



SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: November 17, 2020
FROM: Ms. Denise Juneau, Superintendent
LEAD STAFF: Dr. Diane DeBacker, Chief Academic Officer,
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For Introduction: December 16, 2020

For Action: January 13, 2021

1. TITLE

Approval of courses with new content for the secondary course catalog

2. PURPOSE

This Board Action Report asks the Board to approve courses with new content that have been recommended by the Superintendent pursuant to the requirements of Board Policy No. 2026 and Superintendent Procedure 2026SP. If approved, courses will be added to the secondary course catalog.

3. RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that the School Board approve the New Course Additions for School Year 2021-22 as attached to the Board Action Report.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Background

SPS educators submit proposed new courses every year, and after a formal review by District staff (content area managers, counselors, content area directors), those recommended for inclusion in the district secondary course catalog are either referred to the Chief Academic Officer, if made up of revised content, or to the Superintendent and the Board, if new content. For the latter, according to Superintendent Procedure 2026SP, “if the proposed course is made up of content new to the district course of study, the Superintendent recommends the course to the Board” and “the Board acts on the recommendation” upon review of the course content including subject area, description, course objectives, grade level/scale, and the reason for the request.

Once approved and added to the course catalog, the district’s online catalog will provide information on these courses, including required civil rights, federal and state data, as well as some district-specific fields, such as course descriptions and course objectives. Those with a Seattle Public Schools email account can review information for each course by accessing the catalog here: <https://coursecatalog.seattleschools.org>.

This year's course requests include:

- Several College in High School courses, five (5) in math subjects
- LGBTQIA+ History/Culture, Anti-racism, and Black Studies courses
- Re-alignment of Fine Arts middle school courses based on historical data review
- Adding CTE credit to levels 1 and 2 of the American Sign Language courses
- Re-alignment of Science course descriptions and objectives to meet 2013 WA standards
- Adding an additional Advisory course as proposed by the SPS/SEA Advisory workgroup
- Suspending/updating over 150 existing courses that no longer meet objectives for learning

The Board is being asked to make a recommendation on the seven new course requests that have expressly new content that has not been taught in SPS previously:

- Black Studies U.S. History 11A and 11B
- Global Warming A and B
- Health Topics – Honors
- LGBTQIA+ World History 3
- LGBTQIA+ Introduction to Literature and Composition 9A and 9B
- LGBTQIA+ American Literature and Composition 11A and 11B
- Antiracism & Civic Engagement

b. **Alternatives**

Do not approve the courses; as a result, these courses will not be available for schools to use. This alternative is not recommended given the merits of these courses.

5. FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE

The revenue source for this motion is N/A.

This motion has no immediate fiscal impact.

Expenditure: ☐ One-time ☐ Annual ☐ Multi-Year ☒ N/A

Revenue: ☐ One-time ☐ Annual ☐ Multi-Year ☒ N/A

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

With guidance from the District's Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

☐ Not applicable

☐ Tier 1: Inform

☐ Tier 2: Consult/Involve

☒ Tier 3: Collaborate

As a part of the course approval process, school staff or central staff propose new courses when they are needed or desired and have the opportunity to suspend or revise existing courses that no longer meet learning objectives and/or graduation requirements. In this way, requests for new or revised courses come primarily from schools as a means to satisfy student needs and requests and to take advantage of the skills and expertise of SPS teachers.

This year, the College & Career Readiness (CCR) Team implemented a new process to track course requests that gives more transparency to the steps in between requesting a course and it being added to the catalog. Now, any person with a SPS email account can navigate to the CCR course request tracking page to see all the course requests submitted for the year, by whom they were submitted, and if they have been recommended for approval by Curriculum, Assessment & Instruction (CAI) staff, District leadership and/or Board members.

7. **EQUITY ANALYSIS**

The CCR team has explicitly embedded racial equity considerations into the course request process. Specifically, requestors are required to examine and respond to the question, “How does this course request help meet the District’s goal of ensuring educational equity for students furthest from educational justice?” There are a number of equity considerations that requestors, content managers, building leaders, and district staff make before sending a formal course request including: access across the district; history of course demographics; increasing credit-earning opportunities; and creating multiple pathways to graduation.

Desired outcomes for this course request process include:

- Increase and enhance pathways to graduation
- Institute new courses that meet district expectations for promoting and recognizing diversity and inclusion
- Suspend or update existing courses that do not meet learning standards or support students furthest from educational justice (SFFEJ)

This year, we are adding several new College in the High School (CIHS) courses: Global Warming, Business Math, Math in Society, and Intro to Calculus. These college-level courses will provide an opportunity for students furthest from educational justice to have early college access and earn college credit through registering with the University of Washington and successfully completing the high school course. The math courses specifically meet math requirements for Algebra II and provide multiple opportunities for students to graduate prepared for upper-level math. Offering this course as a two-semester course allows the high school to provide high school-level math and reading supports, if necessary, while following the college curriculum, thereby providing a bridge from high school-level academics to college-level academic work. Completion of these CIHS courses will help students furthest from education justice to see themselves as successful college students.

Following up on the Board resolution passed in June, “Affirming Inclusion of Our LGBTQIA+ Students, Staff, & Community,” and the request from the Board that the Superintendent direct applicable staff to explore the development of a LGBTQIA+ history and culture course to be added to the Catalog of Secondary School Subjects, a course on LGBTQIA+ World History 3 is being proposed for approval. This course will center the intersectional voices of LGBTQIA+ people through critical analysis of contemporary and historic texts, art and media. Students will earn credit towards the World History 3 graduation requirement after taking and passing this course. Also in response to this resolution and after consulting with SPS educators, there are two other proposed courses that will count for an English Language Arts graduation requirements: LGBTQIA+ Introduction to Literature and Composition 9A and 9B; and LGBTQIA+ American Literature and Composition 11A and 11B. The Department of Equity, Partnerships, and Engagement and the CCR team are also proposing a Black Studies course in accordance with the Board Resolution and call for “meaningful actions that affirm its commitment to Black students and their safety and success in Seattle Public Schools and in America.” The Black Studies U.S. History 11A and 11B courses will focus on the Black/African American experience from a national and global perspective. This includes, but is not limited to African History, American History, Critical Race Theory, American Enslavement, Black/African American-led social movement, Black/African American social autonomy and economic development, Black/African American Innovation, as well as Black/African American leadership nationally and globally. Students will be able to earn credit towards the 11th grade history graduation requirement by taking and passing the Black Studies courses. We are exploring options for piloting materials as we develop and launch the Black Studies and LGBTQIA+ courses in accordance with Policy 2015 and in anticipation of a potential adoption.

There is also a proposal for a course entitled, Antiracism & Civic Engagement. In this course, students will be taught to view their own purpose in their school, community, and country through an antiracist lens through reading, discussing, and writing about a wide variety of texts in multimedia formats and featuring Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) voices.

Visual and Performing Arts reviewed course taking patterns based on race/ethnicity data at the secondary level in order to identify and address barriers for students of color. Their middle school course revisions are designed to remove barriers, create more opportunities, and articulate more clear pathways for students to enter and progress in their learning. The new Media Arts capstone course, proposed by the CTE department, will allow students to complete a graduation pathway in media arts that is aligned with a CTE Graduation Pathway. The Science team is revising the description and objectives for more than a dozen courses to meet 2013 Washington Science standards continuing extensive course revision work that has occurred over the last two years.

CCR and the District counseling staff have also recommended a new Advisory course, as proposed by the joint SPS/SEA Advisory workgroup, which will offer students additional credit earning opportunities to reach 24 credits, per the 24-credit revisioning work.

Before any course is suspended, work is done to ensure that there is a revised or updated course added to the course catalog to prevent negative impacts on students and prevent disruptions in learning or credit-earning opportunities. CCR also reviews course data each year to ensure that students do not lose valuable chances to earn cross-credit, industry-recognized certifications through our CTE classes, or dual credit with our CIHS, Running Start, and AP/IB course

selections. This course data review also includes a check to see if each of SPS' courses, and the corresponding course specifications meet WA State standards for special education and online learning.

It is the goal of the District staff and building leaders to continue to add course content to the SPS catalog that ensures students have equitable access to multiple pathways to success that are culturally relevant and academically rigorous.

8. STUDENT BENEFIT

Approval of this motion will provide new course offerings to students to learn, explore their interests, meet Washington State graduation requirements, and graduate ready for college, career, and life.

9. WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY

- ☐ Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds \$250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- ☐ Amount of grant exceeds \$250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)
- ☐ Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- ☐ Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- ☐ Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- ☒ Board Policy No. 2026 Course of Study Adoption, and Superintendent Procedure 2026SP, Addition to Catalog of Secondary School Subjects, provides the Board shall approve this item
- ☐ Other:

10. POLICY IMPLICATION

Under Policy No. 2026, Course of Study Adoption, it is within the Board's power to prescribe the course of study to serve the needs of students. The process is laid out in the accompanying Superintendent Procedure which is being followed here.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was discussed at the December 8, 2020 Student Services, Curriculum, and Instruction Committee meeting. The Committee reviewed the motion and moved the item forward for approval by the full Board."

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, these courses will be added to the district's course catalog beginning in the 2021-22 school year.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- New Course Content Proposals for School Year 2021-22 (for approval)
- Superintendent Procedure 2026SP, Addition to Catalog of Secondary School Subjects (for reference)

SPS Course Catalog New Course Content
Proposals for School Year 2021-22

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Course Name: Black Studies U.S. History 11A and 11B

Content Area: Social Studies

Requestor: Manal Al-Ansi, Director, Racial Equity Advancement; Caleb Perkins, Executive Director of College & Career Readiness

Grade Range: High School

Reason for Request: The School Board passed a resolution in June in support of meaningful actions that affirm its commitment to Black students and their safety and success in Seattle Public Schools and in America. In this resolution, the Board directs Superintendent Juneau to... create a stand-alone Black studies course for middle and high school students that will be required for graduation from Seattle Public Schools.

Full Description Narrative: Seattle Public Schools is committed to building a Black Education Program in response to the insights and asks of Black students, families and community across SPS. This program will be for student credit and will be led by SPS's community-partners and staff across departments.

Black Studies U.S. History 11A and 11B will focus on the Black/African American experience from a national and global perspective. This includes, but is not limited to African History, American History, Critical Race Theory, American Enslavement, Black/African American-led social movement, Black/African American social autonomy and economic development, Black/African American Innovation, as well as Black/African American leadership nationally and globally. In this course, Black Studies, will be taught through an intersectional lens and through resources created by Black educators, theorists, leaders, authors, organizers, historians, researchers and scholars, building upon students' critical analysis and awareness of miseducation embedded in traditional curricula and accounts of history, racial equity, Black/African American identity, and Black/African American experiences nationally and globally.

Racial Equity Considerations: As stated in the Board resolution calling for the creation of this course, the Seattle Public Schools strategic initiatives are focused on ensuring racial equity in our educational system by unapologetically addressing the needs of students of color who are furthest from educational justice and working to undo legacies of racism through closing gaps in service to African American males and other students of color furthest from educational justice. This course is seen as another step in support of these strategic initiatives.

Course Name: Global Warming A and B

Content Area: Science

Requestor: Lura Ercolano, Middle College High School Teacher

Grade Range: High School

Reason for Request: Completing the two-semester course sequence will provide an opportunity for eligible students to earn high school credit and 5.0 University of Washington college credits while gaining a fundamental understanding of the science, impacts and issues of global warming and climate change. The course requestor, Lura Ercolano, has been pre-approved by UW to teach this official UW in the High School course.

Full Description Narrative:

Global Warming A is the first semester of a year-long dual credit course that follows the curriculum of University of Washington's College of the Environment Atmospheric Sciences course "ATM S 111 Global Warming: Understanding the Issues."

Students taking both high school semesters A and B have the option to register to earn 5 UW credits through the UW in the High School program.

This course presents a broad overview of the science of global warming, including causes, evidence, and societal and environmental impacts. The course explores future climate projections, discusses societal decisions that influence greenhouse gas emission scenarios and explores our ability to adapt to climate change, all topics fundamental for living in the 21st Century.

In this course, students will learn ways to identify disinformation versus science reasoning from evidence and will explore the debate on global warming with a focus on scientific ideas.

Global Warming B is the second semester of a year-long dual credit course that follows the curriculum of University of Washington's College of the Environment Atmospheric Sciences course "ATM S 111 Global Warming: Understanding the Issues."

Students taking both high school semesters A and B have the option to register to earn 5 UW credits through the UW in the High School program.

This course presents a broad overview of the science of global warming, including causes, evidence, and societal and environmental impacts. The course explores future climate projections, discusses societal decisions that influence greenhouse gas emission scenarios and explores our ability to adapt to climate change, all topics fundamental for living in the 21st Century.

In this course, students will learn ways to identify disinformation versus science reasoning from evidence and will explore the debate on global warming with a focus on scientific ideas.

Racial Equity Considerations: These dual-credit courses provide an opportunity for students furthest from educational justice to have early college access and earn college credit through registering with UW and successfully completing the High School course. Offering these courses as a two-semester course allows the high school to provide high school-level math and reading supports, if necessary, while

following the college curriculum, thereby providing a bridge from high school-level academics to college-level academic work. Completion of the course will encourage students furthest from educational justice to see themselves as successful college students.

Course Name: Health Topics – Honors

Content Area: Health Education

Requestor: Lura Ercolano, Middle College High School Teacher

Grade Range: High School

Reason for Request: This course will challenge students to explore Health topics beyond their standard 9th grade Health class.

Full Description Narrative: Health Topics Honors is an upper division elective Health class in which students will explore health topics selected from current events or personal interests. Topics covered will vary based on student interests. Collaboration, creativity, problem solving are employed to complete projects throughout the course.

Racial Equity Considerations: Students of color, their families, and their communities are disproportionately affected by many current health issues, such as COVID-19 infection rate and fatality rate, diabetes, safe drinking water, air pollution, and infant mortality. This course encourages students, including our students of color, to continue learning about health issues and moves that learning towards advocacy.

Course Name: LGBTQIA+ World History 3

Content Area: Social Studies

Requestor: Caleb Perkins, Executive Director of College & Career Readiness

Grade Range: High School

Reason for Request: The Board passed in June a resolution Affirming Inclusion of Our LGBTQIA+ Students, Staff, & Community. In this resolution, the Board requests the Superintendent to direct applicable staff to explore the development of a LGBTQIA+ history and culture course to be added to the Catalog of Secondary School Subjects, if staff determines that the new course is needed or desired, and provide a report to the Curriculum and Instruction Policy Committee on their determination.

Full Description Narrative: LGBTQIA+ World History 3 is a course that centers the intersectional voices of LGBTQIA+ people through critical analysis of contemporary and historic texts, art and media.

The themes of identity and language, representation, intersectional systems of power and privilege, colonization, capitalism, liberation and resistance movements, and the thriving of marginalized people will be explored through this course using student centered historical scholarship.

Racial Equity Considerations: “The Board Resolution Affirming Inclusion of Our LGBTQIA+ Students, Staff, & Community”, notes that a 2019-20 Focus Goal of the Seattle Public Schools Strategic Plan is to provide schools where students feel safe and welcome and that goal is rooted in the belief that students should be celebrated for being their authentic selves, recognizing that when students are provided healthy, safe, engaging, supportive, and academically rigorous school environments they are able to learn to their full potential. We also know LGBTQIA+ youth, particularly LGBTQIA+ youth of color, still face significant discrimination and barriers to inclusion as compared to their peers, including disproportionate rates of school disciplinary action and are two-to-four times more likely than their peers to be physically assaulted or threatened at school, leading them to be less likely to attend school, according to a national study (2017 RTI Report, “Violence and LGBTQ+ Communities”).

Course Name: LGBTQIA+ Introduction to Literature and Composition 9A and 9B

Content Area: English Language Arts

Requestor: Caleb Perkins, Executive Director of College & Career Readiness

Grade Range: High School

Reason for Request: The Board passed in June a resolution Affirming Inclusion of Our LGBTQIA+ Students, Staff, & Community. In this resolution, the Board requests the Superintendent to direct applicable staff to explore the development of a LGBTQIA+ history and culture course to be added to the Catalog of Secondary School Subjects, if staff determines that the new course is needed or desired, and provide a report to the Curriculum and Instruction Policy Committee on their determination.

Full Description Narrative: LGBTQIA+ Introduction to Literature and Composition 9A and 9B is an English Language Arts course that centers the intersectional voices of LGBTQIA+ people through an introduction to and a critical analysis of contemporary literature.

The themes of identity and language, representation, and intersectional systems of power and privilege will be explored through an introduction to and the study of contemporary literature.

Racial Equity Considerations: “The Board Resolution Affirming Inclusion of Our LGBTQIA+ Students, Staff, & Community”, notes that a 2019-20 Focus Goal of the Seattle Public Schools Strategic Plan is to provide schools where students feel safe and welcome and that goal is rooted in the belief that students should be celebrated for being their authentic selves, recognizing that when students are provided healthy, safe, engaging, supportive, and academically rigorous school environments they are able to learn to their full potential. We also know LGBTQIA+ youth, particularly LGBTQIA+ youth of color, still face significant discrimination and barriers to inclusion as compared to their peers, including disproportionate rates of school disciplinary action and are two-to-four times more likely than their peers to be physically assaulted or threatened at school, leading them to be less likely to attend school, according to a national study (2017 RTI Report, “Violence and LGBTQ+ Communities”).

Course Name: LGBTQIA+ American Literature and Composition 11A and 11B

Content Area: English Language Arts

Requestor: Caleb Perkins, Executive Director of College & Career Readiness

Grade Range: High School

Reason for Request: The Board passed in June a resolution Affirming Inclusion of Our LGBTQIA+ Students, Staff, & Community. In this resolution, the Board requests the Superintendent to direct applicable staff to explore the development of a LGBTQIA+ history and culture course to be added to the Catalog of Secondary School Subjects, if staff determines that the new course is needed or desired, and provide a report to the Curriculum and Instruction Policy Committee on their determination.

Full Description Narrative: LGBTQIA+ American Literature and Composition 11A and 11B is an English Language Arts course that centers the intersectional voices of LGBTQIA+ people through the critical analysis of American literature.

The themes of identity and language, representation, intersectional systems of power and privilege, colonization, capitalism, liberation and resistance movements, and the thriving of marginalized people will be explored through this course through the study of American literature.

Racial Equity Considerations: “The Board Resolution Affirming Inclusion of Our LGBTQIA+ Students, Staff, & Community”, notes that a 2019-20 Focus Goal of the Seattle Public Schools Strategic Plan is to provide schools where students feel safe and welcome and that goal is rooted in the belief that students should be celebrated for being their authentic selves, recognizing that when students are provided healthy, safe, engaging, supportive, and academically rigorous school environments they are able to learn to their full potential. We also know LGBTQIA+ youth, particularly LGBTQIA+ youth of color, still face significant discrimination and barriers to inclusion as compared to their peers, including disproportionate rates of school disciplinary action and are two-to-four times more likely than their peers to be physically assaulted or threatened at school, leading them to be less likely to attend school, according to a national study (2017 RTI Report, “Violence and LGBTQ+ Communities”).

Course Name: Antiracism & Civic Engagement

Content Area: Social Studies

Requestor: Taryn Coe, Ballard High School Teacher

Grade Range: High School

Reason for Request: The course is being requested because STAR (Students & Teachers Against Racism) has functioned successfully as a civic engagement and learning club at Ballard High School for the past five years. Students and teachers work together to learn about different forms of racism in our own lives and in the institutions, we inhabit; we use this learning to advocate for change in our school and in our community. Putting this course into the course catalog will provide this opportunity for learning and action to students across the district.

Full Description Narrative: The Antiracism & Civic Engagement course is a semester-long class that prepares students to think critically about racism – at the individual, collective, and systemic level – in our schools, in our community, and in our country. Through reading, discussing, and writing about a wide variety of texts in multimedia formats and featuring BIPOC voices, students are taught to view their own purpose in their school, community, and country through an antiracist lens. This course is action-oriented. Students are expected to turn their learning into civic engagement that is antiracist in nature and that will create meaningful long-term systemic change in our school and in our community.

Racial Equity Considerations: This course request helps to meet the District's goal of ensuring racial equity and educational justice for students of color by providing a classroom experience that encourages students to understand how racism functions (both at the personal and institutional level) and by teaching students how to fight against the racism that permeates our society. Students of color are empowered to develop strategies to combat the racism they face. White students are encouraged to develop strategies to become effective allies for students of color.

Superintendent Procedure 2026SP

Addition to Catalog of Secondary School Subjects

Approved by: s/S. Enfield Date: 12/14/11

Dr. Susan Enfield, Interim Superintendent



Introduction

The Catalog of Secondary School Subjects serves as the master list from which schools select the courses they offer. Decisions regarding which courses are offered at a specific school should be made on the basis of student need, high school graduation requirements, and available staff and facility resources.

No courses other than those in the catalog are approved. Persons responsible for preparing the master schedule for a school should be very careful to assign proper course numbers to all of the courses in the schedule. Course descriptions are provided to facilitate that task.

Definitions

1. New Content - Information, skills, or concepts not previously approved by the School Board.
2. Revised Content - Content already approved by the School Board, but organized into a different course format.

Procedures

1. School staff or central staff determines that a new course is needed or desired.
2. Staff reviews the present catalog descriptions of similar courses and determines whether the proposed course would be made up of content new to the course of study or is a revision of content already approved.
3. A proposal for a new course is completed and sent to the Coordinator of Curriculum Support Services.
4. The Coordinator of Curriculum Support Services reviews the proposal and refers it to the appropriate curriculum consultant(s) for comment.
5. The curriculum consultant recommends approval, revision, or disapproval of the course to the Coordinator of Curriculum Support Services. If approval is not recommended, or a revision is recommended, the originator of the proposal is so informed.
6. If the proposed course is made up of revised content, it may be approved by the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning.
7. If the proposed course is made up of content new to the district course of study, the Superintendent recommends the course to the Board.
8. The Board acts on the recommendation.
9. If the course is approved, it is placed in the CATALOG OF SECONDARY SCHOOL SUBJECTS.

Approved: December 2011
Revised:
Cross Reference: Policy No. 2026