

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 957

H.P. 616

House of Representatives, March 11, 2025

An Act to Integrate Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander History into the Statewide System of Learning Results

Received by the Clerk of the House on March 6, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 401.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

Presented by Representative SATO of Gorham.
Cosponsored by Senator TALBOT ROSS of Cumberland and
Representatives: DANA of the Passamaquoddy Tribe, MITCHELL of Cumberland, OSHER of
Orono, RANA of Bangor, SARGENT of York, WHITE of Ellsworth, WOOD of Greene,
Senator: INGWERSEN of York.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA §4706**, as amended by PL 2023, c. 537, §§1 and 2, is further
3 amended to read:

4 **§4706. Instruction in American history, African American studies, Maine studies,**
5 **Wabanaki studies ~~and the~~, history of genocide and Asian American, Native**
6 **Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history**

7 Instruction in American history, African American studies, government, citizenship,
8 Maine studies ~~and~~, the history of genocide and Asian American, Native Hawaiian and
9 Pacific Islander history must be aligned with the parameters for essential instruction and
10 graduation requirements established under section 6209.

11 **1. American history.** American history, government and citizenship, including the
12 United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, the importance of voting and
13 the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship, must be taught in and required for
14 graduation from all elementary and secondary schools, both public and private. African
15 American studies and Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history must
16 be included in the review of content standards and performance indicators of the system of
17 learning results conducted in accordance with section 6209, subsection 4.

18 **2. Maine studies.** Maine history, including the Constitution of Maine, Maine
19 geography and environment and the natural, industrial and economic resources of Maine
20 and Maine's cultural and ethnic heritage, must be taught. A required component of Maine
21 studies is Wabanaki studies, and Wabanaki studies may be taught as a component of other
22 content areas, as appropriate, including but not limited to the content areas of English
23 language arts, mathematics, science and fine arts. Wabanaki studies, Maine Asian
24 American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history and Maine African American
25 studies must be included in the review of content standards and performance indicators of
26 the learning results conducted in accordance with section 6209, subsection 4. Wabanaki
27 studies must address the following topics:

- 28 A. Wabanaki governments and political systems and their relationship with local, state,
29 national and international governments;
- 30 B. Wabanaki cultural systems and the experience of tribal people throughout history;
- 31 C. Wabanaki territories; and
- 32 D. Wabanaki economic systems.

33 **3. History of genocide.** The history of genocide, including the Holocaust, must be
34 included in the review of content standards and performance indicators of the system of
35 learning results conducted in accordance with section 6209, subsection 4.

36 **4. Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history.** Asian
37 American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history instruction pursuant to subsections
38 1 and 2 must consider, but is not limited to:

- 39 A. The history of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the
40 State, the region and the United States; and
- 41 B. The contributions of:

- 1 (1) Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders toward
2 advancing civil rights from the 19th century to the present day;
3 (2) Individual Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in
4 government, the arts, humanities and sciences; and
5 (3) Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities to the
6 economic, cultural, social and political development of the United States.

7 As used in this section, "Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander
8 history" includes, but is not limited to, the history of Americans of East Asian, Southeast
9 Asian, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander descent.

10 **Sec. 2. Resource development; advisory group; curriculum audit; report.**

11 The Department of Education is responsible for fulfilling the requirements of this section.

12 **1. Development of resources.** The department shall identify and make available to
13 schools resources and materials for teaching Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific
14 Islander history, including Maine Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander
15 history, pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 4706, subsection 4.

16 **2. Advisory group.** The department shall, within 30 days after the effective date of this
17 Act, convene a volunteer advisory group to collect information and prepare materials for
18 the teaching of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history. The
19 advisory group must include scholars of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific
20 Islander history and culture; representatives from Asian American, Native Hawaiian and
21 Pacific Islander civil rights organizations in the State; Asian American, Native Hawaiian
22 and Pacific Islander history and cultural organizations; the State Archivist; and members
23 of the public with personal experience that would inform the collection of information and
24 the preparation of materials under this section. The department shall include at least one
25 member from the advisory group in any group or committee convened to review the
26 parameters for essential instruction and graduation requirements for social studies pursuant
27 to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 20-A, section 6209, subsection 4.

28 **3. Guidance; best practices; exemplar modules.** The department shall develop
29 guidance, best practices and exemplar modules to support the integration of Asian
30 American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history into the instruction of American
31 history and Maine history.

32 **4. Curriculum audit.** The department shall develop a process that supports and
33 enables a local school administrative unit to conduct an internal audit of its curriculum to
34 ensure an equitable representation of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific
35 Islander voices and an accurate historical account of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and
36 Pacific Islander history and culture.

37 **5. Reporting.** The department shall submit a report on the progress of the
38 implementation of this Act to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural
39 Affairs matters no later than April 1, 2030.

40 **Sec. 3. Effective date.** That section of this Act that amends the Maine Revised
41 Statutes, Title 20-A, section 4706 takes effect July 1, 2029.

1

SUMMARY

2 This bill includes instruction on Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander
3 history in the Department of Education's required units of instruction on American history
4 and Maine studies. The bill requires the department to convene a volunteer advisory
5 committee to collect information and prepare materials for teaching Asian American,
6 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history and to develop and provide guidance, best
7 practices and exemplar modules to local school administrative units to integrate Asian
8 American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history into their curriculum. The bill also
9 requires the department to develop a process to enable a local school administrative unit to
10 conduct an internal audit of its curriculum to ensure an equitable representation of Asian
11 American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander voices and an accurate historical account
12 of Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history and culture. The bill also
13 requires the department to submit a report on the progress of the implementation of this
14 legislation to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs no later than
15 April 1, 2030.