



Ethnic Studies is Beneficial and in High Demand for High School Students

IDRA Testimony for HB 178, Submitted by Kaci Wright to the Texas House Public Education Committee, April 22, 2025

Dear Chairman Buckley and Members of the Committee:

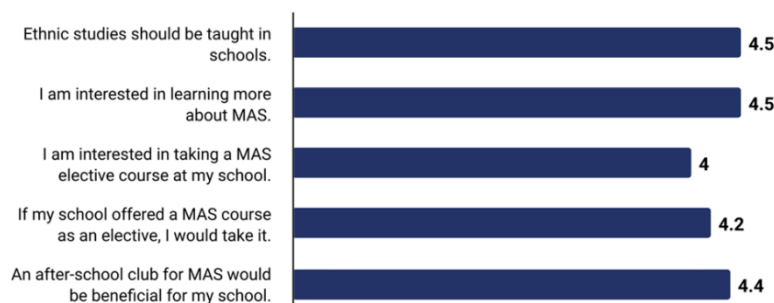
My name is Kaci Wright, and I am a former public school teacher and a current Education Policy Fellow at IDRA, an independent, non-partisan non-profit committed to achieving equal educational opportunity for every child through strong public schools that prepare all students to access and succeed in college.

Students across the state of Texas are currently enrolled in and benefiting from ethnic studies courses. A 2024 youth-led research study produced by IDRA surveyed Texas students on their experience taking a Mexican American studies (MAS) course and results noted that the course contributed positively to their academics and that they felt more engaged in their school community. Students also expressed that they would recommend for their peers to take a Mexican American studies course. (IDRA, 2024)

This study also interviewed students not enrolled in a Mexican American studies course and the results showed that these students wanted to learn more and enroll in MAS courses, indicating strong support for more course offerings (IDRA, 2024). Overall, the study confirms that Texas students want to take advantage of ethnic studies courses but, because school districts aren't required to offer them, they may miss out on all the benefits.

Respondents rated the statements below using a 5-point Likert scale with the following assigned values: 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Somewhat disagree, 3 = Neither disagree nor agree, 4 = Somewhat agree, and 5 = Strongly agree.

Students Not Enrolled in Mexican American Studies



IDRA, 2024

HB 178 includes ethnic studies courses, Mexican American Studies and African American Studies, as options to meet the required social studies curriculum for high school students.

