March 6, 2026

POLICY ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

TO: Education and Workforce Development Committee

THRU: Dr. Arun Puracken AP
Education and Workforce Committee Director

FROM: Caleb Callender
Legislative Budget and Policy Analyst

RE: Policy Analysis and Fiscal Impact Statement
CR-012-2026 Enhanced African American Studies Curriculum

CR-012-2026 (*Proposed by:* Council Member Adams-Stafford)

Assigned to the Education and Workforce Development Committee

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A RESOLUTION CONCERNING ENHANCED AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES CURRICULUM IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY for the purpose of the County Council affirming its support for mandatory, comprehensive African American history instruction in all Prince George's County public schools.

Fiscal Summary

Direct Impact

Expenditures: Additional professional development costs may be incurred to implement this curriculum.

Revenues: No anticipated impact on revenues.

Indirect Impact

Likely Favorable.

Legislative Summary:

CR-012-2026 proposed by Council Member Adams-Stafford and cosponsored by Council Members Hunter, Burroughs, Oriadha, Olson, Adams, Blegay, Fisher, and Dernoga would advocate for the broader inclusion of African American history instruction across academic disciplines in Prince George's County Public Schools. The study of African American history provides a more holistic understanding of the nation's history, enriching students' experience while exposing them to historical figures and contributions that reflect the identities of many students throughout Prince George's County. While current African American history instruction establishes a foundation for the impact of African colonization and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, this does not provide a complete account of the contributions and achievements of African Americans.

This legislation doesn't seek to establish a formal Africana studies framework, defined as the study of the African diaspora. Rather, the resolution supports the interdisciplinary integration of US African American history across the PGCPS curriculum, including instruction on African American history in Maryland and Prince George's County. Additionally, the resolution will encourage teachers to use assessment to determine students' mastery of the content and skills.

Current Law/Background:

State and County Law:

In 2021, Maryland Delegate Wilson sought to pass HB-011[1] which would require the Maryland Board of Education to develop content standards for African American History to be included in the State Standards and Frameworks for Social Studies. Although this bill didn't pass, MSDE has since aligned its standards to ensure that African American history is incorporated into social studies courses.

Within Prince George's County, there is currently an outline in place for social studies courses that details the expectations for the integration of African American History content by grade. For example, according to the Social Studies office in PGCPS, 5th-grade students in US History are to "analyze multiple perspectives, studying how diverse populations, including African Americans and American Indian Nations, shaped and were impacted by early events. The curriculum focuses on Maryland's unique colonial establishment, its proprietary system, and the role of its diverse populations during the Revolutionary Era, making local connections between the past and the present". This outline provides a framework for social studies teachers in Prince George's County to implement within their curriculum.

[1] Maryland General Assembly Legislation

Neighboring Jurisdictions:

In 2023-2024, Harford County Public Schools participated in a national pilot in which three of its schools implemented an Advanced Placement (AP) African American studies course. However, the Harford Board of Education voted to discontinue this course in the summer of 2024, which drew harsh criticism from the public. Former Maryland Teacher Union president Cheryl Bost stated, "When we tell them that they can't learn about people who look like them and can't be trusted with understanding the complexity of our history, that sends a strongly negative message about our schools, our history, and our belief in the potential of the next generation. When we know better, we must do better". As a result, the course was reinstated for the 2024-2025 school year. Over 200 students[2] enrolled in the course, and for 39% of those students, this was their first AP course.

Resource Personnel:

- Leroy D. Maddox, Jr., Legislative Officer
- Taylor Ware, Chief of Staff

Discussion/Policy Analysis:

Research demonstrates that integrating Black history into classroom instruction is essential for providing students with a more comprehensive understanding of the United States of America. According to the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the inclusion of Black history fosters meaningful representation and enables African American students to develop a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage.[3]

It is vital that African American students experience a sense of belonging in the classroom, particularly when the educator workforce may not reflect the demographic composition of the student population. Traditional American pedagogical frameworks have not consistently centered the experiences and contributions of people of color; moreover, when such narratives are included, they have at times been presented primarily through negative or limited portrayals.[4] These approaches can adversely affect students' self-perception, engagement, and overall educational experience.

Such integration is essential not only to promote confidence and positive identity development among African American students but also to broaden perspectives and challenge misconceptions regarding the contributions and experiences of African Americans. Through exposure to

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[2] AP Black Studies Classes Back in Harford County
[3] A Year-Round Approach to Teaching Black History
[4] Black Student Belonging in K12 Schools

interdisciplinary instruction in African American history, students gain a critical understanding of past systemic structures and their ongoing impact on society today.

Since incorporating this content may require some educators to engage with material beyond their prior instructional experience, comprehensive professional development is essential to support the effective implementation of African American history content integration examples across grade levels and subject areas. Providing teachers with appropriate resources, training, and workshops will help ensure high-quality instruction and improved educational outcomes for students.

Fiscal Impact:

- *Direct Impact*

Adoption of CR-012-2026 may have a slightly adverse fiscal impact on the County through increased costs of professional development for teachers to help properly integrate African American history across all subject curricula.

- *Indirect Impact*

Adoption of CR-012-2026 may have a favorable indirect impact by enhancing students' knowledge of African American history, which is foundational to a comprehensive understanding of American history, for all students.

- *Appropriated in the Current Fiscal Year Budget*

No.

Effective Date of Proposed Legislation:

This Resolution goes into effect on the date of its adoption.

If you require additional information or have questions about this fiscal impact statement, please contact me by phone or email.