

Seattle Public Schools

Black Studies



Guiding Questions for this document:

1. What is the current state of Black Studies in the District?
2. What do we believe are next steps?

What is Black Studies?

Black Studies is a course that focuses on Black/African American experiences 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.

Black Studies is 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.

The Black Studies course is managed in the Department of Liberatory Education under the Black Education Program. The Ethnic Studies Program partners with the Black Education Program to support professional learning among educators and other staff that implement the Black Studies via course or curriculum design across subjects.

What is our current process?

The District is working to develop liberatory curriculum for grades K-5 that embeds Black Studies across all subjects, and to create a district-wide Black Studies course for middle and high school students that will be required for graduation from Seattle Public Schools. Currently, the District is developing a district-wide Black Studies course for Spring Semester of 2021 for 11th grade students and a middle school Black Studies course in alignment with Dr. Gholdy Muhammad's culturally and historically responsive curriculum and practices. Training and capacity building for effectively teaching Black Studies will be prioritized and aligned through institutes, workshops, and coaching support for educators and administrators. The Black Education Program is also developing the BEAT (Black Education Advise Team), a team of key stakeholders from community and institutional partnerships, to plan and expand the program beyond the courses.

What growth opportunities do we envision?

SPS has a unique opportunity to create a through-line of Black Studies across every level of our education system. The Black Education Program is supporting the development and implementation of yearlong Black Studies in the elementary, middle, and high school level. This will eventually include Summer programming with community-guided lessons in alignment with the vision expressed by Black students, families, and communities. The goal is to provide ongoing and sustainable Black Education that is community-centered, responsive, and quality education.

Budget and Staffing Summary

	Adopted Budget		
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total Budget	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ 414,984
Staffing FTE	-	1.0	2.0

Positions Staffed	FTE	FTE	FTE
Black Studies Program Manager	-	1.0	1.0
Curriculum Specialist	-	-	1.0