



Leadership for Educational and Organizational Advancement

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Transforming Afro-American Content into the School Curriculum

Recently passed laws are requiring that schools increase efforts to include Afro-American content into school curriculum activities.

Schools have had challenges with including Afro-American content while successfully implementing other culturally required curriculum activities.

Many schools include Afro-American content by focusing on the civil rights movement during history class, having special school and community concerts, or having students do reports on individual historically underserved persons to name a few. However, many activities are accomplished as a celebration of Black History month.

To further complicate the process many schools are preparing students for state standardized testing during the month of February which further limits opportunities to include Afro-American content into the curriculum.

Requirements for standardized testing places added pressure on

the administrators and teachers and they often choose to abandon the Afro-American curriculum requirements in an effort to maximize their efforts to increase standardized testing results.

It is important for educators to understand that infusion of Afro-American content during the entire school year is necessary if we are to begin a process where people from all ethnicities can live productively and respectfully in our world.

When historically underserved students are exposed to curricular activities that are exclusive of their ethnicity then the student's culture becomes devalued and many students will reject learning other academic concepts. This will consequently impact student achievement.

Consequently, students in the majority will also learn that the historically underserved student's culture is devalued too. This sets the stage for conflict amongst students who are also future adults because the

devaluation of the student's culture is now institutionalized. It is this institutionalization that continues to breed devaluation of individual's culture in our communities and from generation to generation.

Use the following steps to infuse Afro-American content into the curriculum:

1. Pilot the infusion with an individual teacher at each level for grades pre-k to 12.
2. Teachers will select curricular activities for each content area.
3. Bring the teachers at each grade level or content area together to infuse the activities.
4. Develop the curriculum guides.
5. Submit the new curriculum for approval.