.]

AB 2016, Alejo. Pupil instruction: ethnic studies.

Existing law requires the adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to include, among other subjects, the social sciences. Existing law requires the State Board of Education, with the assistance of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, to establish a list of textbooks and other instructional materials that highlight the contributions of minorities in the development of California and the United States. Existing law establishes the Instructional Quality Commission and requires the commission to, among other things, recommend curriculum frameworks to the state board.

This bill would require the Instructional Quality Commission to develop, and the state board to adopt, modify, or revise, a model curriculum in ethnic studies, and would encourage each school district and charter school that maintains any of grades 9 to 12, inclusive, that does not otherwise offer a standards-based ethnic studies curriculum to offer a course of study in ethnic studies based on the model curriculum.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) The State of California is committed to providing excellent educational opportunities to all of its pupils.
- (b) There are 92 languages other than English spoken throughout the state, with the primary languages being Arabic, Armenian, Cantonese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

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<sup>1</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: California AB2016 mandates the development of an ethnic studies curriculum for all high schools, the first such mandate in the nation*



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(c) There is a growing body of academic research that shows the importance of culturally meaningful and relevant curriculum.

(d) Based on the National Education Association (NEA) publication, *The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies*, the inclusion of ethnic studies in a curriculum has a positive impact on pupils of color.

(e) Ethnic studies benefit pupils in observable ways, such as pupils becoming more academically engaged, increasing their performance on academic tests, improving their graduation rates, and developing a sense of self-efficacy and personal empowerment.

(f) The state's educational standards should be guided by core values of equity, inclusiveness, and universally high expectations.

(g) The State is committed to provide all pupils with excellent educational opportunities, without regard to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, income, sexual orientation, or disability.

(h) The state is committed to its obligation to ensure its youth are college prepared and career ready, while graduating 100 percent of its pupils.

(i) The implementation of various ethnic studies courses within California's curriculum that are A-G approved, with the objective of preparing pupils to be global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures, will close the achievement gap, reduce pupil truancy, increase pupil enrollment, reduce dropout rates, and increase graduation rates.

(j) The state encourages the participation of pupils and members of the community in the development of an ethnic studies model curriculum.

SEC. 2. Section 51226.7 is added to the Education Code, to read:

51226.7. (a) The Instructional Quality Commission shall develop, and the state board shall adopt, modify, or revise, a model curriculum in ethnic studies to ensure quality courses of study in ethnic studies. The model curriculum shall be developed with participation from faculty of ethnic studies programs at universities and colleges with ethnic studies programs and a group of representatives of local educational agencies, a majority of whom are kindergarten to grade 12, inclusive, teachers who have relevant experience or education background in the study and teaching of ethnic studies.

(b) The model curriculum shall be written as a guide to allow school districts to adapt their courses to reflect the pupil demographics in their communities. The model curriculum shall include examples of courses offered by local educational agencies that have been approved as meeting the A-G admissions requirements of the University of California and the California State University, including, to the extent possible, course outlines for those courses.

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- (c) On or before December 31, 2019, the Instructional Quality Commission shall submit the model curriculum to the state board for adoption, and the state board shall adopt the model curriculum on or before March 31, 2020.
- (d) The Instructional Quality Commission shall provide a minimum of 45 days for public comment before submitting the model curriculum to the state board.
- (e) Beginning in the school year following the adoption of the model curriculum pursuant to subdivision (a), each school district or charter school maintaining any of grades 9 to 12, inclusive, that does not otherwise offer a standards-based ethnic studies curriculum is encouraged to offer to all otherwise qualified pupils a course of study in ethnic studies based on the model curriculum. A school district or charter school that elects to offer a course of study in ethnic studies pursuant to this subdivision shall offer the course as an elective in the social sciences or English language arts and shall make the course available in at least one year during a pupil's enrollment in grades 9 to 12, inclusive.
- (f) It is the intent of the legislature that local educational agencies submit course outlines for ethnic studies for approval as A-G courses.

# COLORADO HB19-1192<sup>2</sup>, SB21-067

HOUSE BILL 19-1192

CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF MATTERS RELATING TO AMERICAN MINORITIES IN THE TEACHING OF SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, ESTABLISHING THE HISTORY, CULTURE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN EDUCATION COMMISSION TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCLUDE THE HISTORY, CULTURE, AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF AMERICAN INDIANS, LATINOS, AFRICAN AMERICANS, AND ASIAN AMERICANS, THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS WITHIN THESE MINORITY GROUPS, THE CONTRIBUTIONS AND PERSECUTION OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES, AND THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FEATURES WITHIN THESE COMMUNITIES, IN THE TEACHING AND CONTENT STANDARDS FOR HISTORY AND CIVICS, AND MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, amend 22-1-104 as follows:

22-1-104. Teaching of history, culture, and civil government.

(2) (1) in-addition; The history and civil government of the United States AND OF THE STATE OF COLORADO, which includes the history, culture, and SOCIAL contributions of minorities, including, but not limited to, American Indians, LATINOS, African Americans, AND ASIAN AMERICANS, THE LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS WITHIN THESE MINORITY GROUPS, AND THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FEATURES WITHIN THESE COMMUNITIES, AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS AND PERSECUTION OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES, MUST be taught in all the public schools of the state.

(a) (2) Satisfactory completion of a course on the civil government of the United States and the state of Colorado, INCLUDING the subjects described in SUBSECTION (1) of this section, IS a condition of high school graduation in the public schools of this state.

(4) (3) (a) In an effort to increase civic participation among young people, each school district board of education shall convene a community forum on a periodic basis, but not less than once every SIX years, for all interested persons to discuss adopted content standards in civics,

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<sup>2</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: Colorado's HB19-1192 tasks the state board of education with revising learning standards to include the history, culture, and social contributions of people of color, religious minorities, and LGBTQ people*

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including the subjects described in subsection (2) SUBSECTION (1) of this section. THE HISTORY, CULTURE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN EDUCATION COMMISSION ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 22-1-104.3 SHALL ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN ANY SUCH FORUMS.

(b) Based upon input from this community forum, each school district board of education shall determine how the subject areas specified in SUBSECTION (1) OF this section are addressed when establishing graduation requirements.

(5) (4) (a) In an effort to strengthen the teaching of the history, CULTURE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT of the state of Colorado and of the United States in all public schools of the state in accordance with the requirements of this section, the department of education, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HISTORY, CULTURE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN EDUCATION COMMISSION ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 22-1-104.3, shall assist the school districts of the state in developing and promoting programs for elementary and secondary students that engage the students in the process of discovery and interpretation of THE SUBJECTS AND TOPICS SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION.

(b) The department of education is authorized to accept gifts, grants, and donations in furtherance of the objectives specified in paragraph SUBSECTION (4)(a) OF THIS SECTION.

(c) It is the intent of the general assembly that the objectives specified in SUBSECTION (4)(a) OF THIS SECTION are to-be funded through the state education fund created in section 17 (4) of article IX of the state constitution. The general assembly hereby finds that the development, promotion, and maintenance by the school districts of the state of programs for elementary and secondary students that engage such students in the process of discovery and interpretation of THE SUBJECTS AND TOPICS SET FORTH IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION ASSIST these students in meeting state academic standards and may therefore be funded from MONEY in the state education fund.

(5) (a) In an effort to strengthen the teaching of HISTORY, CULTURE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT, AS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION, in all public schools of the state in accordance with the requirements of this section, the department of education, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE HISTORY, CULTURE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN EDUCATION COMMISSION ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 22-1-104.3, shall assist the school districts of the state in developing and promoting programs for elementary and secondary students that address the state model content standards for HISTORY AND civics and promote best practices in WHILE ALSO ADDRESSING THE SUBJECTS AND TOPICS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION.

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(b) It is the intent of the general assembly that the objectives specified in this SUBSECTION (5) are funded through the state education fund created in section 17 (4) of article IX of the state constitution. The general assembly hereby finds that the development, promotion, and maintenance by the school districts of the state of programs for elementary and secondary students that address the state model content standards for HISTORY AND civics and promote best practices in WHILE ADDRESSING THE SUBJECTS AND TOPICS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (1) OF THIS SECTION assist these students in meeting state academic standards and may therefore be funded from MONEY in the state education fund.

(6) THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ANY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HISTORY, CULTURE, SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN EDUCATION COMMISSION ESTABLISHED IN SECTION 22-1-104.3 WHEN PERFORMING ITS SIX-YEAR REVIEW OF THE STATE'S EDUCATION STANDARDS PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-7-1005 (6).

# CONNECTICUT HB7082, PUBLIC ACT 19-12<sup>3</sup>

Substitute House Bill No. 7082 Public Act No. 19-12

AN ACT CONCERNING THE INCLUSION OF BLACK AND LATINO STUDIES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Section 10-16b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (Effective July 1, 2021):

(a) In the public schools the program of instruction offered shall include at least the following subject matter, as taught by legally qualified teachers, the arts; career education; consumer education; health and safety, including, but not limited to, human growth and development, nutrition, first aid, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation training in accordance with the provisions of section 10-16qq, disease prevention and cancer awareness, including, but not limited to, age and developmentally appropriate instruction in performing self-examinations for the purposes of screening for breast cancer and testicular cancer, community and consumer health, physical, mental and emotional health, including youth suicide prevention, substance abuse prevention, including instruction relating to opioid use and related disorders, safety, which shall include the safe use of social media, as defined in section 9-601, and may include the dangers of gang membership, and accident prevention; language arts, including reading, writing, grammar, speaking and spelling; mathematics; physical education; science, which may include the climate change curriculum described in subsection (d) of this section; social studies, including, but not limited to, citizenship, economics, geography, government, history and Holocaust and genocide education and awareness in accordance with the provisions of section 10-18f; African-American and black studies in accordance with the provisions of section 2 of this act; Puerto Rican and Latino studies in accordance with the provisions of section 2 of this act; computer programming instruction; and in addition, on at least the secondary level, one or more world languages; [and] vocational education; and the black and Latino studies course in accordance with the provisions of sections 3 and 4 of this act. For purposes of this subsection, world languages shall include American Sign Language, provided such subject matter is taught by a qualified instructor under the supervision of a teacher who holds a certificate issued by the

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<sup>3</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: Connecticut's HB7082, Public Act 19-12 makes the state the first to mandate the offering of African American and Latino Studies courses in high schools. Connecticut will also similarly require Native American Studies courses in high schools beginning in 2023-24.*

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State Board of Education. For purposes of this subsection, the "arts" means any form of visual or performing arts, which may include, but not be limited to, dance, music, art and theatre.

(b) If a local or regional board of education requires its pupils to take a course in a world language, the parent or guardian of a pupil identified as deaf or hard of hearing may request in writing that such pupil be exempted from such requirement and, if such a request is made, such pupil shall be exempt from such requirement.

(c) Each local and regional board of education shall on September 1, 1982, and annually thereafter at such time and in such manner as the Commissioner of Education shall request, attest to the State Board of Education that such local or regional board of education offers at least the program of instruction required pursuant to this section, and that such program of instruction is planned, ongoing and systematic.

(d) The State Board of Education shall make available curriculum materials and such other materials as may assist local and regional boards of education in developing instructional programs pursuant to this section. The State Board of Education, within available appropriations and utilizing available resource materials, shall assist and encourage local and regional boards of education to include: (1) Holocaust and genocide education and awareness; (2) the historical events surrounding the Great Famine in Ireland; (3) African-American [history] and black studies; (4) Puerto Rican [history] and Latino studies; (5) Native American history; (6) personal financial management, including, but not limited to, financial literacy as developed in the plan provided under section 10-16pp; (7) training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automatic external defibrillators; (8) labor history and law, including organized labor, the collective bargaining process, existing legal protections in the workplace, the history and economics of free market capitalism and entrepreneurialism, and the role of labor and capitalism in the development of the American and world economies; (9) climate change consistent with the Next Generation Science Standards; (10) topics approved by the state board upon the request of local or regional boards of education as part of the program of instruction offered pursuant to subsection (a) of this section; and (11) instruction relating to the Safe Haven Act, sections 17a-57 to 17a-61, inclusive. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection shall be available to each local and regional board of education for the development of curriculum on climate change as described in this subsection.

Sec. 2. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2019) (a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2021, and each school year thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall include African-American and black studies and Puerto Rican and Latino studies as part of the curriculum for the school district, pursuant to section 10-16b of the general statutes, as amended by this act. In developing and implementing the African-American and black studies and Puerto Rican and Latino studies curriculum, the board may utilize the curriculum materials made available by the State Board of Education pursuant to subsection (d) of section 10-16b of the

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general statutes, as amended by this act, or other existing and appropriate public or private materials, personnel and resources, provided such curriculum is in accordance with the state-wide subject matter content standards, adopted by the state board pursuant to section 10-4 of the general statutes.

(b) A local or regional board of education may accept gifts, grants and donations, including in-kind donations, designated for the development and implementation of the African-American and black studies and Puerto Rican and Latino studies curriculum under this section.

Sec. 3. (NEW) (Effective from passage) (a) (1) Not later than January 1, 2021, the State Board of Education shall review and approve the black and Latino studies course developed pursuant to subsection (b) of this section by the State Education Resource Center, established pursuant to section 10-357a of the general statutes. The state board shall approve such course if, following a review of such course, the state board determines that the content of such course is rigorous, aligned with curriculum guidelines approved by the state board, and in accordance with the state-wide subject matter content standards, adopted by the state board pursuant to section 10-4 of the general statutes.

(2) Not later than January 15, 2021, the state board, in consultation with the State Education Resource Center, shall submit a description of the black and Latino studies course, which includes the scope and sequence and course objective, and a report on the development and review of such course to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

(b) The State Education Resource Center shall develop a black and Latino studies course. Such course shall be one credit and offered at the high school level. In developing such course, the State Education Resource Center may utilize existing and appropriate public or private materials, personnel and other resources, including, but not limited to, persons and organizations with subject matter expertise in African- American, black, Puerto Rican or Latino studies, and the curriculum materials made available pursuant to subsection (d) of section 10-16b of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

(c) For the school years commencing July 1, 2022, to July 1, 2024, inclusive, the Department of Education shall conduct an annual audit to ensure that the black and Latino studies course approved pursuant to this section is being offered by each local and regional board of education. The department shall annually submit a report on such audit to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.



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Sec. 4. (NEW) (Effective July 1, 2019) (a) For the school year commencing July 1, 2021, a local or regional board of education may offer the black and Latino studies course, approved pursuant to section 3 of this act, in grades nine to twelve, inclusive.

(b) For the school year commencing July 1, 2022, a local or regional board of education shall offer the black and Latino studies course in grades nine to twelve, inclusive.

Approved June 21, 2019

# DELAWARE HB198<sup>4</sup>

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 198

AS AMENDED BY HOUSE AMENDMENT NO. 1

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO BLACK HISTORY EDUCATION. WHEREAS, the General Assembly has traditionally left the development of school curricula up to the school districts and charter schools; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly intends to leave the future development of school curricula up to the school districts and charter schools; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly recognizes that including Black History in the curricula is of such importance that the General Assembly has designated Black History as a subject the General Assembly chooses to require school districts and charter schools to include in their curricula.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend Chapter 41, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows: § 4142. Black History instruction.

(a)(1) Each school district and charter school serving students in 1 or more of the grades K through 12 shall provide instruction on Black History.

(2) The instruction required under paragraph (a)(1) of this section is provided through curricula developed or identified by the school district to charter school.

(3) At a minimum, Black History curricula must include all of the following:

a. The history and culture of Black people prior to the African and Black Diaspora, including contributions to science, art, and literature.

b. The significance of enslavement in the development of the American economy. c. The relationship between white supremacy, racism, and American slavery.

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<sup>4</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: See synopsis following bill language*

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d. The central role racism played in the Civil War.

e. How the tragedy of enslavement was perpetuated through segregation and federal, state, and local laws. f. The contributions of Black people to American life, history, literature, economy, politics, and culture. g. The socio-economic struggle Black people endured, and continue to endure, in working to achieve fair treatment in the United States; as well as the agency they employ in this work for equal treatment. h. Black figures in national history and in Delaware history.

(4) The curricula developed must rely heavily on primary sourcing to receive a true perspective of the Black experience inclusive of the triumphs, setbacks, and contributions of Black persons.

(5) The curricula developed must ensure the material is presented in an age appropriate manner.

(b) The study of Black History serves to educate students about how Black persons were treated throughout history in this country. The study of Black History is intended to do all of the following:

(1) Examine the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and intolerance.

(2) Prepare students to be responsible citizens in a pluralistic democracy.

(3) Reaffirm the commitment of free peoples to the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

(c) Curricula required under this section must be designed to do all of the following:

(1) Be trauma-responsive and recognize the impact of racial and historical trauma on students.

(2) Stimulate students' reflection on the roles and responsibilities of citizens in democratic societies to combat racism, inequality, and discrimination through tools of resistance such as protest, reform, and celebration. (3) Incorporate contemporary events into discussions of Black History and the tools of resistance. (4) Develop students' respect for cultural and racial diversity.

(5) Enable students to understand the ramifications of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping.

(6) Provide opportunities for students to discuss and uplift the Black experience.

(7) Provide students with a foundation for examining the history of discrimination in this State.

(8) Explore the various mechanisms of transitional and restorative justice that help humanity move forward.

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(d) The Department of Education shall develop and make publicly available a list of resources to assist a school district or charter school in creating Black History curricula. The Department shall consult with organizations that provide education about the experiences of Black people, or seek to promote racial empowerment and social justice, including the following:

- (1) The National Association of the Advancement of Colored People (“NAACP”).
- (2) Africana Studies programs at Delaware State University and the University of Delaware.
- (3) Delaware Heritage Commission.
- (4) Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League. (5) Black Student Coalitions.
- (6) Delaware Black Student Coalition.
- (7) Eastern Shore AFRAM.

(e) School districts and charter schools shall provide in-service training required under this section within the year.

(f)(1) Each school district and charter school shall designate an individual responsible for overseeing the implementation of the educational programming provided under this section. Each school district and charter school shall provide the name and contact information for the individual designated under this subsection to the Department of Education no later than September 15 of each year.

(2) Each individual designated under paragraph (f)(1) of this section shall report to the Department of Education no later than November 15 of each year regarding how the curriculum has been implemented by that individual’s school district or charter school.

(3) The Department of Education shall submit a written report to the Governor, the members of the General Assembly, and the Director of the Division of Research no later than January 15 of each year. The report must include the educational programming provided under subsection (a)(3) and how the curricula has been implemented by each school district and charter school.

(4) The Department of Education may, with the approval of the State Board of Education, adopt regulations to implement and enforce this section.

Section 2. This Act is effective immediately and must be implemented during the 2022-2023 school year.

## SYNOPSIS

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This Act requires each school district and charter school to establish and implement a curriculum on Black History for students in grades K through 12. This Act incorporates contemporary events into discussions of Black History and the tools of experience.

# ILLINOIS PUBLIC ACT 101-0227<sup>5</sup>

Public Act 101-0227

HB0246 Enrolled LRB101 05293 AXK 50307 b

AN ACT concerning education.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Sections 2-3.155 and 27-21 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/2-3.155)

Sec. 2-3.155. Textbook block grant program.

(a) The provisions of this Section are in the public

interest, for the public benefit, and serve secular public purposes.

(b) As used in this Section, "textbook" means any book or book substitute that a pupil uses as a text or text substitute, including electronic textbooks. "Textbook" includes books, reusable workbooks, manuals, whether bound or in loose-leaf form, instructional computer software, and electronic textbooks and the technological equipment necessary to gain access to and use electronic textbooks intended as a principal source of study material for a given class or group of students. "Textbook" also includes science curriculum materials in a kit format that includes pre-packaged consumable materials if (i) it is shown that the materials serve as a textbook substitute, (ii) the materials are for use by the pupils as a principal learning source, (iii) each component of the materials is integrally necessary to teach the requirements of the intended course, (iv) the kit includes teacher guidance materials, and (v) the purchase of individual consumable materials is not allowed.

(c) Beginning July 1, 2011, subject to annual appropriation by the General Assembly, the State Board of Education is authorized to provide annual funding to public school districts and State-recognized, non-public schools serving students in grades kindergarten through 12 for the purchase of selected textbooks. The textbooks authorized to be purchased under this Section are limited without exception to textbooks that have been preapproved and designated by the State Board of Education for use in any public school and that are secular, non-religious, and non-sectarian, and non-discriminatory as to any of the characteristics under the Illinois Human

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<sup>5</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: In this law, which took effect July 2020, public schools are prescribed to "study the roles and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in the history of Illinois and the United States."*

## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

Rights Act. Textbooks authorized to be purchased under this Section must include the roles and contributions of all people protected under the Illinois Human Rights Act. The State Board of Education shall annually publish a list of the textbooks authorized to be purchased under this Section. Each public school district and State-recognized, non-public school shall, subject to appropriations for that purpose, receive a per pupil grant for the purchase of secular and non-discriminatory textbooks. The per pupil grant amount must be calculated by the State Board of Education utilizing the total appropriation made for these purposes divided by the most current student

(d) The State Board of Education may adopt rules as necessary for the implementation of this Section and to ensure the religious neutrality of the textbook block grant program, as well as provide for the monitoring of all textbooks authorized in this Section to be purchased directly by State-recognized, nonpublic schools serving students in grades kindergarten through 12.

(105 ILCS 5/27-21) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-21)

Sec. 27-21. History of the United States. History of the United States shall be taught in all public schools and in all other educational institutions in this State supported or maintained, in whole or in part, by public funds. The teaching of history shall have as one of its objectives the imparting to pupils of a comprehensive idea of our democratic form of government and the principles for which our government stands as regards other nations, including the studying of the place of our government in world-wide movements and the leaders thereof, with particular stress upon the basic principles and ideals of our representative form of government. The teaching of history shall include a study of the role and contributions of African Americans and other ethnic groups including but not restricted to Polish, Lithuanian, German, Hungarian, Irish, Bohemian, Russian, Albanian, Italian, Czech, Slovak, French, Scots, Hispanics, Asian Americans, etc., in the history of this country and this State. To reinforce the study of the role and contributions of Hispanics, such curriculum shall include the study of the events related to the forceful removal and illegal deportation of Mexican-American U.S. citizens during the Great Depression. In public schools only, the teaching of history shall include a study of the roles and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in the history of this country and this State. The teaching of history also shall include a study of the role of labor unions and their interaction with government in achieving the goals of a mixed free enterprise system. No pupils shall be graduated from the eighth grade of any public school unless he or she has received such instruction in the history of the United States and gives evidence of having a comprehensive knowledge thereof.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1, 2020.

# ILLINOIS SB648<sup>6</sup>

AN ACT concerning education.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The School Code is amended by adding Section 27-20.8 and by changing Section 27-21 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/27-20.8 new)

Sec. 27-20.8. Asian American history study.

(a) Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, every public elementary school and high school shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of Asian American history, including the history of Asian Americans in Illinois and the Midwest, as well as the contributions of Asian Americans toward advancing civil rights from the 19th century onward. These events shall include the contributions made by individual Asian Americans in government and the arts, humanities, and sciences, as well as the contributions of Asian American communities to the economic, cultural, social, and political development of the United States. The studying of this material shall constitute an affirmation by students of their commitment to respect the dignity of all races and peoples and to forever eschew every form of discrimination in their lives and careers.

(b) The State Superintendent of Education may prepare and

- 1 make available to all school boards instructional materials,
- 2 including those established by the Public Broadcasting
- 3 Service, that may be used as guidelines for development of a
- 4 unit of instruction under this Section. However, each school
- 5 board shall itself determine the minimum amount of
- 6 instructional time that qualifies as a unit of instruction
- 7 satisfying the requirements of this Section.

8 (c) The regional superintendent of schools shall monitor a

9 school district's compliance with this Section's curricular

10 requirements during his or her annual compliance visit.

11 (d) A school may meet the requirements of this Section

12 through an online program or course.

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<sup>6</sup> MSC Executive Summary: *The Illinois TEAACH Act mandates the teaching of Asian American history and historical contributions in public elementary and high schools as well as the expansion of African American history requirements*



## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

13 (105 ILCS 5/27-21) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-21)  
14 Sec. 27-21. History of United States. History of the  
15 United States shall be taught in all public schools and in all  
16 other educational institutions in this State supported or  
17 maintained, in whole or in part, by public funds. The teaching  
18 of history shall have as one of its objectives the imparting to  
19 pupils of a comprehensive idea of our democratic form of  
20 government and the principles for which our government stands  
21 as regards other nations, including the studying of the place  
22 of our government in world-wide movements and the leaders  
23 thereof, with particular stress upon the basic principles and  
24 ideals of our representative form of government. The teaching  
25 of history shall include a study of the role and contributions  
1 of African Americans and other ethnic groups, including, but  
2 not restricted to, Polish, Lithuanian, German, Hungarian,  
3 Irish, Bohemian, Russian, Albanian, Italian, Czech, Slovak,  
4 French, Scots, Hispanics, Asian Americans, etc., in the  
5 history of this country and this State. To reinforce the study  
6 of the role and contributions of Hispanics, such curriculum  
7 shall include the study of the events related to the forceful  
8 removal and illegal deportation of Mexican-American U.S.  
9 citizens during the Great Depression. Beginning with the  
10 2022-2023 school year, the teaching of history shall also  
11 include the study of the wrongful incarceration of Japanese  
12 Americans during World War II pursuant to United States  
13 President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's signed Executive Order  
14 9066, the heroic service of the 100th Infantry Battalion and  
15 the 442nd Regimental Combat Team of the United States Army  
16 during World War II, the subsequent legal challenges by  
17 Japanese Americans to Executive Order 9066, the resettlement  
18 of Japanese Americans in Illinois following incarceration, and  
19 the formal apology and redress for the incarceration issued by  
20 the United States government in 1988. In public schools only,  
21 the teaching of history shall include a study of the roles and  
22 contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender  
23 people in the history of this country and this State. The  
24 teaching of history also shall include a study of the role of  
25 labor unions and their interaction with government in  
26 achieving the goals of a mixed free enterprise system.

## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

1 Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, the teaching of  
2 history must also include instruction on the history of  
3 Illinois. No pupils shall be graduated from the eighth grade  
4 of any public school unless he or she has received such  
5 instruction in the history of the United States and gives  
6 evidence of having a comprehensive knowledge thereof, which  
7 may be administered remotely.  
8 (Source: P.A. 101-227, eff. 7-1-20; 101-341, eff. 1-1-20;  
9 101-643, eff. 6-18-20.)

# KANSAS BOARD LETTER ON CRT<sup>7</sup>

The subject of critical race theory is currently dominating media headlines and daily conversations for many. Just as we teach our Kansas students to be judicious consumers of information, we encourage all Kansans to educate themselves on what critical race theory (CRT) is and what it isn't.

Critical race theory is an advanced and complex concept with roots extending to the 1970s and the examination of how laws and systems promote inequality. CRT is not new. It has existed with little fanfare for more than 40 years.

Unfortunately, there are some who are conflating CRT with educational equity. These concepts and practices are not interchangeable. Educational equity refers to federal and state policies and requirements for measuring achievement, fairness and opportunity in education.

Critical race theory is not a part of Kansas' academic standards and has never been a part of Kansas' academic standards. We encourage everyone to review these standards.

This is not the time to pull focus away from the critical task at hand of addressing the immediate needs of our students created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Now more than ever, our students and educators need the public's focused support as they work to address unfinished learning and rebuild lost social-emotional connections.

As the Kansas State Board of Education, we fully support and affirm that our schools are a place of trusted learning. We are confident in the work of Kansas schools, local boards of education and communities to deliver the very best education for each student to be a successful citizen.

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<sup>7</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: The Kansas Board of Education states that conflation of Critical Race Theory (CRT) with inclusivity and educational equity is dangerous and fallacious. Kansas is a more politically conservative state.*

# MASSACHUSETTS HD.4112<sup>8</sup>

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court (2021-2022)

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An Act establishing a cultural diversity curriculum in Massachusetts public schools.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section: - Section 98. The commissioner shall establish a cultural diversity curriculum to be implemented in elementary and secondary schools in the commonwealth. The purpose of the curriculum shall be to promote cultural diversity awareness among the children of Massachusetts including, but not limited to, educating students on diverse world cultures, heritages and backgrounds; highlighting the history of diverse cultures and peoples in shaping the United States of America and Massachusetts; and fostering respect for and appreciation of cultures, heritages, and backgrounds that students may otherwise not be aware of or have gained exposure to. The curriculum may be integrated into existing subject areas as to best promote cultural diversity awareness among a range of topics.

SECTION 2. The commissioner shall establish a plan to implement the cultural diversity 13 curriculum at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year.

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<sup>8</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: The Massachusetts bill HD.4112 requires the establishment of a “cultural diversity curriculum to be implemented in elementary and secondary schools.”*

# NEW JERSEY A4454<sup>9</sup>

A4454 MURPHY, REYNOLDS-JACKSON 2

AN ACT concerning diversity and inclusion instruction in school districts and supplementing chapter 35 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, each school district shall incorporate instruction on diversity and inclusion into the curriculum for students in grades 9 through 12 as part of the district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education.

b. The instruction shall:

(1) highlight and promote diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance and belonging on topics including: gender and sexual orientation; race and ethnicity; disabilities; religious tolerance; and unconscious bias; and

(2) encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical disabilities, and religious beliefs.

c. The Commissioner of Education shall provide school districts with sample learning activities and resources designed to promote diversity and inclusion.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

## STATEMENT

This bill requires school districts to provide instruction on diversity and inclusion as part of the implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Comprehensive Health and Physical Education for students in grades 9 through 12. The instruction is to:

highlight and promote diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance and belonging on topics including: gender and sexual orientation; race and ethnicity; disabilities; religious tolerance; and unconscious bias; and

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<sup>9</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: The New Jersey bill mandates instruction on diversity and inclusion, specifically along the lines of gender and sexual orientation; race and ethnicity; disabilities; religious tolerance; and unconscious bias*

## **MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION**

encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical disabilities, and religious beliefs.

Under the bill, the Commissioner of Education will provide school districts with sample learning activities and resources designed to promote diversity and inclusion.

# NEW YORK REGENTS POLICY STATEMENT<sup>10</sup>

Issue for Action

THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY,  
NY 12234

The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents Chancellor Lester W. Young, Jr.

The New York State Board of Regents Policy Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in  
New York State Schools

May 6, 2021

## SUMMARY

At the Board of Regents meeting in April 2021, the Board discussed a framework on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for New York State Schools which served as the basis for adopting a policy statement. At the May 2021 meeting of the Board, they will discuss and act on the proposed policy statement. The policy of the NYS Board of Regents is to encourage and support efforts at the State and local level to create within every school an ecosystem of success that is built upon a foundation of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, opportunity, innovation, confidence, trust, respect, caring, and relationship-building. All students must feel that they are welcome, they belong, and they are supported in every school.

The Board of Regents recognizes that much of this work is already happening in districts all across the State. School and district leaders, teachers, staff, students, and parents are working to create school communities that are more diverse, more equitable, and more inclusive than ever before. Many of New York's education stakeholders and their organizations have prioritized this issue, and their efforts must be recognized and applauded. But more work remains, and the Board of Regents and the State Education Department are committed to supporting schools and districts in their efforts to lift up all students.

### *Recommendation*

It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve the policy statement that will advance diversity, equity and inclusion in New York schools.

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<sup>10</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: The New York State Board of Regents released a lengthy statement which encouraged districts to implement practices of inclusion, equity, and diversity as well as addressing the role bigotry and racism play in American life and society.*

## **MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION**

VOTED, that The New York State Board of Regents Policy Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in New York Schools be approved.



# OREGON SB739<sup>11</sup>

77th OREGON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY--2013 Regular Session

Enrolled Senate Bill 739

Sponsored by Senators WINTERS, MONROE, Representative CAMERON; Senators BAERTSCHIGER JR, BATES, BEYER, BOQUIST, BURDICK, CLOSE, COURTNEY, DEVLIN, DINGFELDER, EDWARDS, FERRIOLI, GEORGE, GIROD, HANSELL, HASS, JOHNSON, KNOPP, KRUSE, MONNES ANDERSON, OLSEN, PROZANSKI, ROBLAN, ROSENBAUM, SHIELDS, STARR, STEINER HAYWARD, THOMSEN, WHITSETT, Representatives BARKER, BARNHART, BARTON, BENTZ, BERGER, BOONE, DEMBROW, DOHERTY, FAGAN, FREDERICK, FREEMAN, GARRETT, GILLIAM, GORSEK, HANNA, HARKER, HICKS, HOLVEY, HOYLE, JENSON, JOHNSON, KENY-GUYER, KOMP, KOTEK, KRIEGER, MATTHEWS, MCKEOWN, MCLANE, NATHANSON, OLSON, PARRISH, REARDON, RICHARDSON, THATCHER, TOMEI, WEIDNER, WHITSETT, WILLIAMSON, WITT

CHAPTER .....

AN ACT

Relating to Oregon Studies; creating new provisions; amending ORS 329.492; appropriating money; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. ORS 329.492 is amended to read:

329.492. (1) The Department of Education shall develop academic content standards for Oregon Studies and shall prepare materials to support teacher training and classroom instruction in Oregon Studies.

(2) [*The department shall consult with the Oregon Historical Society*] In the development of the academic content standards in Oregon Studies and in the preparation of materials to support teacher training and classroom instruction in Oregon Studies[.], the department shall consult with:

(a) The Oregon Historical Society;

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<sup>11</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: The Oregon bill seeks to present a “balanced representation of the relevant contributions to society by men and women of African-American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian-American and other racial groups in Oregon” in public school curriculums.*

## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

- (b) The Commission on Black Affairs;
- (c) The Commission on Hispanic Affairs;
- (d) The Commission on Indian Services;
- (e) The Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs; and
- (f) Any other organization identified by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

(3) The materials prepared as provided by subsection (2) of this section shall include a bal-

anced presentation of the relevant contributions to society by men and women of African-American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian-American and other racial groups in Oregon.

[(2)] (4) The Oregon Historical Society or any commission identified in subsection (2) of this section may use any public funds allocated to the [*Oregon Historical Society*] society or commission for the purposes of this section. In addition, the Oregon Historical Society or any commission identified in subsection (2) of this section may raise additional funds from private sources for the purposes of this section.

Enrolled Senate Bill 739 (SB 739-A) Page 1

SECTION 2. The Department of Education shall ensure that the academic content standards for Oregon Studies and the preparation of materials to support teacher training and classroom instruction in Oregon Studies are established and ready for distribution to school districts no later than July 1, 2014, for the purposes of the 2014-2015 school year.

SECTION 3. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropriated to the Department of Education, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2013, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$146,167, which may be expended for the purpose of complying with the provisions of this 2013 Act.

SECTION 4. This 2013 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2013 Act takes effect July 1, 2013.

# WASHINGTON SB5044<sup>12</sup>

ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5044

AN ACT Relating to equity, cultural competency, and dismantling institutional racism in the public school system; amending RCW 28A.410.260, 28A.415.445, 28A.405.106, 28A.410.270, 28A.413.050, and 28B.50.891; adding a new section to chapter 28A.415 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 28A.345 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.410 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.343 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.710 RCW; creating a new section; and repealing RCW 28A.345.100, 28A.415.420, 28A.415.440, and 28A.657.140.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. (1) The legislature finds that state resources have been invested to: (a) Identify model standards for cultural competency; (b) incorporate these cultural competency standards into both the standards for effective teaching and the standards of practice for paraeducators; (c) develop cultural competency training programs for school district staff from paraeducators to administrators; and (d) develop a plan for the creation and delivery of cultural competency training for school board directors and superintendents. (2) The legislature plans to continue the important work of dismantling institutional racism in public schools and recognizes the importance of increasing equity, diversity, inclusion, antiracism, and cultural competency training throughout the entire public school system by providing training programs for classified staff, certificated instructional staff, certificated administrative staff, superintendents, and school directors that will be provided in an ongoing manner.

[ABBREVIATED]

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<sup>12</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: Washington SB5044 aims to dismantle institutional racism in the state's public school system through broad curriculum reform*

# WYOMING HB0076<sup>13</sup>

AN ACT relating to public education; providing that the heritage, history and contributions of American Indian tribes be addressed through education; imposing requirements on the state board of education and the department of education; and providing for an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Wyoming:

Section 1. W.S. 21-4-602 is created to read: ARTICLE 6

## AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION PROGRAMS

21-4-602. American Indian educational program.

(a) The state board through the department of education shall, in cooperation with tribes of the region including the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Indian tribes, evaluate and review existing state social studies content and performance standards to ensure the cultural heritage, history and contemporary contributions of American Indians are addressed in the Wyoming social studies content and performance standards.

(b) The department shall, in consultation with tribes of the region including the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Indian tribes, make available materials and resources on the department's official web site to assist school districts in meeting social studies benchmarks within Wyoming social studies content and performance standards relating to the study of American Indian tribes.

Section 2. This act is effective immediately upon completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming Constitution.

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<sup>13</sup> *MSC Executive Summary: Wyoming HB0076 mandates changes to the curriculum to mandate Indigenous history*

**MARYLAND  
COUNTIES'  
POLICIES**

# BALTIMORE COUNTY

## 2022-01 LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVITY RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Students experiencing discrimination or harassment based on sex (male/female), sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression are at a significant risk of a rank of health, safety, and educational problems; and

WHEREAS, In schools, conversations to foster equitable improvements and acknowledge diversity, often implicitly and/or explicitly exclude lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, and other queer individuals; and

WHEREAS, Board Policy 0100, Equity, declares that "Disparities on the basis of...gender...sexual orientation, and gender identity (including gender expression)...are unacceptable and are directly at odds with the belief that all students can achieve;" therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board promises to educate itself, as an entity, on the composition of, and disparities for, students of the LGBTQ+ community, from issues of bullying/harassment and lack of gender identity recognition; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board supports discussions about sex (male/female), sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression within classroom curricula material, professional development, and extracurricular activities, allowing students and staff to become educated on the LGBTQ+ community; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board supports the decisions of students for gender expression, including accommodations for the use of school facilities corresponding to the gender they consistently identify and the right of individuals to be addressed by names and pronouns corresponding to their gender identity.

August 10, 2021

# HARFORD COUNTY

## BOARD RESOLUTION

### I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the Board's commitment to provide educational equity for all students.

### II. Definitions

A. **Accountability Measures** – means those Maryland accountability framework indicators in place to guarantee oversight of opportunities, resources, and educational rigor that will lead to achievement for all students.

B. **Educational Equity** – means that every student has access to the opportunities, resources, and educational rigor they need throughout their educational career to maximize academic success and social/emotional well-being and to view each student's individual characteristics as valuable.

C. **Educational Opportunities** – means all students have access to rigorous, well-rounded academic programs and experiences that enrich their educational career and prepare them for academic and career success.

D. **Equity Lens** – means that for any program, practice, decision, or action, the impact on all students is addressed, with strategic focus on marginalized student groups.

E. **Individual Characteristics** – means the characteristics of each individual student, which include but are not limited to:

1. Ability (cognitive, social/emotional, and physical);
2. Ethnicity;
3. Family structure;
4. Gender identity and expression;
5. Language;
6. National origin;
7. Nationality;
8. Race;
9. Religion;
10. Sexual orientation; and,
11. Socio-economic status.

## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

### III. Statement of Policy

- A. Environments for student learning, extra-curricular activities, and other school or school-sponsored activities, shall be designed by the school system so as to be equitable, fair, safe, diverse, and inclusive.
- B. School system resources shall be identified and utilized so as to provide equitable access to educational opportunities and services including, among other methods, the use of disaggregated student data to analyze trends and identify gaps and equitable solutions.
- C. The school system shall identify partnerships with the Maryland State Department of Education (“MSDE”), local government agencies, other agencies, and stakeholders to support educational equity.
- D. The school system shall provide professional development designed and differentiated to build capacity for cultural responsiveness to address identified areas of inequity.
- E. The school system shall ensure equitable access to effective teachers for all students.
- F. The school system shall use an equity lens in all staff recruiting, hiring, retention, and promotion processes.
- G. The school system shall use an equity lens in reviews of staff, curriculum pedagogy, professional learning, instructional material, and assessment design.
- H. The school system shall provide access and opportunity for all students to successfully read on level by the end of each grade.
- I. The school system shall address equity in the Local Every Student Succeeds Act (“ESSA”) Consolidated Strategic Plan.
- J. The school system shall identify a process for analyzing data to develop goals, objectives, strategies, and timelines for the implementation of equitable and culturally responsive practices in each school.
- K. The school system shall identify a method of evaluation to measure the effect of equitable practices in the system and in schools.
- L. The Superintendent shall identify a system employee responsible for the facilitation, monitoring, and implementation of the system’s equity initiatives within the Local ESSA Consolidated Strategic Plan.
- M. The Superintendent shall issue procedures which implement this policy.



## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

### DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION CURRICULUM GOALS

Since 2017, HCPSS has implemented several actions to remove structural barriers to access and ensure a rigorous classroom experience that reflects the rich diversity of our community:

1. Eliminated all unnecessary prerequisites for courses that had historically proven to exclude underrepresented student populations
2. Eliminated low-level courses that had delayed high school graduation for some students, and sent others to college needing remediation in English and/or math
3. Established more inclusive access to gifted and talented and advanced placement programming
4. Developed accessible and affordable dual enrollment course pathways
5. Adopted a consistent, districtwide early reading program and interventions, which include phonemic awareness development
6. Significantly Increased the diversity of texts appearing in media centers, classrooms and the curriculum
7. Incorporated research-affirmed, universal design principles into curriculum instructional strategies
8. Trained teachers and school administrators in delivering research-based first instruction and teaching controversial issues
9. Added electives, including an African American history course offered at all 12 high schools
10. BSAP Saturday Math Academies offer instruction and enrichment to a diverse student population

# MONTGOMERY COUNTY

## MEMORANDUM & RESOLUTION

The purpose of this memorandum is to request approval to develop a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) Studies pilot course. Pilot courses are submitted to the Board as required by Board of Education Policy IFA, *Curriculum*, adopted February 13, 2001, and its accompanying Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Regulation, IFA-RA, *Curriculum*. The policy requires that initial information regarding proposed curriculum development or significant revisions be presented to the Board for approval.

Pilot courses traditionally are approved by the Board in the fall of each school year; however, this course was not included at that time. Due to the strong interest and advocacy of students and teachers, the Board is asked to review this request for pilot implementation in the 2020–2021 school year. Ten high schools expressed initial interest in piloting or developing the course. Two of the 10 high schools plan to offer the course during the spring semester of the 2020–2021 school year, pending sufficient student enrollment and availability of staffing. The remaining eight high schools plan to offer the course during the 2021–2022 school year. Attached is a summary of the proposed LGBTQ+ Studies pilot course.

Staff members in the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs are collaborating with teachers, students, and nationally recognized experts and organizations committed to more inclusive curriculum for LGBTQ+ students as they develop the course curriculum and resources. Feedback and input from teachers and students will continue to shape the development of the course prior to implementation.

Following an initial implementation, teacher, student, and parent/guardian surveys will be used to gather data on the success of the course materials and instruction in meeting expectations for the course. Gradebook data also will be collected to analyze student performance across subgroups. Teacher feedback will include suggested revisions and additions to the course framework and materials. A social studies content team instructional specialist also will observe each of the teachers during the pilot. This feedback from multiple stakeholders will be reviewed by social studies content team staff prior to making a recommendation to conclude the pilot and open the course to all high schools, continue the pilot for an additional year, or end the pilot and remove the course from consideration as a new elective for high schools.

The following resolution is included for your consideration.

WHEREAS, On February 13, 2001, the Montgomery County Board of Education adopted Policy IFA, *Curriculum*, governing all curriculum development and implementation; and

## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

WHEREAS, Montgomery County Public Schools established procedures under Regulation IFA-RA, *Curriculum*, to allow school staff to develop and pilot non-core curriculum courses through the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Programs; and

WHEREAS, The proposed course has met all of the requirements established in the procedures; and

WHEREAS, The proposed course supports and extends high school elective programs; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Montgomery County Board of Education approve the following course, LGBTQ+ Studies, as a pilot course, in accordance with the procedures established in Regulation IFA-RA, *Curriculum*.

## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

### COURSE OFFERINGS

Montgomery County Public Schools PROPOSED ELECTIVE HIGH SCHOOL PILOT COURSE May12, 2020

The following course is proposed for pilot development and will be submitted for Board of Education review and approval, if successful.

LGBTQ+ Studies

Proposed by: OCIP

Number of Credits and Course Duration: 0.5 (1 semester) Grade Level: 11–12

Instructional Level: On-Level

Prerequisite: U.S. History

**Purpose/Rationale:** The goal of this semester-long course is to increase the awareness of students to the history, culture, and challenges of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) community in America. The LGBTQ+ community faces enduring discrimination that has resulted in a rise in hate crimes against them, higher rates of depression, suicide, and addictive drug use. The course aims to bring acceptance, support, and a stronger sense of shared community among our students of all sexual and gender identities. As such, the course is designed both for students who identify as LGBTQ+ and for those who do not. For students who identify as LGBTQ+, this course will empower them as they learn about their shared history, culture, and contributions. For students who do not identify as LGBTQ+, this course will increase understanding and acceptance of their peers and others in this community.

**Course Description:** This course is an interdisciplinary exploration of LGBTQ+ identity, history, and culture. In Unit One, students will examine the factors that shape identity, with a focus on intersectionality. In Unit Two, students will investigate which voices are included in the historical narrative by exploring the resistance and resilience of the LGBTQ+ community in the U.S. Unit 3 focuses on the cultural contributions of LGBTQ+ individuals and their representation in media. Unit 4 will engage students in examining and addressing contemporary challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals locally, nationally, and globally.

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

## HIGH SCHOOL COURSE ELA OFFERINGS

### Survey of African-American Literature

This course is a survey of writings by African American authors from the 17th through 19th Centuries. A range of genres will be studied. Students will examine the formal connections of this tradition—how authors work and rework certain styles, techniques, genres, and structures. Students will also examine how this tradition explores a diverse body of ideas which nonetheless coalesce around the preoccupations of identity, freedom, mobility, and security. Students will have opportunities to engage in close reading, complete short research projects, and engage in writing linked to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards.

Textbook(s): *myPerspectives ELA Student Edition Grade 12 Volume 1*, ISBN 9780133338836; *myPerspectives ELA Student Edition Grade 12 Volume 2*, ISBN 9780133338843

### Survey of Women's Literature

This course introduces literature by women in America and all over the world. A variety of genres will be covered along with varying historical periods. Students will become acquainted with the contribution of women writers and investigate the nature of their contributions. Students will have opportunities to engage in close reading, short research projects and writing aligned to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards.

Textbook(s): *myPerspectives ELA Student Edition Grade 12 Volume 1*, ISBN 9780133338836; *myPerspectives ELA Student Edition Grade 12 Volume 2*, ISBN 9780133338843

### Survey of African-American Literature 20th Century to Present

This course is a survey of writings by African American authors from the 20th Century to present times. A range of genres will be studied. Students will examine the formal connections of this tradition—how authors work and rework certain styles, techniques, genres, and structures. We will also examine how this tradition explores a diverse body of ideas which nonetheless coalesce around the preoccupations of identity, freedom, mobility, and security. Students will have opportunities to engage in close reading, complete short research projects, and engage in writing linked to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards

Textbook(s): *myPerspectives ELA Student Edition Grade 12 Volume 1*, ISBN 9780133338836; *myPerspectives ELA Student Edition Grade 12 Volume 2*, ISBN 9780133338843

## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

### Latino-American Literature 1

This course is a survey of writings by Latino authors. Students will examine and be challenged to think critically about identity, history and culture through the experiences and portrayals of Latino Americans in literature and nonfiction. Students will have opportunities to engage in close reading, complete short research projects, and engage in writing linked to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. A range of genres will be studied.

Textbook(s): *myPerspectives*, *Elizabeth*, novels

### Latino-American Literature 2

This course is a survey of writings by Latino authors. Students will examine and be challenged to think critically about language, representation and culture as portrayed through the experiences of Latino Americans across a variety of genres and mediums. Students will have opportunities to engage in close reading, complete short research projects, and engage in writing linked to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards.

Textbook(s): *myPerspectives*, *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*, novels

## HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES COURSE OFFERINGS

### Blended Women's Studies

Geography and World Cultures offers a tightly focused and scaffolded curriculum that enables students to explore how geographic features, human relationships, political and social structures, economics, science and technology, and the arts have developed and influenced life in countries around the world. Along the way, students are given rigorous instruction on how to read maps, charts, and graphs, and how to create them.

### Blended African American History

How have African Americans shaped the culture of the United States throughout history? Tracing the accomplishments and obstacles of African Americans from the slave trade through emancipation, and to the modern African diaspora, you will learn about the political, economic, social, religious, and cultural factors that have influenced African American life. In African American History, you'll come face to face with individuals who changed the course of history and learn more about slavery, racism, and the Civil Rights Movement. You will also explore how the history of African Americans influences current events today.

**POTENTIAL  
ADVOCACY  
ORGANIZATIONS**

# LIST & DESCRIPTIONS

\*Student organizations

## **Maryland Student Coalition (MSC)\***

The Maryland Student Coalition (MSC) is a student-run advocacy organization, that is tasked with organizing and representing student issues to the local Boards of Education and the Maryland State Government.

The MSC accepts Associates from all districts in the state, who wish to volunteer and testify on matters that they personally care about. The MSC is also comprised of Member Organizations who work together within MSC to advocate for legislation and education policy.

When a popular (or unpopular) policy is being debated, the Maryland Student Coalition will be on the ground floor gathering public opinion, personally testifying and organizing students from across the state.

## **Maryland State Education Association (MSEA)**

MSEA is the 76,000-member Maryland affiliate of the National Education Association, which represents 3 million education employees across the country. MSEA is the state's largest professional employee organization.

Members include elementary and secondary teachers, education support professionals, certificated specialists, school administrators, retired educators, higher education faculty, and students preparing to become members. MSEA supports 39 local affiliated associations throughout Maryland.

MSEA's 76,000 members are dedicated educators united by a common goal—to provide every student with an education that will lead to a successful and meaningful life.

## **Teachers Association of Baltimore County (TABCO)**

TABCO's political action program includes recommendation for support and campaign assistance for friends of education, legislative lobbying for pro-education laws, and lobbying for education funding. No dues money can be used for political action. A separate voluntary fund called the Fund for Children and Public Education is used.



## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

### **Maryland Youth Advisory Council (MYAC)\***

As a coalition of diverse young advocates and leaders from across the State, the Maryland Youth Advisory Council addresses relevant issues by influencing legislation, spreading public awareness and serving as a liaison between youth and policymakers.

### **Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC)\***

The mission of MASC is to foster a statewide environment for all secondary school students to express and exchange opinions and ideas, develop leadership skills, and promote student representation and involvement in all groups and organizations impacting the lives of students.

### **County Student Councils\*:**

1. Allegany County Association of Student Councils
2. Associated Student Congress of Baltimore City
3. Baltimore County Student Councils
4. Calvert Association of Student Councils
5. Charles County Association of Student Councils
6. Cecil County Council of Student Councils
7. Carroll County Student Government Association
8. Chesapeake Region Association of Student Councils (Anne Arundel County)
9. Dorchester County Association of Student Councils
10. Garrett County Association of Student Councils
11. Harford County Regional Association of Student Councils
12. Howard County Association of Student Councils
13. Kent County Association of Student Governments
14. Montgomery County Junior Councils (middle school)
15. Montgomery County Region of the MD Assoc. of Student Councils
16. Northern Eastern Shore Association of Student Councils (Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline Counties)
17. Prince George's Regional Association of Student Governments
18. Southern Eastern Shore Association of Student Councils (Worcester, Wicomico, Somerset Counties)
19. St. Mary's Association of Student Councils
20. Washington County Association of Student Councils

# **Directors Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jon DiPietro

Position: FAV

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# **TESTIMONY PACKET: (A)**

## **SENATE BILL 116**

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TESTIMONY FROM: MSC Board of Directors



**MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION**

2022 Legislative Session

[marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org)

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Jonathon DiPietro, *Director of the Maryland Student Coalition*  
([marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org))

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Friday, January 27, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. My name is Jon DiPietro, I am a K-12 product of the Howard County Public School System, and a second-semester first-year student at American University. I am writing to you all today as Director of the Maryland Student Coalition.

*The Maryland Student Coalition is an entirely student-led, advocacy group that serves to bring students together to promote education policy reform. Founded in 2020 as a vehicle for advocating for students' right to demonstrate, our scope has since expanded to include more educational advocacy initiatives. You can learn more at [marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org)*

**Background**

This legislation is an addition to §7-205.5 of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland. The general goal of this legislation is to diversify English/Language Arts (“ELA”) curriculum, to include authors with the perspective of various defined demographics. This legislative initiative has been supported by various student groups, representing secondary school students from across the state, and spearheaded by the Maryland Student Coalition.

There are countless examples of comparative legislation, enacted by various state legislatures and several Maryland public school systems. For the record, these include: HB1192-2019 (Colorado); HB7082-2020 (Connecticut); HB 198-2021 (Delaware); 101-0227-2020, SB648-2021 (Illinois); A4454-2021 (Massachusetts); SB739-2013 (Oregon); SB5044-2021 (Washington); HB0076-2018 (Wyoming). This legislation had been passed with support from

both Democratic and Republican-controlled legislatures. Four counties are specifically brought to the fore in terms of policies and resolutions that are either similar or adjacent, to the goals of the DELAC bill. The counties are Baltimore, Harford, Montgomery, and Prince George's.

### **What The Bill Does**

The purpose of this bill is to reform current Maryland State English/Language Arts curricula in grades six through twelve in a cohesive and targeted manner statewide. Specifically, this bill pushes for the mandating of the substantive inclusion of racial minority, LGBT, and woman/gender non-conforming authors in the current literary requirements. This bill also seeks to redress the injustice of decades of underrepresentation of racial minorities, LGBT, and women/gender non-conforming authors in literature and curricula. To further the quality of a Maryland public school education, it is of the utmost importance that English/Language Arts curricula be diversified along the lines of authorial identity in a standardized and consistent manner.

### **Concerns expressed<sup>1</sup>**

*Why does this bill take on race, gender, and sexuality, instead of focusing on a single minority group?*

Race, gender, and sexuality have been selected as the focal points in terms of minority representation for this bill because of their widely recognized importance in influencing perceptions, lived experiences, and societal/institutional interactions. The Yale University Department of History identifies race, gender, and sexuality as “powerful axes of social difference that have structured social hierarchy and inequality, from regimes of slavery and apartheid to legal and cultural criteria for immigration, employment, inheritance, and citizenship.” Moreover, the department identifies these three characteristics as being the most influential sources of self-identity, collective belonging, and social organization both historically and contemporaneously.

*Why is this being set as a state standard as opposed to allowing local Boards of Education to implement this bill?*

Allowing local BOE's to develop this curriculum leaves it up to them to ‘interpret’ this how they see fit, allowing for political biases to permeate literature selection. This bill is not politically motivated but rather socially and statistically motivated: Giving students a more diverse curriculum should not be up for interpretation. Students deserve literature that connects them

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<sup>1</sup> For further detail view our “Legislative Brief On: Diverse ELA Curriculum” at <https://www.marylandstudents.org/our-work/2022-session>

with the current society they are living in where people of color, LGBT people, and gender non-conforming peoples are increaisngly more visible.

*How does this bill follow through on effective implementation?*

This bill will follow the implementation procedures developed by the Maryland State Department of Education for the development and implementation of curriculum changes.

**For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.**

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## TESTIMONY

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** FAVORABLE

**FROM:** Hunter Craig, *Deputy Director of the Maryland Student Coalition*  
([marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org))

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### SB116: Favorable

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

Across the nation, states and local jurisdictions have responded to calls of change by beginning to diversify their schools' English and social science curriculum. This is happening for two reasons; first, to account for the millions of students who have long been part of underrepresented groups in our nation's society and second, to provide all students with a more holistic understanding of the relative subject matter. Studies show that when students are taught real world perspectives, they become well-suited for diverse workplaces, know how to respond in multicultural environments, and most importantly, leave implicit biases behind. Adopting diverse and inclusive content standards into our state English language arts (ELA) curriculum will deliver fair, accurate, and responsive material for our educators to cover during the 180-day school year.

As a K-12 product of Maryland public schools, I know firsthand the potential that lies in broadening our ELA curriculum. I recall from high school that some of the most memorable books we ever read were by authors of underrepresented groups. Two in particular were *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and *Americanah* by Chimamanda Adichie. Unfortunately, most of our current standards revolve around Euro-centric lenses of study. My classmates and I could've been afforded even more enlightening and thought provoking readings if it wasn't for certain content quotas. In short, we need to embrace our contemporary culture and align with the 21st century by diversifying our state's English language arts curriculum.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** SB116 - Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts -  
Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis, Charles County

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Christopher Lidard, *Associate Director of the Maryland Student Coalition*  
([marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org))

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Sunday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee: I am writing in favor of SB 116.

When I was in fifth grade, I participated in an event called “Battle of the Books” - a program partly administered by my school system. I had just barely started to read novels, and all of a sudden I had only a few months to become an expert on the content of 16 of them. One of the books that was placed into my hand was *Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai. A memoir, the book details the author's migration from Vietnam to Alabama after the Fall of Saigon during the Vietnam War. This was the first book I ever read that even began to discuss topics of race and discrimination, and the content stays with me today as a college student. In the book, the author recounts encounters with someone she dubs “pink boy,” a fellow student that embodies the bullying, discrimination, and isolation the author dealt with from white students after her relocation. As a white male who had lived in America his entire life, I realized at that time that I was much closer to the background of “pink boy” than I ever would be to the author. And though I didn’t have the vocabulary to express these concepts at that age, I learned valuable lessons about racism, xenophobia, and the power to hurt others that I possessed as someone with privilege in our society. From that moment on, I was much more aware of ensuring that my role was that of allyship.

Senate Bill 116 ensures that the opportunity to have this experience will be accessible to all public school students. By ensuring that texts in the English Language Arts curriculum are more representative, students will have access to a variety of perspectives in a very uniform way.



While Maryland is a very diverse state, simply being in the presence of diversity does not always enable students to be appreciative of it. Literature, which is often the gateway to complex and gritty subject matters, can provide a deeper look at the background of different identity groups.

Being exposed to literature by a diverse set of authors was an incredibly formative experience for me in building tolerance and inclusion for others. Other students in Maryland need to be provided with similar opportunities.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a **favorable** report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** SB116 - Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts -  
Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis, Charles County

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Vinay Khosla, 42B  
Vinaykhosla13@gmail.com  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition*  
([marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org))

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Friday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

The diversity in curriculum which SB 116 advocates for is not only desirable but necessary. By increasing the authorial diversity of required texts for English Language Arts classes, in turn both representation and inclusivity are affected. The diversification of required texts to include those written by people of color, marginalized gender identities, LGBT people, disabled people and more, students who similarly identify with these groups see a path forward in a world that is not necessarily made for them. But more than just being able to relate to minority authors, these identities are often reflected in the characters and themes of the literature written. Finally, disabled students will get to read a book with a disabled hero; students of color can read a book where someone they can identify with is a CEO; and the list goes on. The diversification of literature not only creates a learning environment that fosters the dreams and aspirations of the many instead of the few, but also allows students of all backgrounds who *don't* identify with authors or characters to broaden their world view and understanding. It has been shown that consistent exposure through literature to characters unlike yourself increases empathy and decreases discriminatory tendencies. In these ways, the diversification of literature must be seen not only as a priority but as a necessity by the state of Maryland.

As a former Baltimore County Public Schools student for thirteen years, I have a commanding understanding on the state of representation in ELA curriculum that can generally be extrapolated across counties bar few. And the state of representation is very poor indeed. Having taken the highest-level English courses offered to me throughout my educational career, I only ever encountered 2 female

authors, 1 Jewish author, 1 Black author, and 1 Hispanic author of substantial required texts. The remainder of required texts I read—and also the vast majority—were written by straight, white men. As a person of color who identifies as gay, I never in my thirteen years of schooling encountered an author or character who I could relate to as a gay man or racial minority. I am unable to speak to whether or not this representation would have made me feel more comfortable in my own skin, but I can say that for me, and many people of color, and many members of the LGBTQ+ community, coming to terms with your identity in predominantly straight or white institutions was a challenge. By diversifying literature from middle school onwards, we as a state can take the crucial and revolutionary steps to cultivating an educational environment that is inclusive not only in name but in practice. Moreover, it is the responsibility of this body and of the state of Maryland to strive for such an environment irrespective of political agenda or affiliation—a responsibility that must be realized.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a **favorable** report on SB 116.

# **SB116 Brief.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jon DiPietro

Position: FAV

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**LEGISLATIVE BRIEF ON:  
SENATE BILL 116**

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*Written By:*

*MSC Senior Associate Group*

*Organized by: Vinay Khosla, Associate Director*

**MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION**

2022 Legislative Session

# MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

## About Our Organization:

The Maryland Student Coalition (MSC) is an advocacy group comprised of secondary and post secondary school students working together to create and advocate for effective and equitable education policy.

### MSC Leadership:

Jonathon T. DiPietro  
*Director*

Hunter P. Craig  
*Deputy Director*

Christopher D. Lidard  
*Associate Director*

Lauren A. Raskin  
*Associate Director*

Vinay K. Khosla  
*Associate Director*

### MSC Senior Associates:

Olivia Le (Anne Arundel County)  
Maja Durkovic (Baltimore County)  
Kyle Abosch (Cecil County)  
Harshia Bhagat (Howard County)  
Neha Dinesh (Howard County)  
Noah Hanssen (Howard County)  
Julia Littlefield (Howard County)  
Chikamara Obioha (Howard County)  
Sidd Shah (Howard County)  
Elani Bui (Montgomery County)  
*Senior Associates*

**marylandstudents.or**

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## Abstract

Curriculum is the structured documents which are used to inform the objectives, assessments principles, resources and more of an educational institution. These core tenants work together to form what we know as the basis of K-12 education. As such, curriculum provides for localities and teachers in guiding students' educational journeys and thus directs the formal learning process for students across the country for 13 years of their life. In recent years, sparked by growing social reform movements, there has been a call by legislators, educators, and most importantly students, for educational reform—for curriculum reform. Mirroring topical social movements, students across the nation are advocating for increasingly diversified curricula that educates students on the perspectives and lived experiences of Americans who exist outside majority demographics. Youth activists all over the country have begun to identify Euro-centrism ingrained in our history and in education itself within the English Language Arts and Social Sciences curricula, especially with minority authors and stories being underrepresented or nonexistent, and minority experiences being erased from historical teachings. As an increasing number of these activists and students find themselves unable to identify with the majority demographics of the United States, their cries for diversity are not only to broaden their non-minority peers' education but also for representation in their educational material. In the United States' and Maryland state education curriculum, there has been a historical lack of minority representation across disciplines and a consistent Euro-centrism which permeates educational material. As a student-led and education advocacy organization, we are seeking to diversify Maryland state English Language Arts curriculum to correct this unacceptable oversight.



# Introduction

Since the development of the first public school in 1821 and with no American national curriculum, curriculum development has been, and still is, the responsibility of individual states and school districts. After the Department of Education was established in 1867, it only took until 1870 for public schools to begin operating in every state, including Maryland<sup>1</sup>. Although the Department of Education “is the agency of the federal government that establishes policy for, administers and coordinates most federal assistance to education,”<sup>2</sup> of the many functions it executes, curriculum development is not, and has never been, one of them. Prior to the establishment of even the federal DoE, Maryland’s first State Board of Education was authorized in 1864, marking the beginning of the formal organization of education in Maryland. For the first time in 1921, under the then-named Bureau of Educational Measurement, the Maryland State Department of Education attempted to establish state-wide standards in the form of curricula. This early Division of Curriculum, Research, Assessment, and Accountability has evolved over the past 100 years into what is now known as the Division of Curriculum, Instructional Improvement and Professional Learning which continues to develop and implement state-wide standards for learning and assessment in the form of curriculum.<sup>3</sup>

In terms of youth impact on policy, such as curriculum, fourteen states have formed Youth Advisory Councils (YACs): North Dakota, New Mexico, Washington, New Hampshire, Alabama, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Nevada, California, New Jersey, and Maryland with several major cities throughout the country establishing their own YACs.<sup>4</sup> These Youth Advisory Councils are typically comprised of high school and college students who advise governors, representatives, and other government officials on youth issues and the youth popular opinion. These issues range from health to safety, and environmental preservation to education among others. In fact, Maryland’s Youth Advisory Council’s 2019-2020 Legislative Program was centered around education focusing on such themes as diversification and equity. A specific education policy goal, the Maryland YAC advocated for additional teaching regarding family life and human sexuality to the end that students of all gender identities, sexualities, and gender expressions were represented.<sup>5</sup> Both outside and inside Maryland, a precedent has been established that youth, and students, should have a substantive role in influencing the development of the curriculum they are in turn being taught. The Maryland YAC itself has been doing so annually since 2008, even with changing legislative agenda focuses.

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<sup>1</sup> Wright, C. (2019, June 9). *History of Education: The United States in a Nutshell*. History of Education in the United States | Educational Tools | LiM.

<sup>2</sup> US Department of Education (ED). (2018, May 14). *An Overview of the U.S. Department of Education-- Page 1*. Home. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/what.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Maryland State Department of Education. (2019, September 25). *Education, Maryland State Department of - Historical Evolution*. Maryland State Department of Education.

<sup>4</sup> Brian. (2019, September 11). *What's a YAC? And Does Your State Have One?* The Civic Educator. <http://civiceducator.org/legislative-youth-advisory-councils/>.

<sup>5</sup> Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services. (2020). (rep.). *Maryland Youth Advisory Council 2019-2020 Annual Report*. Retrieved from <http://goccp.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/Maryland-Youth-Advisory-Council-2019-2020-Annual-Report-2-1.pdf>

## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

Analogous to the Maryland YAC and YACs across the country there is a national push for student voices to be represented in curriculum development. Although this idea of youth involvement in policy such as curriculum development is somewhat modern, with the first YAC not being established until the 21<sup>st</sup> century, states nationwide have embraced such activism. In state legislatures, youth testify on behalf of bills they believe in and in some instances even introduce bills they have helped author. Moreover, the push for increasingly diversified curriculum by youth is not novel either. A number of states have passed laws regarding this very subject matter—bills which were testified on by youth and student advocates.

As of 2019, and again in 2020, New Jersey passed Revised Statutes to their educational policies 18A:35-4.36a. Entitled “*policies, procedures pertaining to inclusive instructional materials*,” the New Jersey bill (A4454) deals with the “instruction on diversity and inclusion” of students from grades kindergarten through twelve. More specifically, the “instruction” the curriculum mandates must address “the impact that unconscious bias and economic disparities have at both an individual level and on society as a whole” with special emphasis on “gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance.” Finally, the law encourages the creation of safe and inclusive environments for students of all races, genders, sexual orientations, ability, and religious affiliation.<sup>6</sup> The New Jersey statute is a prime example of a successful bill with broad support concerning diversity and inclusion instruction being added to existing curriculum.

Illinois legislators and students took a more direct and focused route to revising current education curriculum with the *Inclusive Curriculum Law* (Public Act 101-0227). In this law, which took effect July 2020, public schools are prescribed to “study the roles and contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in the history of Illinois and the United States.” Moreover, the law bans any use of textbooks which discriminate against any protected class under the Illinois Human Rights Act including on the basis of race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation among many others.<sup>7</sup> Like the NJ A4454, Public Act 101-0227 applies to grades kindergarten through twelve though how the content is taught is left to the discretion of individual school districts. Moreover, the law provides for various modifications of instruction based on age and grade-level. Neither NJ A4454 or IL Public Act 101-0227 required a fiscal note demonstrating the feasibility of diversifying curriculum at no cost to the taxpayer.<sup>8</sup>

As early 2013, Oregon passed SB739 which mandated that “in the development of the academic content standards in Oregon Studies” the Oregon Department of Education must consult with the Commissions on Black Affairs, Hispanic Affairs, Indian Affairs, and Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs. The Oregon bill, which took effect in 2014 with bipartisan support, required the consultation of multiple racial and ethnic minority groups in order to present a “balanced representation of the relevant contributions to society by men and women of African-American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian-American and other racial groups in Oregon.” Not incorrectly, the final clause of Oregon’s 2013 SB739 stated “This 2013 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2013 Act takes effect July 1, 2013” in regard to the need for education on historical

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<sup>6</sup> “N.J.S. § 18A:35-4.36a” N.J. Stat. § 18A:35-4.36a

<sup>7</sup> 105 ILCS 5/2-3.155; 105 ILCS 5/27-21. Public Act 101-0227

<sup>8</sup> Magdaleno, G. (n.d.). *Inclusive Curriculum Law Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)*.

## DIVERSE CURRICULUM INITIATIVE

minority contributions.<sup>9</sup> The Oregon law is also a perfect example of how minority stakeholder groups should be included in the influencing of curriculum mirroring new monuments led by students across the country who are pushing for representation in both the writing, and content, of curricula. Both the Illinois Public Act 101-0227 and Oregon SB739 represent increasingly narrow and focused bills in regard to diversifying curriculum with Illinois's focusing on a single underrepresented demographic and Oregon's requiring conferencing with multiple representative groups prior to curriculum establishment.

In a final reference to particularly relevant case law, in 2021 Massachusetts State Delegate Pignatelli introduced “*an Act establishing a cultural diversity curriculum in Massachusetts public schools*” (HD.4112) which required the establishment of a “cultural diversity curriculum to be implemented in elementary and secondary schools.” HD.4112 aims specifically to educate students on “diverse world cultures, heritages, and backgrounds” and touches on highlighting the diverse stories and backgrounds of those who shaped both American and Massachusetts history.<sup>10</sup> Following the pattern set by the aforementioned states, HD.4112 does not have a fiscal note and mandates these standards be set in grades kindergarten through twelve. The Massachusetts bill HD.4112 also joins NJ A4454 in being a broad policy mandate for the implementation of diversity with no specifics allotted by the bill.

These, however, are not the only states in which students and legislators find themselves fighting to expand diversity in curriculum. Currently 13 other states also have pending legislation that deals with expanding education curriculum on racism, bias, and/or the contributions of specific racial or ethnic groups to United States history and related topics. These states include: Washington, California, Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Louisiana, Minnesota, New York, Connecticut, Maine, and Delaware.<sup>11</sup> Colorado most notably is revisiting state curriculum standards (cross-filed as SB 21-067 and HB 19-1192) to include the history and contributions of people of color, religious minorities, and LGBTQ people. In terms of mandating LGBTQ+ curriculum in any manner, currently 5 states do so: California, New Jersey, Colorado, Oregon, and Illinois.<sup>12</sup>

The independent development of curriculum by the 1619 Project regarding the history of Black people in America as well as their contributions to the founding of our nation and democracy emphasizes both the lack of, and need for, increasingly diversified curricula that brings similar stories and experiences to students' attention.<sup>13</sup> Currently, there is no Maryland State standard that regulates the identities of authors of English Language Arts reading material, a necessity which is exacerbated by the increasing number of students who identify with one or more minority identities. The State of Maryland and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) *must* fulfill their responsibilities to Maryland's students by mandating that historically marginalized groups such as racial minorities', female and gender non-conforming peoples', and

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<sup>9</sup> Or. Rev. Stat. § 329.492 (2013). SB739

<sup>10</sup> Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 71, § 98 (2021). HD.4112

<sup>11</sup> Stout, C., & LeMee, G. L. M. (2021, July 22). *CRT Map: Efforts to Restrict Teaching About Racism, Bias Have Multiplied*. Chalkbeat. <https://www.chalkbeat.org/22525983/map-critical-race-theory-legislation-teaching-racism>.

<sup>12</sup> Walker, H. (2019, August 16). *Here's Every State That Requires Schools to Teach LGBTQ+ History*. OUT. <https://www.out.com/news/2019/8/16/heres-every-state-requires-schools-teach-lgbtq-history>.

<sup>13</sup> The Pulitzer Center. (n.d.). *The 1619 Project Curriculum*. Pulitzer Center. <https://pulitzercenter.org/lesson-plan-grouping/1619-project-curriculum>.

## **MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION**

LGBT peoples' voices are formally introduced into the classroom through English Language Arts literature requirements.

**COMMON  
QUESTIONS**

## Marginalized Demographics; Scope

*What is the basis for the mandating of 50% of literature be written by a racial minority, female/gender non-conforming person, or LGBT community member?*

The 2020 Census Bureau<sup>14</sup> which notes the proportion of Maryland residents who are non-white to be 51.4% thus students should be reading material that is reflective of the makeup of the society with which they interact. Research<sup>15</sup> famously used in the Brown v. Board of Education (1954) Supreme Court case of the Civil Rights Movement notes that children as young as 3 to 7 years old internalize harmful beliefs about their race or ethnicity. Replicated studies<sup>16</sup> conclude that fiction reading in which the reader connects on an emotional level with the main character generally results in higher scores on measurements of empathy. On the one hand, studying literature reflective of one's larger community empowers an individual to engage with their lived and diverse reality. On the other hand, studying literature reflective of a personal experience that is unique to an underrepresented demographic engages a reader and piques their interest academically, while affirming a lived experience as valuable and significant.

*Why should schools implement such standards if the reformed literature authors are not reflective of the school's makeup?*

Regardless of the school, the student population will shortly enter the larger United States, where the 50% will be reflective of the US population under 18 in 2021.<sup>17</sup> Students who are exposed to a wealth of human experiences will be empowered and more informed, in comparison to their graduating peers who did not study diverse literature. Students who never need to discuss the racial considerations of their society and environment will be unequipped to be empowered scholars well-versed in the matters of state. Meanwhile those students exposed to diverse experiences and perspectives through their educationally-required literature will be thoroughly prepared for their ventures daily into a vast and diverse interpersonal world.

*Why does this bill take on race, gender, and sexuality, instead of focusing on a single minority group?*

Race, gender, and sexuality have been selected as the focal points in terms of minority representation for this bill because of their widely recognized importance in influencing perceptions, lived experiences, and societal/institutional interactions. The Yale University Department of History identifies race, gender, and sexuality as “powerful axes of social difference that have structured social hierarchy and inequality, from regimes of slavery and apartheid to legal and cultural criteria for immigration, employment, inheritance, and

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<sup>14</sup><https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/race-and-ethnicity-in-the-united-state-2010-and-2020-census.html>

<sup>15</sup> <https://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnn/2010/images/05/13/doll.study.1947.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <https://english.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/zunshineTheory%20of%20Narrative%20Empathy.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2019/estimates-characteristics.html>

## DIVERSE CURRICULUM INITIATIVE

citizenship.”<sup>18</sup> Moreover, the department identifies these three characteristics as being the most influential sources of self-identity, collective belonging, and social organization both historically and contemporaneously.

*Why does this bill only focus on race, gender, and sexuality and disclude religious minorities and disabled persons, among others?*

This bill focuses on these three aspects of identity due to their widely recognized importance in shaping lived experience. It would be remiss to say other groups such as disabled persons and religious minorities do not also face similar challenges as a result of their identity to persons falling under the three classifications set forth in this bill. However, in order to ignite a conversation and affect reform in regard to representation in literature, these three classifications have been selected for initial focus. This bill is intended to serve as the outset for increasingly diversified literature in Maryland public schools that will eventually also include disabled persons and religious minorities by formal statute.

*Why was English Language Arts curricula chosen to be reformed as opposed to social science curricula?*

English Language Arts courses have been ruled by classics for decades. In fact, it has “...been more than 50 years since literacy experts first stressed the need for more diverse books in the classroom, and yet reading lists look surprisingly the same as they did in 1970.”<sup>19</sup> As our student population that identifies as people of color and members of the LGBTQ community is continually increasing, the need for representation in the books they read also becomes more prevalent. Diversifying authors in our English Language Arts classes allows for minority perspectives to be shared in many fashions that are not just limited to historical texts. LGBTQ and POC stories do not just exist in history, they exist around us, and in many of our students. Moreover, English Language Arts curricula also allows for critical analysis of the ways in which different identities and backgrounds influence not only authors' works but the world around them.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://history.yale.edu/undergraduate/regions-and-pathways/race-gender-and-sexuality>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/ed/19/08/hooked-classics>

# Racial Minority Author Requirement

*Is this bill discriminatory against majority demographics?*

While some people may view this bill as discriminatory against the majority, its goal is to broaden educational horizons and empower minority students through representation in assigned educational literature. According to the recently completed US Census<sup>20</sup>, the white population continues to be the largest in the United States; however, the population has decreased by 8.6% since 2010, making history as the first time the United States has had a declining white population. Meanwhile the multiracial population of the United States has increased a staggering 276% in the same time frame. The rate of growth of racial minorities shows that America must make a change in its educational diversity due to its everincreasing population of non-white citizens. Without change, the minority will continue to be extremely underrepresented. Similar arguments can be made for rapidly increasing populations of gender non-conforming people as well as the growing LGBT community. This bill leaves 50% of educational literature untouched for majority demographics in terms of race and sexuality while dividing up the remaining 50% among a number of minority populations meaning the “majority demographic” is in no way being marginalized by this bill’s provisions.

*Is discussion of identity, and differences along racial lines, discriminatory?*

The discussion of identity and the differences along racial lines is not discriminatory. This discussion is a necessity in order to continue the diversification of public school curriculum. Along with allowing students that identify with racial minorities to be recognized in curriculum, discussions of differences along racial lines promotes a deeper understanding of the systemic biases that exist due to the history of racism. Critical Race Theory (CRT), a term coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, is an element of education which “recognizes that race intersects with other identities, including sexuality, gender identity, and others.<sup>21</sup> CRT recognizes that racism is not a bygone relic of the past. Instead, it acknowledges that the legacy of slavery, segregation, and the imposition of second-class citizenship on Black Americans and other people of color continue to permeate the social fabric of this nation.” That being said, this bill is not advocating for the formal or informal instruction of Critical Race Theory.

*Is this bill or its contents reminiscent of Critical Race Theory (CRT)?*

No. This bill does not advocate for the teaching of Critical Race Theory in any way. Critical Race Theory, or CRT, is according to the American Bar Association, a theory which “critiques how the social construction of race and institutionalized racism perpetuate a racial caste system that relegates people of color to the bottom tiers.” Moreover, CRT acknowledges the present forces of racism and racial bias and how these forces continue to influence our nation. Critical Race Theory is, in fact, a legal term which grew from Critical Legal Studies, a train of thought which “argued law was not objective or apolitical” and could be maintaining systems of injustice. While CRT makes the claim that education “excludes the history and lived experiences

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/population-changes-nations-diversity.html>

<sup>21</sup> [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human\\_rights\\_magazine\\_home/civil-rights-reimagining-police/a-lesson-on-critical-race-theory/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/civil-rights-reimagining-police/a-lesson-on-critical-race-theory/)



## DIVERSE CURRICULUM INITIATIVE

of Americans of color,”<sup>22</sup> which this bill seeks to redress, this bill is not advocating for the teaching of Critical Race Theory in Maryland public schools. Instead, this bill is simply vying for more diverse authors to be introduced into the English Language Arts curriculum. These books can deal with a variety of topics, which will ultimately be at the Maryland State Department of Education’s discretion and will be written by not only racial minorities but also LGBT people, gender non-conforming people, and women.

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<sup>22</sup>[https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human\\_rights\\_magazine\\_home/civil-rights-reimagining-police/a-lesson-on-critical-race-theory/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/civil-rights-reimagining-police/a-lesson-on-critical-race-theory/)

# Women and Gender Non-Conforming Author Requirement

*Why are women and gender non-conforming authors grouped together, rather than transgender and gender non-conforming authors grouped together into a distinct category?*

The distinction between LGBT and gender non-conforming within this bill's three classifications is made for a number of reasons. Firstly, the inclusion of women authors is a critical tenet of this bill. A mandating of female authors within Maryland English Language Arts curriculum is currently not in place and individual counties apply their own diversity requirement regarding author's genders inconsistently at the very best. Based on the zoned county of a particular student, said student may only read a single book by a female author during their secondary educational career. This is unacceptable. The second reason for this grouping methodology is that transgender people are not gender-nonconforming under this bill's definitions. Transgender men and women are valid men and women and therefore identify with one of these sexes. However, transgender men and women have unique experiences and identities which greatly influence their writings and life and are therefore included under the LGBT umbrella. Meanwhile, the gender non-conforming identification is used to increase representation for genders outside the typical binary such as non-binary and agender peoples.<sup>23</sup> Thus, the aim of this bill's current classification methodology is to distinguish between underrepresented gender identities and underrepresented sexual identities in order to increase representation for both groups in English Language Arts curriculum literature.

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.apa.org/topics/lgbtq/transgender>

## LGBT Author Requirement

*How can you make sure lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender authors are considered equally?*

GLSEN reported that introducing an LGBT inclusive curriculum in school can increase classmate acceptance by 82%.<sup>24</sup> By making sure that students are exposed to a wide variety of books that highlight the struggles of the LGBT community, along with literature that is written by LGBT authors who express their identity, students are benefited positively in a number of ways. That being said, no one identity under the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) umbrella is more or less important than another in terms of representation. It is because of this fact that this bill provides for the “equal consideration in literature selection” of each of the four LGBT identities in clause II.B.3.a.1.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.glsen.org/research/2015-national-school-climate-survey>

# Intersectional Text Requirement

*What is the purpose of the intersectional text requirement?*

Diversity itself in literature is of paramount importance when it comes to educating Maryland students. However, the similar importance of gaining an understanding of intersectionality, and intersectional identities, and their role in shaping lived experiences, literature, and more also cannot be understated. The DICE Lab at Northwestern University argues that “in order to effectively study identity, the intersectionality framework is critical, as it encourages us to conceptualize how larger systems of power, privilege, and oppression intersect with social categories, like race, class, gender, and sexuality.”<sup>25</sup> Thus, in order to effectively implement authorial diversity it is an important provision of this bill to include at least one text which was written by an author with intersecting minority identities.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://sites.northwestern.edu/thedicelab/ilit/>

# Contemporary Literature Requirement

*How will local Boards of Education be directed to develop curriculums that are “contemporary in nature”?*

Based on this bill’s definition of contemporary, contemporary texts are those which are not written more than twenty years before the date of instruction. By using contemporary texts as required literature in English Language Arts curricula, the curricula itself becomes contemporary in nature. Although not all literature which falls under this bill’s “50%” quota must be contemporary, MSDE is urged to develop model curricula and guidelines for Local Boards of Education that include contemporary literature options. Local Boards of Education thus will not bear this burden individually but will be aided by MSDE in developing curricula that follows the guidelines set forth in this bill.

*Why should a curriculum be “contemporary in nature”?*

Contemporary literature reflects current social, political, and topical issues, allowing students to develop an understanding of the modern world and how the events of the past and present influence the status quo. These topics in turn spark conversation about political and philosophical issues within the classroom. Furthermore, contemporary literature promotes realism, which helps students understand the modern-day struggles that people, namely minorities, around the world face. This change in curriculum would improve the curriculum’s diversity, as much of Maryland’s curriculum currently consists of “classic” literature. Moreover, the study of contemporary literature would boost students’ interest in their assigned texts, as contemporary literature connects to the modern world and to social justice issues.

*Does the mandate for contemporary literature overly restrict BOEs?*

No. Contemporary literature is an extremely diverse genre, and thus choosing from the wide array of modern and social-justice-focused literature should be relatively easy for each county’s BOE. By nature, contemporary literature is more diverse than classical texts in terms of authorial identity, which simplifies the process of local BOEs choosing literature to fulfill the requirements set by this bill. This provision encourages a fair balance between classical and contemporary texts in the ELA curriculum, which promotes the importance of modern-day social issues and minority experiences mentioned in popular contemporary literature. Individual BOEs still have complete autonomy over which texts in particular they choose to include in their curriculum, so long as those texts meet the requirements set by this bill’s provisions.

*How much text would be contemporary?*

Per this bill, there is no required amount, or percentage, of the diversified curriculum that need be contemporaneous. This bill merely urges the State Department of Education and local Boards of Education to develop curricula which are sufficiently contemporary in nature. This is provided for in clause II.A.1 which reads “directs local Boards of Education to develop curriculum that contains texts that are contemporary in nature.”

# Implementation

*What will happen to higher-level courses (Advanced Placement & International Baccalaureate) where curriculums are set by independent organizations?*

Both Advanced Placement (AP)<sup>26,27</sup> and International Baccalaureate (IB)<sup>28</sup> set their own curriculums for districts, educational institutions, and educators to use for higher-level instruction. However, in the five courses that encompass all English, Language Arts, and Literature study options between the two programs, no specific literature is required by either. In AP courses certain skills are expected to be taught and learned and in IB the same, with a required number of texts based on whether the course is being taken as a Standard Level (SL) or Higher Level (HL). This lack of specifically mandated literature leaves room for districts to still effectively implement the guidelines set forth in this bill.

*Will there be support for teachers to aid them in selecting books relevant to their class that meet this requirement?*

This bill will include in its provisions a requirement that the Maryland State Department of Education will create resources “to assist and guide curricula in identifying unit themes that incorporate similarities in experience” as well as “to assist and guide curricula and teacher regulations.” These provisions are in place specifically to ensure a smooth transition, which isn’t to be implemented until the 2025-2026 academic year, for teachers.

*How does this bill follow through on effective implementation?*

This bill will follow the implementation procedures developed by the Maryland State Department of Education for the development and implementation of curriculum changes. This process loosely follows the process delineated below:

During the implementation period, teachers will have the ability to take the time to create plans and update their course to incorporate the bill. They will have the time to familiarize themselves with new literature, and slowly incorporate their plans into the classroom. This period will be determined based on feedback from teachers, and more information. More importantly, the state will provide a list of recommended literature that teachers can use, templates of lessons, and helpful documents and resources that will make the process smoother for the teachers. State ensures that by the end of the implementation period, teachers have been able to incorporate new books. Specific problem areas within the curriculum will be addressed and reformatory steps will be taken to redress any educational institutions which refuse to properly and wholly implement said curriculum.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-english-language-and-composition>

<sup>27</sup> <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-english-literature-and-composition>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/language-and-literature/>

## DIVERSE CURRICULUM INITIATIVE

*Does this bill overstep teachers' autonomy over their own curriculum/content?*

No, it does not. For English teachers in all counties, the nature of curricula itself is flexible. Educators currently have the ability to choose which texts they teach (from a list of approved literature), and how they teach it. By introducing specific criteria for a percentage of these texts, educators still have the discretion in choosing what they teach, and they have full freedom in choosing the rest of their classes' "traditional" texts. On top of this, other topics within English (rhetoric, analysis, writing) are not text-specific, and all these things can be taught with any academic material that possesses literary merit. For AP English classes, for example, while it is in the curriculum that the educator must teach things like formulating an argument and writing a thesis, there are no specific books mandated or required by the curriculum. As CollegeBoard states, "For each unit, the teacher selects a theme or topic and then chooses texts, typically short nonfiction pieces, that enable students to practice and develop the reading and writing skills for that unit." Educators' flexibility within the curriculum will still exist, and the content that they teach will be at their discretion, sourced from a collection of approved texts.

*How are teachers expected to change their lessons and planning and adapt to the new literature if they are not familiar with it?*

Although the 50% of ELA literature will be "changing" the majority of lessons will remain unchanged, even if the literature being read is different, as the analytical, comprehension, and writing skills being taught are not text-dependent. Regardless, teachers will be fully supported in the process of implementation and lesson planning as educators across Maryland will be provided with a list of recommended books that fit the diversity requirement provided for in this bill, based on courses that they may teach. This can aid educators in deciding what specific texts will work best for their courses and students. With that being said, as with any new curriculum implementation, there will be a period where the teachers can work on developing plans for new literature while also familiarizing themselves with a variety of texts they may not be versed in. With such measures and more put in place by MSDE, teachers will be more than prepared to begin teaching a far more diverse curriculum by the 2025-2026 academic year.

## Middle School Considerations

*Why are these requirements instituted beginning in Middle School (G6-8)?*

There is ample research that racial biases can begin and take hold at an earlier age than Middle School. Research shows that children can become cognizant of their race by the age of five,<sup>29,30</sup> and additional research seems to indicate that racial bias is a part of this understanding of race.<sup>31</sup> While it is true that Elementary School would be an ample time to include diverse literature and work on preventing negative racial bias, the curriculum of Elementary School requires a different approach from Middle and High School. Elementary School English has a heavy emphasis on teaching the fundamentals of English, primarily of learning to read and communicate, whereas Middle and High School share far more similarities in how it approaches requiring literature, honing grammar, and improving writing. Research done by Celestial Zaldana from Claremont McKenna College<sup>32</sup> has indicated that there are positive results of engaging with diverse literature in that it can improve the self esteem of students of different ethnic backgrounds to read works that they can see themselves in.<sup>33</sup> While this study was conducted on High Schoolers, there is little evidence to indicate the benefits found would not apply to Middle Schoolers.

*Is middle school (G6-8) too early to be learning about topics concerning sexuality?*

Within the current middle school health and wellness curriculum, students are expected to begin sex education, learning about both the human body, puberty, sexual attraction, sex itself, and safe sex. Sexuality both heterosexual, homosexual and beyond are included in middle school health classes as early as sixth grade. Moreover, romance and sexual content are already included in literature taught to middle school students, in texts such as *Romeo and Juliet* and more. Thus works that are written by authors who identify with minority sexualities and/or which have characters that identify with minority sexualities would not be presenting foreign ideas to students but rather presenting a holistic teaching and understanding of minority populations. The same goes for minority gender identities and expressions.

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<sup>29</sup> <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1940-01472-001>

<sup>30</sup> [http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnn/2010/images/05/13/expanded\\_results\\_methods\\_cnn.pdf](http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnn/2010/images/05/13/expanded_results_methods_cnn.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/desc.12788>

<sup>32</sup> [https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1065&context=cmc\\_theses](https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1065&context=cmc_theses)

<sup>33</sup> <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/diversity-schools-must-include-curriculum/?agreed=1>



## Translated Texts

*If books are translated, how will students and educators address such mistranslations?*

Teaching translated works in the classroom is a great opportunity to expose students to different world views and perspectives. The translation process for foreign texts is meticulous and detail oriented, with attention paid to every word in order to make the book equally as valuable for English language audiences. The concern that concepts may be “lost in translation” is reductive of the time spent by translators in preparing the book for global readers. In fact, students are already reading translated works in the classroom such as *Cinderella*, *The Little Prince*, *The Alchemist*, and *The Odyssey*. That being said, MSDE will develop curricula that is holistic in its understanding of translated texts and provide teachers with the relevant materials to educate students on possible errors and their significance in translated texts.

## Enforceability

*How can you prevent efforts to meet the 50% quota resulting in the choice of less relevant and meaningful texts?*

The intent behind this bill is to broaden the selection process for choosing literature in the classroom to better reflect all students. The statewide mandate will create a support system for teachers in selecting diverse literature, in addition to the numerous resources available online. Thus, teachers should not feel overwhelmed and isolated in finding diverse titles. Just like with any text used in the classroom, the teacher is responsible for the lesson plan but is able to refer to curricula guidelines and recommendations set by MSDE and their individual counties: the strength and impact of the book is dependent on the way it is taught. Furthermore, since MSDE will be developing this curricula with due diligence, in accordance with the provisions set forth in this bill, no local BOE will be empowered to require texts with no educational value.

## Formulation and Development

*How will approved books be decided upon? Who will decide upon them?*

It is entirely up to the teachers on which books they choose to teach on for the unit that are *approved* by their respective school districts. There is a wide spectrum of LGBTQ and POC novels that deal with similar subject matter, but this does not substantially affect the objectives being taught. Should a teacher feel more comfortable in their ability to teach one book over another they have every right to choose that book if approved by their school board of education.<sup>34</sup> In fact, the Rhode Island Department of Education ‘The Right to Read Act’ requires Rhode Island Schools to provide a reading curriculum that provides students with access to all texts<sup>35</sup> regardless of which text is ultimately chosen by the teacher. Although the county will decide upon a collection of literature that is approved for teaching, specific book selection from this collection is at the educator’s discretion. This collection of literature decided upon by the county will meet the provisions of this bill. By giving teachers the tools they need to provide students with reading material that aligns with their current society allows students to understand the world around them.

*What will happen to the “classic” literature taught in schools currently that has been chosen specifically by counties and teachers?*

Commonly, teachers choose literature that they are comfortable with. In our ever changing society, being uncomfortable and learning from unique perspectives empowers students to grow. “Classics are still important to read and analyze and be studied, but there is a very skewed, Eurocentric lens that is portrayed amongst the books considered to be classics,”<sup>36</sup> Ceci Gao, a University of California Berkeley student, says. Diversifying 50% of the literature students are taught each year leaves plenty of room for the ‘classics’ to still be taught. This bill is not advocating for the removal of ‘classic literature’ rather for the expansion of the content and perspectives literature is coming from. Students describe classical literature as “bland and ineffective” when asked if they understand the perspectives of such literature. To form an inclusive environment students need to be exposed to literature which validates their struggles and/or personality that is often resultant of race, sexuality, or gender identity. Moreover, POC and LGBT authors have a more authentic perspective on these topics because of personal lived experiences, thus making literature written by these people more impactful to teens.<sup>37</sup>

*Why is this being set as a state standard as opposed to allowing local BOEs to implement this bill?*

Allowing local BOE’s to develop this curriculum leaves it up to them to ‘interpret’ this how they see fit, allowing for political biases to permeate literature selection. This bill is not politically motivated but rather socially and statistically motivated: Giving students a more diverse curriculum should not be up for interpretation. Students deserve literature that connects them

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<sup>34</sup> <https://saratogafalcon.org/content/how-books-are-chosen-english-classes/>

<sup>35</sup> <https://ncte.org/statement/righttoreadguideline/>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.stanforddaily.com/2020/08/30/do-we-still-need-to-read-and-teach-the-classics/>

<sup>37</sup> <https://meridian.allenpress.com/her/article-abstract/88/4/538/32324/Critical-Canon-Pedagogy-Applying-Disciplinary?redirectedFrom=fulltext> , <https://www.news.iastate.edu/news/2019/01/29/classics>

## **MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION**

with the current society they are living in where people of color, LGBT people, and gender non-conforming peoples are increaisngly more visible.

## Cultural Sensitivity and Wellbeing Clause

*How are teachers expected to hold conversations, if they themselves are not a part of the marginalized group of people the book is addressing/written by?*

MSDE will provide teachers with the resources and provisions to guide conversations, connect different themes throughout the different units and topics, as well as the skills to ensure all information presented and discussed is culturally and mentally sensitive and considerate. Additionally, should they need more materials, teachers can utilize the Internet to look online for resources to educate and guide them through a discussion when they are unfamiliar with a marginalized group.<sup>38</sup> Through such research, they may be able to find a list of comprehensive questions about the book/topic, gain a better understanding of a time period or struggle. Finally, teachers can even turn to their students and listen to their personal experiences and thoughts on the topic when appropriate.

*What does “being sensitive to student cultural and mental wellbeing” mean or indicate?*

Since this bill aims to increase literature by minority identity authors along the lines of race, gender, and sexuality, additional considerations come with such an aim. In terms of cultural sensitivity and student wellbeing it is crucial to be cognizant of the fact that many minority identity authors often discuss topics, either implicitly or explicitly, within their works that students may find traumatic or triggering based on personal or cultural experience. Such topics may include, but are not limited to: racism, homophobia, historical and modern violence, use of slurs, etc. It is clear that as a result the state needs to provide accommodations for students who might be adversely affected by an increase in literature by minority authors due to the reasons aforementioned. As such, MSDE will create provisions for such accommodations per clause IV of this bill which reads “MSDE will create provisions and resources to assist and guide curricula and teacher regulations in being sensitive to student cultural and mental wellbeing when learning about marginalized groups.”

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<sup>38</sup><https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/opinion-how-can-white-teachers-teach-black-history-six-things-you-need-to-know/2021/02>

# Relevance

*What would be the positive impacts of the bill?*

The 2019 Diversity in Children’s and Young Adult Literature report run by the Cooperative Children’s Book Center found that 41.8% of characters in children and young adult books are white with only 3.1% of characters being part of the LGBTQIA+ community and 3.4% being disabled.<sup>39</sup> By enforcing that 50% of educational literature is written by the minority groups outlined in this bill, it allows students to recognize character(s) like themselves, making them feel noticed and accepted, as well as introducing other students to varying cultures and experiences at an early age. As previously stated, Research done by Celestial Zaldana from Claremont McKenna College<sup>40</sup> has indicated that there are positive results of engaging with diverse literature in that it can improve the self esteem of students of different ethnic backgrounds to read works that they can see themselves in.<sup>41</sup>

*Is a book diverse just because its author is a racial minority? What do students gain from these authors having diverse backgrounds?*

The Oxford Dictionary defines diverse as “including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc.” Using this definition, it is clear that diversity is not just regarding race, but also sexual orientation, gender identity, etc. By reading literature from diverse backgrounds students will possess cultural sensitivity, become more aware of social practices, and will gain inclusive beliefs. For example, according to GLSEN<sup>42</sup>, introducing an LGBTQ inclusive curriculum in school can increase classmate acceptance by 82%. By making sure that students are exposed to a wide variety of books that highlight the struggles of marginalized communities, along with literature that is written by underrepresented authors who express their identity, students retain information from authors with varying identities and backgrounds. Analyzing literature in schools is crucial to affecting inclusiveness, which can simultaneously increase the exposure of underrepresented authors.

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<sup>39</sup>Tyner, Madeline. “The Numbers Are In: 2019 CCBC Diversity Statistics.” CCBlogC, Cooperative Children's Book Center, 16 June 2020

<sup>40</sup> [https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1065&context=cmc\\_theses](https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1065&context=cmc_theses)

<sup>41</sup> <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/diversity-schools-must-include-curriculum/?agreed=1>

<sup>42</sup><https://www.glsen.org/research/2015-national-school-climate-survey>

## Why This Concerns The State

The purpose of this bill is to reform current Maryland State English/Language Arts curricula in grades six through twelve in a cohesive and targeted manner statewide. Specifically, this bill pushes for the mandating of the substantive inclusion of racial minority, LGBT, and woman/gender non-conforming authors in the current literary requirements. Maryland students *must* be prepared to enter a workforce, environment, and world that is increasingly diverse along the lines of race, gender, and sexuality, among other classifications. Part of preparing Maryland students for such a future is introducing them to a broad and diverse array of perspectives through the literature they read, engage with, analyze, and are assessed on.

However, this bill also seeks to redress the injustice of decades of underrepresentation of racial minorities, LGBT, and women/gender non-conforming authors in literature and curricula. This lack of representation and visibility is not only damaging to these communities but also minority students who find themselves unable to identify with the characters they are made to analyze, and the authors whose books they have to read. Increasing inclusivity in literature increases minority student comfort in the classroom while also broadening the minds and perspectives of the entire student body.

Nationwide there have been cries by students, of all backgrounds, for increasingly diversified literature and curricula in public education. This cause has also been taken up by students across Maryland including several counties' Student Member of the Board (SMOBs). While some counties in Maryland could be deemed more progressive, there are others which remain stagnant on the topic of curriculum reform and diversification. As a select few counties incorporate diversified curricula in the form of LGBTQ+ History courses, or diverse literature, others take little to no action in the same direction. Although this fact is entrenched in political and social views, the issue of the education of Maryland's students is not a political one. The application of such curriculum reform cannot be an inconsistent patchwork as it is now; rather students should be exposed to a breadth of perspectives and authorial backgrounds *irrespective* of what district they reside in. Quality diverse education cannot become a commodity accessible to the few.

To further the quality of a Maryland public school education, it is of the utmost importance that English/Language Arts curricula be diversified along the lines of authorial identity in a standardized and consistent manner. Thus, it is to this end that we the students of the State of Maryland advocate that the State of Maryland take the following actions:

1. Recognize that the educational institutions of the State of Maryland should strive to highlight and promote diversity not only in their student populations but also in their curricula
2. Recognize the importance of increasing the visibility of marginalized groups including racial minorities, LGBT persons, and women/gender non-conforming peoples
3. Encourage or compell the Maryland State Department of Education and local Boards of Education to diversify English/Language Arts curricula through the introduction of required literature written by underrepresented authors

## MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

4. Recognize the above is necessary for adequately preparing students of all backgrounds for their futures and for adequately providing imperative representation



**SUPPORTING  
DOCUMENTS**

## Major Points

The Maryland Student Coalition Senior Associates and relevant student leadership propose a state bill that sets uniform regulations for all Maryland educational jurisdictions to diversify English/Language Arts curriculum through the inclusion of underrepresented authors. While these jurisdictions and the state may extend or complement these regulations, this bill is intended to set comprehensive requirements that ensure the necessary diversification of curricula.

The Bill Must:

1. Be enforced at the state level with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) developing and enforcing the standards set by the bill
2. Outline regulations which provide for the diversification of English/Language Arts curricula along the lines of race, gender, and sexuality in terms of the identity of required literary texts
  - a. These regulations must be implemented all levels of Maryland secondary educational institutions
    - i. 50% of required texts should be by racial minorities, women or gender non-conforming persons, and LGBT persons
    - ii. Each of these classifications are given equal consideration in curriculum development
3. Direct local Boards of Education to develop curricula in accordance with specific regulations
  - a. Local Boards of Education should develop curricula that contain texts which are contemporary in nature
  - b. Local Boards of Education to incorporate at least one text written by an author who identifies with more than one of the three marginalized identity classifications set forth by the bill
4. Direct the Maryland State Department of Education to create provisions and resources to assist and guide curricula and teacher regulations in being sensitive to student cultural and mental wellbeing when learning about marginalized groups

# Draft Language

Article – Education

7–205.5. 24

(A) (1) On Or Before December 1, 2022, The State Board Shall Develop Content Standards For Inclusive State Standards and Frameworks In English and Language Arts.

(2) The Content Standards For Inclusive Curriculum Shall:

(1) highlight and promote diversity, including economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging.

(2) examine the impact that unconscious bias and economic disparities have at both an individual level and on society as a whole; and

(3) encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical disabilities, and religious beliefs.

(B) Each County Board Shall Develop And Implement Age–appropriate Curriculum Guides For English and Language Arts Subject To The Content Standards Established Under Subsection (A) Of 18 This Section.

(C) The State Board May Adopt Regulations To Implement The Requirements Of This Section. Section And Be It Further Enacted

That, on or before December 1, 25 2022, the State Department of Education shall report to the General Assembly, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, on content standards for inclusive language included in the State Standards and Frameworks in English and Language Arts of the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards, including the content standards for each grade level.

Section 3.

AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That This Act Shall Take Effect July 1, 2022.

**END OF  
DOCUMENT**

**CONTACT:**  
[marylandstudentcoalition@gmail.com](mailto:marylandstudentcoalition@gmail.com)

# **SB116 Explanation.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jon DiPietro

Position: FAV

# MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

*JON DIPIETRO, DIRECTOR  
HUNTER CRAIG, DEPUTY DIRECTOR*

*CHRIS LIDARD, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR  
LAUREN RASKIN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR  
VINAY KHOSLA, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR*

## WHY THE MSC SUPPORTS: SENATE BILL 116 - 2022

- 1.** The purpose of this bill is to reform current Maryland State English/Language Arts curricula in grades six through twelve in a cohesive and targeted manner statewide. Specifically, this bill pushes for the mandating of the substantive inclusion of racial minority, LGBT, and woman/gender non-conforming authors in the current literary requirements. Maryland students must be prepared to enter a workforce, environment, and world that is increasingly diverse along the lines of race, gender, and sexuality, among other classifications. Part of preparing Maryland students for such a future is introducing them to a broad and diverse array of perspectives through the literature they read, engage with, analyze, and are assessed on.
- 2.** This bill also seeks to redress the injustice of decades of underrepresentation of racial minorities, LGBT, and women/gender non-conforming authors in literature and curricula. This lack of representation and visibility is not only damaging to these communities but also minority students who find themselves unable to identify with the characters they are made to analyze and the authors whose books they have to read. Increasing inclusivity in literature increases minority student comfort in the classroom while also broadening the minds and perspectives of the entire student body.
- 3.** Nationwide there have been cries by students, of all backgrounds, for increasingly diversified literature and curricula in public education. This cause has also been taken up by students across Maryland including several counties' Student Members of the Board (SMOBs). While some counties in Maryland could be deemed more progressive, there are others that remain stagnant on the topic of curriculum reform and diversification. As a select

# MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION

*JON DIPIETRO, DIRECTOR  
HUNTER CRAIG, DEPUTY DIRECTOR*

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VINAY KHOSLA, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR*

few counties incorporate diversified curricula in the form of LGBTQ+ History courses, or diverse literature, others take little to no action in the same direction. Although this fact is entrenched in political and social views, the issue of the education of Maryland's students is not a political one. The application of such curriculum reform cannot be an inconsistent patchwork as it is now; rather students should be exposed to a breadth of perspectives and authorial backgrounds irrespective of what district they reside in. Quality diverse education cannot become a commodity accessible to the few.

**4.** To further the quality of a Maryland public school education, it is of the utmost importance that English/Language Arts curricula be diversified along the lines of authorial identity in a standardized and consistent manner. Thus, it is to this end that we the students of the State of Maryland advocate that the State of Maryland take the following actions:

- Recognize that the educational institutions of the State of Maryland should strive to highlight and promote diversity not only in their student populations but also in their curricula.
- Recognize the importance of increasing the visibility of marginalized groups including racial minorities, LGBT persons, and women/gender non-conforming peoples.
- Encourage or compell the Maryland State Department of Education and local Boards of Education to diversify English/Language Arts curricula through the introduction of required literature written by underrepresented authors.
- Recognizing the above is necessary for adequately preparing students of all backgrounds for their futures and for adequately providing imperative representation.

# Senior Associate Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Jon DiPietro

Position: FAV



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# **TESTIMONY PACKET: (B)**

## **SENATE BILL 116**

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TESTIMONY FROM: MSC Senior Associate Group



**MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION**

2022 Legislative Session

[marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org)

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Chikamara Obioha, District 12, [chikamaraobioha@gmail.com](mailto:chikamaraobioha@gmail.com)  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition*  
*([marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org))*

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January, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today I am writing to you in favor of SB116. SB116-Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts is a bill that was created to uplift minority voices and underrepresented groups in our English curriculum.

The state requires a more diverse English Language Arts curriculum because it is imperative we are part of the solution and not the problem. For so long and to this day minorities and underrepresented groups are not fully learned about it in schools adding to the prolonged misconceptions and rude actions towards these groups. It is important that students are exposed to different demographics lifestyles and understandings through a system of diversified curricula at a young age so they don't develop bad habits that cause them to then be discriminatory towards these groups. In schools, we are forced to read books that don't represent the makeup of the classroom, or even of the community.

In many communities throughout Maryland, there is a sufficient non-white, LGBTQ-based community that children are not exposed to through the books currently required by the curriculum. By creating a

a more diverse English Language Arts curriculum, as a state, Maryland would be helping to combat the prolonged issue of misconceptions and prejudice towards underrepresented groups.

As a current student in Maryland, I had, unfortunately, had little to no experience reading literature from a point of view other than a white male author. Being able to experience diverse literature was not something I was afforded in middle or elementary school. My first and only time reading a novel that wasn't from the point of view of a white male cisgender author was last year in the 9th grade English language arts curriculum where we had the opportunity to read the novel 'Long Way Down' by Jason

Reynolds. That was the only time in my entire education where we were able to learn about the life of a young black male and the hardships he went through. Being able to read novels that are from diverse authors shouldn't be something that happens once every 9 years in the curriculum but instead every single school year.

For the reasons I stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Olivia Le, Legislative District 5, [olliethomsonle@gmail.com](mailto:olliethomsonle@gmail.com)  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition*  
*([marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org))*

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Friday, January 14, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

Young people form their viewpoints based on the perspectives that flood their environment at an early age. Some young people are raised by and educated by uninformed perspectives, ones they don't have the resources to dispute until they are deeply ingrained. But the state legislature has a unique opportunity, right here, right now, to contribute at least one perspective that matters: that people of every demographic and every background have meaning, and have value; that every voice deserves to be heard. Studies show that young people who are exposed to diverse perspectives at an early age, through books, use more empathy when making decisions. By diversifying the perspectives that young people experience and therefore empathize with, through reading, the state legislature can make a difference by diversifying the perspectives young people internalize at an early age, and carry into adulthood. Being informed about the effects of their actions on other people from their first-person perspective will be the reason young people actively rethink behaviors and viewpoints that they've unconsciously adopted, break the cycle of generational lack of education, and learn critical thinking skills at a young age that will benefit them for the rest of their lives. Diversifying the kinds of perspectives that young people internalize at an early age can raise more empathetic employers, policymakers and educators.

Young, young people do not have the critical thinking skills to differentiate "good views" from "bad views". They do not have the tools to understand racism, discrimination, inequality. They know only what is explicitly revealed to them by those they trust, and right now that reality is this: The perspective of the world, on average, is precisely as is reflected in the books specifically picked out and shown to them.

They know only that the peak of literature, the golden standard for first-person perspective, is through the blue eyes of the ancient literary canon. Young people of color view the world as the environment surrounding them illustrates it to them, including harmful beliefs about their own value and importance, and the myth of “inferiority”. Young people must be exposed to authority figures in their lives specifically pointing out for them perspectives that reflect their own, struggles that affirm their own experiences with inequality, relationships that are like to their lives, because without these young people are at a loss as to whether or not they exist. When the authority figures in the lives of young people do not specifically expose them to diverse perspectives that mirror their own, young, young people simply believe that is how the world is. According to just world fallacy, young people prefer, at large, to believe, the world is fair and people are generally good and well-intentioned, and, therefore, that their perspectives are omitted, simply put, because their experiences are inferior, and therefore less valuable and less worthy of inclusion in the literary canon. Less important and less noteworthy, less significant as points-of-view. And, by extension, view themselves as inferior voices and characters. Young people of color are made to believe that their voices matter less than those in the books shown to them. Who always seem to share the same characteristics of ancient status, experiences, and points of view. Regardless of whether or not it is ideal, the States is an increasingly diverse society, necessitating interpersonal knowledge to interact with members of every creed and identity, the people who will liaison, go to school, and work alongside today’s students, tomorrow’s adults, in order to succeed. Young people will need the resources to interact with cultures and religions with which they are unfamiliar, and the ability to experience diverse perspectives & viewpoints through reading sets them up for success. The state legislature has a unique opportunity at this moment to greet progress at the door, welcome it in, and offer it a neighborly hand.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Julia Littlefield, *District 9B, juliacl207@gmail.com*  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition (marylandstudents.org)*

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Friday, 1, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

As a senior in high school, the Maryland public school system has molded me for the past 12 years. I attend Centennial High School in Howard County. At Centennial, our biggest strength is our diversity. Our diversity is what draws people to our school and what we boast on our banners. In my classes, I am surrounded by peers of different races, sexual orientations, religions, socio-economic class, and gender identities. The books in our curriculum, however, do not reflect our population. As a white, cisgender student, I have always identified with the characters we discuss in class. I cannot speak for my peers, but I can only imagine the feelings of alienation, isolation, and lack of belonging that come from a repeated lack of representation. If our school system significantly benefits from diversity, why are we not expressing or embracing it in the classroom?

I choose to believe that for the vast majority of students, racism and discrimination comes from ignorance, not true hatred. In order to limit microaggressions and offensive language, students need to understand why what they're saying is wrong. Books are a powerful tool: they are able to transport students into a new perspective. For example, put into the shoes of a transgender teenager, students may better understand the concept of gender identity and why we introduce ourselves with pronouns at the beginning of the year. That is why it is crucial that Maryland diversifies the curriculum. The educational system has the opportunity to take a proactive step in making every student feel included and welcomed, and we need to seize it.

In 2019, at Glenelg High School, four students vandalized the school with horrific racial slurs and antisemitic symbols. This occurred just ten minutes from my school, and made the national news, yet was not mentioned in any of my classes. Moreover, whenever I bring it up with friends and peers it is typically the first time they're hearing of it. For me, this emphasizes the ignorance being perpetuated in our current system. We have a long way to go in addressing the prevailing racism, homophobia, and ignorance in society, and diversifying the curriculum is a great first step.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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## TESTIMONY

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Neha Dinesh, ne.dinesh2004@gmail.com  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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### SB116: Favorable

For years, in English class, we've read the classics. Romeo and Juliet, The Great Gatsby, Lord of the Flies, you name it. While I've enjoyed reading classics, I've gained so much more insight from reading books like In the Time of the Butterflies and poems like Substance, Shadow, and Spirit--works with diverse perspectives outside of the eurocentric norms of typical high school literature. Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee: today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

Literature in English class serves a couple purposes. First and foremost, we learn about literature analysis and things like structure, vocabulary, and rhetorical techniques. These lessons can be derived from many different pieces of literature, not just the classics. With analysis comes learning about the historical and modern context of the piece. For example, as my Humanities class read Jane Eyre this year, we compared the 1800s view of feminism with the modern take on feminism and how that was reflected in the ways that we perceived the book. Literature is crucial for teaching students about history, culture, and social norms--to a degree, the books we read in school shape how we view our world. By diversifying our English curriculum, we would be broadening the lens with which students view our world and spark conversations in the classroom that allow students to be aware of the diverse views and experiences of people in the world around them.

I myself have had the fortunate experience of taking Humanities, the only interdisciplinary course offered in Howard County. Through reading pieces from different cultures, religions, by authors with different backgrounds and from different time periods, I've been able to develop my critical thinking skills and make more connections in my own education. Not to mention, the diversity in our curriculum has made English a thoroughly interesting subject for me. These are a few of the reasons I chose to write SB116



with the MSC this year--I hope to expand these opportunities to students across the state. Thus, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Noah Hanssen, District 9B, [noahkahanssen@gmail.com](mailto:noahkahanssen@gmail.com)  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB116.

The state of Maryland has a unique opportunity with the passing of this bill to engage in English education in a productive and effective manner to better prepare our students for life in an increasingly diverse state and country. There is a significant imbalance in the literature and focus of our current English Language Arts, one that disadvantages students whose curriculums remain overwhelmingly based on a similar set of experiences and perspectives against students whose teachers take the initiative in introducing diverse literature, though there are no curriculum guidelines around doing so. Creating an environment where students are more able to access and be taught significant literature from a diverse range of perspectives and experiences better equips them to engage with a diverse range of people, cultures and experiences, and to lose this educational opportunity in the classroom hamstrings those students compared to those who do.

I had the fortune to participate in the Humanities program at Centennial High School, which linked my English literature courses with my History courses, and included supplementary theater and art classes. So when in AP US History, while learning about the Civil War era and reconstruction, we covered literature like Huckleberry Finn and Their Eyes Were Watching God. While learning about African Colonialism in AP World History, we were reading Chinua Achebe and Rudyard Kipling. I credit this style of learning, and the diverse, unified method of teaching material, with my academic success in College.

My support for this bill is informed by my own academic success, and the success of my peers, having gone through an education style that this bill further incentivises. I strongly urge this bill to be read favorably and passed, understanding that there are advantages in learning based on diverse literature.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Maja Durkovic, District 7, [maja729@hotmail.com](mailto:maja729@hotmail.com)  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
([marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org))*

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Friday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

I have been fortunate enough to co-author the legislative brief for SB116, a role taken on by myself and the other dedicated Senior Associates of the Maryland Student Coalition (MSC). SB116 is a bill by the students, for the students, directly responding to the interests of Maryland youth in adjusting their curriculum. In the context of widespread acts of racial injustice throughout the United States, there is no longer time to wait on advocating for inclusive curriculums for all Maryland public schools. Maryland, in all its wonderful diversity, must act on representing and appreciating this diversity in our schools' curriculums.

Currently, there is no Maryland State standard that regulates the identities of authors of English Language Arts reading material, an issue that spurred the beginnings of discussion from the MSC and concerned student advocates. With the increasing number of students who belong to one or multiple minority identities, it is of the utmost importance for these students to see their identities reflected in the materials they are learning from. Other states have already taken on codifying diverse curriculums in state law; notably, the state legislatures of Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, and New Jersey have worked to pass curriculum regulations that are inclusive of gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, mental and physical disabilities, and religious tolerance, just as the proposed SB116 would accomplish.

As a cisgender, heterosexual white woman, there has always been a plethora of both characters and authors that represented me in my required school readings. A notable example, the most commonly

required and read book focusing on racial injustice in high schools, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, is both written by and focused on a white woman. Upon my joining the MSC, diverse curriculums were an issue I hoped to work to advance further. Hearing student testimony in the MSC, many from students who had never felt represented in their classrooms, made this issue far more personal to me. In Maryland's diverse classrooms, there is a clear problem with the current curriculum if only those who fit in a certain identity, like myself, feel appropriately represented. My work with the Baltimore County Diversity and Equity Committee has driven this issue home on the countywide level as well. Amazingly, SB116 has the leverage to create equality across all counties in Maryland.

Our state is one of great diversity. Our students must feel comfortable in their classrooms and be able to connect with the content that they are learning. SB116 has the power to change curriculum and our current education issues with inclusivity for the better, across all counties in Maryland, for almost 900,000 students. It is your duty as legislators to make this bill law and advocate for those young Marylanders who do not fit the identity expected from our current Eurocentric education standards.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a **favorable** report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Kyle Abosch, 35A kyle.abosch@gmail.com  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition (marylandstudents.org)*

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Friday, January 14th, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Throughout the history of the education system, inclusion for all students has been a major issue. Since America has come off a past full of anger towards those who do not conform to or match the ideal image of those in society, it makes many students lack the representation they require from a positive environment. This makes positive and impactful change necessary, making SB 116 all the more important. Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

I believe that the state requires a more diverse ELA curriculum because it would allow a larger amount of students to receive representation in their educational pursuits. Without the changes to the curriculum, it shows that the Maryland Education System is not open to those different from the majority of society (i.e., White Cis Male).

Although I have been represented in the literature I consume, it is because I am conforming to the image of our ancient society. However, a majority of my friends are unable to share my ability to connect with the characters and authors from the novels we are required to read throughout the ELA curriculum.

I believe that all students, regardless of gender, race, and sexuality, require proper representation in the literature they consume as it allows them to feel welcome to our modern society. For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Siddharth Shah, 9A, [shahsidd2004@gmail.com](mailto:shahsidd2004@gmail.com)  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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14 January, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

To come at this bill and why it is necessary to be implemented within our state from a practical and reasonable point of view, the first point I will try to establish is that diversity within our curriculum is a necessity when aiming to create a more inclusive and comfortable learning environment for all students.

This bill is a unique opportunity to invest in students across the State, and invest in an educational system that strives to make all students feel comfortable and represented within their learning environment.

ELA curriculums in my county, within the State, and overall across the country are widely known to not include much diversity in authorial point of view. As a student within the Howard County Public School System since Pre-K to all the way now, as a senior in high school, I have a first hand understanding of the English curriculum system within my county and the state. Over the past 10 years of reading novels assigned by the ELA classes I have taken, I have read four books by female authors and two books by an author of color.

Female authors, and authors of color are consistently left out of curriculums, while students continue to read stories and books written consistently by the same demographic: white males. While there is absolutely nothing wrong in teaching the classics, there is something wrong with leaving key voices out of our English curriculum. Learning and reading about different perspectives, and being able to analyze and understand literature at a deeper level is the entire goal of an ELA course, however if the same

perspectives are repeated within our curricula year after year, how are students supposed to develop an introspective and deep understanding?

This bill in no way is unreasonable or unattainable, and proves to be the opposite. By giving teachers the opportunity to choose their own books and material to teach, while simply guiding them towards authors that provide a diverse perspective of society and literature, our curriculums will impact students for years to come, and will allow future students to have a more well rounded and diverse understanding of English.

I truly believe that my education would have been greatly supplemented if I read and analyzed more diverse literary perspectives within ELA at school. I hope this opportunity to make student's overall experience with ELA more positive and effective is supported by this assembly, and for the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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## TESTIMONY

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Ngoc-han Elani Bui, District 39, [lanibear0027@gmail.com](mailto:lanibear0027@gmail.com)  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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### SB116: Favorable

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116. I have been in the Montgomery County public school system since Kindergarten. That is 10 years of learning, 10 years of literature, and 10 years of noticing that my friends and I are not like the people in the books we read. We are the minority, a word thrown around to group people who don't have the same opinion, ideology, or skin color as the larger population. None of us are outrageously rich like the characters in the Great Gatsby or live in a completely caucasian community like in Macbeth. Our current struggles aren't related to traveling home after 20 years at war, nor rising to high society. Maryland needs a more diverse ELA curriculum in order to acknowledge the diversity of its students and foster a welcoming and inclusive environment. NYU has found that, "culturally responsive education decreases dropout rates and suspensions, and increases grade point averages, student participation, self-image, critical thinking skills and graduation rates." I, myself, am an avid reader of both classic and contemporary works. Since I was a child, I've grown accustomed to the weekly trips to the library and lugging a bag full of books back home. But unknowingly, the books I surrounded myself with were mainly Caucasian, straight, characters whose biggest problem was something simple, like losing their Best Friend. Their lives were nothing like the ones people around me led, struggling to make ends meet, dealing with loss, and oppression. Recently, I've read both Lord of the Flies and Things Fall Apart, two books published within four years of each other. Lord of the Flies is a story about British schoolboys left to fend for themselves on an island, while Things Fall Apart shares the impacts of colonization on their [Lower Nigerian tribes] culture. The former is taught in English classes all over America, while Things Fall Apart and other stories sharing unfavorable events are not. Why is it that only some stories are heard and only limited viewpoints are taught? Education is a tool to spread knowledge and awareness. Recognizing minority voices allows students to feel seen and to learn more about current issues and history's influence on them. For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.



# **Student Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jon DiPietro

Position: FAV

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# **TESTIMONY PACKET: (C)**

## **SENATE BILL 116**

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TESTIMONY FROM: Students



**MARYLAND STUDENT COALITION**

2022 Legislative Session

[marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org)

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Shalin Bahl, Legislative District 9A, [shalinbahl@icloud.com](mailto:shalinbahl@icloud.com)  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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Saturday, January 29, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs committee. I am writing in favor of SB 116.

I firmly believe that the state of Maryland should institute a stronger and more diverse curriculum for students in the ELA curriculum. First, I believe the representation of minority races as well as LBGTQ+ Individuals in literature read in classes should be more equalized. The underrepresentation of African Americans, South Asians, East Asians, Muslims, and Latinos should immediately be resolved as well as the diminished representation of LBGTQ+ and disabled individuals.

Second, it is important that ELA teachers share stories created by diverse authors from diverse backgrounds. It is important to share stories about different cultures and from one's experiences. Reading stories and influencing diversity from different backgrounds within the language arts classroom can open up minds to different ideas and spark interest towards a stronger diversity.

Third and finally, studies have shown that diversity can lead to greater awareness, understanding, and most of all, acceptance of differing beliefs and customs. Through diversifying the English curriculum throughout the state, students can learn to have a better understanding of the world around them. The positive impacts of diversifying the ELA curriculum outweighs the negative impacts and will have a lasting effect on the future of students.

As a student attending public school in Maryland, I have clear examples and experiences proving why the English curriculum should be better diversified. The majority of books assigned in my English class

specifically are written by authors without a focus on diversity. For example, Edgar Allen Poe, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and more are classic literature books.

Some books may shed light on racism, but having more of a focus on diversity should be incorporated in the curriculum and addressed as a main concept. Why does the English curriculum promote non diversified content? All in all, by diversifying the English curriculum, we can not only rid of prejudice and racism generated by non diversified stories, but we can build better acceptance and understanding of cultures.

Furthermore, for the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

Thank you.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Christian Thomas, District 6, Christian.Thomas@bcps.org  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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Tuesday, January 18, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

As a current Board of Education member for Baltimore County, the 2021-2022 Student Member of the Board, and member of our Curriculum Committee, I greatly understand the immense value in expanding our English, Language, Arts Curriculum to become more diverse. So much so that in August, I sponsored an LGBTQ+ Inclusivity Resolution to do just that, extending the diversity in our curricula to include representation for our LGBTQ+ students in the same way Baltimore County has progressed to provide other culturally diverse curriculum material. Without a diverse curriculum, the issue of a single narrative capturing one's identity is often portrayed. With a diverse curriculum, literature creates a more tolerant youth, ultimately creating a more tolerant society.

As a current high school senior, I can say that I have often not been represented in the literature read in classrooms. From my multi-racial background to being a member of the LGBTQ+ community, our representation in the ELA curriculum has been lacking. While some counties have been able to become more progressive with regard to this issue, others are lagging far behind. Thus, I charge you, the Senate Committee on Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs to rectify this issue and prepare our students to honor and respect the diversity of this day and age.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Paige Plater, Calvert County, [platerp@outlook.com](mailto:platerp@outlook.com)  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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Friday, January 27, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today I am writing in favor of SB 116.

Diversifying our language arts curriculum is important because it introduces students to different ideas at an early age. Introducing diverse ideas, in the beginning, prompts students to understand and learn more about other cultures. An inclusive mindset is vital to the growth and development of young children. Students need to not only see inclusivity practiced in their schools but also in the things they're taught. If we prioritize teaching our students about our differences and acceptance early on, it won't be an uncomfortable conversation later. Early in school, we read, "Esperanza Rising" and "Inside Out and Back Again." They told the stories of a Mexican and a Vietnamese girl who both fled their homes and came to America. Before reading these books, I didn't have any knowledge about these cultures or their experiences. Their stories stick with me in my day-to-day life because I can recognize and understand the experiences of those like them. It opened up my eyes to the prejudice and racism immigrants often face in America. Most importantly, it made me decide that I wouldn't want to act the way some people acted towards the characters.

I think every student would benefit from learning how to love those who are different from us. What better place to do this than the classroom? Our schools value students coming up with new ideas. Why not prompt us to listen to and understand different ideas? In the end, it will make a better future for all of us.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Jonathon DiPietro, *Director of the Maryland Student Coalition*  
([marylandstudents.org](http://marylandstudents.org))

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Friday, January 27, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Hello, my name is Heera and I am an 11th grader at Poolesville High school, and a proud member of the LGBT+ community. I am non-binary. For me to write this so openly has been the result of a long journey of both finding and accepting myself, in a world where my identity has been either tucked away for nobody to see or openly ridiculed for everyone to judge. For centuries, my existence has been deemed inappropriate. My existence has been deemed invalid.

My existence has been deemed unworthy of respect. And I have felt this every day. I have had to sit quietly as the people around me have berated and debated my identity. But today I choose to take a stand and demand respect. Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, today I am writing in favor of SB 116.

Making sure our curriculum is diverse and representative of all students is a value that is near and dear to not only me, but so many around the county. Year after year, assignment after assignment, thousands of students go unrecognized by the curriculum. Our stories are neither told nor heard, despite having centuries of untapped and beautiful history. Instead we are made to read text after text featuring violence against women and minorities. We must then hear students make jokes about violence against women and minorities. And then we must experience that violence.

Just a few months ago, my transgender friends and I were being targeted and harassed by someone that did not want to respect our identities. This harassment included but was not limited to: asking invasive questions, loudly misgendering us, pointing laser pointers at us from across the room, locking us outside of the school on cold winter days, and more. Every day when I came to school, I no longer felt safe.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Etana Heda, District 20, etanaheda1234@gmail.com  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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Friday, January 27, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Great strides have been made in the state of Maryland when it comes to improving our curricula. Students are now able to engage with topics that interest them, apply their knowledge practically, and learn lifelong skills that can change the world. Recognizing these advancements is important, but it is even more important to acknowledge that there is still progress to be made, especially surrounding the diversity of our ELA curricula. Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

In grades 6-12, students in English/Language Arts classes spend a lot of time reading and examining literary texts, but they're often written by people they can't relate to. Being able to relate to the writers and characters in literature is now more important than ever given the incredible diversity within our classrooms, as this makes learning more engaging, and allows students to personally connect with texts. As a high school student myself, I have experienced firsthand how much better learning in my English class can become when I can stay engaged and connect with what I'm reading. Keeping learning engaging motivates students to want to learn more, and diversifying our ELA curriculum is a crucial step towards building lifelong learners.

Being an African American student from Eastern Montgomery County, all of my classes are incredibly diverse, and my IB English teacher reflects this through the text she chooses to explore in our class. This year we've read novels and short stories from various black authors, and this has exposed me to perspectives I've never been able to discover in my previous classes. I'm truly lucky to have had this experience, but I understand that this isn't the case across the state. It is unfair that some of us in certain counties get to connect with our identity through learning while others can't simply because of where they



live. Just as we should work towards achieving universal education, we should strive to reflect diversity in our ELA curricula.

Maryland is a great state filled with driven students who deserve an inclusive education, and for the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Trevor Eric Norton, District 9A, cryontrev@gmail.com  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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Sunday, January 16, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

As a citizen living in the state of Maryland and a product of the Howard County Public Schools, I believe that it is imperative to create a more diverse curriculum as we enter a more diverse society. If we fail to bring to attention the importance of writers such as Frederick Douglass and Maya Angelou, the students of the state of Maryland will fail to understand the diversity of the English language and the Arts. I cannot stress enough the importance of introducing a further diverse curriculum in the state of Maryland.

As a former student and graduate of the Howard County Public Schools, I have been fortunate enough to read diverse books by authors such as Frederick Douglass and Maya Angelou. However, I write this testimony to highlight that many students are not as fortunate. If we do not give all students the right to explore the diversity of the great literature writers, we will undoubtedly be doing an injustice to the students in the State of Maryland.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Nick Dimitriades, District 42, nickdimitriades1@gmail.com  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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January 15, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

Comparable to our state’s student population, English literature is diverse in origin and purpose. I’ve witnessed firsthand the wide-ranging emotional and academic impact of diverse literature on my classmates and I within the Baltimore County Public School system. From A Raisin in the Sun, to I Am Malala, to Hell-Heaven, among countless other works, a diverse ELA curriculum has enriched my understanding of both the world in which I live and literary analysis. Unfortunately, however, I know there are thousands of students across our state who have not had the same experience, which is why I urge you to support this legislation. Empathy, creativity, and tolerance should be fostered within each school across our state—and an increasingly diverse ELA curriculum would allow for it.

I’ve seen firsthand the insight diverse literature brings to my generation; these works have often served as catalysts for new understandings and opened minds. Moreover, texts published by a myriad of diverse writers have often allowed for collective recognition of the imperfections and injustices rooted within our communities. This legislation would assist Maryland students in becoming globally collaborative members of society while also amplifying the voices of marginalized authors and creative writers—and while great work has been done across our state in an effort to do so, there is certainly more to be done. SB 116 is a comprehensive solution to promoting the importance of literature among students while working alongside local governments and educational jurisdictions.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Nainika Kadabha, 7th Congressional District of MD  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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Saturday, January 14, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116 in order to advocate for prioritizing diversity in the English curriculum.

Despite increasing diversity in American public school systems, the English curriculums fail to reflect the diversity of the student body. Restricting particularly the AP English Literature and AP English Language curricula to solely “classics,” which are overwhelmingly written by upper class, white, male, cisgendered, heterosexual authors, implies that prestigious books are only written by authors who fit such a description.

I am a senior at Centennial High School, and every single book in our AP English Literature curriculum is written by a white person. When I asked my teacher about the lack of racial diversity, she told me not to worry since there was a character of color in Jane Eyre– this character ended up being a racist caricature of a Black woman written by Charlotte Bronte, a white author. Children of all races deserve accurate, anti-racist representation in both authors and characters. Not only does it facilitate a deeper connection to the literature, but it allows them to gain a more accurate perspective on other cultures and on systems of racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, ableism and classism.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Mikko J. Parker, District 13, Mikkoparker568@gmail.com  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition (marylandstudents.org)*

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Thursday, January 13th, 2021

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

On this piece of legislation, I appreciate the ability of creating an inclusive English Language Arts curriculum that will be representative of all students from all different backgrounds. Not only showing the ability of being able to be inclusive of those students, but also preventing inflicting biases upon their peers and members of their community. Maryland has beautiful diversity in it's schools and in my opinion, it's time that our curriculum reflects this rich diversity.

Myself as an individual, I constantly see the lack of representation in our curriculum of people that do look like me and students that do not look like me. This bill would change that and ensure that moving forward our school system is respectful and is inclusive of all students and ths bill further ensures that we are non-discriminative of all students. It's time that on a state level, we take action to promote diversity.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116.

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**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Saachi Aggarwal, 09A, saachia11@gmail.com  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition  
(marylandstudents.org)*

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Friday, January 27, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to submit a written testimony in favor of SB 116.

Because our current school curriculum is structured to include books that fail to include marginalized groups, it prevents certain students from feeling like they belong. It paints an incomplete narrative that can prevent us from understanding the whole story and leads us to make false assumptions. Whether it be skin color, hair style, family structure, or sexual orientation, students should have the ability to read literature that include characters and themes that reflect their identities and experiences, or allow others to broaden their outlook and learn about people who are not like themselves. Additionally, these diverse stories allow students, even at the elementary level, to form deeper connections with books that focus on voices that aren't traditionally heard. By doing so, it helps change students' attitude towards those differences, or learn from them. Although some argue that some issues/topics addressed in these books are inappropriate and/or controversial, students should have the autonomy to educate themselves on these topics, rather than being forced to follow a societal construct.

As a junior at Marriotts Ridge High School, the majority of my school career has encompassed books like Romeo and Juliet, The Great Gatsby, and Macbeth. The common theme: they're all written by white, male authors. Although these books are influential, good literature mirrors human experience and it's essential for students from all backgrounds to see their lives represented and have role models that resemble themselves. Books that are multi-faceted, depict people of color, highlight lesser-known historical events, and feature characters with different experiences are crucial to help students see things from different perspectives. As a female, second-generation Asian-American, I've failed to see this

happen for the past seven years that I've been attending school in Maryland. Moving away from "classics" towards more diverse books can help expand one's horizons and promote pedagogy, something I wish I had the chance to experience at a young age. Reading about the experience of a family that immigrated to America, the story of hundreds of students, is something we should promote, not hinder. All students should have the chance to resonate with the literature they read.

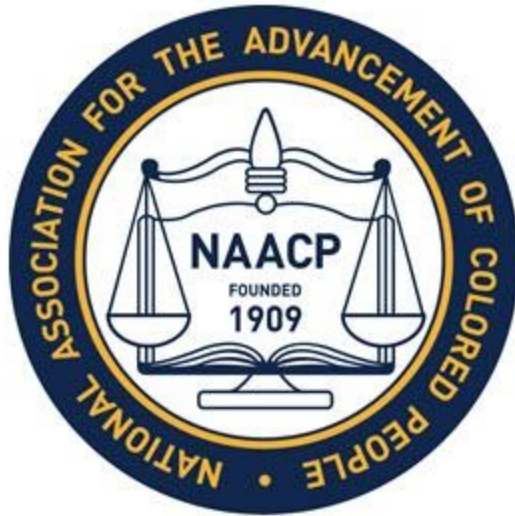
In conclusion, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB 116. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions. I thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

# **Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse Language Ar**

Uploaded by: Ryan Coleman

Position: FAV





# Randallstown

**Po Box 731 Randallstown, MD 21133**

January 31, 2022

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building,  
2 West.,  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SUPPORT SB 0116, Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts -  
Development of Content Standards and Implementation

Dear Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Health, and  
Environmental Affairs Committee.

May it be known the mission of the Randallstown NAACP is to secure equal rights in  
order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and wellbeing of all  
persons. We are the premier organization advocating for students of color in Baltimore  
County.

The Randallstown NAACP supports SB 0116, Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse  
English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation.  
Acknowledging the cultural diversity in English language arts classrooms is important to  
highlight multiethnic cultural heritage. Appropriate pedagogical practices addressing

students' needs and culture are valuable for their academic and personal growth. It is necessary to be aware of the students' backgrounds in order to better understand who the students are and what the students need, as well as to allow all students to gain appreciation, respect, and understand the students' differences. Likewise, encouraging students to acknowledge the diversity of cultures that surround them can help to promote social and educational development.

*The Randallstown Branch of the NAACP urges a favorable report from the committee on SB 0116.*

*yours*

Ryan Coleman

President, Randallstown NAACP

<http://randallstownnaacp.yolasite.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/NAACPrandallstown>

<https://www.instagram.com/naacprandallstown>

# **Vinay Testimony SB116.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Vinay Khosla

Position: FAV

**TESTIMONY**

**BILL:** SB116 - Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts -  
Development of Content Standards and Implementation

**SPONSOR:** Senator Ellis, Charles County

**POSITION:** **FAVORABLE**

**FROM:** Vinay Khosla, 42B  
Vinaykhosla13@gmail.com  
*\*Submitted in Association with the Maryland Student Coalition*  
[\(\[marylandstudents.org\]\(http://marylandstudents.org\)\)](http://marylandstudents.org)

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Friday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**SB116: Favorable**

Chair Pinsky, and honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. Today, I am writing in favor of SB 116.

The diversity in curriculum which SB 116 advocates for is not only desirable but necessary. By increasing the authorial diversity of required texts for English Language Arts classes, in turn both representation and inclusivity are affected. The diversification of required texts to include those written by people of color, marginalized gender identities, LGBT people, disabled people and more, students who similarly identify with these groups see a path forward in a world that is not necessarily made for them. But more than just being able to relate to minority authors, these identities are often reflected in the characters and themes of the literature written. Finally, disabled students will get to read a book with a disabled hero; students of color can read a book where someone they can identify with is a CEO; and the list goes on. The diversification of literature not only creates a learning environment that fosters the dreams and aspirations of the many instead of the few, but also allows students of all backgrounds who *don't* identify with authors or characters to broaden their world view and understanding. It has been shown that consistent exposure through literature to characters unlike yourself increases empathy and decreases discriminatory tendencies. In these ways, the diversification of literature must be seen not only as a priority but as a necessity by the state of Maryland.

As a former Baltimore County Public Schools student for thirteen years, I have a commanding understanding on the state of representation in ELA curriculum that can generally be extrapolated across counties bar few. And the state of representation is very poor indeed. Having taken the highest-level English courses offered to me throughout my educational career, I only ever encountered 2 female

authors, 1 Jewish author, 1 Black author, and 1 Hispanic author of substantial required texts. The remainder of required texts I read—and also the vast majority—were written by straight, white men. As a person of color who identifies as gay, I never in my thirteen years of schooling encountered an author or character who I could relate to as a gay man or racial minority. I am unable to speak to whether or not this representation would have made me feel more comfortable in my own skin, but I can say that for me, and many people of color, and many members of the LGBTQ+ community, coming to terms with your identity in predominantly straight or white institutions was a challenge. By diversifying literature from middle school onwards, we as a state can take the crucial and revolutionary steps to cultivating an educational environment that is inclusive not only in name but in practice. Moreover, it is the responsibility of this body and of the state of Maryland to strive for such an environment irrespective of political agenda or affiliation—a responsibility that must be realized.

For the reasons stated above, I urge the committee to issue a **favorable** report on SB 116.

**SB116\_MSEA\_Lamb\_FWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: FWA

**Testimony in Support with Amendments to Senate Bill 116  
Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts -  
Development of Content Standards and Implementation**

**Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
Thursday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022  
1:00 p.m.**

**Lauren Lamb  
Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports, with amendments, Senate Bill 116. This legislation would develop content standards for inclusive and diverse English Language Arts to be included in the State Standards and Frameworks and require each county board of education to develop and implement curriculum guides for inclusive and diverse English language arts, including economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging.

MSEA represents 76,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students for the careers and jobs of the future. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Students deserve to see themselves represented in curricula, and literature and nonfiction texts are powerful vehicles for learning about oneself, others, and issues around the world, in both the past and present. Diverse and inclusive curricula that examine issues like unconscious bias and economic disparities are important to developing students' critical thinking skills and promoting awareness of experiences different from their own. This bill rightly addresses the importance of developing curricula and resources that highlight diversity in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, and religious beliefs.

MSEA also believes that, as professionals in their content area, teachers should be highly involved in all steps of the curriculum design, implementation, and decision-



making process. Therefore, we propose removing lines 15-17: “Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, each public school in the state shall include inclusive and diverse English Language Arts in the English Language Arts curriculum.” Rather, local jurisdictions should utilize the standards provided by the State Board and county boards of education to empower educators with these important instructional resources.

It is critically important that students have access to a rich, diverse, and inclusive literary canon, and that English Language Arts educators have access to high-quality resources to teach it. **We urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report, including the above referenced considerations, on Senate Bill 116.**



**SB116.DD Council.The Arc.SWA.pdf**

Uploaded by: Rachel London

Position: FWA



**Maryland Developmental  
Disabilities Council**  
CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES



**Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**  
**SB 116: Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts -  
Development of Content Standards and Implementation**  
**February 3, 2022**  
**Position: Support with Amendments**

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council and The Arc Maryland are statewide advocacy organizations committed to improving the opportunities and outcomes for Marylanders with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). **We support the intent of SB 116, which would require the Maryland State Department of Education to develop content standards for inclusion, diversity, and equity in the language arts curriculum.**

It is important to highlight and promote the diversity of Maryland, including people with disabilities. In fact, over 112,000 students with disabilities receive special education services and supports, and represent 12.4% of the student population in Maryland. That percent is similar to the total population in Maryland.

In order to truly promote diversity and equity, and encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students, the content of the curriculum should not be limited to considerations for just “mental and physical disabilities.” It should capture the broader community of people with disabilities. Therefore, we strongly recommend the following changes:

- On page 2, line 4 - add “neurodiversity”
- On page 2, line 9 - remove “mental and physical”

It is important that our academic standards are built to reflect the historical and intellectual contributions of diverse populations, and encourage environments that respect and welcome all people, including people with disabilities. **These two changes will do just that.**

Contact: Rachel London, Executive Director, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council,  
RLondon@md-council.org

# **SB 116.Diverse English Content Standards.pdf**

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: UNF

**BILL:** Senate Bill 116  
**TITLE:** Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation  
**DATE:** February 3, 2022  
**POSITION:** OPPOSE  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
**CONTACT:** John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes Senate Bill 116, which would mandate certain revisions to content standards and curriculum in the teaching of English Language Arts.

MABE generally opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum, including the content standards on which curriculum is based, firmly believing that this role belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with the State Board. Therefore, MABE’s opposition to this bill does not rest on an evaluation of the merits of teaching any specified subject matter, but rather opposition to statutorily mandating revisions to content standards and curriculum.

In creating the State Board and local boards of education, the General Assembly has delegated to them the responsibility for reviewing and adopting content standards and, at the local level, reviewing and adopting curriculum. The State Board establishes State content frameworks, state assessment standards, and minimum state graduation requirements. Each local board and school system implement locally-developed curriculum to ensure that the state content frameworks are followed, student performance standards are met, and students are prepared to meet graduation requirements.

In the context of the content standards proposed by Senate Bill 116, the following table provides links to Maryland’s High School Content Standards in English Language Arts, with all Prekindergarten through Grade 12 standards available at:  
<https://mdk12.msde.maryland.gov/INSTRUCTION/StandardsandFrameworks/ela/Pages/EnglishHomePage.aspx>.

<b>Maryland State Standards and Frameworks: English Language Arts</b>	
<p><b>Grade 9</b>  <a href="#">Author's Craft: Characters, Diction, and Structure</a>  <a href="#">The Search for Identity</a>  <a href="#">Allusions of Love (CMS)</a>  <a href="#">Making my Point</a></p> <p><b>Grade 10</b>  <a href="#">The Journey for Social Justice</a>  <a href="#">Examining Human Compassion</a>  <a href="#">A World Of Words</a>  <a href="#">The Price Of Ambition</a></p>	<p><b>Grade 11</b>  <a href="#">Writers on Writing</a>  <a href="#">Exploring Independence</a>  <a href="#">Faces of War</a>  <a href="#">In Search Of The American Dream</a></p> <p><b>Grade 12</b>  <a href="#">Dramatic and Philosophical Journeys</a>  <a href="#">Searching for Justice</a>  <a href="#">Ethical Dilemmas</a>  <a href="#">Critiquing Societal Dimensions(CMS)</a></p>

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 116.

**SB 116\_SP\_unf.pdf**

Uploaded by: Sarah Reichert-Price

Position: UNF

Senator Paul G Pinsky, Chair  
and Members of The Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee  
Maryland Senate  
Annapolis, Maryland

RE: SB 116- Education- Public Schools- Inclusive and Diverse Language Arts- UNFAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of The Committee,

SB 116 promotes Critical Race Theory. Among other things, CRT is an attack on:

1) Our Declaration of Independence:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..."

The principle of equality written about in the Declaration of Independence and codified into law with the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments, The Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, is rejected by CRT theorists. And;

2) Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Legacy:

MLK, JR. famously said, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

Almost all Americans support Rev. King's dream, and the United States has made great progress towards this goal. **CRT turns MLK, Jr.'s dream on it's head!** The most prominent proponent of CRT, Ibram X. Kendi, is hired by school systems across the country to proselytize his hateful ideology:

"The only remedy to racist discrimination is antiracist discrimination. The only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination." (How to be an Antiracist)

"Capitalism is essentially racist; racism is essentially capitalist. They are birthed together from the same natural causes, and they shall one day die together from unnatural causes" ( How to be an Antiracist)

Furthermore, a recent Rasmussen poll indicated that CRT is extremely unpopular with the American public: "Latinos and Asians oppose CRT by a 2:1 margin (slightly higher than Caucasians); and Independents...oppose CRT nearly 4:1" ([christopherrufo.com/polling-crt/](http://christopherrufo.com/polling-crt/))

I ask that you give SB 116- Inclusive and Diverse Language Arts an UNFAVORABLE Report.

Thank you for your time,

Sarah Price (ACRWC)  
221 Miller Street  
Westernport, MD 21562

# **SB 116 - LOI - Public Schools - Inclusive and Dive**

Uploaded by: Ary Amerikaner

Position: INFO





Senate Bill 116 - Public Schools – Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts – Development of Content Standards and Implementation

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

January 2022

MSDE assures the committee that all future revisions to the English Language Arts standards and frameworks will reflect the principles of inclusion and diversity as outlined in this legislation.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **Senate Bill 116**. Please contact Ary Amerikaner, at 410-767-0090, or [ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov](mailto:ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov), for any additional information.

**SB116 Inclusive ELA Curriculum 2.3.22.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jeanette Ortiz

Position: INFO



**SB116 PUBLIC SCHOOLS - INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS -  
DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENT STANDARDS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

February 3, 2022

EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

**LETTER OF INFORMATION**

Jeanette Ortiz, Esq., Legislative & Policy Counsel (410.703.5352)

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) is submitting a letter of information on **SB116 Public Schools - Inclusive and Diverse English Language Arts - Development of Content Standards and Implementation**.

This bill requires the State Board of Education, by December 1, 2022, to develop content standards for inclusive and diverse English language arts to be included in the State Standards and Frameworks for English Language Arts. Each county board of education is required to develop and implement age-appropriate curriculum guides for inclusive and diverse English language arts. Each public school is required to include inclusive and diverse English language arts in the English language arts curriculum beginning in the 2023–2024 school year.

AACPS acknowledges the historical, generational, and compounding reality of the systems, structures, and practices that have intentionally and unintentionally created and continued to afford advantages to some student groups while perpetuating inequities for others. AACPS must take responsibility and action for dismantling, and actively repairing these inequities to ensure positive educational outcomes for all AACPS students. The goal of the AACPS strategic plan is to ensure that every student meets or exceeds standards as achievement gaps are eliminated. Accordingly, AACPS aims to elevate all students while eliminating all gaps. To that end, AACPS students, schools, and families are supported in a manner that is positive, purposeful, and proactive. Achievement for all AACPS students is promoted using a three-tiered approach:

- Schools are supported in developing and maintaining a responsive, equitable school culture;
- Engaging, relevant, research-based, differentiated instruction is implemented; and
- Enrichment opportunities are provided for all students.

Implementation of the inclusive and diverse English language arts standards outlined in SB116 will support the AACPS commitment to fostering a standards-based learning environment where inclusion and diversity are encouraged. We are, however, concerned about the funding implications and timeline impacts of the legislation. AACPS has an educational equity policy and regulation which align with Maryland State Department of Education regulations. As part of its commitment to educational equity, all AACPS district level offices individually and collectively work to require that an equity lens be used in reviews of staff, curriculum, pedagogy, professional development, instructional materials, and assessment design. The district has been working to implement the State regulations over the last few years and such an adjustment in the curricular requirements will take time and funding to accomplish. The development and implementation of curriculum standards takes more than a year as school districts must obtain materials, train teachers and properly prepare for implementation. Additionally, school systems require funding for teacher and staff stipends for the revisions of curricula and assessments, teacher and staff stipends for participation in professional development, the purchase of new resources and materials of instruction as well as the review of new resources and materials of instruction.

While AACPS supports the goal and the spirit of the bill, we ask that the Committee identify potential funding sources for implementation. AACPS anticipates a cost of nearly \$3.2 million to implement the requirements of this bill. AACPS also respectfully request that the Committee consider delaying the implementation date to ensure proper and meaningful implementation.

Thank you for consideration of this information regarding SB116.