

# NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 203



*To commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity.®*

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TO: Dr. Paul Sally, Superintendent  
Board of Education, New Trier Township High School

FROM: Dr. Chimille Tillery, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

RE: AP African American Studies Pilot Course Implementation in 2023-2024

DATE: November 14, 2022

I am pleased to present the AP African American Studies pilot course for approval by the Board for the 2023-2024 school year. We are extremely excited that New Trier has been selected by the College Board as a school for the second year of this pilot. Upon learning about the College Board's plan to expand their pilot, I worked with Michael Christensen, Social Studies Department Chair, to submit an interest form to the College Board in September 2022. We were notified in early November that we were selected, resulting in a request for approval by the Board outside of our standard process.

This school year, approximately 60 schools across the country are participating in the first year pilot of AP African American Studies. The College Board is expanding the pilot in the 2023-24 school year by adding approximately 350 high schools. The College Board may fully launch the course in the 2024-25 school year. Even though the course is still in the pilot phase, colleges recognize AP African American Studies as an AP course and will decide individually how to give students placement or credit based on their score.

To ensure the course is a success next year, the first step is to work with Michael Christensen to identify one or two teachers for the course and send them to the AP Summer Institute. The course will be listed in the Program of Studies, and as we enter the registration process, we will reach out to students to see if they want to take advantage of the opportunity. We want to use this pilot as a means to help us figure out how we best support a wider range of students in AP classes.

Lastly, piloting this course directly connects to New Trier's Strategic Plan. This pilot expands opportunities for students to access rich and rigorous curriculum while including diverse curricular perspectives. As intended, the strategic plan is guiding our thinking and planning toward a set of common goals and outcomes.

I look forward to answering any questions on Monday. The course will be up for approval with the other new courses as part of the consent agenda.

## **NEW COURSE PROPOSAL**

### **Social Studies - AP African American Studies**

This course is being proposed to permit juniors and seniors who have completed U.S. History to take AP African American Studies. This is a multidisciplinary course that examines the breadth of African American experiences through direct encounters with rich and varied sources, drawing from the fields of literature, the arts and humanities, political science, geography, science, and more. This course is organized by four thematic units that follow a chronological flow across the course. Across each unit, students build interdisciplinary analytical skills through deep encounters with a wide range of texts and sources.

The course is based on rigorous research including, but not limited to:

- Syllabi review from 100+ college syllabi, including 11 HBCUs, all 8 Ivies, and 26 state flagship institutions,
- Conversations with 133 college faculty about the scope of the course, instructional resources, and plans for teacher training,
- Advisory board and writing team of scholars and teachers to help shape the overarching vision of the course and draft models of the course framework, and
- Higher education symposium where almost 200 college faculty gathered to review and provide feedback on the course framework and exam design with an eye towards aligning to college courses with the goal of securing credit and placement for the exam.