

Comments to PRJUSD Board of Trustees

Agenda item: Approval of a permanent Ethnic Studies elective at PRHS, January 11 Meeting

Submitted by Geoffrey Land, Ethnic Studies teacher, PRHS

January 5, 2022

Dear President Arend and Honorable Board members,

Last Spring, I stood before you as you considered and ultimately approved the new Ethnic Studies Honors course at PRHS. I told you I believed the course will contribute to civic education and community dialogue in a way that honors the many diverse perspectives and lived experiences of our Bearcat students. I promised to teach the course in a balanced manner that respects the diverse viewpoints of our students and the community as a whole.

Now, one semester in, I am happy to report that the course is outperforming my own optimistic hopes for the class. Students are engaged, enthusiastic, and every day allows us to expand our conversations about identity, culture, American history, and multiculturalism. Students have sat on panels for Cuesta and Cal Poly education classes, assisted with the Diversity Committee forum at PRHS, met with Salinan and Chumash leaders, and contributed to a number of important efforts at the high school to expand conversations about diversity and inclusion. I truly believe the class is helping build bridges and promote understanding among staff and students, and in the broader community.

I am writing to thank you for giving students the opportunity to access this curriculum, and request your approval for a continuation of the course as a regular Social Studies elective for 11th and 12th graders. Thank you for your support for diverse educational offerings for our students.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Land
Social Studies Department, PRHS

cc. Dr. Curt Dubost