



Washington Office of Superintendent of **PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

Multicultural Education

1. **Purpose:**

The purpose of this proviso is to provide statewide coordination towards multicultural, culturally responsive, and anti-racist education to support academically, socially, and culturally literate learners. OSPI is directed to coordinate the creation of a grade 7–12 African American Studies approach that includes three key elements:

1. A working definition of African American Studies and an accompanying framework.
2. Content alignment across academic disciplines.
3. Recommendations for professional development.

2. **Description of services provided:**

Funding was used to contract with Connector Consulting (CC) in coordination with OSPI to facilitate the agency's development of an African American Studies definition and framework, development of a content alignment plan, and curation of professional development opportunities. To reach these benchmarks, CC has:

- Engaged external stakeholders and community members.
- Created a working African American Studies definition and examined potential models for creating an African American Studies Framework for grades 7–12 in Washington state
- Developed an African American Studies content alignment plan.
- Developed strategies to create African American Studies professional development opportunities.
- Submitted quarterly progress reports tracking progress.
- Submitted summative report that included findings and recommendations for next steps.

3. **Criteria for receiving services and/or grants:**

This proviso was utilized for contracted services.

Beneficiaries in the 2022-23 School Year:

Number of School Districts:	N/A
Number of Schools:	N/A
Number of Students:	N/A
Number of Educators:	N/A
Other:	1



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4. Are federal or other funds contingent on state funding?

No

5. State funding history:

Fiscal Year	Amount Funded	Actual Expenditures
2023	\$200,000	\$190,089
2022	\$200,000	\$185,772

6. Number of beneficiaries (e.g., school districts, schools, students, educators, other) history:

Fiscal Year	Number of Other (contractors)
2023	1
2022	1

7. Programmatic changes since inception (if any):

While this proviso builds on the work of the African American Studies Workgroup funded in the 2020–21 proviso, this investment was funded in FY 22.

8. Program evaluation or evaluation of major findings:

Connector Consulting (CC) was contracted by OSPI to lead this work. CC engaged the expertise of African American scholars with deep roots in Washington, multidisciplinary backgrounds, and extensive experience in black history. As a result, CC made the following recommendations:

1. Adopt the College Board’s definition of African American Studies; while no universal definition of African American Studies exists in the research, the College Board’s definition meets the requirements for the project and provides universal appeal for Washington districts, including those inclined to adopt their Advanced Placement (AP) African American Studies course.
2. Develop an educational framework that presents Blackness with an interdisciplinary approach emphasizing the cognitive, structural, and functional aspects of learning African American Studies.
3. Establish African American Studies as a distinct content-aligned area within the broader educational framework. This approach aims to enable the multidisciplinary nature of African American Studies to be effectively implemented in the classroom.
4. Provide sustained funding for professional development and training.
5. Focus professional development opportunities for teaching African American Studies on increasing educator competencies in cultural relevance, equity, inclusion (anti-



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Blackness), continuous learning, critical consciousness, collaboration and community engagement, empathy and empowerment, and reflective practice.

6. Provide sustained funding for districts to engage credible place-based organizations. OSPI lacks a mechanism that can facilitate strategic, deep, and authentic engagement from community stakeholders at the local level. Partnering with credible place-based organizations is a necessity for local districts and it would positively support local level implementation, accountability, and adoption.

9. Major challenges faced by the program:

As with the 2021–22, these challenges continued to be met during the 2022–23 year:

- Community building work was difficult with meetings primarily held remotely. African American Studies and other culturally responsive work is best done when strong relationships are built in community.
- As indicated above, there is no unified or statutory definition of African American Studies. Work continues to be done to determine the most appropriate aspects of numerous definitions that are applicable across disciplines 7–12.
- African American Studies is, generally, new for K–12 public schools. There are limited examples to draw from as this work is developed in Washington.
- The demographics of public-school educators in Washington state presents challenges for training and implementation. White-identifying educators make up 86.8% of the teaching force in K–12 schools, while there are only 1.5% of educators who identify as Black/African American. This will create significant challenges with limited resources and organizations equipped to provide high-quality professional development and implementation of a 7–12 African American Studies framework.
- The scope of the current legislation and proviso will carry this work through to the establishment of definition, framework, and resources. However, achieving full implementation in Washington classrooms will require future phases of work focused on professional development and educator support. The current political and social environment includes significant pushback to efforts to make public school classrooms more inclusive and culturally responsive.

10. Future opportunities:

- Provide presentations to OSPI content leads of the implications and impact of African American Studies integration into their content area, with opportunities for follow up.
- CC has expressed interest in continued partnership to support actions steps articulated in the recommendations, including professional development and curriculum alignment.
- Explore opportunities to incorporate African American Studies into other related areas including Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Career and Technical Education (CTE).



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11. **Statutory and/or budget language:**

\$200,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2022 and \$200,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2023 are provided solely for the office of the superintendent of public instruction to provide statewide coordination towards multicultural, culturally responsive, and anti-racist education to support academically, socially, and culturally literate learners. The office must engage community members and key interested parties to:

- (i) Develop a clear definition and framework for African American studies to guide instruction in grades seven through twelve;
- (ii) Develop a plan for aligning African American studies across all content areas; and
- (iii) Identify professional development opportunities for educators and administrators to build capacity in creating high quality learning environments centered in belonging and racial equity, anti-racist approaches, and asset-based methodologies that pull from all students' cultural funds of knowledge.

12. **Other relevant information:**

N/A

13. **Schools/districts receiving assistance:**

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14. **Program Contact Information:**

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