

UNIÓN DEL BARRIO

LOS ANGELES - OXNARD - SAN DIEGO



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Union del Barrio fully supports Ethnic Studies in all public schools. Given that the Los Angeles Unified School District is made up of a majority of underrepresented students of color, this initiative is long overdue.

We recognize that the history of oppressed people's in general and of people of color in particular is hardly acknowledged in the most widely used history text books in the United States. For this reason, we support the LAUSD making Ethnic Studies courses a high school graduation requirement for students.

In order to be a well-rounded scholar in the 21st century, we would agree that students should be exposed to multiple perspectives of US History. We believe that students should learn more about their own ethnicity and about other cultures in order to develop greater social awareness and cultural sensitivity. Additionally, students will be better prepared for these courses which are also graduation requirements at many universities across the U.S.

If we require our youth to take Art classes and Physical Education classes to graduate, it makes sense that they should also have to take courses that will make them more aware and appreciative of the diverse cultures that they will encounter throughout the city of Los Angeles.

Other schools districts such as the Tucson Unified School District have already demonstrated that these courses not only raise the self-esteem of students but they also raise standardized test scores, student academic performance and improve high school graduation rates.

LAUSD has the opportunity to do something truly heroic and historic for the students they serve. LAUSD can show the entire nation that while Arizona and others have sadly taken steps backwards in terms of cultural inclusion, Los Angeles is pushing forward with a truly progressive and transformative educational curriculum that should be emulated by districts across the nation.

Union del Barrio will continue to mobilize support for Ethnic Studies NOW and will mobilize members from our community to attend future LAUSD Board meetings to show that the overwhelming majority of our community supports ethnic studies courses. We also offer the LAUSD support to prepare teachers who will be teaching Ethnic Studies courses. We can provide resources in courses such as African American Studies, Latin American Studies and Mexican American Studies, among others. We value and look forward to the implementation of these courses in LAUSD.

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