

Institutionalizing Ethnic Studies into SFUSD
Submitted by Sandra Lee Fewer

WHEREAS: The San Francisco Board of Education has passed previous resolutions (March 9, 2004 and 2010) in support of the importance and future implementation of Ethnic Studies in SFUSD schools; and

WHEREAS: The San Francisco Board of Education in 2010, approved unanimously Resolution 101-26A1 “In Support of an Ethnic Studies Program in the San Francisco Unified School District” which created an Ethnic Studies pilot program in 5 SFUSD high schools that continues today; and

WHEREAS: Resolution 101-26A1 specifically calls for the future implementation and growth of Ethnic Studies beyond the 2010-2011 school year, including the option for students in all high schools to participate in the Ethnic Studies curriculum by the 2011-2012 school year if funds can be secured for FY 2011-12; and

WHEREAS: The United Nations has recognized Ethnic Studies as a human right and condemns the attack on Ethnic Studies in the United States; and

WHEREAS: San Francisco is home to San Francisco State University which has the only College of Ethnic Studies at the university level and has been a partner to SFUSD in the creation, development and support of Ethnic Studies; and

WHEREAS: SFUSD students have and continue to gain college level credit from San Francisco State University upon completion of an Ethnic Studies class during their junior senior year in high school; and

WHEREAS: The Board of Education, on October 8, 2013, approved Resolution No. 136-25A3 “Expanding A-G Course Offerings in SFUSD High Schools and Supporting A-G Course Development and Submission”, which called for the expansion of A-G courses; and

WHEREAS: Ethnic Studies has been approved as an A-G course by the University of California, and meets the “G” requirement towards graduation; and

WHEREAS: SFUSD’s Vision 2025 identifies racial and cultural diversity and tolerance as a goal and acknowledges the importance of Social Justice and Equity in a student’s education; and

WHEREAS: The SFUSD is actively engaged in implementing a vision of multiculturalism, multilingualism and multiethnic instruction and opportunity, embedded in curriculum and instruction for Pre K 12th grade; and

WHEREAS: The existing Ethnic Studies curriculum developed by SFUSD teachers encourages students to explore specific aspects of identity on personal, interpersonal and institutional levels; and

WHEREAS: The existing Ethnic Studies curriculum developed by SFUSD teachers provides students with interdisciplinary reading, writing and analytical skills; and

WHEREAS: The existing Ethnic Studies curriculum developed by SFUSD teachers fosters strong ties between students and their families, neighborhoods, and schools, thus encouraging a sense of civic engagement and social responsibility; and

WHEREAS: The current Ethnic Studies curriculum has broad support from students, parents, teachers, administrators, community organizations, university and college faculty, and members of local government; and

WHEREAS: According to 2013-2014 school year data, approximately 90% of SFUSD students are students of color; and

WHEREAS: The Los Angeles Unified School District and the El Rancho Unified School District in California have made Ethnic Studies coursework a requirement for graduation; and

Therefore Be it Resolved: That the San Francisco Board of Education approves and supports the expansion of Ethnic Studies to all SFUSD high schools, thereby providing opportunity for every high school student to enroll in an Ethnic Studies class by the school year 2015-2016; and

Therefore Be It Resolved: That the Board of Education supports and encourages the expansion of ethnic studies content by ethnic-specific elective courses, (such as African American Studies, Asian American studies, Latino (a)/Chicano(a) Studies, Native American Studies) and the infusion of multiethnic and multiculturalism throughout the 6th-8th grade curriculum as a foundation for Ethnic Studies in high school; and

Therefore Be it resolved: That the San Francisco Board of Education directs the Superintendent to secure funding for this expansion, including the funding of 1 FTE devoted entirely to oversee the expansion of the existing Ethnic Studies course to all high schools, the development of the expansion of new ethnic studies course offerings, the management of data, professional development and budget, the alignment of Ethnic Studies to the Common Core standards; and

Therefore Be It Resolved: That The Board of Education commits to funding and supporting Ethnic Studies professional development, winter and summer retreats, release time for veteran Ethnic Studies teachers for mentoring and coaching new Ethnic Studies teachers and continuing the current funding model in where the costs of the teacher FTE's be shared between site-based budgets of participating schools and centralized budgets; and

Therefore Be it Resolved: The San Francisco Unified School District, within 5 years of passage of this resolution, explore ways to institutionalize its commitment to Ethnic Studies coursework by including Ethnic Studies coursework as a requirement for graduation and seek to make Ethnic Studies an A designation instead of a G designation in the A-G course framework.