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## **An Open Letter to Winston-Salem Forsyth County Schools and Community**

### **Statement of Support for a Researched Based/Data Driven Approach to African-American/Latinx Infusion in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (WS/FCS)**

March 6, 2023

Action4Equity (A4E) supports a K-12 African-American history infusion model to be implemented in the social studies curriculum for all students. We advocate for an approach that allows students to enter the study at the additive level (Banks, 1999) and move through the curricular trajectory that affords an opportunity for critical thinking as they view the goals and objectives at the [transformation](#), if not social action levels A4E submitted a [course outline](#) that represents the suggested approaches. (See Figure 1). (See Addendum of Linked Documents). We also support the same infusion structure for Latinx history, culture, and contributions. (Banks, 1999) Given the current student demographics, it is our position that the social studies curriculum must be reflective of the district's overall population (See Figure 2).

We advocate for the implementation of a comprehensive approach that teaches the history, culture, achievements, and contributions of Africans and African-Americans to national and world civilization, while providing an historically accurate and multiculturally authentic scope and sequence for teaching about African-Americans; a scope and sequence that begins in West Africa, and includes the history and cultures of peoples from the West Caribbean. We recommend the use of original sources in a culturally authentic voice to enhance students' critical thinking and complex reasoning skills. ([Webb's Depth of Knowledge and Bloom's Taxonomy](#), 2001). (See Addendum of Linked Documents). This will require significant professional development for teachers in multicultural education theory in addition to a budget for instructional resources; at least a \$1-2 million dollar social studies allotment. A precedent has been set for this budget request: from 1995-2017 WS/FCS appropriated funds totaling [\\$750,000.00](#) to the Instructional Services Division via the Office of Multicultural Education (Dr. Willette Nash, personal communication, 2021). Those dollars were used to fund the same activities we are currently requesting: professional development, stipends for teachers to design culturally-affirming infusion lessons, salon with multicultural resources and experiences for students. (See Addendum of Linked Documents)

We offer certain recommendations in line with the research on multicultural theory and curriculum reform as we have [audited the current North Carolina social studies standard course of study, and the district's approach to infusion. It is our understanding that multicultural content has been added to the standards through the use of primary sources.](#) (See Addendum of Linked Documents)

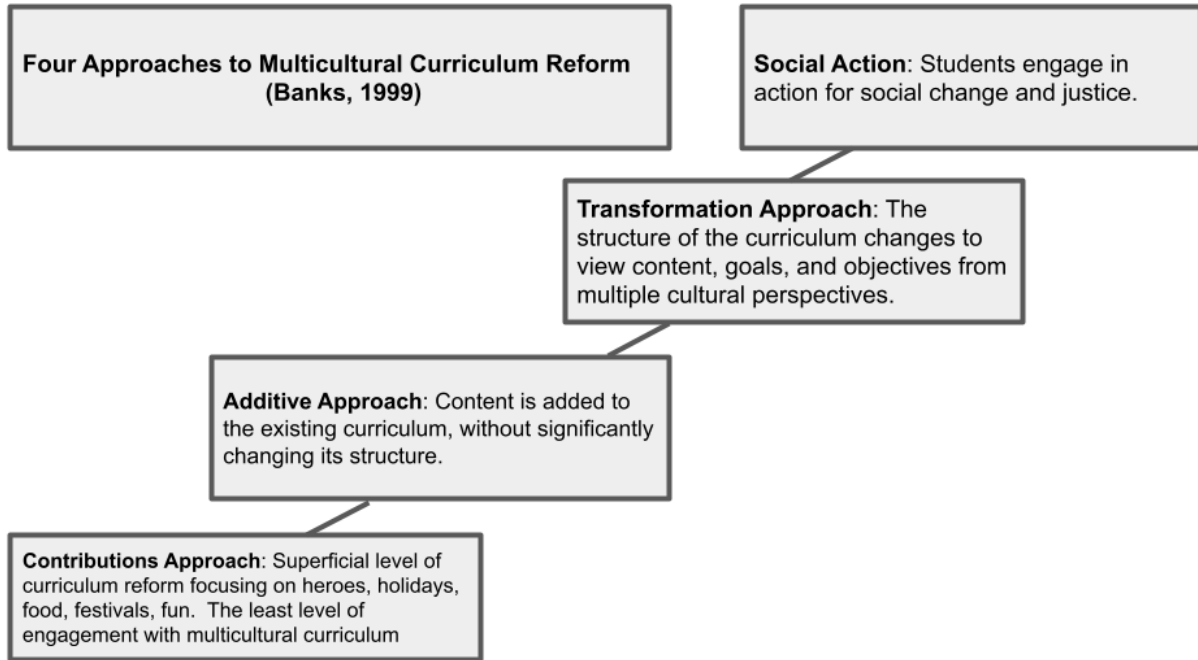
***More importantly, we recognize there are those who argue that the understanding of history should be restricted to protect the feelings of some. There are others who believe that multicultural history is only for Asian, American Indian, Black and Latinx students. Neither position represents the foundations of educational research. A4E believes that the K-12 infusion models that we advocate will produce not only a breadth and depth of historical knowledge, but also a growth of critical and complex thinking that will make all students effective and productive members of the multi-racial society that they live in.***

In support of WS/FCS infusion efforts, in 2020 A4E launched a community-powered coalition, Jump At The Sun. **Jump At The Sun (J@S)** is a literacy-based platform with the mission of providing culturally affirming books, curriculum, and training to educators to infuse historically appropriate and multicultural scope of history in literacy. Since the coalition formed, the Book Drive initiative has placed 1,316 culturally affirming books, in addition to 168 grade-appropriate, educator-developed curricula in our local schools. Further, **J@S** hosted community conversations on representation in curricula, and the importance of multicultural education for **ALL** students. WS/FCS Instructional and Library Media Services Departments are founding members of the **J@S** coalition and continue to be involved in the initiative with the goal being to help both educators and community members to practice, model, and inform the ways that the district adopts an authentic approach to multicultural curriculum infusion. **It is important that we be clear: Jump at the Sun cannot and will not sufficiently meet the resource needs for a social studies curriculum that is infused with multicultural history for a district of 53,000 students.** As referenced earlier, a precedent has been set which demonstrates a cogent understanding of the costs of supporting resources. We stand firm in our commitment that the district should fully fund the social studies program so that its administrators, instructional facilitators/coaches, and teachers can prepare every student for success in an ever increasingly multicultural world.

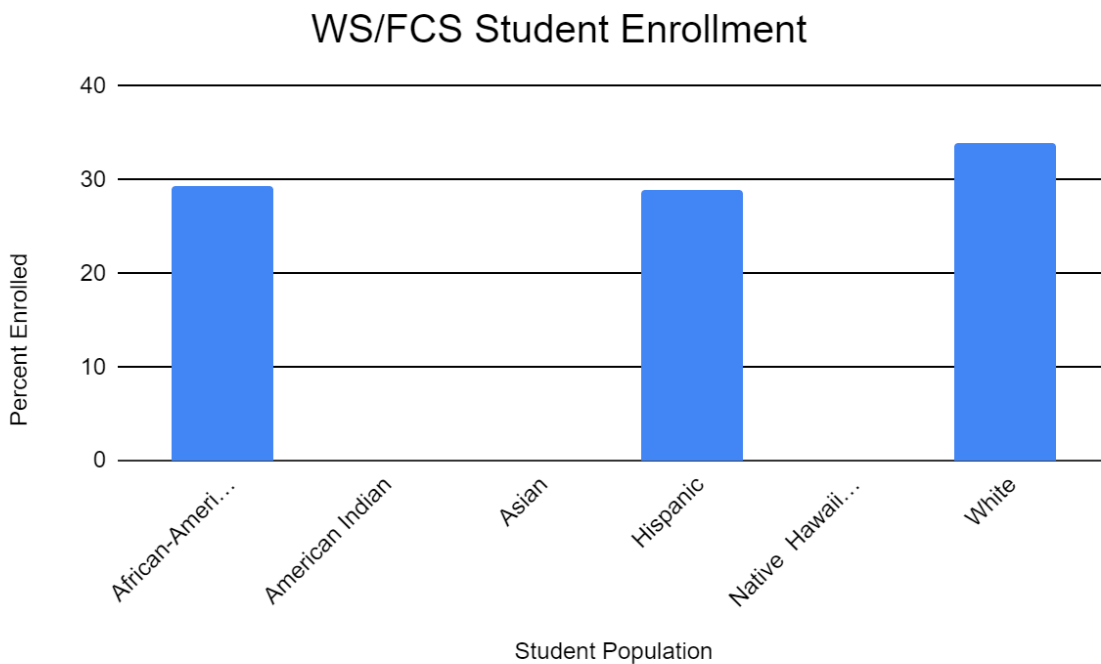
*Action4Equity is a black-led, intentionally multi-racial coalition of educators, parents, students, faith leaders, and community members building a movement to advance equity for students in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools in the areas of academic achievement, access to high-quality instruction, and safe and healthy school environments.*  
[www.action4equityws.org](http://www.action4equityws.org)

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**Figure 1. Four Approaches to Multicultural Curriculum**



**Figure 2: WS/FCS District Overview/Student Demographics**



\*Asian, American Indian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander <1%



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## [Addendum of Linked Documents](#)

### **A4E Documents:**

**Instructional Outcomes for Culminating African American Studies Course  
Culturally Affirming Aspects of WSFCS Sampled Social Studies Curricula  
WSFCS Investment in Multicultural Education 1995-2017**

### **Other References:**

**Webb's Depth of Knowledge and Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking**

## References

Anderson, L.W., Krathwohl, D.R. et al. (2001). A taxonomy for teaching, learning, and assessing: A revision of bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives.

<https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Educator-Evaluation-System/How-to-Design-and-Select-Quality-Assessments/DOK-Compared-to-Blooms-Taxonomy.pdf.aspx>

Banks, J.A. (1999). *An introduction to multicultural education* (2nd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools District Overview.

<https://www.wsfcs.k12.nc.us/Page/120127>