



Downey Unified
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ethnic Studies Course Pilot Overview

**PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024**

Dr. Rani Bertsch
Director of Secondary Ed
Dr. Cassandra Villa
TOSA/Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

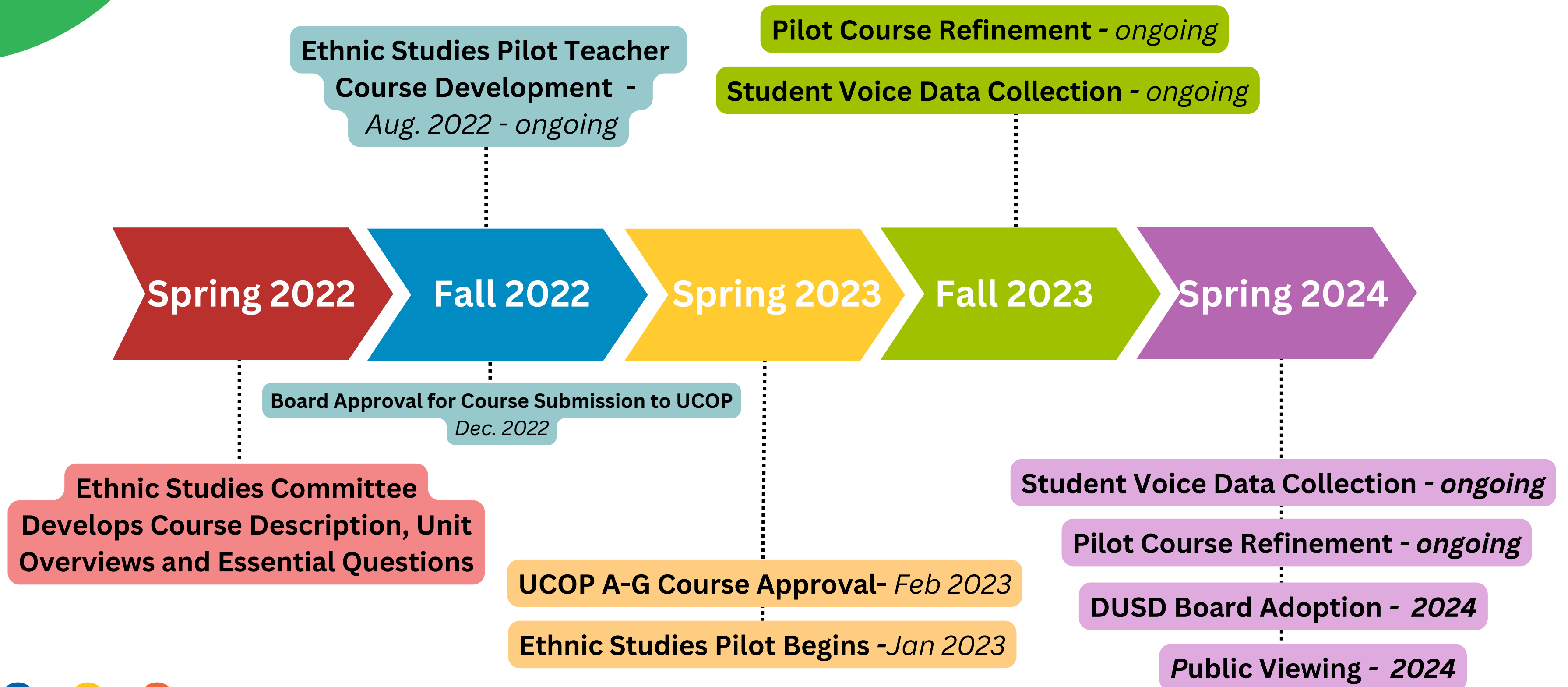
Christopher Membribes
Asst. Principal Warren HS
Golden Fowler
Asst. Principal Downey HS

Assembly Bill 101 Passed in 2021

- Requirement is for at least a one-semester course
 - 9th grade course aligned with health
- Takes effect for the graduating class of 2029–2030
- Districts must begin offering the course by the 2025–26 school year



Ethnic Studies Course Timeline



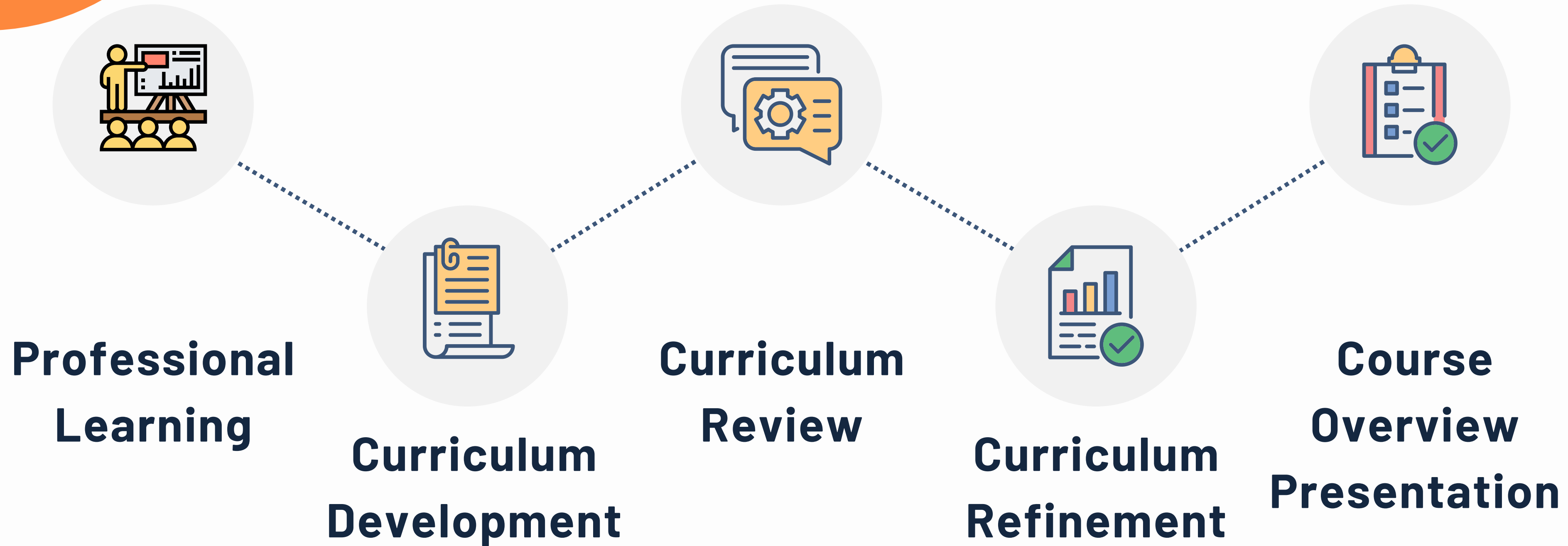
Board Goal # 2023–2024

Downey Unified will implement and assess all components of Downey Unified's Equity Plan to ensure our District continues to grow and improve our practices in acknowledging and addressing issues of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Equity Plan Goals

| DUSD Equity Plan Goals | |
|------------------------|--|
| Goal 1 | DUSD will implement practices addressing diversity, equity, justice and inclusion for all students, staff, and families. |
| Goal 2 | DUSD will establish learning structures and teaching practices that support and are inclusive of diverse learners as well as strengthen community partnerships. |
| Goal 3 | DUSD will continually identify underserved populations and implement targeted whole-child supports. |
| Goal 4 | DUSD will gather actionable data from student experiences and educational achievements with the purpose of establishing benchmarks and reporting on the District' status regarding diversity, equity, inclusion, and safety. |
| Goal 5 | DUSD will establish systems of accountability that create transparency for our District within our community. |

New Course Development Process



Ethnic Studies Pilot 2022–2023

COMMITMENT



Ethnic Studies Course Development Committee *Spring 2022*

COMMUNITY



COLLABORATION



- Dr. Rani Bertsch
- Daniela Sanchez
- Josh Davis
- Robert Hecker
- Cesar Armendariz
- Roger Rios
- Vanessa Brumfield

- Edward Lara
- Daniel Miranda
- Dr. Cassandra Villa
- Ebony Jordan
- Golden Fowler
- Jesus Alvarez



Course Purpose & Goals

Students in Downey Unified will...

- Further develop a stronger sense of self and others.
- Further develop respect for cultural diversity and see the advantages of inclusion.
- Grow academically and socially and develop as responsible citizens.
- Be empowered to engage socially and politically and to think critically about the world around them.



What is Ethnic Studies?

WHAT IT IS MEANT TO BE...



- The study of race and ethnicity that celebrates the societal contributions of people of color.
- A course that analyzes and explores the social, emotional, cultural, economic and political impact of the distribution of power.
- A course rooted in literacy and common core state standards.

WHAT IT IS **NOT** MEANT TO BE...



- Divisive or exclusionary
- A course that teaches racial separatism or religious doctrine.
- A course that reflects or promotes, directly or indirectly, any bias, bigotry, or discrimination against any person or group of persons on the basis of any category.

Unit Overview

Unit 1: Story of Me



Unit 2: Story of You



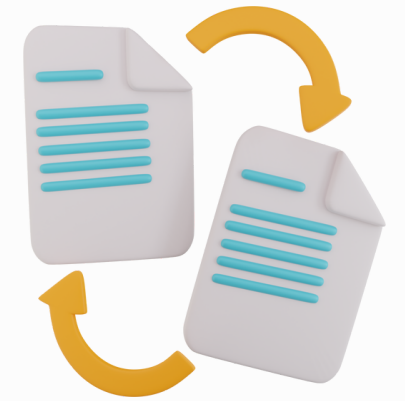
Unit 3: Story of Us



Unit 4: Celebration of All



Course Description



In alignment with our district's mission, vision, and our equity plan, Ethnic Studies is a course that:

- Further develops self-motivated learners who are productive, responsible, and compassionate members of an ever changing global society.
- Cultivates and fosters understanding across ethnic and cultural boundaries.
- Celebrates the multitude of ways people of all backgrounds contribute to the history of the United States, and the global community.
- Fosters critical consciousness to become global citizens of strong character by further developing a regard for diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice.



Ethnic Studies Pilot Team

COMMITMENT



COMMUNITY



COLLABORATION

Spring 2023-present

Cesar Armendariz - DHS

Vanessa Brumfield - DHS

Jana Chilton - WHS

Edward Lara - WHS

Sergio Maldonado - WHS

Jeanetta Wolfe - WHS

Ethnic Studies Pilot Professional Development

- LACOE Ethnic Studies 3 Day Fall Institute - *Fall 2023*
- Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x - *Fall 2022 & Fall 2023*
- African American Studies - *Spring 2023*
- Native American Studies - *Spring 2023*
- Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies - *Spring 2023*
- San Mateo Union High School District Visits - *Fall 2022*
- Collaboration Days - *Fall 2022-present*



Lesson Sample

Today's Objective

- I will be able to complete a profile of my community and identify areas of reform

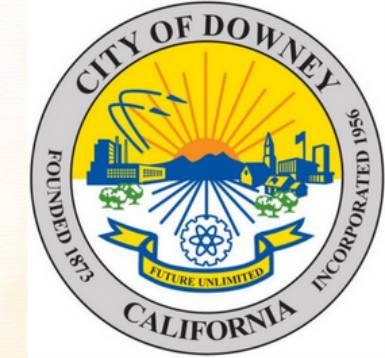
CC Std. SL.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) on topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively



Community Profile

- Identify the leadership in your community
 - *School Administration*
 - *City Government*
 - *State Government*
 - *Federal Government*



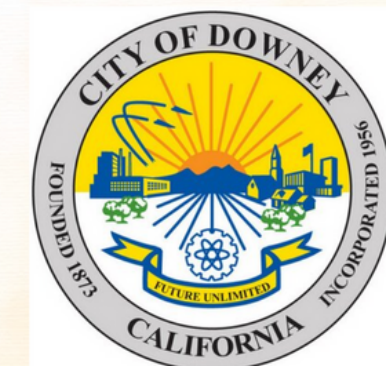
Community Profile

- Complete a profile of your community
 - You can use this [link](#) to obtain information about your community
 - You can use this [link](#) to obtain information about crime in your community



Community Profile

- Detail concerns about your community
 - For reference, refer to the data you compiled
- Identify the changes you wish to see in your community
- Who has the POWER to make change? Why and how?



Centering Student Voice

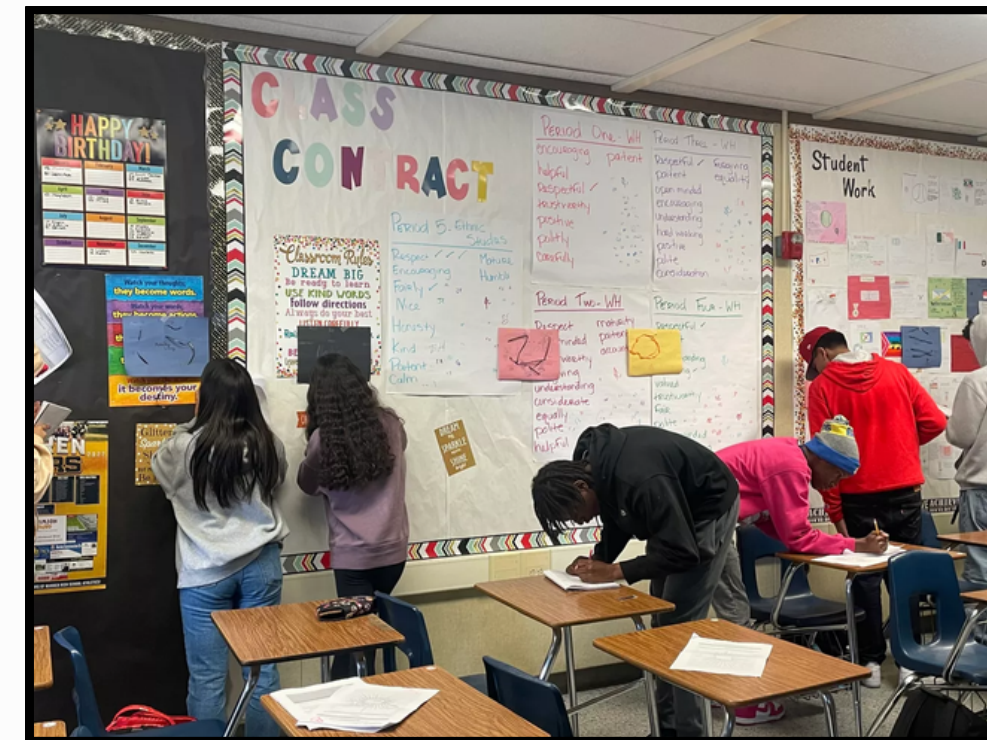
....

“Another thing that I want to start learning at least more is about our own **culture** and presenting where we are from and **our ancestors**”



“The most useful lesson was learning about my **community here in Downey**”

“One thing I learned was how **biases** work”



Advice to Teachers: “To tell the truth on our history”



Next Steps

- **DUSD Board Curriculum Review and Adoption - *Spring 2024***
- **Public Viewing - *Feb 19th - March 19th***
- **Continuous Refinement of Course**
- **Centering Student Voice Data to improve instruction**



QUESTIONS?

