

The History of High School Ethnic Studies Courses in California: A Case Study of Santa Maria
Joint Union High School District

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Introduction

According to José Lara, a leader in the push for statewide high school ethnic studies in California's state government, in the 2014-2015 school year "over 19 [California high] school districts passed resolutions establishing or expanding Ethnic Studies programs across the state [and] five districts took it a step further and made it a graduation requirement."¹ The five years from 2014 to 2018 saw massive growth in this field, reflecting the conditions that drove this expansion.² In 2013, the year before this expansion in ethnic studies began, only 1% of California's high schools offered an ethnic studies course.³ The 2014 to 2018 ethnic studies expansion almost culminated in the passage of AB-2772 in 2018 that would have made ethnic studies a graduation requirement for all California high school students; this bill was vetoed by

¹ Jose Lara, "Guest Editorial: Latinos are the New Majority in CA, But not in our Textbooks," *La Prensa San Diego* (San Diego, Calif.), 2015.

https://search.proquest.com/docview/1699253346?accountid=10362&rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo.

² For information about high school districts that acted in the period from 2014-2018, see: Stephen Ceasar, "L.A. Unified to require ethnic studies for high school graduation," *LA Times*, December 8, 2014, <http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-ethnic-studies-20141209-story.html>; Frances Kai-Hwa Wang, "Oakland Schools Join Others in California in Requiring Ethnic Studies," *NBCNews.com*, November 10, 2015, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/oakland-schools-join-others-california-requiring-ethnic-studies-n459886>; Jennie Luna, "Victory in Oxnard Union High School District," *Ethnic Studies Now*, May 17, 2018, http://www.ethnicstudiesnow.com/victory_in_oxnard_union_high_school_district; Loretta Kalb, "Sacramento City schools to establish ethnic studies as graduation requirement," *The Sacramento Bee*, June 9, 2015, <https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/education/article23622829.html>; City News Service, "San Diego Unified To Expand Ethnic Studies in District," *KPBS News*, April 13, 2016, <https://www.kpbs.org/news/2016/apr/13/san-diego-unified-to-expand-ethnic-studies-in/>; SFUSD, "All SFUSD High Schools to Offer Ethnic Studies Classes," *San Francisco Union School District*, December 10, 2014, <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/news/current-news/2014-news-archive/12/all-sfusd-high-schools-to-offer-ethnic-studies-classes.html>; Blanca Garcia, "Santa Barbara School District to Add Ethnic Studies," *Santa Barbara Independent*, June 14, 2018, <https://www.independent.com/news/2018/jun/14/santa-barbara-school-district-add-ethnic-studies/>; Ben Miller, "SMHS's Chicano/Latino studies course only one of its kind in city," *Santa Maria Times*, June, 8, 2014, https://santamariatimes.com/news/local/education/smhs-s-chicano-latino-studies-course-only-one-of-its/article_c3e63e84-eeed-11e3-a3ec-0019bb2963f4.html; Riva Lu, "College Accredited Course for High School Students," *UWIRE Text*, September 29, 2015, http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE|A430225947&v=2.1&u=calpolyw_csu&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w; Antonio, Victoria, "Ethnic Studies Slowly Being Implemented at San Bernardino Schools," *El Chicano Weekly* (San Bernardino, Calif.), 2015.

https://search.proquest.com/docview/1764127655?accountid=10362&rfr_id=info%3Axri%2Fsid%3Aprimo; California-Mexico Center, "El Rancho Unified School District Ethnic Studies Revolution Documentary," April 2, 2018. <http://california-mexicocenter.org/el-rancho-unified-school-district-ethnic-studies-revolution/>.

³ Luis Alejo and Jose Lara, "Ethnic studies should be a high school requirement," *EdSource*, August 14, 2018. <https://edsources.org/2018/ethnic-studies-should-be-a-high-school-requirement/601244>.

Governor Jerry Brown due to his desire to limit graduation requirements and maintain the local autonomy of school districts.⁴

In many ways, ethnic studies' expansion between 2014 and 2018 fulfilled past leader's desires for educational equality and ethnic self-determination. Ethnic studies in California began in 1968 in both the Bay Area and Southern California with activist groups such as the Third World Liberation Front and East Los Angeles Thirteen leading this movement.⁵ Contemporary ethnic studies seek to empower subaltern and ethnically diverse experiences in the classroom, reflecting California's history of ethnic studies development correlating with community responses to social and educational issues.⁶ This community component of ethnic studies' growth includes the impact of these programs in institutions of higher education. The development of ethnic studies in California has also included changing pedagogies, state laws and statewide curriculum each with varying levels of support from ethnic studies' inception (1968) to its period of greatest expansion (2014 to 2018).

This work considers the history of ethnic studies in California high schools from 1968 to 2018 and with an emphasis on Santa Maria Joint Unified High School District (SMJUHSD). SMJUHSD offers an important case study with its unique application of ethnic studies in the field of history through a course titled "Ethnic and Social Justice in US History" (ESJ in US History).⁷ The course's uniqueness stems from the fact that it directly incorporates ethnic studies

⁴ California State Legislature, "AB-2772 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies: grant program," Sacramento, September 5, 2018. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billHistoryClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2772.

⁵ Allyson Tintiango-Cubales, Rita Kohli, Jocyl Sacramento, Nick Henning, Ruchi Agarwal-Rangnath, and Christine Sleeter, "Toward an Ethnic Studies Pedagogy: Implications for K-12 Schools from the Research," *The Urban Review* 47, no. 1 (2015): 119-20. <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs11256-014-0280-y.pdf>

⁶ Catherine Sleeter, "The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies," *National Education Association Research Department* (2011): 20. <https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/NBI-2010-3-value-of-ethnic-studies.pdf>.

⁷ The majority of the fieldwork for this project took place at Pioneer Valley High School (PVHS) in Santa Maria. Twenty observation hours were conducted at PVHS in ESJ in US History classes and other history-social science classes.

into an “Area A” history-social sciences course rather than being an “Area G” elective course.⁸ SMJUHSD also exemplified the local and statewide nature of California’s ethnic studies development with much of its expansion occurring between 2014 and 2018. Furthermore, SMJUHSD has reflected the population trends of California’s students with an overwhelming majority of its students identifying as “Hispanic/Latino” (about 85%); these students were also the majority of all high school students in the state of California in the 2018.⁹ “Hispanic/Latino” students (and other non-white students) have demonstrated different educational needs than their white counterparts, necessitating a greater understanding for the purpose of educational equality.

This work is split into two parts. The first section studies the broader history and trends of ethnic studies in California high schools. The second section considers SMJUHSD and its relationship to the statewide movement and its unique characteristics. This work ultimately reveals the relevance of ethnic studies in California’s high schools in its first 50 years of existence (1968 to 2018) and beyond based upon its importance to California’s education system with regards to issues in history-social science courses and the needs of its ethnically diverse students.

Factors Pushing Ethnic Studies in California High Schools

As one of many states to embrace ethnic studies curriculum, California school districts’ adoption of these courses reflects widespread factors for increased ethnic studies education, including developments in pedagogy. Other states have explicitly applied the work of multicultural education and ethnic studies pedagogists in cultivating their own ethnic studies

⁸ California’s high school graduation requirements are split into areas a-g depending on subject matter. Area “a” is history-social sciences; students are required to take three years of area “a” courses including World History, United States History and United States Government/Economics. The majority of ethnic studies courses fall into area “g” electives courses rather than area “a” history-social sciences. Thus, ESJ in US History is a unique course in that it is both an ethnic studies and area “a” course.

⁹ California Department of Education Data Reporting Office, “Enrollment Multi-Year Summary,” <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrEthYears.aspx?cds=00&aggllevel=state&year=2017-18>.

programs and even making it a high school graduation requirement. California's high school districts similarly have applied these pedagogies to their curricula. For example, SMJUHSD's Ethnic Gender Studies (EGS) department directly cited the work of Dee and Penner (2017) and Sleeter (2011), extremely prevalent ethnic studies pedagogists, in their reasoning for the expansion of ethnic studies courses.¹⁰

Additionally, ethnic studies have forwarded changes that address long-standing issues in high school history-social sciences curricula throughout the United States. Conventional United States high school history courses lacked historically-accurate textbooks and proper learning methodologies, over relying on "Eurocentric" content from textbooks.¹¹ These deficiencies were especially concerning as over 80% of Americans do not take a history course after high school.¹² Therefore, a vast majority of Americans have not received adequate education in the history-social sciences.¹³ These ideas inspired the 2016 California History-Social Sciences framework to an extent and are even more prominent in ethnic studies courses such as SMJUHSD's "Ethnic and Social Justice in US History." Ethnic studies have historically addressed these deficiencies with the purpose of improving curriculum and empowering historically underrepresented ethnic groups.

¹⁰ SMUHSD, "Ethnic and Gender Studies," Brochure, Santa Maria, 2017, http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/PagesLevel2/Documents/Ethnic_and_Gender_Studies_Brochure...pdf.

¹¹ Sleeter, "The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies," 1-2; James W. Loewen, *Lies my Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (New York: New Press distributed by W.W. Norton and Company, 1995); James W. Loewen, *Teaching What Really Happened: How to Avoid the Tyranny of Textbooks & Get Students Excited About Doing History* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2010); "The Nation's Report Card: 2014 US History, 8th Grade," *US Department of Education*, 1. <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/main2014/pdf/2015112h.pdf>.

¹² Loewen, *Lies my Teacher Told Me*, 5; Loewen, *Teaching What Really Happened*, 10-11.

¹³ Loewen, *Lies my Teacher Told Me*, 1; The 2010 and 2014 reports reveal deficiencies nationwide for 12th graders and 8th grader respectively: National Center for Education Statistics, "The Nation's Report Card: 2010 US History," *US Department of Education*, 37. <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/main2010/2011468.pdf>; National Center for Education Statistics; "The Nation's Report Card: 2014 US History, 8th Grade," *US Department of Education*, 1. <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/main2014/pdf/2015112h.pdf>.

Ultimately, California’s educators must consider the changes ethnic studies offer based on the state’s diverse population.¹⁴ Historically, California’s African American, American Indian and Latinx populations have been subjected to educational inequalities compared to their White and Asian American counterparts, resulting in differing levels of academic success.¹⁵ These achievement gaps similarly impact the United States as a whole, as shown by the 2012 Census:



Figure 1: Educational Attainment of American Ethnic Groups

¹⁴ Several ethnic studies pedagogists have made a similar argument: Cati de los Ríos, V. López, and Jorge Morrell, "Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Race: Ethnic Studies and Literacies of Power in High School Classrooms," *Race and Social Problems* 7, no. 1 (2015): 85; Sleeter, "The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies," 20.

¹⁵ Russell W. Rumberger and J. Douglas Willms, "The Impact of Racial and Ethnic Segregation on the Achievement Gap in California High Schools," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 14, no. 4 (1992): 377-96. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1164282>.

¹⁶ Pérez Huber, Lindsay, María C. Malagón, Brianna R. Ramírez, Lorena Camargo González, Alberto Jiménez, and Verónica N. Vélez, "Still Falling through the Cracks: Revisiting the Latina/o Education Pipeline," *UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center* 19, November, 2015: 3. <http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/files/RR19.pdf>.

As figure 1 shows, these educational inequalities affect California's student population based on the concentration of ethnic non-whites in California's schools, especially Chicanx/Latinx students; about 75% of California's high school students identified as non-white in 2018 and over 50% of all students identified as "Hispanic/Latino."¹⁷

Multicultural education and ethnic studies pedagogies may offer a solution to these problems in California high schools, namely issues in history-social sciences courses and achievement gaps based on race and ethnicity. In 2018, California Congressmen Luis Alejo and José Lara, two leading advocates in the push for statewide ethnic studies, emphasized this phenomenon in arguing for the passage of AB 2772:

Making ethnic studies an integral part of high school makes sense in California as our state is home to the largest and most diverse student population in the nation. Students of color account for 76 percent of the population in our public schools and California students speak 90 different languages. Given California's growing diversity, it is especially important that students learn about the various racial and ethnic groups in our state and their shared American identity.¹⁸

California's statewide education system includes these ideas expressed by Alejo and Lara as they are included in the 2016 History-Social Sciences framework and in ethnic studies legislation passed between 2011 and 2018.

The History of Multicultural Education Pedagogies and Ethnic Studies Pedagogy

Multicultural education pedagogies and ethnic studies pedagogy have been essential to the development of ethnic studies in California high schools. These works have studied all levels of the education system for the purpose of improving multicultural education. This work similarly addresses the potential of multicultural education with the study of ethnic studies in California's high schools.

¹⁷ California Department of Education Data Reporting Office, "Enrollment Multi-Year Summary," <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrEthYears.aspx?cds=00&aggllevel=state&year=2017-18>.

¹⁸ Luis Alejo and José Lara, "Ethnic studies should be a high school requirement," *EdSource*, August 14, 2018. <https://edsources.org/2018/ethnic-studies-should-be-a-high-school-requirement/601244>.

Multicultural education pedagogies include works at all levels of schooling and for many different ethnic groups. Multicultural education pedagogies interact symbiotically with ethnic studies pedagogy as each field of study considers diverse groups of students and their success in education. Furthermore, it is common for researchers in each field to implicitly and explicitly cite one another's work. For example, Dee and Penner (2017) identify "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy" (CRP) in San Francisco Union School District (SFUSD) ethnic studies courses.¹⁹

Multicultural education pedagogies include "Critical Pedagogy", "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy" (CRP), "Culturally Responsive Teaching" (CRT) and "Multicultural Education."²⁰ Paulo Freire's work, "Critical Pedagogy" (popularized in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*), emerged at in the same era that ethnic studies courses were first developed (late 1960s and early 1970s) and remained relevant through the emergence of other multicultural education pedagogies. Freire's lasting contributions to pedagogy include critiquing the "banking system" of education and forwarding a problem-solving praxis around community issues.²¹ CRP and CRT gained popularity in the late-1990s and early 2000s. CRP focuses on connecting with students' backgrounds and community involvement through curriculum.²² The three key goals of CRP are to "produce students who can achieve academically, produce students who demonstrate cultural competence, and develop students who can both understand and critique the existing social

¹⁹ Thomas S. Dee, and Emily K Penner, "The Causal Effects of Cultural Relevance: Evidence from an Ethnic Studies Curriculum," *American Educational Research Journal* 54, no. 1 (2017): 127.

²⁰ Pedagogists often treat each of these theories separately; however, each theory is interrelated in its goal of providing quality education for all demographic groups. Therefore, for the sake of this paper, these pedagogies including CRP, CRT and multicultural education will be referred to together as multicultural education pedagogies.

²¹ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1970), 72-81.

²² Gloria Ladson-Billings, "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy," *American Educational Research Journal* 32, no. 3 (1995): 465-91; Gloria Ladson-Billings, "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy 2.0: A.k.a. the Remix," *Harvard Educational Review* 84, no. 1 (2014): 74-84, <http://hepgjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.17763/haer.84.1.p2rj131485484751>; Lisa Scherff and Karen Spector, *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: Clashes and Confrontations* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Education, 2011).

order.”²³ CRT deals with the implementation of teaching principles and inclusion of multicultural methodologies in the classrooms, “defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively.”²⁴ Finally, the main components of Multicultural Education include “Content Integration, An Equity Pedagogy, An Empowering School Culture and Social Structure, Prejudice Reduction and the Knowledge Construction Process.”²⁵ These pedagogies are all interrelated and seek to improve state of education for all students, especially diverse ethnic groups.²⁶

Ethnic Studies Pedagogies include the work of pedagogists and teachers who have worked to develop, evaluate and implement ethnic studies in high schools.²⁷ These studies have

²³ Ladson-Billings (1995), “Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy,” 474.

²⁴ Geneva Gay, “Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching,” *Journal of Teacher Education* 53, no. 2 (2002): 106-116; Geneva Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research and Practice* (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2000).

²⁵ James A. Banks, *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2002), 14. Banks also discusses the history of Multicultural Education development in: James A. Banks, “The Construction and Historical Development of Multicultural Education, 1962-2012,” *Theory into Practice* 52 (2013): 73-82, <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=edf195c7-c8ad-4c73-9fc4-aa7a2e02f241%40pdc-v-sessmgr05>; James A. Banks, “Ethnic Studies, Citizenship Education, and the Public Good,” *Intercultural Education* 23, no. 6 (2012): 467-473. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/14675986.2012.745986?scroll=top&needAccess=true>; Christine E. Sleeter and Peter L. McLaren, *Multicultural Education, Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Difference* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995).

²⁶ See also the multicultural pedagogical concepts of “Pedagogy of Caring”, “Funds of Knowledge”, “Asset-Based Learning” and the “Third Space”: Sonia Nieto, *Language, Culture, and Teaching: Critical Perspectives for a New Century*. Language, Culture, and Teaching (Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum, 2002); Luis Moll et. all, “Funds of Knowledge for Teaching in Latino Households.” *Urban Education* 29, no. 4 (1995): 443-70; Luis C. Moll, Cathy Amanti, Deborah Neff, and Norma Gonzalez, “Funds of Knowledge for Teaching: Using a Qualitative Approach to Connect Homes and Classrooms,” *Theory Into Practice* 31, no. 2 (1992): 132-41.; Angela Valenzuela, *Subtractive Schooling: U.S. - Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999); Tara J. Yosso, “Whose Culture has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth,” *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8, no. 1 (2005): 69-91. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1361332052000341006?scroll=top&needAccess=true>; Kris D. Gutierrez, “Developing a Sociocritical Literacy in the Third Space,” *Reading Research Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (2008): 148-64.

²⁷ Cati de los Ríos, “A Curriculum of the Borderlands: High School Chicana/o-Latina/o Studies as ‘Sitios Y Lengua,” *Urban Review: Issues and Ideas in Public Education* 45, no. 1 (2013): 58-73; Cati de los Ríos, V. López, and Jorge Morrell, “Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Race: Ethnic Studies and Literacies of Power in High School Classrooms.” *Race and Social Problems* 7, no. 1 (2015): 84-96; Dee and Penner, “The Causal Effects of Cultural Relevance”; Julie Landsman and Chance W. Lewis, *White Teachers / Diverse Classrooms: Creating Inclusive Schools, Building on Students’ Diversity, and Providing True Educational Equity* (Sterling: Stylus Publishing,

included work inside and outside the classroom with student success being the dependent variable. Dee and Penner (2017) and Sleeter (2011) are the most relevant pedagogists related to this study due to their impacts on California legislation and SMJUHSD's ethnic studies materials. Furthermore, these studies held a significant impact on California's most important period of development for high school ethnic studies in SMJUHSD, 2014 to 2018.²⁸

Additionally, Cati de los Ríos' work as a pedagogist and teacher directly influences the EGS department at SMJUHSD.²⁹ Ethnic studies pedagogy in California has generally reported positive results in its respective applications, especially when conducted in the ethnically diverse communities of the Bay Area and Southern California. These pedagogists have justified their work with the principles of multicultural education pedagogies and their own experiences within the field. As a whole, these works cover the relevant development of multicultural education pedagogies and ethnic studies pedagogy.

The greatest amount of information in the ethnic studies pedagogy field spans the research period between 1995 and 2016 with a particular focus on developments in the San Francisco and Los Angeles areas. Ethnic studies pedagogy lacks focus on the development of ethnic studies in smaller localities such as SMJUHSD and the relevant developments between 2017 and 2018. For example, California high schools have begun to implement aspects of the new curriculum, school districts have continued expanding their ethnic studies programs, and

2010); Sleeter, "The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies"; Denise M. Sandoval, Anthony J. Ratcliff, Tracy Lachica Buenavista, and James R. Marin. *"White" Washing American Education: The New Culture Wars in Ethnic Studies* (Santa Barbara and Denver: Praeger, 2016); Allyson Tintiango-Cubales, Christine E. Sleeter, Rita Kohli, Jocyl Sacramento, Nick Henning, and Ruchi Agarwal-Rangnath, "Toward an Ethnic Studies Pedagogy: Implications for K-12 Schools from the Research," *The Urban Review* 47, no. 1 (2015): 104-25;

²⁸ SMJUHSD, "Ethnic and Gender Studies"; Sleeter's work is referenced by name in California Bills AB 101 and 2016: California State Legislature, "AB-101 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies," Sacramento, January 08, 2015, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB101; California State Legislature, "AB-2016 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies," Sacramento, September 16, 2016, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2016

²⁹ Cati de los Ríos was the Keynote speaker at the District-wide Social Justice Curriculum Fair on June 2, 2018 attended by many teachers and administrators from the district. She has been a key pioneer for California ethnic studies as a whole.

California nearly passed AB-2772 that would have made ethnic studies a high school graduation requirement for the entire state from 2017 to 2018. The ongoing changes in the field of high school ethnic studies will necessitate further studies like this one, focusing on new developments at the state level, unique courses in localities such as SMJUHS and the trends of growth statewide.³⁰

Organization

This work studies the history of ethnic studies from 1968 through 2018, considering the critical statewide legislation and local developments of this crucial period. Moreover, this paper will focus primarily on those pedagogies affecting Chicana and Latina students due to the dominance of these ethnic groups in the student populations of California and SMJUHS.³¹

The first section of the paper considers the statewide history of ethnic studies development with a particular focus on the curriculum and laws that govern the state's education system in 2018. The growth of ethnic studies has consistently correlated with issues of ethnic segregation, ethnic self-determination, educational inequalities and immigration issues.³² This section evaluates primary accounts of ethnic studies leaders, histories of the ethnic studies movement, state legislation, and state curriculum. Ethnic studies evolved in four different periods based on several factors including social conditions, pedagogical support and movement leadership. The four periods occurred from 1968 to 1975, during the Civil Rights era and the establishment of university ethnic studies departments; from 1976 to 1994, an era of continued

³⁰ Another important component of Ethnic Studies Pedagogy has been fieldwork with studies emphasizing theories and fieldwork. This work includes both theory and fieldwork in the same vein.

³¹ This paper does not seek to disprove the importance of other ethnic studies fields as all forms of ethnic studies are important. Rather, this work focuses on the relevant developments that have affected and influenced SMJUHS.

³² Ethnic segregation will refer to the separation of various ethnic groups, especially Chicana/Latina peoples, into school districts that have experienced educational inequalities. Educational inequalities refer to varying levels of success based on GPA, graduation rates and participating in higher education for different ethnic groups (see Figure #1). Self-determination refers to the ability of ethnic groups to be taught culturally relevant information from educators that share their ethnicity and/or experiences.

support; from 1995 to 2013, during expansion in major school districts and pedagogy; and from 2014 to 2018, in a time of statewide expansion. While these periods each were distinct in their own ways, the ongoing movement for ethnic studies often connected to issues of ethnic segregation, ethnic self-determination, educational inequalities and immigration issues.

The second section of the paper shifts to the case study of ethnic studies at SMJUHS while focusing on two courses in the History-Social Sciences: “Ethnic and Social Justice in US History” and “Chican@/Latin@ Studies”. SMJUHS must be considered an essential outgrowth of the statewide ethnic studies movement due to its location outside of the Bay Area and Southern California and development of the “Ethnic and Social Justice in US History” course, first taught in the 2018-2019 school year. This section evaluates the history of ethnic studies in this district, the curriculum of its ethnic studies courses, the successes of these courses and their relevance in the future of ethnic studies.

This work concludes that SMJUHS’s department of ethnic studies reflects the statewide movement toward these courses and multicultural education pedagogies. Furthermore, growth in ethnic studies for California’s high schools will continue to occur at the local district level due to ethnic population trends and statewide government laws that have prevented all California high school students from having an ethnic studies graduation requirement. Additionally, this work posits that SMJUHS’s “Ethnic and Social Justice in US History” course, while providing a curriculum consistent with ethnic studies pedagogy and addressing the issues of high school history classes, will not be embraced at the state government level due to the attitudes of the state government regarding ethnic studies as a graduation requirement (including the Board of Education and sentiment of Governor Brown) and the academic rigor of this course. Therefore,

it is likely that courses that courses such as ESJ in US History that combine history-social sciences with ethnic studies will only exist at the district level.

The History of Ethnic Studies Courses in California

The history of ethnic studies courses in California has emerged over the last 50 years, starting in the late 1960s as part of the Civil Rights Movement. The Civil Rights Era most notably included the inception of ethnic studies departments in many of California's public universities and a lesser number of high schools.³³ Ethnic studies' development is often linked to other social and educational movements involving under-represented ethnic groups. This trend began with the Civil Rights Era and continues through 2018 with development correlating with issues of racial and ethnic segregation, self-determination, immigration and educational deficiencies. High School ethnic studies also mainly developed in areas with a history of ethnic studies movements at all levels of schools (including universities) and communities with large ethnic communities; the Bay Area and Southern California were the leaders of this movement. Therefore, one must consider the interrelationship between the growth of university and high school ethnic studies in California's history.

1968 to 1975: The Civil Rights Era, Establishment and College Departments

The era from 1968 to 1975 was crucial to the development of ethnic studies, initiating the movement and providing the foundation for future changes in high schools. The demands for ethnic studies in this era were directly linked to the desire for better schooling and the goals of the Civil Rights Movement. The student-led push for ethnic studies culminated in the creation of many new ethnic studies departments, mostly in colleges and universities and primarily in the fields of Black Studies or Chicanx/Latinx Studies.

³³ This paper focuses more on developments in Southern California related to Chicanx/Latinx studies due to its relevance to SMJUHSD's development.

This period had its own origins in earlier pushes for civil rights and educational equality. Ethnic studies, especially Black Studies, drew from “pioneering works such as the writings of Carter G. Woodson (1933) and W. E. B. DuBois (1903), freedom schools of the 1960s, Black independent schools and Afrocentric public schools (e.g., Durdin 2007, Lee 1992, Span 2002), tribal schools (e.g., Begay et al. 1995), and language immersion schools.”³⁴ Chicana/Latina studies also had origins in California’s history. Two court cases, *Roberto Alvarez vs. the Board of Trustees of the Lemon Grove School District* (1931) and *Mendez, et al v. Westminster [sic] School District of Orange County, et al* (1947), dealt with the segregation and miseducation of Mexican-Americans in Southern California before discussions on these issues grew in the Civil Rights era.³⁵ Furthermore, these cases (especially the *Westminster* case) were the precursor to *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) in many ways.³⁶

Many ethnic groups in California and nationwide experienced similar circumstances during the Civil Rights Era and therefore pushed for similar developments in ethnic studies. This era saw the creation of many university ethnic studies departments nationwide with the strongest developments in California and the southwest more broadly due to ethnically-diverse populations and support in these communities.³⁷ The ethnic studies movement in California was strongest in the San Francisco Bay Area and Southern California due to the strength of ethnic groups and social conditions of these areas.³⁸ The similarities in the regional movements in California

³⁴ Sleeter, *The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies*, 5.

³⁵ Margaret E. Montoya, “A Brief History of Chicana/o School Segregation: One Rationale for Affirmative Action,” *La Raza Law Journal* 12, no. 2 (2001): 165-169; Catherine Sue Ramirez, “Learning and Unlearning from Ethnic Studies,” *American Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (2014): 1062-1064.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Evelyn Hu-DeHart, “The History, Development, and Future of Ethnic Studies,” *Phi Delta Kappan* 75, no. 1 (1993): 52.

³⁸ For a Map of all Colleges and Universities in Southern California with ethnic studies, see Ryan Fukumori, “Ethnic Studies, Higher Education, and the “Urban Crisis” in Postwar Los Angeles,” *California History* 91, no. 3 (2014): 64. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/10.1525/ch.2014.91.3.63.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A8e7189dea73d61180f27dd7d7>

emphasized common social and educational conditions these groups faced; segregation, self-determination and educational inequalities pervaded these groups' demands from 1968 to 1975.

The ethnic studies movement in the San Francisco area arose principally from the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) Movement at San Francisco State University (SFSU). The TWLF included students from a number of ethnic organizations representing a variety of interests. The students of the Black Student Union (BSU) at SFSU responded to de facto segregation throughout the 1960s and sought equal opportunities for education.³⁹ These actions were characteristic of the entire ethnic studies movement, with similar desires being the basis for other ethnic studies pioneers. A unique component of the SFSU movement was the demand for a general ethnic studies program as opposed to only studies for a separate ethnic group (i.e. Black Studies, Chicana/Latina Studies, etc.):

The TWLF demanded the creation of a School of Ethnic Studies, with four fully autonomous departments devoted to the study of each of the major racial/ethnic groups the TWLF represented. They demanded the institution of an open admissions policy, affirmative action in hiring and tutorial and retention programs.⁴⁰

The next university to fully embrace ethnic studies in the area was UC Berkeley in 1969, creating one of the strongest ethnic studies department in the country.⁴¹ These universities and other communities in the San Francisco Bay Area would create the roots for future ethnic studies developments, especially in high schools.

5d7de0c; For the purposes of this paper, Southern California will include all counties south of Santa Barbara county to the California-Mexico border.

³⁹ Salomon, "Movement History: Ethnic Studies Movement".

⁴⁰ Ibid. The TWLF strike at SFSU was the longest student strike in California's history. See also: Third World Liberation Front, "Notice of Demands to San Francisco State College," San Francisco, 1968. Special Collections, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA. <https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187994>

⁴¹ Hu-Dehart, "The History, Development, and Future of Ethnic Studies," 52.

Similarly, the Chicano student movement responded to student, community and educators' desires for social and educational reform.⁴² This movement originated in the broader Chicano rights movement and held connections to the ideas of equal rights and equality. In contrast to the Bay Area movement, the Southern California movement held a pivotal, direct connection to high schools. A key event in this region's push for ethnic studies were the East Los Angeles High School Blowouts in March of 1968 in which community members, high school teachers, high school students, college students and civil rights organizations (including the Brown Berets) worked together to establish demands for better education.⁴³ The Southern California movement as a whole involved this level of support, especially from the United Mexican American Students (UMAS), which later became the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MECHA). Other key events of the Chicano movement were the writing of El Plan de Santa Barbara at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1969 and the formation of ethnic studies departments at local colleges and universities such as at UC Los Angeles and UC San Diego.⁴⁴

A key component of the Chicano student movement during this first period has been its relevance to other movements. The demands for equal education and ethnic studies were relevant to many groups and resembled other social movements (i.e. the TWLF's platform). For example, the BSU and UMAS at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles worked together

⁴² For further research on the Chicano student movement, see: Juan Gómez-Quíñones, *Mexican Students por la Raza: The Chicano Student Movement in Southern California 1967-1977* (Santa Barbara: La Causa, 1978), origins; Juan Gómez-Quíñones, *Chicano Politics: Reality and Promise, 1940-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1990), 101-155; Carlos Muñoz Jr., *Youth, Identity and Power: The Chicano Movement* (New York: Verso, 1989), 75-98; Rodolfo F. Acuña, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 5th Edition (Northridge: Pearson Press, 2004), 298-337; Dolores Delgado Bernal, "Grassroots Leadership Reconceptualized: Chicana Oral Histories and the 1968 East Los Angeles School Blowouts," *Frontiers* 19, no. 2 (1998): 113-42.

⁴³ Mario T. Garcia and Sal Castro, *Blowout!: Sal Castro and the Chicano Struggle for Educational Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 110-153. The LA Blowouts were the largest student mobilization in US history.

⁴⁴ UCSD had an extremely strong ethnic studies department, similar to UC Berkeley's. Hu-Dehart, "The History, Development, and Future of Ethnic Studies," 52.

to achieve similar goals regarding ethnic studies.⁴⁵ Furthermore, these developments would directly and indirectly become the basis for future developments in Southern California schools' ethnic studies.

Two landmark statements for the Chicano student movement in Southern California that would remain relevant through 2018 were El Plan de Santa Barbara (1969) and the East Los Angeles Blowout demands(1968). Both of these documents saw significant contributions from high school students and teachers. El Plan de Santa Barbara explicitly states its purpose of promoting “self-determination” for the Chicano community in creating programs that integrated the community’s demands.⁴⁶ Their demands for ethnic studies programs included the following:

- 1) Admission and recruitment of Chicano students, faculty, administrators and staff, 2) a curriculum program and an academic major relevant to the Chicano cultural and historical experience, 3) support and tutorial programs, 4) research programs, 5) publication programs, [and] 6) community cultural and social action centers.⁴⁷

These demands related to the ideas of the Chicano community as a whole, exemplified with its similarities to the East Los Angeles high schools’ demands.⁴⁸ Both documents demanded academic improvement for Chicano students, arguing for equal treatment, access to facilities, and teachers and curriculum dedicated to a bi-cultural and bi-lingual populace. As a whole, these era-defining documents embodied the connection between the demand for ethnic

⁴⁵ M. Keith Claybrook Jr., "Black Power, Black Students, and the Institutionalizing of Change: Loyola Marymount University, 1968-1978," *Journal of Pan African Studies* 5, no. 10 (2013).

http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA339254310&v=2.1&u=calpolyw_csu&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w

⁴⁶ Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education, *El Plan de Santa Bárbara: A Chicano Plan for Higher Education* (Oakland: La Causa Publications, 1969), 9-11.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 10.

⁴⁸ Chicano Student Movement Newspaper, “Chicano Students Blowouts,” 3.

<https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/Domain/922/Chicano%20Student%20Movement%20Newspaper.vol1.march68.pdf>.

studies ethnic studies and social issues, namely segregation, self-determination and educational deficiencies. These issues would continue to push the ethnic studies movement through 2018.

In the end, the period from 1968 to 1975 would be defined by developments in university departments in line with ethnic groups such as the Third World Liberation Front and East Los Angeles Thirteen. These developments were concentrated in the Bay Area and Southern California with universities such as California State University (CSU) Los Angeles, CSU Northridge, SFSU, UC Berkeley, UC Los Angeles, UC San Diego, and UC Santa Barbara leading the ethnic studies movement. In addition, high school ethnic studies leaders supported these developments and helped create the foundation for future developments, including those in colleges and universities. Additionally, this era began the connection of ethnic studies to social issues with its connection to civil rights issues including self-determination, segregation and educational equality. These community connections to ethnic studies would be important to establishing high school ethnic studies in the future, making this era important to the development of high school ethnic studies despite the majority of developments occurring at universities.

1976 to 1994: Continued Support for Ethnic Studies

The period from 1976 to 1994 is characterized by fewer developments than the previous era but still maintained support from the earlier ethnic studies movement as community leaders continued their work and through the ongoing need to address community social problems, namely immigration, segregation and educational inequalities.⁴⁹ The ethnic studies movement at this time remained mostly local in nature due to lack of state government support, a trend that would not shift significantly until the period between 2014 and 2018.

⁴⁹ Carlos Munoz, head of CSU LA's Chicano Studies, discussed this phenomenon in Ralph Frammolino, "The Next Generation of Rebels," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov 20, 1993: 3. <http://ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1851990206?accountid=10362>.

During the second period, many California colleges and universities struggled to grow their ethnic studies programs due to ongoing challenges. Ethnic studies had similarly faced challenges in the 1960s and 1970s without any state mandate or history of supporting ethnic studies.⁵⁰ This led to both local and statewide resistance including Governor Ronald Reagan and the SFSU President's violent response to a student protest on January 23, 1969.⁵¹ Additionally, these ethnic studies departments were unstable and susceptible to being lost due to a lack of funding after their establishment from the previous era.⁵² Ultimately, support for ethnic studies remained from 1976 to 1994 because the same problems that pushed the creation of ethnic studies persisted and there was still a large, influential group of local leaders that continued support for this field.

This support for ethnic studies resulted in tangible success at the college level with regard to Chicana/Latina studies. By 1993, there were Chicano Studies programs or departments on 41 California campuses.⁵³ Additionally, this era became more accepting over time of the second generation of leaders in this field due to advances in the 1960s and 1970s from previous leaders.⁵⁴

The case studies of Berkeley High School and UC Los Angeles demonstrated the continued support for ethnic studies in the Bay Area and Southern California. Berkeley High School students demanded an African-American Studies program as early as 1968 before becoming one of the first high schools to have a Black Studies program.⁵⁵ Furthermore,

⁵⁰ Lorraine Bennett, "Ethnic Studies: A Search for Survival," *Los Angeles Times*, May 8, 1975.

<http://ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/157830909?accountid=10362>.

⁵¹ Salomon, "Movement History: Ethnic Studies Movement."

⁵² Hu-Dehart, "The History, Development, and Future of Ethnic Studies," 53.

⁵³ Frammolino, "The Next Generation of Rebels," 3.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 2-3.

⁵⁵ Denise M. Sandoval, Anthony J. Ratcliff, Tracy Lachica Buenavista, and James R. Marin, *"White" Washing American Education: The New Culture Wars in Ethnic Studies* (Santa Barbara and Denver: Praeger, 2016), xiii-xiv;

Berkeley High School was the first to offer multiple classes in Chicano Studies.⁵⁶ This high school continued its support for ethnic studies throughout the 1980s and 1990s, including a walkout in support of ethnic studies in 1993, in line with many Bay Area students and teachers' beliefs.⁵⁷ UCLA similarly faced issues regarding ethnic studies in the 1990s, but maintained an ethnic studies department due to the ongoing desire of students and groups like MEChA.⁵⁸ When the university threatened to shut down their ethnic studies program in the 1990s, students and faculty organized a monumental hunger strike including leaders who had previously supported the 1960s and 1970s ethnic studies movement including Professor Juan Gómez-Quiñones, a long-time scholar and activist of ethnic studies.⁵⁹

These schools' experiences demonstrated the ongoing support for ethnic studies in California despite resistance. Similar groups across the state held protests in support of ethnic studies including demonstrations at San Jose State, Fullerton College and Cal State Long Beach; the Fullerton demonstration included help from high school students, showing the ongoing connections between high schools and higher education.⁶⁰

Additionally, school segregation and educational inequality in California (and the United States) remained a key issue between 1976 and 1994, furthering the need for ethnic studies. School segregation occurred throughout the state, in local districts and in the country as a whole; there were "savage" gaps in the United States high school education system during the 1990s

Cati de Los Ríos, V. López, and Jorge Morrell, "Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Race: Ethnic Studies and Literacies of Power in High School Classrooms," *Race and Social Problems* 7, no. 1 (2015): 88.

⁵⁶ Pablo Gonzalez, "Hecho en Berkeley: A Brief History of the Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies Program at Berkeley High School." In *"White" Washing American Education: The New Culture Wars in Ethnic Studies*, edited by Sandoval et. all (Santa Barbara and Denver: Praeger, 2016), 4.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 4-6.

⁵⁸ Jose M Aguilar-Hernandez, "¡Si Se Pudo!: Activism in the Chicana/o Studies Movement at UCLA, 1990-1993," In *"White" Washing American Education: The New Culture Wars in Ethnic Studies*, edited by Sandoval et. all (Santa Barbara and Denver: Praeger, 2016), 258.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 25; Robert A. Rhoads, "Student Protest and Multicultural Reform," *The Journal of Higher Education* 69, no. 6 (1998): 633-635.

⁶⁰ Frammolino, "The Next Generation of Rebels," 2-3

<http://ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1851990206?accountid=10362>.

based partially in segregation.⁶¹ Furthermore, California high schools had become more segregated since the 1960s, especially among “Hispanic” students.⁶² California high schools also saw ethnic/racial achievement gaps during this time period with a connection to segregation.⁶³

Another factor that pushed ethnic studies was immigration reform affecting California. The state passed Proposition 187 in 1994, stopping all funding for “illegal aliens” in government-funded programs (i.e. schools and medical care facilities).⁶⁴ California’s immigration law was a highly discussed issue in the next epoch of ethnic studies due in part to this law passed in 1994.⁶⁵ Immigration offered another ongoing factor for ethnic studies in California to go along with self-determination, educational equality and segregation.

Despite the continued support for ethnic studies and the factors that pushed its expansion, this era still left desires for more growth at colleges and high schools. This would remain an issue through the 2000s with only 1% of California high schools offering ethnic studies courses in 2013. The period between 1976 and 1994, however, enabled these changes to occur due to the continued support for ethnic studies and social conditions in the community that necessitated ethnic studies courses.

1995 to 2013: Expansion in Major School Districts and Expansion of Pedagogy

The growth of ethnic studies in the high school departments of San Francisco and Los Angeles, creation of new scholarship in multicultural education pedagogies and ethnic studies

⁶¹ Christine E. Sleeter and Peter L. McLaren, *Multicultural Education, Critical Pedagogy and the Politics of Difference* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 6.

⁶² Russell W. Rumberger, and J. Douglas Willms, "The Impact of Racial and Ethnic Segregation on the Achievement Gap in California High Schools," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 14, no. 4 (1992): 378-386. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1164282>.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Jeffrey R Margolis, "Closing the Doors to the Land of Opportunity: The Constitutional Controversy Surrounding Proposition 187," *The University of Miami Inter-American Law Review* 26, no. 2 (1994): 363-401. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40176355>; Philip Martin, "Proposition 187 in California," *The International Migration Review* 29, no. 1 (1995): 255-63. doi:10.2307/2547004.

⁶⁵ Cati de los Ríos, "A Curriculum of the Borderlands: High School Chicana/o-Latina/o Studies as "Sitios Y Lengua,." *Urban Review: Issues and Ideas in Public Education* 45, no. 1 (2013): 59-62.

pedagogy, and a continued connection to social issues defined this period of ethnic studies in California. Finally, the state government began embracing the concept of ethnic studies in passing legislation against discriminatory content in schools.

Continuing ethnic studies in Southern California centered on Chicana/Latina Studies due to students' needs and desire to address relevant issues in their communities. Cati de los Ríos, pedagogist and high school teacher, became a leader in this regard with her courses at Pomona High School. Her courses focused on student identity and dealt with issues of immigration.⁶⁶ Cati de los Ríos described the course in her pedagogy:

With its origins in the anti-immigrant climate of 2006, our Chicana/o-Latina/o Studies course is a year-long social science elective that aligns curriculum with California State standards in U.S. History and English Language Arts. It explores Chicana/o and Latina/o experiences from pre-Columbian civilizations to the present and reflects many university level Chicana/o-Latina/o Studies courses in rigor and scope. As an interdisciplinary course, it investigates the diversity of Chicana/o and Latina/o culture as it is conditioned by the intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, borders, regional variation, and power. Through a counter-hegemonic framework, the class provides a historical and political analysis of Chicana/o and Latina/o people's quest for self-determination.⁶⁷

This course was important because it reiterated the purpose of these course as dealing with social issues and appealing to Chicana/Latina students. Cati de los Ríos also cited many of her students' positive reactions to the course: "one student, Armando, shared 'Walking into Chicana/o-Latina/o Studies felt like home.'" ⁶⁸ This type of course would become prominent in California, including a similar course by it taught at SMJUHSD (Chican@/Latin@ Studies).

Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) also held ethnic studies courses at other schools. Two other programs, one at Roosevelt High School and the other part of the Council

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 63.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 69.

for Youth Research (CYR), became known for their successes in ethnic studies.⁶⁹ These programs were similar in their focus on the contributions of these ethnic communities and their development of rigorous curriculum from culturally pluralistic ideas.⁷⁰ Additionally, these courses addressed ongoing California ethnic community concerns regarding segregation.⁷¹

San Francisco's ethnic studies courses at this time followed the same patterns in addressing social issues but differed in the breadth of their offerings. Since offering their first course in 2008, SFUSD provided a greater variety of ethnic studies courses that intersect with different fields of study (literature, history, arts) and that feature different groups.⁷² Moreover, some SFUSD courses could count for SFSU credit, showing the academic rigor of these courses and their connection to their university counterparts.⁷³

The expansion of ethnic studies at this time also created pedagogies which would be utilized from 2014 to 2018. The works of Cati de los Ríos, Christine Sleeter, Thomas Dee and Emily Penner, and others further supported the adoption of ethnic studies.

These ethnic studies pedagogies and movement leaders also drew directly and indirectly from multicultural education pedagogies that emerged at this time. Gloria Ladson-Billings' work in CRP, Geneva Gay's work in CRT and James Banks' work in Multicultural Education all contributed to the field of ethnic studies explicitly and implicitly by their use in high school courses and reference in ethnic studies pedagogy. Another important theorist of this time was

⁶⁹ Cati de los Ríos et. all (2015), "Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Race: Ethnic Studies and Literacies of Power in High School Classrooms," 90-92.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 93; These ideas can also be found in many of the aforementioned pedagogies: Ladson-Billings, "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy," 477-481; Gay, "Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching," 106-112; Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 79-81; Tintiango-Cubales, et. all, "Toward an Ethnic Studies Pedagogy," 115-117.

⁷¹ Montoya, "A Brief History of Chicana/o School Segregation," 171-172.

⁷² SFUSD, "High School Course Catalog: 2015-2016," San Francisco, 2015. <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/curriculum-standards/course-catalog.html>.

⁷³ SFUSD, "All SFUSD High Schools to Offer Ethnic Studies Classes," *San Francisco Union School District*, December 10, 2014. <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/news/current-news/2014-news-archive/12/all-sfusd-high-schools-to-offer-ethnic-studies-classes.html>.

James Loewen whose works criticized history-social science curriculum. Loewen's work proved important in pushing new forms of history social sciences pedagogy that would relate to ethnic studies' leaders critiques of traditional high school courses.⁷⁴

Another factor that pushed ethnic studies in this era was the legal case against Tucson Unified School District's (TUSD) Mexican American Studies program in 2010; this program was banned because state political leaders regarded it to be ethnically divisive.⁷⁵ This ruling against Mexican American Studies "re-invigorated the K-12 Ethnic Studies movement" outside Arizona as many active leaders in this field opposed Arizona's ban.⁷⁶ An example of its impact can be seen in de los Ríos' course at Pomona High School: students were clearly aware of this case and its implications.⁷⁷

In addition, the elimination of bilingual education in California via Proposition 227 in 1998 further pushed multicultural education. This law effectively banned bilingual education by limiting the time students were allowed to spend in special classes and mandating English-language only learning; Proposition 58 repealed this act in 2016.⁷⁸ While there were no clear and direct connections to ethnic studies in California, these examples of limiting multicultural and multilingual education seemingly influenced ethnic studies through inspiration.

As a whole, the developments from 1995 to 2013 expanded on previous eras' courses and precluded the ethnic studies expansion. The state government also officially supported

⁷⁴ Loewen, *Lies my Teacher Told Me*, 1-25; Loewen, *Teaching What Really Happened*, 10-19.

⁷⁵ The decision to ban these courses at TUSD was overturned in 2017:

⁷⁶ Denise M. Sandoval, Anthony J. Ratcliff, Tracy Lachica Buenavista, and James R. Marin, "White" *Washing American Education: The New Culture Wars in Ethnic Studies* (Santa Barbara and Denver: Praeger, 2016), xvii. See also Norma A. Marrun, "The Power of Ethnic Studies: Portraits of First-Generation Latina/o Students Carving Out un sitio and Claiming una Lengua," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 31, no. 4 (2018): 273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2017.1422288>.

⁷⁷ Cati de los Ríos (2013), "A Curriculum of Borderlands," 59.

⁷⁸ Jazmine Ulloa, "Bilingual Education has been absent from California Public Schools for almost 20 Years. But that may soon change," *Los Angeles Times*, October 12, 2016. <https://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-proposition-58-bilingual-education-20161012-snap-story.html>.

ethnically diverse curriculum before 2014 with the passage of the “FAIR Education Act” (SB-48). This law dictated that all schools must include curriculum that address all ethnic groups in an impartial manner (anti-discrimination).⁷⁹ This law drew support from Congressmen Luis Alejo and José Lara; both of whom would become advocates for pushing ethnic studies from 2014-2018.

Despite these forms of support in this time period and the existence of social issues that historically pushed significant growth, only 1% of high schools had ethnic studies courses in 2013 and these courses were concentrated in the Bay Area and Southern California. The expansion of ethnic studies from 2014 to 2018 would draw heavily from this era, but the expansionary period was a clear departure from the previous epoch due to the significant amount of growth in the field.

2014 to 2018: The Ethnic Studies Expansion

The period between 2014 and 2018 saw the largest growth for ethnic studies in California’s high schools since its inception in 1968. This period included widespread adoption at the local district level and at the state government level, as seen in legal and curricular changes. This period almost saw ethnic studies becoming a graduation requirement for all high schools with AB 2772 (vetoed by former Governor Brown). Therefore, post-2018 developments in ethnic studies should continue to build on these courses at the local district level with guidance from the state-supported forms of ethnic studies.

SFUSD and LAUSD continued to lead California even during this period of widespread growth. First, these districts were among the first to make ethnic studies a graduation

⁷⁹ California State Legislature, “SB-48 Pupil instruction: prohibition of discriminatory content,” Sacramento, July 13, 2011. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201120120SB48.

requirement and provide it for all of their high schools- Los Angeles did so in 2014.⁸⁰ Furthermore, these districts held the most extensive and diverse set of course offerings.⁸¹ Finally, and perhaps most importantly, these courses became part of the impetus for other developments in ethnic studies. The aforementioned Dee and Penner (2017) study, conducted in SFUSD, was perhaps most influential due to its startling conclusion that “ES participation increased student attendance by 21 percentage points, cumulative ninth-grade GPA by 1.4 points, and credits earned by 23 credits.”⁸² These statistics became instantly quotable for school districts such as SMJUHSD and for state government leaders including José Lara.⁸³ Lara himself had worked in LAUSD prior to leading support for ethnic studies in state government.

SFUSD and LAUSD offered different courses in ethnic studies than one another, demonstrating the regional variance of the 2014 to 2018 expansion period. SFUSD and LAUSD each offered an ethnic studies course that address the issues of identity and the main ethnic “minority” groups in the United States.⁸⁴ These courses’ requirements reflect some of the ethnic studies curriculum found in the 2016 History-Social Sciences framework.⁸⁵ SFUSD offered a number of classes studying Asian Americans including Asian American Studies and Asian American History.⁸⁶ On the other hand, LAUSD offered Mexican American Studies, African American Studies and Asian American Studies in addition to their general ethnic studies class

⁸⁰ Stephen Caesar, “L.A. Unified to require ethnic studies for high school graduation,” *LA Times*, December 8, 2014. <http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-ethnic-studies-20141209-story.html>;

⁸¹ SFUSD, “High School Course Catalog: 2015-2016,” San Francisco, 2015. <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/curriculum-standards/course-catalog.html>.

⁸² Dee and Penner, “The Casual Effects of Cultural Relevance,” 129.

⁸³ SMJUHSD, “Ethnic and Gender Studies”; Alejo and Lara, “Ethnic studies should be a high school requirement.”

⁸⁴ SFUSD, “High School Course Catalog,” 14; LAUSD Secondary History/Social Science Branch, “Ethnic Studies Course Description,” Los Angeles, 2018.

<https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/Domain/226/Ethnic%20Studies%20Survey%20Course%20.pdf>.

⁸⁵ California State Board of Education, “Social Science Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve,” Sacramento, July, 2016, 310-313.

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/hs/cf/documents/hssframeworkwhole.pdf>.

⁸⁶ SFUSD, “High School Course Catalog,” 14-15.

with Asian American Studies being a notable omission.⁸⁷ These differences between SFUSD and LAUSD have demonstrated the potential for a variety of different ethnic studies courses in different regions.

The expansion of ethnic studies at this time included major developments outside of the prevalent districts of the Bay Area and Southern California to go along with growth in many of these regions' districts (San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Oakland and El Rancho School Districts each expanded their programs). Both the Central Coast (Santa Maria, Santa Barbara, and Oxnard School Districts) and Central Valley (Sacramento School District) experienced growth in ethnic studies by adding courses or making it a graduation requirement. These examples of growth were essential as ethnic studies had been overwhelmingly concentrated in the two main regions of the Bay Area and Southern California; this shift from these highly urban areas to more rural ones represented a significant regional expansion.

Ethnic studies' expansion also included unique examples of development including that of El Rancho and Long Beach Unified School Districts. El Rancho Unified School District was the first school to vote to make ethnic studies a graduation requirement, doing so in June 2014.⁸⁸ In addition, schools from both districts have partnered with Long Beach State University to offer ethnic studies courses for high school students on Saturdays; students can graduate high school

⁸⁷ LAUSD, Secondary History/Social Science Branch, "African American Studies Course Description." Los Angeles, 2018.

<https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/Domain/226/African%20American%20History.pdf>; LAUSD Secondary History/Social Science Branch, "American Indian Studies Course Description," Los Angeles, 2018.

<https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/Domain/226/American%20Indian%20Studies%20.pdf>; LAUSD Secondary History/Social Science Branch, "Mexican American Studies Course Description," Los Angeles, 2018.

<https://achieve.lausd.net/cms/lib/CA01000043/Centricity/Domain/226/Mexican%20American%20Studies.pdf>; There are currently significant pushes in establishing Asian American Studies at LAUSD: Caitlin Yoshiko Kandil, "More than 700 sign High School Student Petition to add Asian American Studies Classes," *Los Angeles Times*, February 1, 2019. <https://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/entertainment/tn-wknd-et-asian-american-20190201-story.html>.

⁸⁸ California-Mexico Center, "El Rancho Unified School District Ethnic Studies Revolution Documentary," April 2, 2018. <http://california-mexicocenter.org/el-rancho-unified-school-district-ethnic-studies-revolution/>.

with as much as a year of college credits through this program.⁸⁹ This connection between high schools and colleges has persisted since 1968 and these courses reflected the support for ethnic studies during its expansion period.

The expansion between 2014 and 2018 occurred due to many converging factors. The first of which was continued support from past ethnic studies leaders. This notably included Cati de los Ríos and others in the 2000s, but also previous leaders since the establishment of ethnic studies in 1968 as seen by this era’s references to the past. In addition, the creation of new ethnic studies courses and graduation requirements reflected indirect support from ethnic studies pedagogists and the state government. As stated previously, the work of Sleeter (2011) and Dee and Penner (2017) became further justification for ethnic studies in this era. Ethnic studies and multicultural pedagogies would also appear in the state government’s laws and curriculum.

History of Ethnic Studies in California State Laws, 2011-2018⁹⁰

Bill Name	Description	Date
SB-48: Pupil instruction: prohibition of discriminatory content (PASSED)	Prohibits discriminatory content against all ethnic groups and the LGBTQ community	July 13, 2011
SB-1540: Instructional materials: revised curriculum framework: history-social science (PASSED)	Allowed the California State Board of Education to create a new history-social science framework (passed July, 2016)	September 8, 2012

⁸⁹ Ibid; Riva Lu, “College Accredited Course for High School Students,” *UWIRE Text*, September 29, 2015. http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?&id=GALE|A430225947&v=2.1&u=calpolyw_csu&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w.

⁹⁰ California State Legislature, “AB-1750 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies: report,” Sacramento, May 14, 2014. http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140AB1750; California State Legislature, “AB-101 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies,” Sacramento, January 08, 2015. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB101; California State Legislature, “AB-2016 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies,” Sacramento, September 16, 2016. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2016; California State Legislature, “AB-2772 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies: grant program,” Sacramento, September 5, 2018. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billHistoryClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2772; California State Legislature, “SB-48 Pupil instruction: prohibition of discriminatory content,” Sacramento, July 13, 2011.

AB-1750: Pupil instruction: ethnic studies: report <i>(NO FURTHER ACTION FROM SENATE COMMITTEE)</i>	Would have created a committee for ethnic studies with focus on high school curriculum	February 14, 2014
AB-101: Pupil instruction: ethnic studies <i>(VETOED)</i>	Would have created a model ethnic studies curriculum for grades 7-12 and required all high schools to offer ethnic studies as an elective	October 15, 2015
AB-2016: Pupil instruction: ethnic studies <i>(PASSED)</i>	Required a model ethnic studies curriculum for grades 9-12 by December 31, 2019 and high schools to adopt ethnic studies elective	September 13, 2016
AB-2772 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies: grant program <i>(VETOED)</i>	Would have made ethnic studies a graduation requirement starting in 2020-2021 school year	September 30, 2018

Figure #2: History of Ethnic Studies in California State Laws

The California state government’s support of ethnic studies occurred in two key forms: state laws regarding ethnic studies and a new history-social sciences framework. A key leader in state government through this period was Luis Alejo, a congressman from Salinas. Alejo and his contemporaries proposed four ethnic studies bills from 2014 to 2018 with only one passing: AB - 2016. AB-2016’s creation of a model ethnic studies curriculum demonstrated the state government’s support for high school ethnic studies. Furthermore, Catherine Sleeter’s crucial 2011 work “The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies” appeared directly in the text of this law.⁹¹

Another key aspect of the state government’s support for ethnic studies was the passage of ethnic studies curriculum in the 2016 history social-sciences framework.⁹² This document provides a framework for Ethnic Studies that relates to much of the past courses and current

⁹¹ California State Legislature, “AB-2016 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies,” Sacramento, September 16, 2016. https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2016.

⁹² California State Board of Education (2016), “Social Science Framework for California Public Schools,” 310-313.

curriculum in SMJUHSD and LAUSD.⁹³ The description of ethnic studies and subsequent materials emphasize the importance of a variety of sources, students' experiences, Youth Participant Action Research (YPAR), and studies of minority/underrepresented groups.⁹⁴ The History-Social Sciences curriculum also provides more of the ethnic studies-style curriculum from Loewen's research that represented a change from "traditional" history courses, especially in highlighting the roles of ethnic groups throughout United States' history.⁹⁵ These developments were significant advances in ethnic studies and multicultural curriculum when compared to its predecessor, the 1998 framework.⁹⁶ For example, the 1998 framework lacked references to the contributions ethnically-diverse historical actors.⁹⁷

These state government laws and curriculum made the years from 2014 to 2018 unique as support for ethnic studies became statewide with new legislation and curriculum. Statewide support combined with regional support to create the climate for significant expansion.

Dissent against Ethnic Studies from 2014 to 2018

On the other hand, the state government's failure to pass all ethnic studies bills showed that their support was qualified. California's government trusted the ability of the State Board of Education to create a model curriculum in ethnic studies and thus did not pass AB-1750 or AB-101.⁹⁸ However, similar measures to those proposed in AB-1750 and 101 became reality when AB-2016 passed.

⁹³ Ibid, 310-312

⁹⁴ Ibid, 509-511.

⁹⁵ Ibid, 377-432.

⁹⁶ California State Board of Education, "History–Social Science Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve," Sacramento, May, 2000.
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/histsocscistnd.pdf>.

⁹⁷ Sleeter, "The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies," 2.

⁹⁸ Governor Brown expresses such dissent in his veto messages. California State Legislature, "AB-1750 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies: report," Sacramento, May 14, 2014.
http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140AB1750; California State Legislature, "AB-101 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies," State Law, January 08, 2015.
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB101.

The most significant state bill veto was AB-2772. This bill would have made ethnic studies a graduation requirement starting in the 2020-2021 school year after only 1% of California high schools offered ethnic studies courses in 2013.⁹⁹ Former Governor Brown vetoed this bill on two key principles: individual school districts were already making ethnic studies a graduation requirement and making ethnic studies a graduation requirement would add work to students who were “already overburdened by multiple tests and endless hours of homework.”¹⁰⁰ This veto was by no means a “death sentence” for ethnic studies in California’s high schools. Rather, it firmly placed the burden of developing ethnic studies in the hands of local school districts as it had operated for the 50 years prior to this bill.

Additionally, there were many members of the California High School Board that have argued against ethnic studies as a high school graduation requirement. Russell Castañeda Calleros reports that dissent against ethnic studies has five key tenants: “(a) limited course schedule, (b) divisive/exclusive, (c) perceived mandate that erode local control, (d) antithetical to American culture, and (e) lack of definition.”¹⁰¹ The California High School Board desired to keep ethnic studies as an elective, maintain local dictation over ethnic studies, and/or eliminate it all together; Former Governor Brown expressed the former two reasons in his veto of AB-2772. The reasoning in opposition to ethnic studies has rested has on divisiveness/exclusiveness and anti-Americanism. This dissent may have been indirectly or directly related to racism, as some pedagogists believe.¹⁰² These sentiments were similar in nature to those surrounding Arizona’s HB-2281, the bill that restricted Mexican-American/Raza Studies in TUSD. Each group

⁹⁹ California State Legislature, “AB-2772 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies: grant program,” Sacramento, September 5, 2018. https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billHistoryClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2772.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Russell Castañeda Calleros, "The Intersection of Ethnic Studies and Public Policy: A Study of California High School Board Members' Perspectives," Order No. 10810209, Loyola Marymount University, 2018: 186-187.

¹⁰² Ibid, 186-189.

expressed desire to avoid “anti-Americanism” in education and prevent racial antagonism among its students.¹⁰³

The State of Ethnic Studies Entering 2019

The history of ethnic studies has suggested that it will be part of California high schools in the foreseeable future based on its establishment in the key areas of the Bay Area and Southern California and recent growth in other regions including the Central Valley and Central Coast. Furthermore, the 2016 history social-sciences framework solidified ethnic studies in high school curriculum. On the other hand, the state government vetoed AB-2772 that would have made ethnic studies a graduation requirement. The lack of a statewide requirement along with a history of growth in several key regions has demonstrated that support for ethnic studies is not universal. Therefore, these developments will continue to occur at the local level in school districts such as SMJUHSD; teachers and pedagogists must study these local areas to understand the statewide movement.

Santa Maria Joint Union High School District’s Ethnic Studies

Santa Maria is a rural city located between San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara. Its population is dominated by “Hispanic/Latino” peoples and SMJUHSD has three public high schools- Pioneer Valley High School, Righetti High School and Santa Maria High School. There are many aspects of SMJUHSD’s history of ethnic studies that have resembled the statewide trends of ethnic studies in the following areas: patterns of ethnic studies’ expansion, the importance of the community in organization for ethnic studies’ implementation in high schools, the utilization of multicultural pedagogies and ethnic studies pedagogy and the curriculum in Chican@/Latin@ Studies.

¹⁰³ Richard Orozco, "Racism and Power: Arizona Politicians' Use of the Discourse of Anti-Americanism against Mexican American Studies," *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences* 34, no. 1 (2012): 43-60; Catherine Sue Ramirez, "Learning and Unlearning from Ethnic Studies," *American Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (2014): 1057-069.

SMJUHSD's history of ethnic studies has followed the periodization of California loosely, reflecting the peaks and valleys of ethnic studies' history. This included the district's establishment of ethnic studies courses in the early 1970s and expansion of the EGS department from 2014 to 2018. Additionally, SMJUHSD has further demonstrated the importance of community issues and support as a key factor for ethnic studies, especially those issues affecting Chicana/Latina students. Furthermore, SMJUHSD has cited the needs of its student population in a similar manner as other school districts, especially in citing the Sleeter (2011) and Dee and Penner (2017) studies. Finally, the course "Chicana/Latina Studies" directly borrowed from Pomona High School's corresponding course. These shared occurrences at SMJUHSD furthered the existence of statewide trends across California's high schools, demonstrating the common themes of ethnic studies.

On the other hand, SMJUHSD has been a unique example of ethnic studies in their course offerings, namely in the aforementioned ESJ in US History class. This course and its integration offered a course worthy of further examination due to its status as an area "A" course and that it was first taught in the 2018-2019 school year. This course represented a culmination in the EGS department's growth since 2012, further solidifying SMJUHSD as an important locality in California high school ethnic studies.

The History of Ethnic Studies at SMJUHSD

The Santa Maria area has participated in many of the same pushes in Civil Rights over time as their counterparts in the Bay Area and Southern California despite being a small semi-rural community far removed from either region. Santa Maria was active during the Chicana movement of the 1960s in both the agricultural and education spheres. This area participated in the farm workers movement of this time by holding large strikes for better pay in the lettuce

industry.¹⁰⁴ In addition, this period saw movements against public schools in the nearby town of Guadalupe. Organizers in the area called for “community schools” run by Chicane people in a manner similar to other protests from 1968 to 1975.¹⁰⁵ These protests were seemingly the base for community support of ethnic studies in the area for its inception in the early 1970s. Mixtec peoples living and working in Santa Maria also held protests in support of bilingual education in the 1990s, showing the community’s ongoing conscious toward educating its Chicane/Latine populous.¹⁰⁶

The first set of ethnic studies classes were taught at both Santa Maria and Righetti High Schools in the early 1970s.¹⁰⁷ These courses were similar to other high school classes emerging in this period as they were born out of student protest and the need for curriculum that addressed the area’s Chicane population.¹⁰⁸ The demands were very similar to those of the East LA Thirteen in their support of Chicane students.

The growth of ethnic studies in Santa Maria also followed statewide trends in California’s four key periods. Ethnic studies in the area faced challenges before the 2014 to 2018 expansion era, even losing ethnic studies courses in the late 1990s.¹⁰⁹ The present era of ethnic studies in Santa Maria began with a single Chicane/Latine Studies class taught by Ricardo Valencia in the 2012-13 school year.¹¹⁰ This class was offered to students due to the vast number of Chicane/Latine students needing and wanting an education that addressed issues

¹⁰⁴ Primary Sources on these strikes can be found in: Central Coast Farm Labor Organizing Collection, Boxes 1-7. Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

¹⁰⁵ “Victor Valle interview of Manuel Echavarria,” Central Coast Farm Labor Organizing Collection, Box 7, Folder 2: 4. Special Collections and Archives, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

¹⁰⁶ Fred Alvarez, “The Mixtecs: A Grim Life in the Fields,” *Los Angeles Times*, July 27, 1995.

<http://ezproxy.lib.calpoly.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/293116255?accountid=10362>.

¹⁰⁷ Miller, “SMHS’s Chicane/Latine studies course only one of its kind in city.”

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

related to their community as opposed to what Sleeter terms an “Eurocentric” curriculum.¹¹¹

This course was offered as an elective to these students with the purpose of filling holes created by traditional US history-social science courses.¹¹² Ethnic studies in this district expanded significantly beyond the one class taught in 2012-2013. From 2012 to 2017, the number of students enrolled in Ethnic Gender Studies (EGS) department increased from 22 to 151.¹¹³

Furthermore, all three high schools in the district (Santa Maria, Righetti, and Pioneer Valley) had EGS courses in the 2018-19 school year including elective (Chican@/Latin@ Studies), history-social sciences (ESJ in US History), and theater/arts courses.

Ultimately, the expansion of EGS at SMJUHSD occurred due to three key factors: the aforementioned high number of “Hispanic/Latino” students, the statewide support for ethnic studies from 2014-2018 including the Sleeter (2011) and Dee and Penner (2017) studies, and the support of the community. First of all, the demographics of SMJUHSD reflected the region’s need for courses addressing its “Hispanic/Latino” population:

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² SMJUHSD’s reasoning for adopting Chican@/Latin@ Studies indirectly cites similar critiques made by ethnic studies pedagogists, multicultural education pedagogists, and others including James Loewen; Miller, “SMHS’s Chicano/Latino studies course only one of its kind in city.”

¹¹³ SMJUHSD, “Ethnic and Gender Studies.”

http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/PagesLevel2/Documents/Ethnic_and_Gender_Studies_Brochure...pdf.

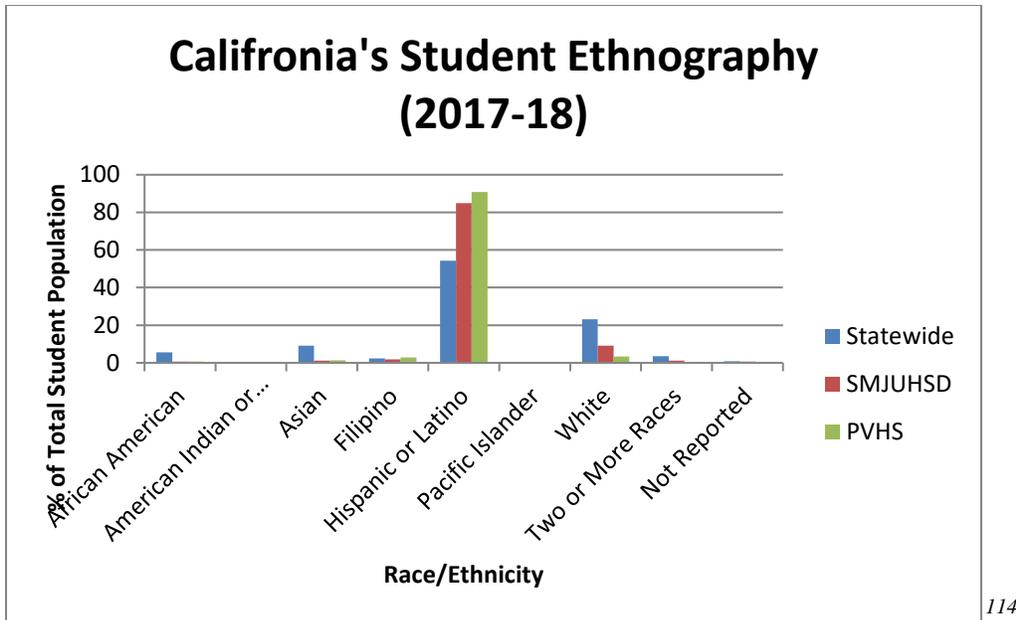


Figure #3: Racial/Ethnic Groups in California’s High Schools, 2017-2018

Furthermore, the “Hispanic/Latino” population increased from 78% to about 85% from the 2012-13 to 2017-18 school years, suggesting a continued increase in this population beyond 2018.

Valencia and other advocates for ethnic studies in SMJUHSD from 2012 to 2018 utilized the vast amount of “Hispanic/Latino” peoples in the area as justification for the expansion of ethnic studies.¹¹⁵

Second, the statewide support for ethnic studies had direct and indirect influences on SMJUHSD. The direct influences include the aforementioned work of Sleeter (2011) and Dee and Penner (2017), directly cited by SMJUHSD.¹¹⁶ The statewide laws and curriculum passed during this time also pushed the growth of ethnic studies. For example, ESJ in US History

¹¹⁴ This graph was created to show the large populations of “minority” groups in California’s high schools, especially “Hispanic/ Latino” students with data from: California Department of Education Data Reporting Office, “Enrollment Multi-Year Summary,” <https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrEthYears.aspx?cds=00&agglevel=state&year=2017-18>.

¹¹⁵ SMJUHSD, “Ethnic and Gender Studies”; Miller, “SMHS’s Chicano/Latino studies course only one of its kind in city.”

¹¹⁶ SMJUHSD, “Ethnic and Gender Studies” http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/PagesLevel2/Documents/Ethnic_and_Gender_Studies_Brochure...pdf.

course directly follows the 2016 history-social sciences curriculum. These factors connected SMJUHSD's expansion to the broader trends of California involving ethnic studies at the state government level.

Third, the growth of ethnic studies in SMJUHSD from 2012 to 2018 included tangible community support including that which pervaded the statewide movement and conditions independent to Santa Maria. The key issues addressed by ethnic studies were the needs of ethnic "minority" students (self-determination) and faults in history-social science curriculum (educational inequalities), reflecting statewide trends. The SMJUHSD Board of Education voiced its support for these courses, solidifying the community-wide support of these courses through the 2018-19 school year.¹¹⁷ One unique aspect of Santa Maria's community support was the framing of EGS department around the community issue of adolescent homicides and deaths in addition to student demands and the aforementioned pedagogies.¹¹⁸ These forms of community support seemingly persisted through the 2018-2019 school year.

SMJUHSD had developed an ethnic studies department that resembled aspects of those of SFUSD and LAUSD in the 2018-2019 school year. SMJUHSD offered a diverse set of courses as SFUSD did with courses in a variety of curricular areas and its Chicana@/Latin@ Studies course partially resembled the corresponding course at LAUSD. A key difference in these districts was the implications of demographics. Whereas LAUSD and SFUSD both offered many different ethnic studies courses (i.e. Mexican-American, American Indian and African

¹¹⁷ SMJUHSD Board of Education, "May 16, 2017 General Meeting Minutes," http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/MeetingSchedule/Minutes_-_May_16_2017.pdf.

¹¹⁸ SMJUHSD, "Ethnic and Gender Studies" http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/PagesLevel2/Documents/Ethnic_and_Gender_Studies_Brochure...pdf.

American Studies at LAUSD), SMJUHSD courses reflected its “Hispanic/Latino”-dominated populace with its most-taught course being Chican@/Latin@ Studies.

Analysis of Chican@/Latin@ Studies

Chicanx/Latinx Studies is a common subject at many California high schools and universities including at SMJUHSD schools. This course, as aforementioned, began the current era of EGS at SMJUHSD. Ricardo Valencia led the revival of this course at Santa Maria High School (SMHS) and remains the course’s teacher today at SMHS. Valencia’s role to this course as SMHS has been similar to Cati de los Ríos’ role at Pomona High School; he wrote the syllabus for the course and has taught the course at SMHS. Furthermore, the initial Chican@/Latin@ Studies course at SMHS was based on the corresponding course at Pomona High School, “Chicana/o-Latina/o Studies”.¹¹⁹

This course was a year-long “G” college elective with course topics found in 10th-12th grade history-social sciences standards.¹²⁰ The areas and methodologies of study in this course seemingly addressed the existing critiques of history-social sciences courses by encouraging the critical study of minority ethnic groups in United States history and higher levels of thinking. One explicitly stated purpose of this course, according to Valencia, was to address the needs of the Chicanx/Latinx-dominated populace.¹²¹ This purpose resembled the aforementioned needs of Pomona High School’s students and José Lara’s support for ethnic studies in LAUSD: ethnic studies courses at LAUSD were made a graduation due to the curriculum’s ability to “suit the needs and interests of their students.”¹²²

¹¹⁹ Ricardo Valencia, “Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Course Description,” Santa Maria, November 3, 2011, 2. <http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/DocumentsCategories/Documents/Chicano%20and%20Latino%20Studies.pdf>.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 3-4.

¹²¹ Miller, “SMHS’s Chicano/Latino Studies Course is the only one of its kind in city.”

¹²² Caesar, “L.A. Unified to Require Ethnic Studies for High School Graduation.”

In addition, there were many curricular similarities between “Chican@/Latin@ Studies” at SMHS and Mexican-American Studies at LAUSD. Each course combines the topics of identity, history and current issues regarding these groups.¹²³ As a result, there is a great deal of overlap in the topics addressed, especially in the topics that have historically impacted Mexican-American/Chicanx peoples. Another similarity between these courses was the level of academic rigor that incorporated the principles of community relevance and academic legitimacy from multicultural education and ethnic studies pedagogies.¹²⁴

On the other hand, there were two key differences between the SMHS and LAUSD Chicane/Latinx Studies courses. First, Chican@/Latin@ Studies at SMHS took place over a full year as opposed to the semester-long Mexican-American Studies course. Second, the SMHS course takes a greater look at the wider Latinx identity as opposed to the more rigid Mexican-American Studies course.

In the end, Chican@/Latin@ Studies at SMHS has filled a strong need at SMJUHS due to its Chicane/Latinx student demographics, evidence of its success thus far, and connection to the dedicated work of Ricardo Valencia. The course has expanded significantly since the 2012 school year due to student need for the course via traditional curriculum’s deficiencies. These trends have suggested that Chican@/Latin@ Studies will survive well beyond the 2018-2019 school year due to the widespread need for this course.

Analysis of Ethnic and Social Justice in US History

ESJ in US History is a unique course because it seemingly is the only course that directly combined ethnic studies with an area “A” US History course. Historically, almost all ethnic studies courses are electives (area “G”). Therefore, this course deserves attention for its potential

¹²³ Valencia, “Chican@ and Latin@ Studies Course Description,” 2-6; LAUSD Secondary History/Social Science Branch, “Mexican American Studies Course Description,” 1-2.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

to challenge the current California education system's teaching of US History. This course successfully created a study of history that integrates many of the aforementioned pedagogies and curriculum, but does not offer a plausible replacement for US History courses statewide due to many factors of its execution due to the opposition stated at the state government level.

ESJ in US History is a course that combines the principles of ethnic studies pedagogists, critics of high school United States history courses (i.e. James Loewen), and the content of the 2016 History-Social Sciences framework. While this course successfully subverted the deficiencies of "Conventional US History courses" by its ethnic studies curriculum and approach, it may not offer a viable solution to statewide issues of ethnic studies education in history due to the execution and academic rigor of this class.¹²⁵

The influence of ethnic studies pedagogists and critics of high school history courses were explicit and implicit in the course description. The course description included a poignant paragraph describing the reasoning for its inception:

Conventional US History courses are often taught from a purely political perspective. That is, they use the chronology of Presidents and major events in US History to serve as guide points for units. This approach can leave a student with a one-sided view of U.S. History; students start to believe that there is only one perspective and they don't see themselves as a part of history. The purpose of this course is to teach U.S. History from the perspective of ethnic, racial or marginalized groups, reflecting narratives and points of view rooted in that group's lived experiences and intellectual scholarship- one which emphasizes the roles of justice, power, race and gender in American history.¹²⁶

While there is no exact definition given for the "conventional US History course," this course differentiated itself by following the California 2016 History-Social Sciences framework course requirements for 11th grade United States history courses.¹²⁷ In comparison, the 1998 framework offered a more "conventional" US History course in its approach that represented a more

¹²⁵ Kevin Ilac, "Ethnic and Social Justice in US History Course Description," Santa Maria, October 2, 2017, 1.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ California State Board of Education (2016), "Social Science Framework for California Public Schools," 379-432.

“Eurocentric” curriculum.¹²⁸ The 2016 framework improved on the fields of ethnic studies and multicultural education through a more frequent inclusion of ethnically diverse historical actors, a greater embrace of ethnic studies as a discipline, and the integration of more community-based areas of learning.¹²⁹ The curriculum of the ESJ in US History followed this framework closely as a way of subverting conventional US History courses.

The ESJ in US Course directly followed the 2016 framework in its content areas and organization. The ESJ course has 12 main units of study throughout out the quarter (i.e. Nation’s Beginnings, Imperialism, etc.) with descriptions of the major topics within these units. The periodization and content in the ESJ course based on these units directly lined up with the corresponding units in the 2016 content standards, justifying the course’s existence as an area “A” requirement.

This course also included many “key assignments” as the culmination of each unit. These assignments reflected the overarching course goals of subverting conventional history courses by including many ethnic and social justice-related topics and encouraging more analytical forms of study.¹³⁰ These assignments included an immigration family tree, analysis of US imperialism policies and reflections on Langston Hughes’ “Me Too” poem.

Additionally, the ESJ in US History course curriculum moved away from conventional history classes in its implicit references to historical and multicultural pedagogy. The curriculum’s subversion of a conventional course implicitly cited the arguments of James Loewen. Loewen’s main critiques of high school history classes involve over reliance on biased textbooks, lack of critical debate and shortcomings involving contemporary history.¹³¹ The ESJ

¹²⁸ Sleeter, “The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies,” 1-4.

¹²⁹ California State Board of Education (2016), “Social Science Framework for California Public Schools,” 379-432.

¹³⁰ Ilac, “Ethnic and Social Justice in US History Course Description,” 2-5.

¹³¹ Loewen, *Lies my Teacher Told Me*, 1-25; Loewen, *Teaching What Really Happened*, 10-19.

course curriculum addressed these issues with its inclusion of primary sources through “Reading like a Historian” and other non-textbook sources, many critical debate “key assignments”, and extremely current issues (i.e. the 2000 and 2016 elections) in its curriculum. The “Reading like a Historian” program moved away from traditional textbook analyses critiqued by Loewen by encouraging student inquiry, departing from traditional textbook studies, and addressing historical inaccuracies.¹³² This program also cited History-Social Science Common Core standards as part of its impetus for existence as these standards emphasize learning strategies.¹³³ The influences of Loewen and “Reading like a Historian” further showed the course’s departure from traditional US History classes.

In addition, this curriculum related to the prevalent ideas of ethnic studies pedagogy. SMJUHSD has cited the work of Sleeter (2011) and Dee and Penner (2017) in its advertisement and support for EGS courses (such as ESJ in US History);¹³⁴ these two works may have also influenced the ESJ course curriculum. For example, Dee and Penner state: “instructional practices are substantially more effective when differentiated to align with the distinctive cultural priors that individual students experience outside of school and when they also affirm both cultural identity and critical social engagement.”¹³⁵ This idea was expressed in the 2016 framework and ESJ in US History course’s emphasis on community research and experiences. Sleeter similarly argues: “As students of color proceed through the school system, research finds that the overwhelming dominance of Euro-American perspectives leads many such students to disengage from academic learning. Ethnic studies curricula exist in part because students of color

¹³² Sam Wineburg, Daisy Martin, and Chauncey Monte-Sano, *Reading like a Historian: Teaching Literacy in Middle and High School History Classrooms* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2013): ix-xii.

¹³³ Ibid, 143.

¹³⁴ SMJUHSD, “Ethnic and Gender Studies.”

http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/PagesLevel2/Documents/Ethnic_and_Gender_Studies_Brochure...pdf.

¹³⁵ Dee and Penner, “The Causal Effects of Cultural Relevance,”127.

have demanded an education that is relevant, meaningful, and affirming of their identities.”¹³⁶

The ESJ course addressed these problems by providing an education meant for an ethnically diverse populous.

This author’s observation of the ESJ in US History course at Pioneer Valley High School (PVHS) concludes that this course successfully executes the ideas expressed by ethnic studies pedagogists, critics of high school United States history courses, and the content of the 2016 History-Social Sciences framework to create a better US History “A” course for California’s ethnically diverse populace.¹³⁷ Yet, the execution of this course also revealed its flaws when considering its potential for California as a whole beyond the 2018-2019 school year, based on the critiques of ethnic studies.

There were considerable differences in conduct of the ESJ in US History class and other History-Social Science courses at PVHS, further reflecting the desire to combine conventional history curriculum with ethnic studies. There was considerably more engagement in the ESJ in US History course among students than in other classes.¹³⁸ Students’ behaviors in this manner reflected the success of the course in engaging its vast majority of “Hispanic/Latino” students by way of its ethnic and social justice focus and the use of primary sources. Another important aspect of the execution of this course was the commitment of the teacher to the principles of the course. Stacie Martinez taught both sections of this course at PVHS and her passion was tangible throughout the course.¹³⁹ Martinez demonstrated her commitment to the course by

¹³⁶ Sleeter, “The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies,” vii.

¹³⁷ This study included 20 observation hours of different history-social sciences courses at PVHS, including Stacie Martinez’s ESJ in US History class. The following evaluation of the course’s execution includes my own observations of the course and information from informal conversations with Stacie Martinez and Kevin Ilac.

¹³⁸ Stacie Martinez noted this to me on multiple occasions due to clear differences in students’ overall willingness to participate in discussions and show enthusiasm during class.

¹³⁹ The importance of teachers is emphasized in much of *Ethnic Studies and Multicultural Pedagogies*: Gay, “Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching,” 106-112; Ladson-Billings, “Toward a Theory of Culturally

integrating the course's ethnic and social justice throughout the course, especially in lectures and assignments. The EGS teachers at PVHS also worked with other educators at other SMJUHSD schools including Ricardo Valencia at SMHS to conduct this course. The execution of this course according to its description, engagement of the students and the preparedness of the teachers ensured the success of this class.

While this course appealed to the educational needs of many students by following the pedagogies and curriculums from which it was created, certain aspects of this course that make it less conducive for statewide adoption were its academic rigor and lack of appeal to all students. ESJ in US History demands more analysis from its students and is thus more academically challenging. According to Stacie Martinez, students at PVHS were told that they should not take this class unless they are interested in a higher-level history course and able to handle this workload. The rigor of the coursework is not a problem in and of itself, but this message resulted in a mostly "higher-level" group of students enrolling in this course according to Martinez. Additionally, the students in the ESJ course did not show a significant GPA increase in comparison to other history-social sciences students as previous ethnic studies pedagogies suggested.¹⁴⁰ The academic rigor of this course is significant as former Governor Brown vetoed a potential statewide ethnic studies graduation requirement partially due to the academic rigor of these courses and the desire to not add academic requirements to high schoolers' coursework.¹⁴¹

Therefore, the ESJ in US History course has seemingly less staying power as a tenant of the statewide ethnic studies curriculum than Chicax/Latinx studies as long as it does not attract

Relevant Pedagogy," 466; Nieto, *Language, Culture and Teaching*, 183-186; Sleeter, "The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies," 20; Tintiango-Cubales et. al, "Toward an Ethnic Studies Pedagogy," 108-121.

¹⁴⁰ Dee and Penner, "The Casual Effects of Cultural Relevance," 129; this study does not consider PVHS students' success in courses outside history-social sciences as the Dee and Penner study does. More research would be needed to confirm this trend across all PVHS and SMJUHSD courses.

¹⁴¹ California State Legislature, "AB-2772 Pupil instruction: ethnic studies: grant program," https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billHistoryClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB2772.

success from all levels of students. That said, the integration of many relevant forms of pedagogy and the multiethnic focuses of the 2016 history-social sciences framework make this course extremely viable for the future. Thus, this course will require slight revision in its execution to ensure that all students will be attracted to and succeed in the level of rigor this course offers. These revisions should include a greater advertisement to all students to expand the potential impacts for all SMJUHS students as ethnic studies research has showed that ethnic studies can benefit all students despite being more rigorous, including those that historically did not have academic success.

All in all, the creation of the ESJ in US History course in Santa Maria demonstrated the level of expansion of California's ethnic studies by 2018. This course addressed long-developed issues in pedagogy and the community in a unique way as an ethnic studies-area "A" course and occurred outside the field's epicenters in the Bay Area and Southern California.

Conclusion

The trends of ethnic studies in California's high schools and the case study of SMJUHS from 1968 to 2018 have suggested that ethnic studies will continue to expand due to several key factors, assuming similar outcomes in the near future. First, the community members that have historically advocated for ethnic studies will seemingly remain in positions of influence whether it may be long-time leaders such as Juan Gómez-Quíñones or new leaders such as Ricardo Valencia. Second, the community support for ethnic studies will continue as long as there are prevalent issues that drive the need for ethnic studies, namely ethnic segregation, ethnic self-determination, educational inequalities and immigration issues. Finally, and perhaps most importantly to the post-2018 era, the 2014 to 2018 period of ethnic studies expansion has created a statewide environment in support of this field. Ethnic studies has been engrained into the state

laws and curriculum, spread from its two key epicenters and been considered for a high school graduation requirement due to its potential benefits from popular pedagogies.

However, the state of ethnic studies in 2018 continued to suggest that localities such as SMJUHSD will have to continue catalyzing the development of ethnic studies; former Governor Brown's veto of AB-2772 directly assured this local autonomy. This paradigm makes the actions of pedagogists such as Dee and Penner and teachers such as Valencia and Martinez more important as the driving forces in its development rather than state laws. Local school districts and pedagogists must continue to develop the theories and practices that successfully cultivate learning for California's ethnically diverse student population. One potential area of study that may drive ethnic studies development in the future is Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy.¹⁴² It is unclear whether this paradigm or another will create another breakthrough in this field similar to work by Sleeter (2011) or Dee and Penner (2017), but these developments will continue to occur outside statewide government for the foreseeable future.

The ever-changing nature in these respects will require future research as this study has conducted. Further research must continue to consider the actions of individual school districts as long as there are no universal course requirements for graduation. 2019 will also offer an inflection point for California's ethnic studies as a "model curriculum" is due by the end of the year per AB-2016. It is unclear how this model curriculum will impact California's high schools until ethnic studies become an elective in all high schools per the requirements of AB-2016. Additionally, further research must continue to emphasize the work of high school teachers in developing and implementing these courses. These teachers work directly with the students that

¹⁴² Django Paris and Sammy Alim, *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice in a Changing World* (Language and Literacy Series, New York, N.Y.: 2017); Django Paris, "Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: A Needed Change in Stance, Terminology, and Practice," *Educational Researcher* 41, no. 3 (2012): 93-97.

ethnic studies address, connecting them to classroom outcomes the most directly. In any case, ethnic studies research is important to the field and must persist for new developments to occur.

Another important aspect of ethnic studies in the future is how it continues to address issues in the history-social sciences. The history of ethnic studies has implied that these courses' curricula and methodologies will make a huge difference in this field based on the principles of theorists such as Loewen, Sleeter and Sam Wineburg (Reading like a Historian). ESJ in US History has represented the shifts in the history-social sciences toward culturally pluralistic curriculum and critical thinking skills.

In any case, ethnic studies have solidified itself as part of California's high school education history. These courses now pervade the two largest school districts (SFUSD and LAUSD) and they have expanded to other areas of the state. California's future educators, especially in the history-social sciences, must consider this field based due to its past successes and relevance with ethnically diverse communities. The importance of ethnic studies has been proven throughout history by its growth and resiliency for its first 45 years of existence to get to the 2014 to 2018 era of expansion that solidified its existence for the foreseeable future. In short, California high schools' development of ethnic studies in the future is unclear, but its importance is undeniable.

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