LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

The Intersection of Ethnic Studies and Public Policy:

A Study of California High School Board Members' Perspectives

by

Russell Castañeda Calleros

A dissertation presented to the Faculty of the School of Education,

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The Intersection of Ethnic Studies and Public Policy:

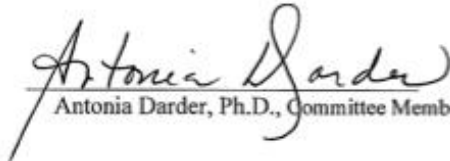A Study of California High School Board Members' Perspectives

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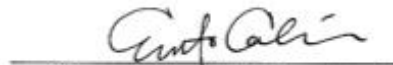**Los Angeles, CA 90045**

This dissertation written by Russell Castaneda Calleros, under the direction of the Dissertation Committee, is approved and accepted by all committee members, in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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To my wife Maria I give the deepest, heartfelt thanks. My decision to write a dissertation has impacted her the most. My wife looked after the kids or arranged for childcare so that I could spend time on coursework during the first two years and on my dissertation during the last eighteen months. She patiently supported me through my rough patches and celebrated key milestones when I reached them. I know that she had to postpone her own aspirations to return to school so that I could pursue this program and write my dissertation. Without her selflessness, I would not have been able to complete this journey. Her walking with me during my dissertation journey was especially critical during the last six months of the process.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents Amador and Esther Calleros who instilled in me a hunger to know more about my history, to my wife, Maria, for choosing to marry me each day to share our history, and to my three children, Abram, Grace, and Selah, who have already begun to write their own history.

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The achievement gap between Students of Color and their Euro American counterparts has

persisted for decades. Too many Students of Color are becoming disinterested in high school

curricula and are being pushed out prior to graduation. This mixed-methods study identified

the perspectives of California high school board members toward Ethnic Studies (ES) curricula

and the extent to which these perspectives informed public policy. This study was completed in

two phases. In Phase I, a link to a survey was sent to all California high school board members,

which elicited quantitative data. In Phase II, semistandardized interviews that generated

qualitative data were completed with a stratified sample of participants who indicated interest

in being interviewed in Phase I. With the use of inductive coding, themes were identified that

more deeply explored some of the results of the survey.

The findings revealed that most school board members were supportive of ES as an

elective, but less supportive of ES as a graduation requirement. School board members

supportive of ES in this survey were primarily Euro American, fourth generation or higher, had

taken ES before, and identified as Democrat. Fourth generation or higher respondents' higher level of support than second-generation respondents were a difference that had statistical significance. Findings also showed board member perspectives can be understood on a continuum. Board members identified as change agents on this spectrum had already taken steps to establish ES and were working to alter district culture to further advance ES in their districts.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge of one's cultural identity is critical to an individual's sense of well-being and capacity to participate fully in society.

—T. R. A. El-Haj, 2011, p. 144

It was a late afternoon day in the spring of 1991 at Stanford University. An eighteen-year-old Mexican American freshman learned that Cesar Chavez was going to be speaking one evening at Casa Zapata in the Stern Hall complex. There was a buzz among many of his Chicanx/Latinx friends, most of whom were planning to attend Chavez's address. However, when asked by one of his friends if he was thinking of going to the event, the first-year student responded, "I don't think so. I don't know who Cesar Chavez is. Besides, I have a lot of work to do tonight. I need to catch up on my reading." This student would miss the opportunity of a lifetime to hear one of the most beloved, respected Chicano civil rights leaders in United States history because he did not know who Cesar Chavez was. Had this student had the opportunity to take an Ethnic Studies (ES) class in high school, he probably would have known who Chavez was, what he did, and for whom he struggled.

Nearly 25 years later, on a warm, summer morning at California State University, Los Angeles, the Director of Ethnic Intercultural Centers and Studies welcomed a group of undergraduate students, most of whom were of color, to the Ethnic Intercultural Center. After greeting these students, the director glanced at the calendar and noted that 2015 marked the 50-year anniversary of a seminal event in the civil rights movement, and for the community of Los

Angeles. He paused to scan the eyes of the students to see if they knew what had occurred 50 years prior. He was both saddened and surprised to learn not a single student could muster a reference to the Watts Rebellion of 1965, which served both as a flashpoint of anger toward the lack of economic progress in inner-city Los Angeles and as a springboard for a flurry of civil rights activity in the latter part of the 1960s. The director immediately asked each of them to research this event and to write a one-page paper so that these students could gain more knowledge of civil rights heroes and heroines than they had prior to college. He wondered silently to himself how an entire group of undergraduates could have missed the Watts Rebellion in their high school history classes. The personal experiences of this administrator, a fellow doctoral student named Frederick Smith, illustrates the same lack of awareness that plagued the Mexican American student at Stanford.

What became of the eighteen-year-old, first-year Mexican American student at Stanford? I was that young man and I eventually did have a second chance to hear Cesar Chavez speak in my junior year, primarily because I was able to take a Chicano Studies course at Stanford and learn about Cesar Chavez and his contributions. From that point on, I embraced my Chicano identity, which inspired me to apply and attend graduate school at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Drawing inspiration from Chicanx who preceded me, I now serve as a school board member of the high school district where I once attended school. And although I cannot have a conversation with the eighteen-year old I once was, I now work tirelessly to advocate for ES courses that I did not have access to as a high school student.

My Four Lenses of Positionality

My research on high school board member perspectives about ES in California is sharply driven by my positionality. I bring four lenses that are important to acknowledge from the beginning of this study, in that they speak to the underlying power of the anecdote shared above. First, I used the high school board member lens. This is the lens I have experienced for over 8 years since I was first appointed to the school board in February 2010. I know firsthand the scope of influence and the nuances that come with serving as a board member for a high school district. If I were a community organizer rallying parents to champion the inclusion of ES, I would have adopted the community organizer lens. If I were a high school administrator working with my assistant principal of curriculum to find the appropriate space in the schedule for an ES course, I would have adopted the principal lens. It is, however, my lived experience as a board member in a high school district that informed my first lens.

One memorable experience as a board member was a seminal moment for me, as it reinvigorated my longtime interest in ES. When the principal of one of the high schools in the district chose to honor one of her outstanding students, Miztla, the Board had an opportunity to meet her. The principal introduced Miztla at a board meeting and gave her an opportunity to address the Board. In her short two-minute remarks, Miztla thanked her principal, recognized her family, and discussed her intention to major in ES in college. Miztla also acknowledged that if she were given the opportunity to take ES courses during her high school years, she would gladly have done so, to gain the unique perspective that ES courses offer. Miztla also shared that she had to "go out of her way" to seek textbooks, anthologies, narratives, and resources about her culture, beyond her traditional high school curriculum and everyday high school experience.

Hearing this student speak motivated me to advocate for the inclusion of ES in our high school curriculum, so students would not have to extend outside of their academic sphere to find resources about their histories and their cultural communities.

The second lens I used in this research was as a student of ES. As a high school student who did not take ES classes during grades nine through 12, I became aware of what I had missed after taking ES courses in college. As an undergraduate student who took multiple ES courses during my undergraduate years, I appreciated the impact of such classes on my worldview and my place in history relative to others. Although I experienced academic success during my high school years and was able to adjust to college rigor, albeit with considerable difficulty, I would have benefited from taking ES courses during high school. The absence of an ES curriculum during my high school years made the impression of my undergraduate Chicanx studies classes that much more powerful. Taking ES courses in college helped me to better understand that my educational journey was not just a product of my own labor, and not just due to the sacrifice of my parents but was also due to the collective struggle of civil rights activists who formed a movement on behalf of students like me. This realization was sobering, yet invigorating, given that I was learning about the contributions of those who had surnames like mine, faces resembling my parents', and trials similar to my ancestors'.

The third lens I brought was as a Chicano. My sense of pride in calling myself Chicano is the direct result of my enrollment in ES classes, my recognition of my place within *el movimiento* (the movement), and my recognition of *la lucha* (the fight). As a Chicano, I have identified with a particular struggle of Mexican Americans who were born in the United States and claimed direct descendance from *la raza*—a *mestizo* people of mixed ancestry embracing

both indigenous and European roots. As a scholar-activist of color, I have joined other People of Color who either immigrated to, were born in, or forcibly brought to the United States and sought robust participation in American democracy and the emancipation of their people. As the son of a first-generation, Mexican American mother and a second-generation Mexican American father, I benefited from their embrace of their Mexican heritage and their inclusion in the American tapestry.

In some ways, this exploration of ES has been part of an ongoing effort to reclaim what was lost or, more specifically, what was taken from my family and my community. My mom, a first-generation Mexican American who was fluent in Spanish her first 5 years of life, was overheard speaking Spanish in grade school and was told that if she was heard speaking Spanish again, she would be expelled from school. This deficit view of language and culture contributed to my mom's eventually losing her Spanish, despite the reality that Spanish remained the dominant language spoken in her home. This experience mirrors what has been written in literature. Yang wrote, "Mexican students were under constant pressures to become 'Americanized' and to reject their own culture and identity" (Yang, 2000, p. 157). Acuña wrote, "Language and culture placed Chicanos in conflict with the Anglo majority, which attempted to suppress their way of life" (Acuña, 1972, p. 188). Had my mother retained her Spanish, perhaps she would have been able to pass her Spanish on to me, helping me to become fully bilingual. My father's parents raised him speaking primarily in English. Although both of his parents were of Mexican ancestry and born in the United States, they had seen enough racism in their time growing up in the 1930s and 1940s to convince them to raise my father to speak mainly English. Still, my father was the first to introduce me to Chicanx studies when he introduced me to

landmark books such as Rodolfo Acuña's *Occupied America*, Carey McWilliams's *North from Mexico*, and Julian Nava and Bob Barger's *California: Five Centuries of Cultural Contrasts*. My father read these texts when he took an evening class in Mexican American history at Rio Hondo College in Whittier, California.

The fourth lens I brought to this study was as a parent of three children. Just as my parents relived their memories and shared their stories with me, I now seek to pass on their experiences and relate my own experiences as a Chicano scholar-activist to my children. I want my children to be aware of who they are and from where they come so they can recognize and honor the struggle before them. Although my children are still a few years from high school, I wish for them to have the opportunity to take ES courses during their high school years. I can certainly give them my favorite books, expose them to key authors, and encourage research of watershed events. However, having the experience of learning ES alongside peers in the context of the high school classroom is a valuable experience that cannot be duplicated. Creating a critical consciousness via ES is crucial to their development as scholars and as citizens in this democracy. I do not want my kids to enter their undergraduate years without ES, as I did when I reached college. I want them to be prepared to have cross-cultural conversations that span not only ethnicity and race, but also gender, sexual orientation, class, and other layers of identity. Hence, it was from the intersection of these four lenses—shaped by my lived history—that I began to explore the attitudes about ES held by high school board members in California.

Statement of the Problem

How many other high school, middle school, elementary students—or even college students—in our nation do not know about Cesar Chavez? What percentage of students can

describe what the Watts Rebellion in 1965 was? How many students can explain the acronym AIM? How many can draw a parallel between the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the anti-immigrant hysteria of today? Anecdotal data stemming from my experiences—as well as the experiences of others in similar positions of educational leadership—attest to the reality that many high school students today cannot identify Cesar Chavez, describe the Watts Rebellion, explain AIM or indicate familiarity with the Chinese Exclusion Act. These anecdotes illustrate the need and rationale for ES in high school curricula—a point I stress now and will return to repeatedly throughout this dissertation.

As they have been for decades, students continue to read textbooks and are taught curricula dominated by Euro American perspectives, thus contributing to the uninformed students mentioned in the two anecdotes above. Even as the ethnic composition of American society diversified, an already-Anglocentric curriculum and cultural representation gradually evolved into a Eurocentric one (Yang, 2000). Euro Americans have controlled schools, written textbooks, and developed procedures with little relevance to People of Color. In addition, policy decisions were made mostly by Euro Americans, leaving very little influence over curricula for People of Color. Consequently, the different histories of People of Color were seldom taught within schools before the 1960s.

Not knowing histories of Communities of Color has had serious consequences. Consider the impact on Students of Color. Research has found that the overwhelming prevalence of Euro American perspectives has led many Students of Color to "disengage from academic learning" (Sleeter, 2011, p. vii). Statistics have shown a persistent achievement gap between Students of Color and their White counterparts (GradNation, 2015; Leonardo & Grubb, 2013; Tintiangco-

Cubales et al., 2014). Leonardo and Grubb (2013) posited, "students who do not see themselves reflected in curriculum will not have an organic connection with schooling" and that such "disconnection has far reaching implications for the kind of education they experience" (p. 17). Curriculum that excludes Students of Color by revolving around Eurocentric views and focusing on the history and accomplishments of European societies and cultures sends an insidious message to Students of Color. By neglecting to include the history of non-Western people and places, Eurocentric curricula signals to Students of Color that the accomplishments of their ancestors are insignificant and not worthy of attention, which "compromises their education" (p. 18).

The dominance of Euro American perspectives also has had harmful effects on Euro American students. The prevalence of Euro American perspectives has led to "miseducation" of Euro American children about historical truths, the contributions of People of Color, and the role of Euro American people in American society and culture (Yang, 2000). Biased curricula and materials have inculcated Euro American children into false notions of superiority over People of Color by presenting a distorted view of historical and contemporary roles of Whites and Non-Whites (Knowles & Prewitt, 1969). In this process, Eurocentric curricula has instilled a "sense of entitlement" and a falsely elevated "self-efficacy" (Leonardo & Grubb, 2013, p. 18). This entitlement has led Euro American children to believe that the current American education system is fair for all people, and that "no fundamental changes in American institutions are needed, to achieve liberty, equality, and justice for all" (Yang, 2000, p. 161).

Racism has had a profoundly deleterious impact on educational institutions in the United States. In some cases, racism has been covert and subtle; and in others, overt and blatant.

Studying "various ethnic groups that are victimized by institutionalized racism" can assist students to develop a "better understanding" of the complexities and nuances of racism, as well as the capacity to critically analyze and challenge it (Banks, 2008, p. 93). Racism in the United States—and the various forms of prejudice and discrimination that result—merit serious study by students of all grades in age-appropriate ways, from kindergarten through the university level. Such study is especially important in places like California, one of the most ethnically diverse states and home to the highest number of immigrants in the nation. Research by Glock, Wuthnow, Piliavin, and Spencer (1975) indicated that students who were more cognitively sophisticated and were able to reason more logically about prejudice were likely to express fewer prejudices than less cognitively sophisticated students. It is precisely this important cognitive aim of ES that best speaks to the underlying purpose of this study: to support the need for programs that prepare high school students to engage with their own cultural histories as well as to prepare them to contend in constructive ways with issues that are simply part of coexisting in a culturally diverse society.

Today's ES programs are the result of the ongoing struggle of People of Color, women, and LGBTQI communities and their allies to create a counter-hegemonic lens for studying history (Engberg, 2004; Thompson, 2004). Although the field of ES is relatively young compared to other traditional academic disciplines, it has developed tremendously over a period of three decades (Yang, 2000). This development led to the creation of ES programs on campuses around the country. These programs persisted unabated in some high schools, until they began to encounter conservative resistance, which began in the 1980s and culminated in the well-publicized dismantling of the ES program at the Tucson Unified School District by Arizona

state officials in 2011 (Darder & Torres, 2014). From the ashes of this dismantling arose a new revolution of ES programs, which has been especially noteworthy in California over the last five years as ES programs have blossomed at a dozen different high school districts across the state (Ethnic Studies Now Coalition Website, 2017).

Leading the way in this new renaissance has been the El Rancho Unified School District (ERUSD), which became the first school district in the United States to make ES a graduation requirement for all high school students when the District passed a board resolution (ERUSD Board Resolution, 2014). Since the ERUSD blazed a trail in 2014, over a dozen school districts throughout the Golden State from Sacramento to San Diego have followed suit (Ethnic Studies Now Coalition Website, 2017). In fact, in 2016,

> About 40 of Los Angeles Unified's 150 high schools offered at least one of six one-semester ES courses—African American History, African American Literature, American Indian Studies, Asian Literature, Mexican American Literature and Mexican American Studies. By 2016, plans were underway to offer a one-semester, survey-style course in ES to even more high schools. (Janofsky, 2016, p. 2)

The grassroots activism facilitated by the Ethnic Studies Now Coalition (ESNC) not only helped multiple school districts to adopt ES courses or programs, but also culminated in the passing of a historic state bill. On September 13, 2016, Governor Brown signed into law AB2016, which was the first state law in the nation to require the development and adoption of a model curriculum in ES. This model curriculum was intended to encourage districts that did not already offer a standards-based ES curriculum to students in grades seven through 12 to establish a course of study in ES (Assembly Bill No. 2016, 2016).

Beyond grassroots efforts calling for the institution of ES programs, there has been a growing body of research, anchored in both qualitative and quantitative approaches,

documenting myriad benefits to high students enrolled in ES courses (Cabrera, Milem, & Marx, 2012; Castillo, 2014; Dee & Penner, 2016; Sleeter, 2011). Moreover, the research has shown that;

> Providing courses to examine the experiences of African Americans, Latinx and other ethnic and racial groups makes the understanding of American history and social movements more relevant to students who might appreciate but don't identify with a Eurocentric approach to teaching American history and culture. (Janofsky, 2016, p. 4)

The specific benefits identified by ES researchers can be categorized primarily into three themes: academic achievement, academic engagement, and personal empowerment (Sleeter, 2011).

Students of Color and Euro American students taking ES courses have expressed that these classes open new worlds for them. For example, in May 2016, I was invited to attend an open house event about ES organized by the ERUSD, the first school district in the United States to pass an ES graduation requirement for all students (Kalb, 2015; Lara, 2015). In addition to hearing presentations by the superintendent and the board president and visiting two ES classrooms, I attended a panel of ERUSD high school ES students.

The students on this panel shared that taking these ES classes: (a) enabled them to learn more about cultures besides their own, (b) increased their level of interest in current events, and (c) magnified their future aspirations related to a career in higher education and research. I was impressed at the students' self-confidence, public speaking poise, and *esprit de corps*. I was struck by the enthusiasm with which the students shared their ES classroom experiences.

One student commented that taking the ES course "taught me to think for myself" and to "have respect for all people" (Unidentified student 1, 2016). Another commented, "I am now less stereotypical and less judgmental of others" (Unidentified student 1, 2016). Still another shared, "we were not as aware of other cultures; [now] we are aware since we are getting to know

different types of people" (Unidentified student 2, 2016). When I had the opportunity ask the students if taking one ES course made them want to take more, they responded affirmatively. One student said that it was her favorite class and that it spurred her to want to teach ES (Unidentified student 3, 2016). A fourth student explained that learning more about his own culture helped him discern his future calling (Unidentified student 4, 2016). Another said that she "found herself" and decided that she wanted to become a therapist (Unidentified student 5, 2016). The students' comments and my observations mirror the literature, which suggests that ES courses support students' engagement with the text, academic achievement, and civic participation (Sleeter, 2011).

ES contributes to the formation of high school students by guiding them to see the world through multidimensional perspectives. There is no question that a multidimensional lens is becoming more important to the evolution of global citizens within the nation, especially in states like California, where Students of Color are now the majority population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Not being able to recognize and value the perspectives of marginalized people leaves them vulnerable to demagogues who point to the poor, immigrants, and People of Color as scapegoats for economic downturns. This scapegoating has manifested itself in cyclical patterns throughout U.S. history and most recently in Donald Trump's presidential campaign of 2016 (Ball, 2016). The lack of awareness about the historical and contemporary struggles of ethnic minorities that plagues both Students of Color *and* Euro American students is a major problem in the United States that must be addressed. A lack of orientation to a decolonizing understanding of pluralism can lead to greater difficulties related to social injustice.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

What is missing from research related to ES is an identification and understanding of high school board member attitudes toward this area of study. Board members have a unique, influential role with respect to ES, as they are popularly elected officials who oversee high school districts and have a responsibility to create public policy. As such, this influence can either facilitate or preclude the creation of ES curricula in California high schools. Some school boards have passed board resolutions to support the creation of ES courses, while others have not done so. High school board members, given their charge to create and enforce policy, are in a unique position to exercise leadership in the effort to achieve social justice in public schools. Indeed, several school districts that have already initiated ES curricula were led by the efforts of school board members who passed board resolutions. These board resolutions are prime examples of how board members can influence, or shape public policy related to ES. An exploration of the roles, responsibility, and perspectives of board members—particularly in the State of California—can help elucidate why high school board members are in a unique position to effect change with respect to ES.

School board members are locally elected public officials entrusted with governing public schools (California School Boards Association, 2017). Board members' primary role is to ensure that school districts are responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of their communities. Members fulfill this role by performing five major responsibilities: "[1] setting direction; [2] establishing an effective, efficient structure; [3] providing support; [4] ensuring accountability; and [5] . . . [serving] as advocates for children, the district, and public schools" (para. 2). These five responsibilities are core functions that can only be performed by an elected

governing body (CSBA, 2017). Maricle (2016) posited that board members are tasked with the

responsibility of upholding district policies as well as state and federal laws. Implicit in this

upholding of laws is values-based work, including the adoption of district-wide principles that

could guide the district. It is here that board members have an opportunity to ensure the

provision of ES curricula. As mentioned earlier, one such district that has benefited from board

leadership with respect to ES is the ERUSD in Pico Rivera, California.

With all this in mind, the new knowledge resulting from this dissertation research could

potentially help create public policy options for social justice-minded high school board

members who are committed to advancing ES. Moreover, such research could include a socially

just approach to curriculum-formation that could ask and address questions such as "Are People

of Color there [in the curriculum]" (Leonardo & Grubb, 2013, p. 14) and whose stories and

narratives are being told and through what lens? School board members then have many

opportunities to shape curriculum creation, consistent with their responsibility to serve the needs

of all students from various backgrounds. Hence, understanding the attitudes of California high

school board members regarding ES contributes to the ongoing struggle for ES programs in high

school settings.

The process of curriculum creation, referred to by Leonardo and Grubb (2013) "includes

values and politics such as which knowledge counts most and how it should function in society"

(p. 13). Furthermore, the curriculum process is one that is "rarely a transparent process, often

going through multiple deliberations and iterations. . . [and]. . . debated at various levels of

education" (Leonardo & Grubb, 2013, pp. 13–14). Indeed, policymakers have and will continue

to shape curriculum formation at the national, state, and local levels of education. In California,

the results of this study could inform efforts of state legislators and school board members to implement AB2016 the law sponsored by Assemblyman Luis Alejo and signed into law by Governor Brown, which enacted the creation of a model ES curriculum for grades seven through 12 in all school districts.

Connection to Leadership and Social Justice

ES is integral to a healthy democracy through robust civic participation and the full development of one's God-given talents and humanity (de los Rios, Lopez, & Morrell, 2015). Perhaps El-Haj's (2011) words at the beginning of this chapter about the knowledge of one's cultural identity is also the starting point for the ultimate fulfillment of social justice in education. One of the goals of ES is to spark the minds and hearts of Students of Color, women, and LGBTQI communities who recognize they are part of a larger struggle that continues to be fought for those who have been marginalized and whose stories have been cast aside, in favor of dominant hegemonic narratives (Thompson, 2004). One of the goals of teaching ES should be, then, "to empower students with knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to participate in civic action that will help transform our world and enhance the possibility for human survival" (Banks, 2008, p. 22). Moreover, including ES in high school curricula is essential if cultural citizens of a multicultural, multilingual world are to thrive.

Banks (2008) said that "racism is still a major problem in U.S. society," maintaining that the "study of various ethnic groups that are victimized by institutionalized racism will help students develop a better understanding" of this complex problem and develop "the ability to reason about it thoughtfully" (p. 93). Banks's words in 2008 are more relevant today than ever. The recent tensions that have mounted from the killing of young black men and the shootings of

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by law enforcement officials have once again cast a spotlight on the capacity (or lack thereof) of the United States to own up to the pernicious effects of racism or have an honest dialogue about race. The scapegoating of immigrants and the intersections of race, class, and gender that permeated the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign and have continued during the first term of the Trump Administration have demonstrated the importance of the cross-cultural communication that is a hallmark of ES courses. There appears to be a generation (or more) of Americans who are unwilling, unable, or unprepared to discuss issues related to race, their impact of race on power and privilege, and how these dynamics shape how various groups interact (or do not interact) with one another. The uptick in violence in the United States in 2016 (Soffen, 2016) and 2017 (Farivar, 2017), though dismissed as a two-year, statistical anomaly by some, could speak to the increasing need for the type of multidisciplinary perspectives and cross-cultural communication that is the decolonizing hallmark of ES pedagogy and leadership.

Research Questions

The two major research questions that informed this study include:

1. What are the perspectives of California high school governing board members toward the inclusion of ES programs?

2. To what extent do high school governing board member perspectives inform policies regarding the development and inclusion of ES curricula in California high school districts?

These research questions focused exclusively on high school board members in the State of California, given its unique status as a bellwether state and the birthplace of ES. California is the state in which I currently serve as a third-term high school board member. California is also

home to 71 high school districts that vary widely with respect to student demographics, political

persuasion, geographic location, and history. Identifying board members' perspective toward ES

and determining how such perspectives shape policy required exploration of additional

subquestions, such as:

- Which board members are more likely to support ES than others?

- Why are some board members against ES?

- What role does racism play (if any) in the opposition to ES?

- Which strategies should ES advocates embrace when trying to influence board

    members' perspectives toward ES?

- Which strategies should ES advocates avoid?

Though not as central as the two overarching research questions above, these five

supplemental questions helped to lay the groundwork upon which I explored the multiple ways

high school board members' perspectives may inform their approach to public policy. While the

survey results helped shed light on the first subquestion, the interview responses helped address

the remaining four subquestions. Subquestions #2, #4, and #5 were explicitly mentioned in the

language of the interview questions. The responses to subquestions #4 and #5 can be valuable to

academics, activists, statewide organizations, and other advocates of ES in California and the

United States.

Theoretical Framework

Critical race theory (CRT) is not just a theoretical framework, but also a movement

comprised of "activists and scholars" committed to "studying and transforming the relationship

among race, racism, and power" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 2). Offering an activist

dimension that is inherited from trailblazers ranging from Black Power to Brown Power, CRT not only tries to understand social situation, but also to change it. CRT activists and scholars are not only interested in analyzing "how society organizes itself along racial lines, but to transform it for the better" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 3).

CRT is built on the insights of two previous movements, critical legal studies and radical feminism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Derrick Bell, who has been recognized by multiple scholars as the intellectual father of CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson Billings & Tate, 1995; Urrieta & Villenas, 2013), was a legal scholar who wrote several law articles that gave birth to several key tenets of CRT, including interest convergence (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Some scholars have identified W. E. B. DuBois as a "grandfather" of CRT, given his recognition of the "problem of the color line," exacerbated by a "lack of an explicit and sustained analysis of racial injustice" (Trevino, Harris, & Wallace, 2008, p. 7). DuBois was among the first who "used race as a theoretical lens to critically assess social inequality" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 50).

The field of ES is interdisciplinary, and the subjects of ES require an appreciation of intersectionalities of identities tied to various subaltern communities. For example, proponents of ES have pointed to how an individual's identification with a specific ethnic group, gender, class, immigration status, age, ability level, or sexual orientation can shape their view of ES due to the extent to which these layers of identity intersect with each other. Most appropriate for addressing this intersectionality of "multiple identities, loyalties and allegiances" (Torre, 2009, p. 120) is CRT, which is grounded in critical theory (Beachum, 2013). CRT is a "framework that attempts to provide unique ways to analyze and explain the roles, rules, and recognition of race and

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racism in society" (Beachum, 2013, p. 923). Furthermore, CRT produces a critical stance against dominant ideologies and offers a language to address oppression and work for "equity in schools and communities" (Beachum, 2013, p. 923). As such, CRT provides a useful lens to examine attitudes about ES, as it seeks to unearth alternative narratives that can destabilize cultural hegemonies and dominant worldviews that perpetuate inequity (Bell, 1992).

CRT "encompasses interdisciplinary voices," including scholars from the fields of "social sciences, humanities, and education, and it is grounded in moral and spiritual texts" (Capper & Green, 2013, p. 74). The interdisciplinary scope of CRT parallels the interdisciplinary nature of ES, which features the intersection of various layers of identity and how these layers inform and interplay through asymmetrical power dynamics. Furthermore, CRT has been used frequently in the execution of "equity related research" in the field of educational leadership and has been a tool for informing and "leveraging integrated socially just schools" (Capper & Green, 2013, p. 78).

McCoy and Rodricks (2015) explained this further by stating that CRT can "elucidate in depth the complex power differentials that exist within higher education institutions and critiques notions of color-blindness, meritocracy, and neutrality" (p. 33). From McCoy and Rodricks' perspective, CRT demystifies this power differential by framing it systematically within the law and exposing the support this power receives by institutional programs and policies (McCoy & Rodrick, 2015). Critical race scholars have contended that racial analysis can be used to deepen the understanding of educational barriers that People of Color encounter (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Beyond deconstructing educational barriers, scholars

have used CRT to frame and analyze issues of "access, persistence, and achievement" for both "Students of Color as well as Faculty of Color" (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015, p. 33).

Using a CRT conceptual lens to conduct analysis of the data, this study sought to identify which types of board members might be most open to the possibility of ES and possibly explain how they arrived at these positions. Similarly, the research attempted to unearth which types of board members were not as likely to support ES and why. Analyzing support or opposition to ES programs in the context of CRT tenets can potentially highlight coalitions or movements needed to promulgate the expansion of ES. Hence, the tenets of CRT can serve as powerful tools of analysis for better understanding public policy approaches to advance ES curricula in the future.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative/qualitative or "quan/qual" (Creswell, 2009), mixed-methods approach, consisting of two sequential phases. In Phase 1, a survey instrument was created and distributed to all high school district governing board members in the State of California. I worked with the California School Boards Association (CSBA) to ensure that all school board members received the link to the survey instrument. The question included in the survey instrument (see Appendix A) asked board members to share their perspectives on ES including an assessment of their school districts' level of support (as well as their own individual levels of support) for ES. In addition, the survey instrument queried board members on future steps related to ES and asked board members to provide demographic information about themselves and the districts they represent. This survey captured quantitative data that provided a macro-view of the current landscape of board members' perspectives toward ES.

The survey provided respondents an opportunity to self-identify as potential follow-up interview candidates, which was important in Phase 2 of the study. In the second phase, semistandardized interviews (see Appendix B) were conducted with 11 board members, some of whom were supportive of ES, some of whom were not supportive of ES, with a few who expressed mixed support. The results of these semistructured interviews provided qualitative data that revealed why board members supported ES, why they did not, which implementation strategies might be considered, and which should be avoided. In short, these interviews enabled the researcher to ask questions that excavated deeper than the initial survey questions so that assumptions, biases, and values could be uncovered and studied, especially as they related to themes of social justice and educational equity. This mixed-methods research design helped to provide quantitative and qualitative data in an area of study that has been largely unexplored and undertheorized—the identification of California high school board member perspectives toward ES, the values behind these perspectives, and the extent to which these may shape public policy.

Limitations, Delimitations, Assumptions

Limitations

The first limitation is that this study's focus on board members' perspectives toward ES excluded the multitude of other players who have contributed to the creation of ES curriculum, fought for the inclusion of ES curricula in schools, and shaped ES as an interdisciplinary space for emancipatory dialogue and action. These change agents include students, parents, grandparents, teachers, administrators, artists, and other activists who were involved in the advancement of ES in the late 1960s and early 1970s. I do not intend to give the impression that I think board members' perspectives toward ES or their role in enhancing or stunting its influence

were more important than those of other change agents. My decision to focus on board members is based on my own experience as a high school board member.

Second, although I intended to collect surveys from every high school district school board member in the State of California, I was able to attain a 26.5% response rate. School board members' demanding schedules, combined with the absence of personal relationships with nearly all school board members I surveyed, limited survey participation. Having the survey link sent by the CSBA was helpful in securing responses among board members who were familiar with the CSBA.

Third, I aspired to be transparent about the reality that I am an advocate of ES primarily because I am a grateful beneficiary of all who sacrificed and struggled to create ES. Reflecting on this sacrifice motivates me to ask myself one central question: "*What am I willing to sacrifice*?" To explore the undiscovered area of trustee attitudes and advocacy in ES, I need to consider what I am willing to sacrifice, just as so many scholars and activists before me have had to sacrifice comfort and prestige, while risking ridicule, typecasting, and ad hominem attacks. My concerns, while considerable, pale in comparison to the risks taken and sacrifices endured by pioneers of the civil rights movement and ES champions. Solemnly acknowledging the sacrificial love of those who gave their lives for social justice and the right for others to be fully human, I entered this field of study determined to contribute what I could to advance understanding of, and advocacy for, ES. As I consider my interest for the subject, I acknowledge that my passion is inherited from my ancestors, rooted in my own experience of ES, and manifested in my dreams for my children. I hope that this passion—or bias—did not preclude a

thoughtful analysis of the data that resulted from surveying and interviewing California high school board members of all backgrounds, some of whom were not supportive of ES.

Delimitations

The study looked exclusively at high school districts instead of K–12 school districts to focus on school board members who have jurisdiction over high school districts. Some scholars and activists argue for the creation and implementation of ES curricula in middle or elementary school, since they believe students should be exposed to ES material before they enter high school. While I am supportive of creating some opportunities for middle and elementary school students (especially because I have twins in middle school and a third child in elementary school), I remained focused only on high school districts in this study.

Furthermore, this study focused exclusively on school districts in the State of California for two primary reasons. First, the focus on California was due to California's reputation and history as a bellwether state, especially in light of California being the birthplace of ES in 1968. Second, I selected California as the subject of my research due to my service as a high school board member in California. In fact, the high school district I currently serve is the same district I attended 30 years ago. Although there are many prime examples of successful, robust ES programs and valuable lessons learned in states such as Arizona, Texas, and New York, the focus of my research was squarely on California.

Assumptions

I operated under the assumption that including ES in high school curricula is beneficial to all students regardless of their background and that these benefits outweigh any drawbacks.

Logically, I concluded that it was in the best interest of all high school districts across California for their school board members to advocate for ES inclusion in their district curricula.

Definition of Key Terms

ES is sometimes referred to as cultural studies, multicultural studies, or global studies, but I used the term ES in this dissertation. Unlike these other terms, ES is rooted in a rich history of activism that commenced at San Francisco State University, UC Berkeley, and UC Santa Barbara in 1968. The activism at these three campuses sparked a movement that made demands for ES programs at other campuses throughout the state and nation (Engberg, 2004; Thompson, 2004). The field of ES has been rooted in decolonial epistemology and continues to "provide a liberating educational process that challenges Western imperialism and Eurocentrism" (Hu-DeHart, 1993, p. 52).

Acronyms (see Appendix C for complete list) used throughout this dissertation included: BOT for Board of Trustees; CES for Critical Ethnic Studies; CSBA for California School Board Association; CRT for Critical Race Theory; ESNC for Ethnic Studies Now Coalition; ERUSD for El Rancho Unified School District; MEChA for Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan; LGBTQI for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex community; and WUHSD for Whittier Union High School District.

Euro American was used, instead of using the term Whites. Euro American has been more inclusive of people of European ancestry than the term Anglo-American and has more accurately described the group that has enjoyed cultural dominance and privilege over other groups. The term Euro American/White was used with reference to the survey instrument.

High school board members are often referred to as trustees, governing board members, school board members, or local elected officials. I used the term board member throughout the dissertation, as it was the most succinct and straightforward way of referring to the high school board members that were the subject of my research.

People of Color was used to describe groups who used to be referred to as ethnic minorities and have been traditionally marginalized in the United States. Demographic changes in the past 30 years have rendered the term *minorities* inaccurate and outdated. By use of the term People of Color, I did not mean to imply that Euro American background have no color whatsoever, no more than I would assert that Euro Americans have no ethnicity. Instead, the term embodies a political connotation of struggle. As a Chicano and Person of Color, I intentionally used this term People of Color to stand in solidarity with other People of Color who share experiences of systemic oppression and institutional racism.

Organization of Study

I began this dissertation by providing background for why the topic of ES first piqued my interest and how it has continued to be important to me. I also explained why ES is significant to the history of all peoples and how it has carved a unique place in the tapestry of American history. I made the case for why maintaining Eurocentric curricula is problematic for students of all backgrounds. While doing so, I explained why advocating for ES curricula in high schools is an issue of social justice as it can facilitate full participation in American democracy. Next, I offered a brief definition of CRT and explained why CRT is the theoretical framework lens through which I analyzed the data of this study. I then presented my two primary research questions and a set of subquestions that were addressed in the process of pursuing the two major

research questions. I explained the purpose and significance of this study and how my findings address current gaps in knowledge about board member perspectives toward ES. I described how a mixed methodology was uniquely constructed to unearth board member perspectives and to discover how they inform public policy regarding ES. I summarized the delimitations, limitations, and assumptions of this proposed study and defined key terms.

Chapter 2 contains a literature review of ES, including an overview of how ES originated, how it has evolved, and where ES is today. This overview of ES is provided with a focus on California. Also featured is a summary of the literature that deals with the benefits and critiques of ES. ES's connection with critical race theory (CRT) is also discussed. Chapter 2 includes ES's longstanding relation to politics and public policy, including its outgrowth from political mobilization in California and recent efforts to legislate ES curricula that culminated in the Governor's signing AB2016. There is also a review of the role and responsibilities of school board members, with a particular focus on the literature surrounding board members in California and their potential influence over ES-related policies.

Chapter 3 includes my methodology and provides a rationale for the use of this particular methodology (mixed methods) to respond to the proposed research questions. Using the work of Creswell (2009) I proposed a quan-qual design to address my twin research questions of identifying California high board member perspectives toward ES and determining how they shape public policy. Included in this exposition is a complete description of the survey instrument, the type of data expected from the responses to the survey questions, and sample questions from the follow-up interviews that were conducted after the survey results were analyzed.

Chapter 4 presents the data from the survey instrument with a focus on trends and themes. In addition, there is a report of the results of the follow-up interviews, which magnifies ways in which the interview responses support, clarify, or contradict the initial results from the survey data. Special consideration is given to whether the results from the survey are corroborated or contradicted by the results of the follow-up interviews.

Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the data and considers the implications of the findings for the field of ES and for current and future school board members. The chapter explores what implications the responses have for those who seek to identify strategies for implementing ES curricula, and for supporting ES in general. Although the focus of these implications is on California, they could be of some interest to those in other states who are similarly interested in exploring the impact of board members' ES perspectives on public policy.

Final Note

This research is very meaningful to me, given that taking ES in college created a pathway to graduate school and sparked critical consciousness and awareness that my education was partly due to the struggles of civil rights pioneers who fought for ES. Eager to establish ES at the high school district where I currently serve, I endeavor to create the same learning opportunities for the next generation of students. Three members of this next generation are my own children, who are only a few years away from attending high school. My passion for ES is inherited from my ancestors, rooted in my own experience, and manifested in dreams for my children—and all children waiting to learn about their roots and discover their place in history.

CHAPTER 2

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE:

ETHNIC STUDIES, SCHOOL BOARDS' POLITICS, AND CRITICAL RACE THEORY

We need to know the history of their struggle and they need to know ours. Our mothers, our sisters, and brothers, the guys who hang out on street corners, the children in the playgrounds, each of us must know our Indian lineage, our afro-mestizaje, our history of resistance

--G. Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 86

The struggle to determine whose history is included in history books is an enduring one that has galvanized all ES advocates, including students, teachers, administrators, parents, legislators, scholars, civil rights activists, and policy-making school board members. The ongoing efforts of students, faculty, administrators, and community members to propose ES programs (and maintain existing ones), the reactionary efforts of ES opponents to dismantle some of them, and the counterarguments that have emerged in response to attacks of the dominant culture have seized news headlines and are well-represented in the existing literature. What seems to be missing in the ES literature, however, is analysis of the perspectives of school board members in California. Before I explain the research design intended to identify and analyze such attitudes toward ES (which will be addressed in Chapter 3), I will include a review of the current literature on ES, the existing literature on California school board members, and any literature that explores the intersectionality of school board members in California and ES.

This literature review is therefore broken down into five discrete, yet related discussions, including: a history of ES; a history of school board members; the benefits, critiques, and

counters to critiques of ES; ES and its relationship to politics, policy, and social justice; and ES and its connection to critical race theory. Although this literature review of board members may encompass a few references to other states and a few references to K–12 school board members, the primary focus of this study is California high school board members.

History of Ethnic Studies: Rooted in Struggle and Resistance

To effectively understand the current position of ES in the United States and California and why it has become so contentious today, it is critical to understand how and why it has emerged as a counterhegemonic force to contest the dominant narrative prevalent in history books. In March 1968, thousands of students walked out of classes from Wilson, Garfield, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Belmont, Venice, and Jefferson High Schools to protest poor educational conditions at their schools. The protesters issued demands to the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education that focused on the provision of relevant bilingual/bicultural education, improved facilities, culturally sensitive administration, and protection of student rights (Muñoz, 1989). After playing original footage of the 1968 East Los Angeles Walkouts from the video "Taking Back the School," Ochoa (2008) wrote, "students had a clearer appreciation of the precursors leading to the formation of Chicana/o Studies" (Ochoa, 2008, p. 53). In the same spirit, I will discuss the roots of the ES Movement here, to assist the reader to understand and appreciate the significance of ES as a field of inquiry.

Prior to the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, the only way for Students of Color to learn about their histories and literature was through independent schools geared toward African American students (freedom schools), tribal schools, and community schools focused on language immersion (de los Rios et al., 2015; NCTE, 2015; Sleeter, 2011). Freedom schools,

established by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) during the 1950s and 1960s, promulgated school curricula that featured the histories and achievements of Black people (Hale, 2016; Perlstein, 1990). The curricula proposed by the Freedom Schools were grounded in the lived experiences of Black students, with an objective "to work with the identity problem by introducing Negro History" (Perlstein, 1990, p. 304). The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, coupled with the liberation movement in the Third World, helped irrigate the soil from which ES sprouted. As African Americans, Latinx, Asian Americans, and Native Americans developed heightened political consciousness, they pushed for "an anti-racist, multicultural curricular reform … guided by a strong sense of decolonization and self-determination" (Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2014, pp. 3–4). The Civil Rights Movement and the struggles of People of Color—called ethnic minorities during the middle-to-late 1960s but not considered ethnic minorities in California today—facilitated the birth of the first ES program at San Francisco State University (SFSU).

Students and community members "demanded the inclusion of histories and paradigms focused on issues of race, culture, power, and identity" (Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2014, p. 4). These demands undergirded the struggle by Students and Scholar-activists of Color and their Euro American allies to overcome Eurocentrism and White racial hegemony in education. Accordingly, cultural hegemony manifested in a variety of ways, but notably in curricula, "which undervalued People of Color, rendering them invisible" (Love, 2015, p. 2). Several scholars documented the events of the Civil Rights movement, the impact of the Civil Rights efforts on the ES movement, and how these movements shaped the first ES program at San Francisco State

(Anderson, 2016; Engberg, 2004; Love, 2015; Sleeter, 2011; Thompson, 2004; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2014).

The First Ethnic Studies Program

At San Francisco State University, the seeds for a movement were planted by the Black Student Union (BSU), which planned and coordinated initial demonstration activities, sowing the seeds for one of the most important educational movements of its time (Thompson, 2004). Soon thereafter, recognizing that alliances with groups that shared common goals would benefit all groups involved, the BSU leadership jointly planned subsequent activities with other underrepresented groups, including Latino, Chinese American, Japanese American, and Filipino American students. Afterwards, the BSU, La Raza, and the Asian Student Alliance organized themselves collectively, forming a coalition that became the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) (Remnick, 2014; Thompson, 2004). Eventually, the TWLF also included the Filipino American Collegiate Endeavor and the Native American Student Union (Hu-DeHart, 1993; Love, 2015; Ramirez, 2014). Together, the coalition members focused on the "lack of access, misrepresentation, and the overall neglect of indigenous peoples and People of Color within the university's curriculum and programs" (Herrera, 2016, p. 10), pushing the administration for concrete change to the university curriculum and to protocols for admitting Students of Color and the hiring of Faculty of Color.

Although at least one former SFSU student reported "shattered windows," "four firebombs," and "threats to students who went to class and professors who held class" (Nance, 2008, p. 1), the movement expressly adhered to a nonviolent stance. A faculty member involved in the demonstration reported, "Most of the demonstrations at SFSU consisted of non-violent

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picketing and rallies by students and supportive faculty" (Thompson, 2004, p. 114). For four months, from November 6, 1968 to March 21, 1969, the students led a strike and organized rallies and demonstrations demanding the establishment of the School of ES (Love, 2015; Remnick, 2014; Thompson, 1994). This sustained, coordinated activism, which at the time was the longest student strike in U.S. history, achieved lasting impact on the U.S. higher education system when it resulted in SFSU's becoming the first university to establish a School of ES (Nance, 2008).

What began first at SFSU and then shortly thereafter at University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), and University of California, Berkeley (UCB) spread to many other colleges throughout California and across the nation (Anderson, 2016; Hu-DeHart, 1993). Scores of students, primarily Students of Color, invaded administrative offices in 1968–1969, demanding fundamental changes to higher education (Hu-DeHart, 1993). The occupation of administrative spaces by Students of Color and Euro American allies startled deans, shocked faculty, and threatened presidents in power. These students demanded better access to higher education, changes in curricula, recruitment of Professors of Color, and the creation of ES programs, just as it occurred at SFSU, UCB, UCSB, and LMU. The United Mexican American Students (UMAS) at LMU presented a proposal for the development of a Chicano Studies Department at LMU in 1968. Hu-DeHart wrote that ES programs, which grew out of student and community grass roots efforts, "challenged the prevailing academic power structure and the Eurocentric curricula of colleges and universities" (Hu-DeHart, 1993, pp. 51–52). ES programs shared a subversive agenda from the outset, which led to their being labeled as illegitimate and suspect by traditional academia (Hu-DeHart, 1993).

The Evolution of Ethnic Studies and Multiculturalism

ES continued to emerge on campuses during the rest of the 1970s and the 1980s. The numbers of Students of Color in higher education increased, which helped to bring new life into the ES movement. By 1980, the numbers of African Americans in college had reached 1.1 million, up from 75,000 in 1953. Between 1976 and 1993, the number of Asian American college students grew from 198,000 to 724,000. As of 1993, 1 million Latinos attended college (Wing, 1999). These increases in Students of Color in higher education paralleled the U.S. population becoming more diverse due to immigration patterns between 1965 and 1990 (Gurin et al., 2002; Hu-DeHart, 1993). Students of Color leveraged their increased presence to bolster the ES movement. Building momentum from the Rainbow Coalition and the anti-apartheid activism of the mid to late 1980s, Students of Color demanded anew the establishment of ES course requirements for college graduation.

Concurrently, ES scholars "seized on these demographic shifts to push for ideological shifts" (Wing, 1999, p. 2), including progressive versions of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is best understood as a political movement that originated in the 1960s, since it was rooted in "history and traditions of the socially transformative civil rights movement" (Santa Ana & González de Bustamante, 2012, p. 101) and "aimed at providing children with a broader view of the world than that provided by the traditional Eurocentric education (Nieves, 1994, p. 1). Darder (2015) referred to this movement in the form of "political pressure [that] was placed on colleges and universities to transform the curriculum in ways that would not only be culturally relevant but would also engage the longstanding historical inequalities and social exclusions that persisted" (Darder, 2015, p. 51). Hu-DeHart (1993) referred to multiculturalism as a collection of

education reforms—one example of which is the integration of ES into the college curricula—with goals of "democratic pluralism and the achievement of educational equity" (Hu-Dehart, 1993, p. 51). Gay (2004) saw multiculturalism as a means of linking students with the central reality "that diverse, ethnic, racial, and cultural groups and individuals have made contributions to every area of human endeavor and to all aspects of U.S. history, life, and culture" (Gay, 2004, p. 33).

By the 1990s there were over "seven hundred ES programs and departments" (Hu-DeHart, 1993, p. 51). They were supported by five established professional associations: The National Council of Black Studies, the National Association of Chicana/o Studies, the Asian American Studies Association, the American Indian Studies Association, and the Association of Puerto Rican Studies (Hu-DeHart, 1993). A "disproportionate number of ES programs" (Hu-DeHart, 1993, p. 51) were situated in public colleges and universities due to the reality that these institutions "were more susceptible to public pressure than private schools" (p. 51). Furthermore, "there were more ES programs in the West" (p. 51)—especially in California—due to the region's "fast-growing and ethnically diverse population" (p. 51).

ES scholars, professors, and students began to raise critical questions about the status of both new and long-standing ES programs. Since inception, ES has not been totally institutionalized or monolithic in its content. Much like the communities it includes, ES is dynamic and in a "state of transition structurally, intellectually, and ideologically" (Hu-DeHart, 1993, p. 53). With this dynamic in mind, there is tension between institutional survival of ES and the original radical mission of the ES movement (Wing, 1999). Implicit with this tension are two schools of thought. On one end of the debate, exist some ES professors who have coalesced

around the notion of one pan-ES program, which would include multiple communities, situated under one umbrella. On the other end of the debate are ES advocates who reject the pan-ES approach and insist on each community having its own separate intellectual focus and space, such as the Department of African American Studies, the Department of Chicanx or Latinx Studies, and so forth. Some defenders of ES have even proposed to "merge ES with African American Studies" (Wing, 1999, p. 3) into American Studies, which has also generated controversy due to the perception of "a hostile takeover" (p. 3).[1]

Students at colleges and universities in the mid-1990s, in an ongoing effort to reconnect with the activist roots of ES, demanded cultural centers and ES programs for a new generation of students. At UCLA, a group of students led by MEChA organized a 14-day hunger strike, "galvanizing widespread attention to the underfunding of Chicana/o studies" (Wing, 1999, p. 4) that resulted in the establishment of the Cesar Chavez Chicano Studies Center. This activism inspired a similar three-day hunger strike and administrative building takeover led by MEChA students and their allies at Stanford University in the spring of 1994. Among the multiple demands made by the striking Stanford students was increased funding for Chicana/o studies and a promise that it not be combined with other ES programs into one pan-ES program, which would result in fewer resources than if Chicana/o Studies remained a stand-alone program. Also, in 1996 students at Columbia University organized a 14-day hunger strike, "demanding that Latinx and Asian American Studies be created to complement the existing African American Studies Center" (Wing, 1999, p. 4). Hence, hunger strikes have served as an effective political strategy for the ES movement over the years. Most recently, a 10-day hunger strike for ES was

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[1] For a complete elaboration of this debate, which extends beyond the scope of this literature review, see Hu-Dehart (1993).

held in May 2016 on the campus of SFSU. The strike resulted in "a commitment of $482,806 in funding to the College of ES . . . plus 11 demands negotiated by the protesters" (Herrera, 2016, p. 6).

Over the years, ES demonstrations have drawn national attention and have illustrated an intentional connection between the roots of the ES movement and more contemporary efforts to unite ES supporters across the generations. Many students who attended college during this era of 90s activism were inspired to become scholars, including myself. The success of the movement is evident is its historical evolution. By 2000, there were "over 800 ES programs and departments" (Yang, 2000, p. 6) at higher education institutions across the United States Increasingly, ES courses have become part of requirements for degree programs. This trend is expected to continue as the college student population—and the U.S. population in general— "becomes increasingly multi-ethnic" (Yang, 2000, p. 7).

The spread of ES eventually reached K–12 schools. In 1994, Berkeley High School in California became one of the first high schools in the country to offer ES (Anderson, 2016). Even at Berkeley, widely known as a "bastion of progressive thinking" (Anderson, 2016, p. 2), there was fierce opposition to offering ES to high school students. Roughly 20 years later, El Rancho Union High School District became the first K–12 district in the nation to pass a board resolution mandating ES as a graduation requirement for all graduating seniors (Dee & Penner, 2016). Even with the emergence of ES programs on the school district landscape, the expansion of ES has been far from consistent and has only spread at a staccato pace due to the organized ES opposition mounted at virtually every stage of its development.

Conservative Backlash to Ethnic Studies and Multiculturalism and the Arizona Attacks

ES suffered reactionary attacks in the Reagan years by "academic conservatives who railed against "any kind of multiculturalism and ES programming with accusations of political correctness" (Wing, 1999, p. 2). These attacks were known by many as the "culture wars" (Caban, 2003), as conservatives sought to "regain control" over the nation after perceived loss of influence during the 1960s and 1970s. This counterattack, however, was not a new phenomenon in the United States. Reactionary movements can be traced to the Nativists of the 1880s and 1920s, the repatriation movement of the 1930s (in which my paternal grandfather was deported to Durango, Mexico, despite being born in the United States), and the internment of Japanese Americans in the 1940s (Acuña, 1972; Winkler-Morey, 2010). As early as 1972, scarcely three years after the birth of the first ES program at SFSU, a coalition of administrators, politicians, and conservative intellectuals formed to "castigate ES as balkanized bastions of self-imposed isolation for Students of Color, shoddy scholarship, and unqualified professors" (Wing, 1999, p. 2). Their counterattack purged "radicals" and ended infant ES programs (Wing, 1999).

Another example among the litany of reactionary movements was the ongoing effort to push back on the gains of multiculturalism by attempting to neutralize and coopt multiculturalism. Darder (2016) noted, "by the early 1990s the politics of difference had become mired in the hyperbole of political correctness as mean-spirited attacks began to gnaw away at multicultural visions of equality and inclusion within the university" (Darder, 2016, p. 52). Darder further argued that critics of multiculturalism, such as Allen Bloom and Dinesh D'Souza, "alleged liberal bias at the university and pointed out that the destructive impact of multiculturalism on the integrity of Western canon and American society" (Darder, 2016, p. 52).

The culture of greed has given rise to what Darder described as a "toothless neoliberal multiculturalism—a conservative ideology of difference that employs meritocratic justification to explain and legitimate inequalities" (Darder, 2016, p. 53). This muted multiculturalism was also called corporate multiculturalism or tokenistic multiculturalism that preserved the interests of the status quo (Wing, 1999).

This mid-1990s, conservative movement was especially virulent in California. In 1994, conservatives drafted and were successful in convincing voters of California to approve Proposition 187, an anti-immigrant initiative, which ultimately was not enforced due to a permanent injunction never appealed by the State of California. Subsequently, however, two other conservative propositions were approved and executed. In 1996, Proposition 209 was passed by voters, which ended affirmative action in California. In 1998, Proposition 227 was also successful, which ended bilingual education. This last initiative symbolized the shortsighted xenophobia and anti-immigrant hysteria that was not only consuming California, but also contaminating the rest of the nation (Yang, 2000). All three of these initiatives were not only harmful to People of Color individually, but collectively represented a much larger political force against culturally democratic efforts in California (Darder, 2012). In four years, conservatives managed to scapegoat undocumented immigrants, terminate state-sanctioned affirmative action, and end bilingual education. These propositions created a political landscape that was threatening the proliferation of ES and other culturally responsive educational efforts.

In what became the most blatant attack launched on ES in recent memory, the Arizona State Legislature passed HB 2281, which banned the Mexican American Studies (MAS) program at the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) for nearly four years. HB 2281 was passed by the

predominantly Republican state legislature, signed into law by Republican governor Jan Brewer,

and enforced by State Superintendent Tom Horne. The bill was narrowly written to target MAS

and dismantle the structure that MAS architects had built over time. HB 2281 would have

penalized the TUSD by withdrawing state funding if the TUSD School Board were to continue

implementing the MAS program (Cammarota & Romero, 2014; Rothberg, 2012). Moreover,

Darder and Torres (2014) argued that these

> mean-spirited, public initiatives. . . encompassed nativist efforts to restrict the use of
> Spanish in schools and the workplace, the elimination of the Mexican American Studies
> at the secondary level, and the banning of books considered to be subversive by
> conservative educational proponents. (Darder & Torres, 2014, p. 62)

This Arizona law dovetailed with a larger effort of neoconservative historians and

organizations involving the Liberty Institute, a think-tank that supported the adoption of new

Texas Social Studies standards that avoided the reality that

> cotton growers invaded Texas and Apache territory and battled Mexico for the right to
> own slaves [while] . . . conflating Japanese internment with German and Italian prisoner
> of war interment [and]. . . failing to recognize the racialized community incarceration [of
> the Japanese-Americans]. (Winkler-Morey, 2010, p. 2)

The underlying theme woven like a thread through the Arizona law, the Texas Social Studies

standards, and the reactionary initiatives in California in the mid-to-late-1990s is what some

scholars such as Winkler-Morey (2010) have referred to as the efforts of individualists. In

summary, individualists "reduce the Civil Rights Movement to a few phrases and few

individuals, devoid of power, protest, or people" (Winkler-Morey, 2010, p. 3). Like the nativists

of the 1880s and 1920s, individualists of the 2010s—also seen and heard in the Tea Party Revolt

of 2008 and the Trump Presidential Campaign of 2016—"view the present as a period when

forces from the outside … threaten the very fabric of their monochromatic fantasy Americana quilt" (Winkler-Morey, 2010, p. 3).

Although the rise of the neo-revisionists, conservative, individualist agenda had national impact, it is important to see the impact on California, where this study is centered. California State Assembly member Luis Alejo commented that he followed the calculated attack of the neo-conservatives on the MAS program in Tucson and was inspired by the activism of the MAS students, who joined with their teachers, families, and community activists in the struggle to keep MAS alive. The battle in Tucson, Arizona, though being waged in a neighboring state, was so monumental that it constituted a contemporary watershed moment in ES history and, thus, clearly led to a new rise of ES in other parts of the United States.

Latest Renaissance: Post-Arizona

Although the efforts of Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) students could not persuade the TUSD Board from voting to eliminate MAS, the students' resistance, as mentioned above, inspired California State Assembly member Alejo to write and continue proposing the ES bill. Assembly member Alejo tried to pass this legislation repeatedly despite multiple defeats. His persistence, along with support from a statewide coalition called Ethnic Studies Now Coalition eventually led to the passage of AB2016, which was signed into law by Governor Brown in September 2016. The 3 years leading up to this study have seen a slow, but steady increase in the number of high school districts—and K–12 districts—that have adopted either ES courses as a graduation requirement, or as an elective. School districts in Northern California (including Berkeley, Oakland, Sacramento, and San Francisco), along with school districts in Southern California (including Bassett, Centinela Valley, Coachella Valley, Compton, El

Rancho, Los Angeles, Montebello, San Diego, Santa Ana, Santa Barbara, and Ventura), were among the districts that either approved ES as an elective or as a graduation requirement (Ethnic Studies Now Coalition Website, 2017, School District Page).

Though best known for its presence on higher education institutions, multicultural gains have been realized in K–12 schools. Santa Ana and González de Bustamante (2012) lauded the MAS program at TUSD, which "was rooted in multicultural education and based on history and traditions of the socially transformative Civil Rights Movement (Santa Ana & González de Bustamante, 2012, p. 101). Another example of multiculturalism reaching an entire K–12 district is the SFSD's decision to unanimously to expand multicultural curriculum to all of the city's 18 public high schools and to approve a resolution to "encourage multiethnic and multiculturalism throughout the 6-8 grade curriculum" (Janofsky, 2016, p. 3) Although these two examples are exceptions rather than the rule, they indicate that multiculturalism has begun to blossom in the K–12 world and manifests in the form of ES programs.

In December 2017, a federal judge's ruling that blocked Arizona's ban on ES breathed new life into the possibility of the return of ES to the Tucson Unified School District. Judge Wallace Tashima declared Arizona's ban unconstitutional, since it had discriminatory, racist intent (Iasevoli, 2017). Because Arizona officials have indicated they will research if supporters of the ban can successfully appeal the injunction, it is not clear if the TUSD Board will vote to resurrect the previously outlawed MAS program (U.S. News & World Report, 2017). Still, it is possible that Judge Tashima's ruling will inspire other ES programs to take shape, much like the original ban inspired others.

The struggle that has led to the creation of ES programs—and continues to this very day—is celebrated and analyzed by scholars who see value in connecting the outgrowth of current ES programs to the roots of the initial programs. Acknowledging why and how ES curricula has been firmly rooted in struggle helps to illuminate the ongoing battle for ES curricula in the present. This history is important for board members to understand because of their unique position as policymakers, which renders them potent advocates for (or opponents of) ES programs in high schools.

Ethnic Studies and School Board Politics

To appreciate the current roles and responsibilities of school board members in California, it is important to understand the history of school board politics and thus how the roles of board members have evolved over the last 140 years. Since the late 19th century, school board members have been the largest single body of elected public officials in the U.S. (Plough, 2014). The American education system has been unique in the world, due to its emphasis on local control, including the election of lay persons to serve as school board members (Anderson & Snyder, 2001). Hence, according to Campbell and Greene (1994) this "citizen oversight of local government" is the "cornerstone of U.S. democracy" (Campbell & Greene, 1994, p. 391).

School Board Governance and Local Control

From the inception of the United States in the late 18th century, and throughout the first half of the 19th century, school boards were the "central governing institution of U.S. schools" (Howell, 2005, p. 1). Local control, referred to as localism by some historians, was the rule. Public funding of schools, languages of instruction, length of school year, and administration of educational services were all locally determined. However, local control was not completely

within the purview of school board members, but more so in the hands of individual teachers who retained considerable autonomy. School board members "rarely could be sure that teachers would implement their policies" (Howell, 2005, p. 2) in individual classrooms.

Starting in the middle of the 19th century, efforts to professionalize common schooling began to threaten local control. "Rising immigration and a demand for skilled labor to meet the needs of an industrializing economy" (Howell, 2005, p. 3) drove changes in education. Toward the end of the 19th century, these changes were further hastened by Progressive Era efforts to remove politics from local and state governance of schools and by the rise of Taylorism and scientific management of industries and businesses. This call to take "the schools out of politics" (Hightower, Knapp, Marsh, & McLaughlin, 2002, p. 10), and the growing popularity of the "scientific approach" to management, continued to shape school board members' decisions during the postindustrialization period and the Progressive Movement. Both of these phenomena increased the size and scope of school administration and eroded the decision-making authority of school board members (Mountford, 2008). Hence, during the first few decades of the 20th century, "school board members took a low-key, hands-off approach" (Plough, 2014, p. 42) to decisions related to student achievement. Furthermore, the rise of federalism that began toward the end of the 19th century and continued through the turn of the 20th century, led to a more unified, centralized system of education and consolidation of school districts. This consolidation resulted in fewer school districts and larger populations within each district (Howell, 2005).

In the arena of racialized differences in schooling, educational school governance decisions were generally in-line with the "separate but equal" doctrine tied to *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), particularly in the South (Anderson, 1988). Moreover, across the country, the *Plessy v.*

Ferguson decision sanctioned a national vision of segregation. As such, "from 1896 to 1954, policies and practices in many northern and southern parts of the country resulted in racial segregation of public schools" (Loasa, 2001, p. 7). And although the ongoing struggles of Mexican Americans to desegregate schools in the United States have often been ignored due to the black-white binary (Darder & Torres, 2004) that persists in educational policy debates, Valenzuela's (2005) research on Mexican American desegregation lawsuits identified "28 cases dating from 1925 to 1985" (Valenzuela, 2005, p. 390). These cases included *Mendez v. Westminster* in 1946, "a class action lawsuit filed on behalf of more than 5,000 Mexican American students in Orange County, California. The Mendez case became the first successful constitutional challenge to segregation" (p. 389), preceding the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954.

Erosion of Local Control

Amid changes in the second half of the 20th century, school boards attempted to manage "diverse and changing conditions surrounding public school districts" (Plough, 2014, p. 42). The *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling was at the center of changing conditions faced by school boards across the country. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision led to:

> a series of cases compelling local school district boards to desegregate public schools under consent decrees that were overseen by court-appointed special masters. As the Supreme Court expanded the desegregation mandate to address the pattern and practice of segregation in school districts throughout the United States, local school districts found their influence diminished and their actions scrutinized by federal courts intent on addressing a history of international, segregative practices in America's public schools.[2]

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[2] See: School-Boards – RESPONSIBILITIES DUTIES DECISION-MAKING AND LEGAL BASIS FOR LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD POWERS

Hence, *Brown v. Board of Education* further eroded the decision-making power and authority of local school board control, given mandates to fully desegregate the education of children in public schools.

Brown v. Board of Education, when combined with significant legislation that closely followed, slowly helped create a more equitable education system, particularly for Students of Color (Simmons, 2014). But after initial emphasis on integration and enforcement of desegregation during the decade after *Brown vs. Board of Education*, school board members were confronted with the public pressure to close achievement gaps and create opportunities for all students. Significant federal laws passed to help make progress toward these goals were the Civil Rights Act (1964), the Bilingual Education Act (1968), and Title IX of the Education Amendments (1972), which had federal resources tied to them and were driven by broad-based coalitions (Simmons, 2014). These federal laws, intended to improve educational opportunities for a wider universe of students, further limited local control of school board members.

Also prominent among the changes in school board decision-making was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, which "forced school boards to examine just how a school district could create and sustain high levels of achievement for all students" (Plough, 2014, p. 42). Furthermore, ESEA, passed as part of the "War on Poverty," ushered in a new era during the subsequent 20 years in which federally funded housing, economic development, community revitalization and health programs were inextricably linked with education reform (Simmons, 2014). School board members, who now had a moral imperative to address the plight of all students, were pressured to consider how housing, economic development, and health

impacted student success. Also, figuring prominently among shifting conditions were the changing racial demographics of the students attending public school districts.

Another key issue for board members during this time was school finance reform, which was first highlighted by the *Serrano v. Priest* decision in 1971 and the U.S. Supreme Court decision *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* in 1973. In the *Serrano* decision, which required an equalization of state spending across school districts, the plaintiffs argued, "the state's school finance system violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment" (Public Policy Institute of California, 2000, p. 1) and the California Supreme Court upheld this finding (Kirp & Yudof, 1971). The *Serrano* decision had an impact on a policy directly affecting the quality of education—school district expenditure—since the California State Supreme Court had a compelling state interest in taking affirmative state action to eliminate the economic disparities of its citizens (Durbin, 1972). The decision in the *Rodriguez* case, which also argued against unequal school district funding, served to demonstrate "the power and significance of the Court's recognition of the value of local control in public education" (Briffault, 2005, p. 40). At the same time, the by-product of both the *Serrano* and *Rodriguez* decisions was the limitation of local financial discretion of school boards (Moe, 2005).

As an outcome of changing federal and state mandates to create greater educational equality, school board members also found themselves needing to approve outside agencies to provide supplemental services to overextended district personnel. These services were needed to initiate the changes required to address "students' needs to achieve adequate yearly progress" (Plough, 2014, p. 42). By 1992, the Institute for Educational Leadership "recognized the

increased non-instructional needs of a growing percentage of the school-age population"
(Plough, 2014, p. 42).

Four Trends Impacting School Board Member Governance: 1985 to 2005

Between 1985 and 2005, four trends beset school boards: (a) "site-based management,"
which brought about "restructuring of public education" and featured the rise of school site-
based councils; (b) the increase of city or state takeovers of school districts under the auspice of
public school reform; (c) the introduction of choice-based reforms that brought "competition in
an educational marketplace" where voucher systems were unveiled; and (d) the "push for
standards and accountability" epitomized by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (Howell, 2005, pp.
5–6). These four trends illustrate how dramatically governance has shifted for school board
members who used to govern all aspects of public education in the 19th century, but now
"compete with political actors" at every level of government and "organized interests in the
private sphere" (Howell, 2005, p. 5).

By the end of the 20th century, the political roles and responsibilities for school board
members needed clarification, given the many changes that had transpired (Anderson & Snyder,
2001). The evolution of school board member roles and responsibilities is part of a larger debate
centered on whether school board members even have a future (Howell, 2005). In light of the
mounting complexity of school districts and consternation over board member role expectations,
the National School Boards Association (NSBA) formed a task force, chaired by the executive
director of the California School Boards Association (CSBA) "to develop a concise definition of
the governance responsibilities of school boards" (Campbell & Greene, 1994, p. 392). The
development of this definition was based on the premise that there were certain core decision-

making functions—fundamental to any school district rooted in a system of democracy—that

must be performed only by an elected governing body. These functions included:

- The "establishment of a long-term vision for the school system;"

- The "establishment and maintenance of a basic organizational structure for the school

    system, including employment of a superintendent, adoption of an annual budget,

    adoption of governance policies, and creation of a climate that promotes excellence;"

- The "establishment of systems and processes to ensure accountability to the community,

    including fiscal accountability, staff accountability, and student outcomes;"

- "Advocacy on behalf of children and public education at the local, state, and national

    levels" (Campbell & Greene, 1994, p. 392).

CSBA officials used these four functions as governance guidelines that informed the

design of a comprehensive curriculum and were intended to orient and prepare California school

board members for their duties and responsibilities. Although the CSBA executive director

conceded that further development to the definition was needed to provide optimum direction

and best meet the needs of students, the four functions have continued to be used in the creation

of seven categories. These seven areas included:

> [(1)] "setting the vision for the district and creating a climate for excellence; 2)
> appointing and evaluating the superintendent; 3) adopting the budget and ensuring fiscal
> accountability; 4) developing curriculum standards and ensuring program accountability;
> 5) governing through policy; 6) collective bargaining; and 7) advocacy."
> (Campbell & Greene, 1994, p. 393)

Seven subcommittees of the CSBA board of directors were established to "define specific

functions and responsibilities within each of the seven areas," (p. 393), which were intended to

shape subsequent board-training programs.

Current Political Challenges

By 2001, there were about 112,000 school board members in the United States (Anderson & Snyder, 2001). With the sprouting of national school board associations, state school board associations, and board Member of Color associations, there was increasing attention placed on professional development and leadership training opportunities. This instruction was designed to prepare new generations of school board members to face increasingly complex challenges Plough (2014) painted a vivid picture of this process, further illustrating the changing landscape and evolving roles and responsibilities of school board members. Plough found that "one in four children live in poverty [with] the gap between rich and poor widening each year" (Plough, 2014, p. 42). The U.S. Latino population, moreover, has "increased at a rate five times that of Euro Americans" (Plough, 2014, p. 42). Consequently, school board members have confronted the need to adopt "appropriate curriculum, instituting bilingual instruction, and increasing non-instructional resources to address the growing linguistic and cultural differences among students" (Plough, 2014, p. 42).

Concurrently, the need for school accountability has increased; meaning that students, parents, community members, special interest groups, and advocacy organizations "demand equal access to high quality instruction and rigorous curriculum for all students" (Plough, 2014, p. 42). Ironically, school board members are being held increasingly accountable for student performance, despite decreasing authority over decision-making, "due to conflicting forces of federal mandates, state legislation, and local collective bargaining contracts" (Plough, 2014, pp. 42–43). This decline in authority is paralleled by increasing pressure on school district budgets.

Making governance even more challenging was the Great Recession of 2008. This financial crisis—the worst recession since the Great Depression (The Brookings Institution, 2009)—contributed to budget reductions for school districts for five straight years, from 2008 to 2012. It was in the middle of this calamity that I was appointed a school board member of the Whittier Union High School District in March 2010. In fact, at my first school board meeting, one of my first actions as a board member was to approve a resolution to authorize a reduction-in-force (R.I.F.) for 50 teachers who were scheduled to receive a March 15 notice of their possible termination. This extreme measure was being recommended by the superintendent to balance the budget, in response to declining funding from the state government. My personal experience with this bleak situation at my school district was a microcosm of the larger reality that was taking place at other districts across the state and throughout the nation.

Moreover, an increasing emphasis on neoliberal policies of accountability over the last two decades, coupled with the growing pressure to maintain enrollment and balance budgets, has made socially just school board leadership even more necessary. Socially just leadership is essential at the board level to make decisions related to equity and diversity, including those related to ES programming and course offerings at the secondary level. Accordingly, California's diverse student body and changing demographics present unique challenges and opportunities to school board members in California.

The California School Board Association (CSBA) reports there are 1,022 school districts in the state, including 71 high school districts, and 366 school board members currently serving in these high school districts (CSBA Website, 2017). There are more school districts in California than in any other state, enrolling a total of 6,226,737 students from grades K–12

(California Department of Education Statistics, 2017). In December 2016, a review of all California high school district board members revealed that 80% were Euro American and 20% were Members of Color (including 17% Latino/a, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% African American). These percentages represent a sharp discrepancy from the current demographics of students enrolled in California's K–12 school districts, in which Students of Color now make up about three-quarters of the student population (California Department of Education, 2017; Remnick, 2014) and a stark difference from the overall population of the State of California in which 60% of the population are People of Color (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015).

In *Maximizing School Board Leadership: Policy*, the CSBA defined policy as a "written guide for action adopted by the board to address a specific issue" (McCormack Brown et al., 2004, p. 52). CSBA described policies as "what the Board wants done and why the Board wants it done" (McCormack Brown et al., 2004, p. 52). With these definitions in mind, it is critical to examine the role that school board members in California fulfill as policymakers at the local level, since they must keep one eye on state policy and another on the needs of the district they are entrusted to govern. McCormack Brown et al. (2004) viewed California school board members as "key decision-makers in school settings [who] face critical decisions" (p. 57). Among these critical decisions is how a board member responds to the need for culturally relevant curricula in high school districts. At this juncture, a review of the responsibility of California school board members in approving curricula that best serve the needs of students in their districts—including the opportunity to support ES curricula—proves useful to this study.

Politics of Curriculum

In the State of California, an emphasis on curriculum has long been at the heart of school board decision-making. In a 1981 published board member guide, the CSBA's Delegate Assembly approved a resolution stating, "Local governing boards are encouraged to continue their commitment to the review of curriculum with the intent of improving curriculum and instruction" (CSBA, 1981, p. 3). Education code contains language that goes even further in outlining the responsibility board members have over curriculum. This responsibility not only includes meeting instructional needs of a unique population, but the importance of refraining from bias. For example, Article 3 of the California Education Code: Sections 60040 through 60047 mentions the prohibition of "biased propagandistic, or inaccurate materials containing matter reflecting adversely upon persons because of their race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, or occupation" (p. 5). This education code language is remarkable, given that it prohibits "biased" or "inaccurate" materials that reflect adversely on persons, including bias that is due to race or color.

In California, ES curricula has slowly gained considerable attention among school districts, board members, and educators in general. In an interview with Banerjee (2000), ES champion and scholar-activist Ronald Takaki shared that Californians are "intensely aware of the need for multicultural education, not only in the University, but also in K-12. . . and are aware of the need for a more inclusive and more accurate curriculum" (Banerjee, 2000, p. 4). Takaki's words proved prophetic because, 16 years later, a few of California's largest school districts, including Los Angeles Unified, the state's largest, San Diego Unified, the state's second-largest school district, San Francisco Unified, the sixth biggest school district, and Oakland Unified, the

12th largest district all either approved an ES course or voted to start an ES pilot program

(Janofsky, 2016; Watson, 2016). Tintiangco-Cubales, one of the contributors to ES curricula at

San Francisco Unified, stated,

> ES for K-12 is extremely important for the development of students' identities, but it's
> also important for [high school students] to critically understand the world they live in, so
> they can develop the skills to solve the problems of the communities they live in.
> (Tintiangco-Cubales as cited by Planas, 2015, p. 1)

Tintiangco-Cubales, moreover, asserted that an ES curriculum provides high school students "an

entry point to an education that is relevant and responsive to their needs" (Planas, 2015, p. 1).

Further indicative of a heightened awareness on this issue, Takaki and others anticipated

that additional school board members in K–12 districts would continue to pass board resolutions

in support of ES. School board members have indeed passed resolutions mandating ES as a

graduation requirement, while other board members have advocated for the inclusion of ES as an

optional elective. Both approaches can be categorized as ES-friendly public policy; since, at the

very least, these actions lay the groundwork and the infrastructure for expanding ES curricula

across the state. Underlying this policy is also the unspoken assumption that ES curricula helps

students learn better and achieve more by developing them into well-rounded scholars, critical

thinkers, and self-aware individuals.

One more consideration could be of direct relevance to the capacity of school board

members to engage in policy decisions regarding ES. Though not necessarily the case, one could

assume that school board Members of Color may be more open-minded to the idea of including

ES curricula, than their Euro American counterparts are. This does not necessarily mean that

Euro American board members might not advocate for ES, since progressive Euro Americans

have served and continue to serve as important allies in the struggle for ES. The demographics of

school board members could create additional opportunities (and challenges) with respect to advocacy for ES curricula within secondary education.

Benefits, Critiques, and Counters of Ethnic Studies

This discussion, thus far, has looked at the history of ES and explored the history of school board members, while describing the evolution of board member responsibilities and roles. Before considering how the histories of ES and school board members coalesce in the context of public policy, it would be helpful to better understand what the literature says about ES curricula and the extent to which this impacts student learning, development, and growth. The literature on the benefits of ES can be divided into three subsections: (a) benefits to ES measured by qualitative methods; (b) benefits to ES measured by quantitative methods; and (c) benefits to ES related to participatory action research. This detail is provided to note the extensive overlap of these subcategories and the enormous complexity of articles that seek to reflect the multidimensionality, depth, and rigor of ES.

Qualitative Benefits

Several scholars have written scholarly articles that discuss the benefits of ES through a qualitative lens. Sleeter (2011) offered evidence that well-designed and well-taught ES curricula have positive academic and social outcomes for students of all backgrounds. Sleeter divided her review of the benefits of ES into two sections: first, ES curricula designed primarily for Students of Color who are members of the group under study, and second, ES curricula designed for diverse student groups that include Euro American students. With the first group, Sleeter found that Students of Color who take ES curricula become "classroom insiders" whose "prior knowledge was valued and useful to academic learning;" become more adept problem-solvers

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and thinkers by being "more intellectually engaged;" "develop a sense of constructive participation and hope" about their lives; "acquire academic identity" that is linked. . . to their ethnic identity; and begin to affirm an American identity through "seeing the depth and richness of their own American ethnic identity" (Sleeter, 2011, p. 15). With the second, mixed, diverse group that include Euro American students, Sleeter found that ES curricula "helps students grapple with multiple perspectives. . . [and develop] higher order levels of thinking" (Sleeter, 2011, p. 19). Qualitative benefits explicitly associated with Euro Americans included a heightened sensitivity and understanding of issues related to power and privilege, as well as improved cross-racial interaction (Sleeter, 2014). Remnick (2014) discussed the positive impact of ES on Euro American students who gain a more "sophisticated ethnic consciousness as they confront issues of race already familiar to Students of Color" (Remnick, 2014, p. 3).

Thompson (2004) proposed that activism linked with ES contributes to "student development and commitment to social and political causes" (Thompson, 2004, p. 114). Tovar and Feliciano (2009) discussed the effect of taking ES classes on the formation of ethnic self-identities of undergraduate students. Tovar and Feliciano added that that ethnic self-identity is important as it includes "being conscious of inequalities and helping in minority communities" (Tovar & Feliciano, 2009, p. 9). Rendon (1994) completed a study testing validation theory wherein she found that culturally diverse students were more likely to become effective learners when their experiences were validated via "in-class and out-of-class academic and/or interpersonal validation" (Rendon 1994, p. 44). Rendon suggested that one such in-class validation strategy is including ES in high school curricula.

Boggess (2016) wrote an article about a few high school districts that have offered ES courses as an "early retention strategy" for outgoing middle school students who were in danger of failing or being pushed out of the educational system (Boggess, 2016, p. 2). Gilbertson (2014), in her coverage of the LAUSD Board's decision to approve ES a graduation requirement, reported supporters' claims that ES courses "promote racial tolerance and teach an accurate version of the nation's history" (Gilbertson, 2014, p. 1) through exposure to stories and cultures of different ethnicities long ignored in textbooks. Kalb (2015) echoed this claim in her article when she discussed the value of learning other cultures' backgrounds and contributions. Kalb also discussed administrators who decided to approve an ES course based on their realization that ES "enhanced students' perceptions of their own place in the world" (Kalb, 2015, p. 3).

The concept of global citizenship refers to a type of belonging in which the "bonds of community [extend] beyond the limited borders of the nation (Camacho, 2010 as cited in Ramirez, 2014, p. 1067). Banks (2012) and Nussbaum (2002) called this identification "cosmopolitanism," whereby cosmopolitans see themselves as citizens of the world who will make decisions and take actions in the global interests that will benefit human kind. This allegiance to a worldwide community of humankind (Nussbaum, 2002) includes identification with a "multiplicity of citizenships" (Ramirez, 2014, p. 1067). Reysen and Hackett (2017) cited research showing identification with global citizenship predicts "six clusters of values: 1) intergroup empathy; 2) valuing diversity; 3) social justice; 4) environmental sustainability; 5) intergroup helping; and 6) responsibility to act for brotherhood of the world" (Reysen & Hackett, 2017, p. 132). Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, and Gurin (2002) posited that global citizenship is essential in order to "thrive and lead in work environments of the 21st century," as it includes abilities to

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"view issues from multiple perspectives and respond with sensitivity to the needs and cultural differences" (Gurin et al., 2002, p. 12) of diverse constituencies. Gay (2004) saw ES as a means of preparing students for "democratic citizenship in a pluralistic society" (Gay, 2004, p. 30).

Kandil (2016) completed interviews with Students of Color who took ES courses in college and claimed that learning about ES reinforced their sense of humanity and cultivated sentiments that their concerns and experiences were legitimate. One of the students Kandil interviewed shared a reflection that exemplifies one enduring benefit:

> I'm one of 87 in my kindergarten class to make it to the university. If those other 86 could have seen themselves in the books – if they knew there was an Angela Davis, a Malcolm X, a Cesar Chavez – I think it could have made a ton of difference. (Kandil, 2016, p. 3)

Kandil also quoted Anna Sampaio, the director of ES at Santa Clara University who shared that ES validates the perspectives of "poor, working-class Communities of Color or Women of Color [and not just] rich, White, well-educated men" (Kandil, 2016, p. 3). In addition to sharing qualitative benefits, Kandil referred to quantitative benefits, which leads to a review of scholars who have studied the quantitative benefits attributed to ES.

Quantitative Benefits

Scholars have completed quantitative studies to show the statistically significant results in the performance of students who take ES courses. Astin (1993) identified the number of ES courses taken by students during their undergraduate years and explored the effects of these courses on student outcomes. Astin found that the strongest positive effects were on "cultural awareness and commitment to promoting racial understanding" (Astin, 1993, p. 46). Other positive effects, not as strong yet still significant, included participation in campus protests, listening ability, and foreign language skill. Cabrera et al. (2012) found a consistent, significant,

positive relationship between participation in Mexican American Studies (MAS) and academic performance. In other words, the more ES courses students took, the greater the likelihood that had of academic success.

The Dee and Penner (2016) study measured the causal effects of taking ES courses by revealing an increase in attendance, improvement of grade point average, and greater number of credits earned for 9th-graders. Dee and Penner discussed these quantitative results in the context of a growing body of literature that emphasizes the influence that culturally relevant pedagogy and curricula can have on student outcomes (Banks, 2008; Cammarota & Romero, 2014; Sleeter, 2011; Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2014). Ladson-Billings (1995) identified culturally relevant pedagogy as instruction that rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) students experience academic success, (b) students develop and/or maintain cultural competence, and (c) students develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order. In the classroom where there is culturally relevant teaching, Ladson-Billings claimed, students are "expected to engage the world and others critically through developing multiple perspectives on a variety of social and historical phenomena" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 162). This engagement and preparation for the multicultural world is optimized when multicultural teaching is infused across the curriculum (Gay, 2004). Gay lauded multicultural education, a component of ES, as an effective means of achieving educational equality, particularly for students from ethnic groups that historically have been marginalized, dispossessed, oppressed, miseducated, and undereducated in schools. Gay also discussed the costs of offering culturally irrelevant education that produces "disparities in educational opportunities" and lower

achievement rates among students, due to loss of interest and lack of identification with curricula (Gay, 2004, p. 30).

Engberg (2004) completed a review of various educational interventions in higher education on students' racial bias. Engberg found that ES, one of the educational interventions Engberg analyzed, was included as an intervention in seven quantitative studies, each of which measured the cumulative effects on students' racial bias. All seven studies relied on data from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), which used a large national sample of college students from a representative group of private and public four-year colleges. Engberg shared that five of the studies reported positive, significant findings (Antony, 1993; Astin, 1993; Hurtado & Orfield, 2001; Hyun, 1994; Milem, 1994), which stated the greater the number of ES courses students took, the higher the students' level of commitment was to the promotion of racial understanding. The remaining two studies reported both positive and nonsignificant findings (Gurin et al., 2002; Vogelgesang, 2001).

Though their study yielded findings that were not as significant as others, the findings of Gurin et al. (2002) were unique in that they looked at the impact of students' various diversity experiences (including taking ES courses) on learning and democracy outcomes. Gurin et al. found that the three indicators of democracy outcomes— "perspective-taking, racial/cultural engagement, and viewing compatibility between difference and democracy" (Gurin et al., 2002, p. 8)—all exhibited strong, positive correlations with diversity experiences. At the same time, students who participated in diversity experiences exhibited higher scores in the categories of active thinking and intellectual engagement (Gurin et al., 2002).

Sleeter (2011) identified three categories of benefits accrued by students who took ES courses. One of these categories, academic outcomes, lends itself to quantitative studies because gains in academic outcomes are measured by test scores (Sleeter, 2011). Closely linked to civic participation is an increased propensity to participate in service learning opportunities that address social injustice or inequalities. Remnick (2014) and Sleeter (2011) both cited research that showed that Students of Color who know about race, racism, and cultural identity show better grades, higher graduation rates, and increased likelihood of attending college.

Participatory Action Research

Community responsive pedagogy, directly derived from Paulo Freire's (1998) ideas, have provided the roots for participatory action research (PAR). PAR comprises a research method in which educational researchers operate as full collaborators with members of communities in studying and transforming their organizations and the world. Designed as an ongoing organizational learning process, PAR is a research approach that emphasizes co-learning, participation, and action for organizational transformation. With PAR, knowledge is generated through participants' collective efforts and actions. PAR seeks to "liberate" participants to have a greater awareness of their situation so they can act in their particular context.

Cahill (2007) identified PAR as a research methodology that "challenges normative production of knowledge by including excluded perspectives and engaging those must affected by research in the process" (Cahill, 2007, p. 326). Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, and Bradley (2013) studied PAR as a means of engaging youth in the process of creating educational policy. Quijada Cerecer et al. found that "radically including youth participation and action" is instrumental in forging a "just, equitable, diverse society" (Quijada Cerecer et al., 2013, p. 222).

Some scholars have articulated the value of ES for high school students, in the context of community participatory action research (CPAR) or youth participatory action research (YPAR) that enable students to becoming critical researchers. Irizarry (2009) explored YPAR as a way of improving educational experiences and outcomes for youth traditionally underserved by schools and of reversing the "softening" of multicultural education. Irizarry defined softening multicultural education as the "abandonment of the activist roots and ideals" (Irizarry, 2009, p. 194) of multicultural curriculum, which are hallmarks of ES. Irizarry (2009) saw YPAR as "deeply rooted in the struggle for social justice and educational equity" (p. 196). Fine and Torre (2004) revealed how the practice of PAR can be offered as part of a large-scale democratic project to "re-member" institutions and communities marginalized by neoliberalism especially low-income Communities of Color. Fine and Torre found that this "re-membering" is achieved because of PAR's capacity to: "1) reveal the complex workings of power within institutions" and to reconnect bodies that have been socially and politically excluded; and 2) surface a series of counter stories or explanations that "challenge dominant laminations of social arrangements" (Fine & Torre, 2004, p. 16).

Torre (2009) analyzed the intersection of PAR and critical race theory (CRT) to explore the possibilities for researching a space in which individuals "hold multiple identities," provoke "analyses that require historical re-memory;" and "destabilize naturalized power hierarchies" (Torre, 2009, p.118). Ozer, Newlan, Douglas, and Hubbard (2013) examined the practice of YPAR in urban high schools and the tensions associated with this practice. Ozer et al. found that "two key dimensions of YPAR – developing youth power and having an impact on the surrounding community – are integrated and understood in the context of diverse school

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settings" (Ozer et al., 2013, p. 25). Ozer, Ritterman, and Wanis (2010) studied the impact of

PAR on middle school students. Ozer et al. found that PAR offers opportunities for learning at a

critical time in a student's personal and academic development given that early adolescence

shows an "upsurge in academic disengagement and psychopathology" (Ozer et al., 2010, p. 152).

Furthermore, de Los Rios et al. (2015), presented three case studies of critical pedagogy

of ES at high school students. Two of these cases involved high school classes and the third

explored summer and after-school programs where high school student engagement with YPAR

projects enabled them to be active in their surrounding communities. In these cases, de los Rios

et al. explored the connections between teaching ES, the capacity-building of YPAR, and the

development of literacies of power, agency, social awareness, civic engagement, and academic

achievement (de los Rios et al., 2015). Tintiangco-Cubales et al. (2014) examined YPAR as one

type of critical pedagogy ES teachers use to develop critical consciousness. Included in this

critical consciousness are "empathy for the struggles of others and engagement with social

justice activities that are informed by the students' lived experiences" (Tintiangco-Cubales et al.,

2014, p. 12).

Cammarota and Romero (2014) studied the Mexican American Studies or "Raza Studies"

program at the TUSD as an example of a curriculum reflecting critical pedagogy that led to

"critically progressive transformation" (Cammarota & Romero, 2014, p. 27) for students and

teachers. Here, students comprehended "their roles as historical agents to promote, restore, and

sustain generosity and compassion" (Cammarota & Romero, 2014, p. 27). YPAR figures

prominently in Cammarota and Romero's chapter on the Social Justice Education Project, given

the use of YPAR as a strategy to empower Students of Color through understanding how students' research projects brought changes to the environment.

Critique and Counter Arguments

There is literature on ES that can best be described as critique and counter, given these articles have included both critiques of ES programs and counter arguments to these critiques. Since ES strikes at the heart of issues such as individual identity, group identity, and power, supporters and detractors have realized the stakes are high with respect to the spread or demise of ES in school districts. Anderson (2016), Cabrera, Meza, Romero, and Rodriguez (2013), Chen (2016), Orozco (2012), Rothberg (2012), and Thompson (2004) have discussed criticisms and responses to such criticisms.

Given the high ideological and political stakes associated with ES, intense opposition can result at school districts where ES has been adopted as a graduation requirement or as an elective. For example, Cabrera et al. (2013) and Orozco (2012) have critically examined the opposition to ES that manifested in HB 2281, an Arizona state law that effectively outlawed ES programs from being offered by school districts. Opponents to ES have alleged that ES programs are un-American and separatist (Orozco, 2012). Other scholars have written about numerous critiques—some intended to be constructive, but most designed to be destructive— leveled at ES (Boggess, 2016; Cammarota & Romero, 2012; Chen, 2016; Gurin et al., 2002; Nieves, 1994; Ramirez, 2014; Rothberg, 2012; Wing, 1999; Winkler-Morey, 2010). These scholars have identified the most common arguments made against ES. These critiques can be grouped into six categories. These categories include: allegation of divisiveness; anti-Americanism; promotion of

political upheaval; resentment toward a specific class or race of people; narrow width in scope; and lack of need in "post-racial" society.

Allegation of divisiveness. It has been argued by some critics that urging identification with one's ethnic group can threaten national unity and cause divisiveness (Boggess, 2016; Orozco, 2012; Ramirez, 2014). This argument presupposes that People of Color already feel welcomed in this country and assumes that they feel accepted as part of this nation. For Students of Color in particular, learning to navigate society with its nearly invisible system of racial power and privilege has been dangerous and costly (El-Haj, 2011). Ironically, critics such as Arizona state superintendent Tom Horne appealed to individualism, to counter what he perceived to be the "exemplars of racial groups" (Orozco, 2012, p. 52) advanced by ES. It is worth noting that some scholars have perceived such individualism as a threat to achieving the kind of national unity ES critics profess to both support and uphold (Orozco, 2012).

Anti-Americanism. It has been purported that learning about ES can foment anti-Americanism due to studying various events and activities in which the U.S. government has mistreated People of Color (Orozco, 2012). This fear, for example, was reflected in the words of Arizona state attorney general Tom Horne, who was instrumental in enforcing HB 2281 to ban Mexican American Studies (MAS) in the State of Arizona. Horne wrote a letter in which he alleged MAS as "vehemently anti-Western culture … opposed to the United States" (Orozco, 2012, p. 50) and staffed by "political activists" in a "totalitarian climate of fear" (Horne as cited in Orozco, 2012, p. 51). Horne wrote "it is certainly strange to find a textbook in an American public school taking the Mexican side of the Battle at the Alamo" (Orozco, 2012, p. 51). The assumption here was that being critical of the U.S. is not acceptable and many, like Horne, have

equated such scholarship in ES as a disguise for anti-Americanism (Alexander, 2011). ES scholars have countered that those who can engage critically with the conditions of inequalities in their nation are in a better position to advocate for the liberation of the oppressed and the co-creation of knowledge born from such critical thought (Soto & Miranda, 2010).

Promotion of political upheaval. Some have expressed concern that ES promotes political upheaval. There has been concern that learning about the offenses of the past will incur a wrath that will motivate students to overthrow the U.S. government. This fear has been seen in the individualistic, assimilative rhetoric of Euro American elected officials and leaders in Arizona as they made the case for HB 2281 (Soto & Miranda, 2010). Soto and Miranda argued, "The law misrepresents ES through a now-familiar ruse that claims any attention to race or racism, even as a topic of study, is itself racist" (p. 50) and, therefore, disruptive. The actual bill language, moreover, outlawed courses that, "promote the overthrow of the U.S. government [and] … promote resentment toward a race or class of people" (HB 2281 Language, 2010, p. 2).

Although HB 2281 was supposedly authored to outlaw classes that promote the overthrow of the U.S. government, "neither the Governor, nor other proponents of the bill, could cite specific examples of when the overthrow of the government was taught or endorsed by any teacher of an ES class" (Chen, 2016, p. 2) in Arizona or elsewhere. Those who harbored fear of government overthrow overlooked ES research, which has shown the opposite effect. Sleeter (2011) discussed that students who take ES are more likely to become civically engaged in their community, "affirm their American identity" (p. 16), and not overthrow the government. Civic engagement has not only been a hallmark of students who take ES, but also a common practice of ES scholars and activists since ES was established.

Another concern of a political nature may prima facie sound qualitatively different than the political upheaval complaint but will be mentioned here since the concern and complaint share a common element. Some believe that public education should always be neutral, and that curriculum should not be "politicized" with a specific ideology. Response to this concern has been that education can *never* be neutral and that decisions on what to include or exclude in a curriculum are inherently ideological or political in nature (Apple, 1999, 2004). Much like the fear that ES will foment political upheaval in an external fashion, there is anxiety that ES will foster internal political upheaval among students (Cammarota & Romero, 2014). This type of upheaval could actually result in the development of what Freire termed *critical consciousness* (Freire, 1970), which is a necessary antecedent to transformative social change (Darder, 2015).

Resentment toward a particular race or class of people. Some critics of ES have maintained that students who take ES develop resentment toward a particular race—namely Euro Americans/Whites who have been in power and have benefited from exercising White privilege. For example, opponents of ES in the TUSD alleged that ES "promotes resentment toward a race or class of people" (Cabrera et al., 2013, p. 9). Challengers even fought to include this exact wording in the language of a bill designed to target TUSD's MAS program (Cabrera et al., 2013). What was missing from this narrative was the finding that students who "developed critical consciousness" in the MAS program "affirmed a commitment to non-violence" (Cabrera et al., 2013, p. 19), acquired an understanding of one's surrounding community, and renewed a willingness to work with people from other groups.

ES can be too narrow in scope. Detractors of ES have contended that some ES programs are too narrow in their focus on research and instruction. Even some supporters have

criticized Chicanx and Puerto Rican Studies for "failing to abandon their antiquated analytical frameworks and for lacking the requisite cosmopolitanism to embark on cutting edge research" (Caban, 2003, p. 14). Some ES programs have been "faulted for being too narrow in their focus on research and instruction, lacking a comparative and contemporary perspective" (Caban, 2003, p. 14). However, such critiques of ES must also be understood as efforts to silence dissent, where "such expressions of opposition, more often than not, are sly and unjustified proclamations to obstruct the establishment of democratic approaches to teaching and learning within schools. . . that seek to alter the asymmetrical power relations of schooling practices" (Darder, et. al., 2009, p. 18). Hence, ES scholars have argued that critiques that attempt to narrow the legitimacy and criticality of ES scholarship have functioned to trivialize important political claims tied to oppression and, thus, obstructed the critical analysis of inequalities across society (Okihiro, 2010; Soto & Miranda, 2010).

Another retort that some ES courses are too narrow in focus has centered on the reality that until recently, the majority of history textbooks relied on the exceedingly narrow lens of European history. Sleeter (2011) completed an analysis of the History Social Science Framework for California Public Schools that revealed long-standing patterns where "racial and ethnic minorities were added in a 'contributions' fashion to the predominantly Euro American narrative of textbooks" (Sleeter, 2011, p. 2). Furthermore, Sleeter's study revealed among the 96 Americans who were named for study in the framework's course descriptions, the composition of this group was 77% Euro American, 18% African American, 4% Native American, 1% Latino, and 0% Asian American/Pacific Islander. In addition, Sleeter found that, at the secondary level, 79% of the named individuals were Euro American, mostly either U.S. Presidents or

famous artists and authors. Hence, a preferential focus on one particular Community of Color (i.e., Chicanx Studies, that focus on Mexican Americans) was necessary to counterbalance the inordinate focus most textbooks have placed on the Euro American (and male, heterosexual, able) lens.

ES is no longer needed in "post-racial" society. There has been a racially based attack on multicultural and inclusive pedagogy resulting from the belief that there is "no longer a need to address issues of race since racism no longer exists" (Springer, 2014, p. 1). Springer analyzed the content and impetus behind what she referred to as "post racial rhetoric that has permeated recent scholarship and social media" (Springer, 2014, p. 1) since the election of Barack Obama as president in 2008 and his reelection in 2012. Springer articulated the effect of postrace rhetoric that included negative influences on student perceptions of race, the suffocation of challenges to White supremacy, and increased difficulty of "addressing disparities and inequalities at work within U.S. institutions" (Springer, 2014, p. 5).

Hidden in the argument that ES is no longer necessary is the assumption that racism no longer exists or is at least not as potent or destructive as it was perhaps a generation ago. Assumptions such as these can be challenged by the rise in racial attacks in the days following Barack Obama's election as president (Springer, 2014), in the tenor of Donald Trump's campaign rallies, which offered numerous examples of bigotry, fear, and scapegoating (Ball, 2016), and in the verbal and physical attacks on people of color that occurred in the two weeks immediately after the election of Donald Trump as U.S. President, in November of 2016 (Eversley, 2016; McCarthy, 2016). Rossing (2012) stated, "Post racial narratives sever contemporary racial reality from historical events that shaped it and suggest that the

consequences of systemic racial oppression ended" (Rossing, 2012, p. 2). Springer countered the myth that racism no longer exists or that the United States is now a "post-race nation" by describing it as "a sophisticated form of racism that allows the benefactors of White privilege an opportunity to escape the discomfort that discussions of race incur" (Springer, 2014, p. 7).

Myriad iterations of the types of ES critiques discussed above have been articulated and recycled at various times throughout history. It is worth noting that most critiques can be found in the articles of ES scholars, activists, and other supporters who have known them well from lived experience and have engaged in critical work to deconstruct unsubstantiated critiques by exposing the false assumptions and racialized beliefs embedded in them. It is not surprising to see the lengths to which some critics have gone, as seen in Tucson, Arizona, to outlaw what they have perceived as threatening to their power. As Orwell stated in his dystopian classic *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, "He who controls the past controls the future. He who controls the present controls the past" (Orwell, 1949, p. 37). To better understand the stakes of the battle and the deeply entrenched forces that ES proponents seek to address, it is crucial to understand the intersection of ES and public policy.

Ethnic Studies and its Relationship to Public Policy

CSBA has defined public policy as a "guide to action adopted by the Board to address a specific issue," which also includes "what a school board wants done and why" (McCormack Brown et al., 2004, p. 52). Public policy making has also been described as "the art of setting parameters for the actions of a groups' members or [governing] behavior of those within a system" (Baldridge, 1995, p. 2). Fullan (2016) described public policy as "an associated set of strategies designed to bring about positive change in the system" (Fullan, 2016, p. 41),

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which can be guided by policy "drivers." School board members have the power to form "critical linkages" between legislators and the behaviors of teachers who interact regularly with students in the classroom (Baldridge, 1995; Delagardelle & Alsbury, 2014). Baldridge asserted that the "core of educational policy development is consistently appropriate action by school system employees as defined by the school board" (Baldridge, 1995, p. 8).

The process of policymaking, including educational policymaking, can be influenced by the ebb and flow of politics. Whether this impact is negative or positive depends on the political actors and whether the political agendas of these actors are aligned with the students' best interests. Cox and Cox (2009) cited research in which lawmakers often "don't have a clue what the unintended consequences of their laws will be" and "don't read most of them" (Cox & Cox, 2009, p. 3). As a result, policymakers who are mired in self-serving political agendas resort to "hasty implementation of policies" that may impede academic success, with "little or no consideration given to [their] outcomes" (Cox & Cox, 2009, p. 3). Fullan (2016) described the risk of policymakers using "wrong drivers" such as, "external accountability, individualistic teacher and school quality, technology, and fragmented strategies" (Fullan, 2016, p. 42). Hess (1999) has referred to this phenomenon of the "policy churn" in which school board members "constantly embrace politically attractive changes" that results in the "recycling of previous initiatives that may no longer be as relevant" (Hess, 1999, p. 5).

On the other hand, some regard politics as a routine reality in which board members leverage relationships to create conditions conducive to student success (Bigham & Ray, 2012). Fullan (2016) described the positive educational change that can result when policymakers select the "right drivers," such as "capacity-building, collaboration, pedagogy, and systemness"

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(Fullan, 2016, p. 42). According to Bigham and Ray, school board members' use of politics to affect public policy for their districts are more likely to craft policy conducive to student success when they remember that "educators have been trained and are typically the most knowledgeable individuals in their community about pedagogy, curriculum, instruction, and assessment" (Bigham & Ray, 2012, p. 9). Board members successful in crafting public policy that is oriented to student success work "interactively with superintendents and district administrators" (Fullan, 2016, p. 169) while also embracing a love of lifelong learning and professional growth.

One of the drivers for studying public policy in the context of ES is to explore the role that public policymakers can play in influencing the inclusion of ES curricula at the secondary level. An important assumption of this study is that local school board members are best positioned to enact public policies that can defend, support, and expand ES programs throughout California. While the academic literature on the nexus of ES and public policy in California is scant, widening the search yielded a few articles and resources that have made isolated yet useful references to how ES relates to public policy making.

Personal Becomes Political

Cammarota & Romero (2014) wrote about how ES instructors in the Social Justice Education Project (SJEP) taught students that history and politics relate closely to students' lives as they discern larger social patterns. Students have also been taught that their "personal stories are political" (Cammarota & Romero, 2014, p. 174), and these stories have formed rationales for advocating specific public policies. For example, Cammarota and Romero have documented the juxtaposition of ES and public policy, in their accounts of students in the TUSD who fought to save MAS. HB 2281, a law authored and passed by the Arizona state legislature in 2011 to

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dismantle MAS, motivated a group of high school students, their teachers, and their community allies to engage in struggle to retain the program. In their struggle against HB 2281, students responded to hegemonic state policy through activism and resistance to influence local policy at the school board level (Cammarota & Romero, 2014). Although student supporters of MAS fell short in their attempt to persuade the TUSD Board of Trustees to protect MAS, their efforts created ripples in policy making in the neighboring state of California.

Examples of ES students who have drawn upon their personal experiences as metanarratives that inform public policies are visible in the actions of several elected officials. Assemblyman Luis Alejo (D-CA), who took ES as an undergraduate at University of California at Berkeley (UCB), was the juggernaut behind AB2016, which mandated the creation of an ES model curriculum for grades seven through 12 in all school districts. School board member José Lara, a current member of the school board at the ERUSD in Pico Rivera, took ES as an undergraduate at California State University at Northridge (CSUN) and led the charge to galvanize ERUSD to be the first school district to mandate an ES graduation requirement for all high school students. Lara is the founder of the Ethnic Studies Now Coalition, a loose collection of advocates, teachers, trustees, activists, parents, and students who organized to pressure school districts to pass ES resolutions, much like ERUSD did in 2014. Dr. Lani Cupchoy, a current member of the school board at the Montebello Unified School District (MUSD), took ES at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and now teaches ES at California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA), and led the MUSD to pass a resolution making ES a requirement in her district.

The continuing efforts of the ESNC contributed to the passage of board resolutions at many high schools across California (Lara, 2015), including 40 of the 150 high schools within the LAUSD (ESNC Website, 2017, School District Page; Janofsky, 2016). These resolutions established new ES programs or expanded existing ones. *The Atlantic* reported 16 school districts have passed resolutions, with five of the California school districts instituting an ES requirement, and 11 others opting to offer ES as an elective (Anderson, 2016; Lara, 2015; Love, 2015). By late 2017, the ESNC announced that 19 school districts had passed resolutions in support of ES curricula—an achievement heavily marked by educators who courageously made the personal political.

Statewide Legislation and its Roots in Struggle

Examples of statewide legislation concerning ES are also pertinent in this study of the intersection of ES and public policy. To clarify what can or cannot be done by board members with respect to ES, it is imperative to understand what state legislators have already done and continue to do to form and reform the dynamic landscape of ES at the state level. There are key players and agencies including state legislators, the governor, the California Instructional Quality Commission, the California Department of Education who have played or will play key roles in shaping ES policy. Besides monitoring legislation, it is equally important to study advocacy, which is attempting "to influence public policy through education, lobbying, or political pressure" (Kilpatrick, 2016, p. 1).

In 2002, as an Assembly Fellow for Assembly member Manny Diaz, future Assembly member Luis Alejo drafted the language of AB2001, a bill that proposed to establish an ES curriculum. The bill was the precursor to what would eventually become AB2016. Several

attempts later, this original bill evolved into AB1750 in 2014, which would have established a mandate to establish ES at all high schools, but was later amended to identify model programs, standards, and curricula relating to ES at the high school level (Sleeter, 2014). After Governor Brown vetoed AB1750, Assembly member Alejo reintroduced a similar bill in 2015, AB 101, which excluded the original mandate language but included language that gave school districts the "option of adopting" (Love, 2015, p. 2). AB 2001, AB 1750, AB 101, and myriad other variations of the original bills, though not signed into law, paved the way for AB2016, which was finally passed by the state legislature and signed into law in the fall of 2016. The successful passage of AB2016 underscored not only the collective ability for supporters of ES to draw wisdom from the lessons learned after previous setbacks, but also testified to the spirit of resistance in which ES was first established in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

It is important to understand the ongoing advocacy of Assembly member Alejo within the context of activism and struggle for ES that has occurred across the nation—especially in the State of Arizona. Although this dissertation focuses on California, the ongoing influence of ES advocates on one another has transcended generations, years, and state boundaries. Alejo's original 2014 bill was "a reaction to conservatives shutting down ES programs in Arizona" (Love, 2015, p. 2). This is noteworthy since the takeaway here is that state or local policies toward ES in one state can directly impact state or local policies in another. Referring to Alejo's advocacy as a "reaction," however, could give the unintended impression that his authoring the bill was a knee jerk reaction and not the result of thoughtful planning and political strategies developed over time.

Alejo's methodical approach to shepherding legislation multiple times mirrors the thoughtful planning that the original founders engaged in when they laid the groundwork for ES at SFSU in the late 1960s. Thompson (2004) referred to the "strong persistent leadership … and phenomenal planning and thinking that preceded each aspect of the SFSU student movement" (Thompson, 2004, p. 114). Thompson debunked the myth that student activism represented spontaneous responses to Eurocentric curriculum. I draw this parallel between the architects of the late 1960s with today's advocates to show that both are rooted in a shared struggle and a legacy of activism that continues to shape public policy. Even with the passage of AB2016, there are still critics who have claimed that the bill does not go far enough since the original language mandating that ES be a graduation requirement was stricken. One critic on Assembly member Alejo's Facebook page commented, "White privilege is requiring that history is taught as a requirement while [others'] history is taught as an elective" (Assembly member Luis Alejo Facebook Page, 2016, Posts Thread). This critic speaks to the implications that ES-friendly policy may or may not create sufficient movement toward social justice, given the context of support or resistance in which ES policies are developed and implemented.

Ethnic Studies, Social Justice, and Cultural Democracy

It is critical to understand how and why ES has been a battlefield in the struggle for social justice. The relevance of ES-friendly policy to social justice is best seen through the lens of El-Haj (2011) who identified three claims through which proponents of equity can achieve educational justice: recognition, equal standards, and integration. According to El-Haj, these claims were defined as follows:

Recognition refers to the acknowledgment of group differences among groups and the need to respond to these differences in the process of achieving a just education. Recognition is seen as fundamental premise of all multicultural education, including ES.

Equal standards refer to a focus on student outcomes as an indicator of educational equity that moves beyond the limitations of access as a measure of equity. It is not enough to claim that all students have been exposed to equal standards; educators must build a school culture that helps students to meet them.

Integration refers to the process of moving beyond desegregation—beyond removing legal barriers, and simply placing together students of different races—to bringing students together under conditions of equality, emphasizing common goals, while deemphasizing personal competition.

Although these three claims have been significant to questions of policy and social justice, the claim of *recognition* is most relevant to this analysis of ES. El-Haj (2011) asserted that recognition of one's cultural identity "is critical to an individual's sense of well-being and capacity to participate fully in society" (El-Haj, 2011, p. 144). El-Haj further argued, "having one's group affiliations fully acknowledged, included, and equally valued as an active member of the community. . . are components of a fair and just education" (El-Haj, 2011, p. 191). This robust participation has implications for a healthy democracy, which could facilitate transformative and socially just change at the policy level (Astin, 1993; de los Rios et al., 2015; Gurin et al., 2002; Sleeter, 2011).

El-Haj (2011), moreover, proposed a relational view of difference in her understanding of recognition, as a new framework for justice, which moved beyond focusing on differences

between groups to confronting "how the dominant values and assumptions of our educational system perpetuate the success of some at the expense of others" and reflect the "ways that power and privilege are negotiated in the interaction" (El-Haj, 2011, p. 188) between groups. This framework offers an opportunity for school board members to develop policies and practices that create possibilities for substantive inclusion and to reject the ones that reproduce educational inequalities. But this view is a critical one that requires school board members to examine how existing policies and practices could limit substantive inclusion, especially if dominant values and assumptions that perpetuate educational injustices are not addressed. If substantive inclusion in the community and participation in a democratic society are the objectives of educational justice, ES can be the means of fulfilling these objectives. Policies that support ES can therefore facilitate educational and social justice.

Darder's work on a critical theory of cultural democracy helps to explain how ES curricula can facilitate meaningful, liberatory participation with democracy. The notion of schools as apprenticeships in democracy (Darder, 2012; Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1973) has been helpful in understanding how critical the classroom space is for preparing students to be full-fledged participants in democracy. Freire wrote "Democracy requires dialogue, participation, political and social responsibility [and includes] … examination of common problems" (Freire, 1973, pp. 28–29). Darder (2012) discussed student capacity to enter a dialogue in the classroom, its connection to student voice, and the centrality of student voice in the struggle for democracy and equality in the classroom, particularly for Students of Color. These issues of dialogue and examination of common problems (Freire, 1973), development of student voice (Giroux, 1988), and organization of classroom relationships in which students can draw and confirm dimensions

of their own histories (Giroux, 1988) are several of the fundamental principles on which Darder (2012) posited a critical theory of cultural democracy.

Multicultural curricula, including ES, can have emancipatory potential for students. However, one of the takeaways from Darder's (2012) work is that focusing on curriculum content alone is not enough to ensure a democratic environment. Only if a culturally democratic educational environment exists, one in which students may participate freely, will students be able to "develop their bicultural voice. . . [and] use it toward their collective empowerment and emancipation" (Darder, 2012, p. 61). Furthermore, Darder insisted educators "must recognize that no multicultural curriculum, in and of itself, can replace the dialogical participation of bicultural students in the process of schooling" (Darder, 2012, p. 119). She has argued that educators must "address cultural issues related to power and dominance, as well as the impact that these forces have on the lives of bicultural students" (Darder, 2012, p. 118).

Key to creating this emancipatory space in the classroom is Freire's notion of *unity-in-diversity* (Darder, 2015). The value of unity-in-diversity fully blossoms as a shared one when educators help create space for ongoing dialogue, maintain respect for voices and participation of the oppressed and facilitate self-determination and self-formation to advance culturally democratic life (Darder, 2015). Freire saw that a politics of unity-in-diversity could assist in the collective struggle to fight "oppressive forces that seek to culturally homogenize schools and society" (Darder, 2015, p. 122). The fruits of this struggle—for both students and teachers— would be a growing sense of solidarity built on love, respect, and compassion for one another and a commitment to the liberation of all people (Darder, 2012). This local struggle in the classroom can reinforce and join with the larger, ongoing struggle for ES curricula and policy.

Critical Race Theory and Ethnic Studies

Much of the contemporary literature on ES has employed critical race theory (CRT) as a conceptual lens of analysis. Although CRT has its roots in legal studies and has been used in a variety of disciplines, it seems uniquely suited as a critical lens for research situated at the intersection of ES and public policy. Succinctly stated, CRT is both a theoretical framework and a living movement comprised of scholar-activists who study the "relationship between race, racism, and power" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 2). CRT contains an activist dimension since it not only tries to understand social inequalities, but also to transform unjust conditions. As was stated earlier, CRT is built on the insights of two previous movements, "critical legal studies and radical feminism" (p. 4). Scholars have traced the beginnings of CRT to a larger movement, which predated both critical legal studies and radical feminism, namely, the Civil Rights Movement.

Although CRT began as a movement in the legal field, it has spread beyond the legal discipline to other fields, notably to the field of education (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Critical race educational theorists use CRT as a lens to analyze issues relevant to Students of Color such as discipline, tracking, curriculum, and achievement testing. Torre (2009) used CRT and PAR to create the Opportunity Gap Project that facilitated research on the varying impacts of tracking systems on Students of Color and Euro American students. Cammarota and Romero (2014) grounded the class readings associated with the Social Justice Education Project (SJEP) in CRT to help the SJEP students develop a critical lens "through which their level of racial, cultural, historical, and social consciousness is elevated through a curriculum that. . . is authentically relevant to their lived conditions and realities" (Cammarota & Romero, 2014, p. 15).

Capper and Green (2013) found that a CRT perspective enabled school leaders to "conduct racial equity audits regarding student suspensions, extra-curricular participation, advanced placement enrollments, and graduation" (Capper & Green, 2013, p. 76). Steele and Aronson's (1995) research discovered stereotype threat in which African American college students who were prompted to indicate their race before taking the GRE showed tests scores that were significantly lower than those who were not prompted to note their race. Solorzano, Ceja, and Yosso (2000) used CRT as a framework to examine microaggressions and how they influence the collegiate racial climate for Students of Color. CRT's application to education and analysis of culturally relevant and socially just curriculum renders it appropriate for analyzing ES. Key to such an analysis are the central CRT tenets and themes that can prove suitable for identifying perspectives about ES and deconstructing assumptions embedded within such perspectives.

CRT Tenets and Themes

The tenets of CRT have provided an effective theoretical framework from which ES scholars have examined the field. Similarly, a major assumption of this study is that these tenets can prove useful in examining board member attitudes toward ES and the intersection of these attitudes with public policy. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) posited the following five tenets in CRT analyses of policies and practices tied to questions of race and racism:

- Racism is normal, not aberrational, and found in the usual way society conducts business since it is the common, everyday experience of most People of Color.
- White-over-color hierarchy serves important purposes such as defending colorblind conceptions of equality and interest convergence, in which racism persists when it advances the interests of White elites
- Social construction thesis states race is a product of social thought, which means race is a category that society invents or manipulates when convenient for those in power.
- Everyone has potentially overlapping, conflicting identities, loyalties and allegiances (intersectionality) and no person has a single, easily stated, unitary identity (anti-essentialism).
- People of Color have a unique voice that must be included in storytelling or counter-narratives that offer unique perspectives that differ from master or hegemonic narratives. (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, pp. 7–9)

In addition to these five tenets, there are four overarching themes that characterize CRT, including: "interest convergence; revisionist interpretation of history; critique of liberalism; and structural determinism" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 11). In brief, Delgado and Stefancic defined these themes in the following manner:

Interest Convergence. Also known as material determinism or racial realism, the theme of interest convergence refers to a confluence of changing economic conditions and self-interest of elite Whites "accounting for racial progress as opposed to true altruism" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2011, p. 18). Bell (1992) pointed to *Brown vs. Board of Education* as a quintessential example of interest convergence as he rightfully hypothesized, "that the world and domestic considerations—not moral qualms over blacks' plight—precipitated the path-breaking decision" (Bell, 1992, p. 19).

Revisionist Interpretation of History. This includes a reexamination of America's historical record in which "comfortable majoritarian interpretations of events [are replaced] … with ones that square more accurately with minorities' experiences" (Delgado &

Stefancic, 2001, p. 20). One example is the Japanese internment in which accounts of Japanese Americans who were personally impacted by these "relocation camps" eventually replaced the dominant narrative that internment policy was necessary for the protection of Japanese Americans and for the national security of the United States (Takaki, 2012).

Critique of Liberalism. This theme centers on a suspicion of absolute color-blindness and neutral principles of constitutional law, which refuse to consider that some groups are judged and treated with more prejudice than others. Another feature of the critique of liberalism—and its descendant, neoliberalism—is suspicion of rights-dominated approaches in which procedural concerns are valued over substantive ones. One example is hate speech, which disproportionately harms people of color, LGBTQI, and other marginalized groups, but is tolerated and protected to some extent by the First Amendment (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

Structural Determinism. This theme is centered on the idea that our system, by reason of its structure and vocabulary, cannot redress certain types of wrong. Structural determinism assumes a number of forms including: (a) the dilemma that some types of prejudice are "hard to name unless one's interpretive community has begun to talk or think about it" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 30); (b) the fallacy (known as empathic fallacy) that "one can use words to undo the meanings that others attach to these very same words" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 28), or the belief that one can change a narrative by merely offering another one; and (c) the tension of "serving two masters" in the legal field wherein a lawyer representing a client may be motivated by a different type of social change than the client may want (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 30).

Overlapping the tenets and themes discussed above, the concept of microaggressions has appeared in CRT literature. Racial microaggressions constitute forms of everyday, systemic racism used to keep those at the racialized margins in their place. According to Pérez Huber and Solorzano (2014), racial microaggressions manifest in a variety of ways, including: (a) "verbal or non-verbal assaults directed toward People of Color" consciously or subconsciously; (b) "layered assaults based on race and its intersections" with other layers of identity; and (c) "cumulative assaults that take a psychological, physiological, and academic toll on People of Color" (Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2014, p. 2). Pérez Huber and Solorzano also argued that the concept of racial microaggressions can be a "useful tool for research on race, racism and everyday experiences for People of Color," as it allows one to "identify subtle acts of racism that can emerge in schools, college campuses, classrooms, and everyday conversations and interactions" (Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2014, p. 2). Hence, the concept of microaggressions can prove salient to an analysis of school board members' responses to ES and policy making.

As indicated above, storytelling as part of CRT research is useful in illuminating the experience and realities of subjects from oppressed communities. CRT's emphasis on amplifying the "voices of People of Color" is considered central to "an analysis" of inequalities "within the educational system" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 58). The notion of storytelling as a way of fighting racism is credited to one of CRT's founders, Derrick Bell, who began a trend of popularizing civil rights discourse through storytelling. Bell and his fellow CRT founders "used storytelling to raise consciousness of the voices of those historically dispossessed within society," which included People of Color (Jones, 2002, p. 46). The CRT tradition of storytelling as a method of constructing counter-narratives to the master or hegemonic narratives also gave

birth to the use of *testimonios*, which is a Latinx Critical Theory (LatCrit) methodology intended

to explore the impact of race and racism on the experience of Latinx (Delgado Bernal, 2002;

Urrieta & Villenas, 2013).

CRT and Education

Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate were among the first to introduce CRT to the

field of education (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Drawing an analogy to the use of CRT in legal

scholarship, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) cited three propositions: (a) "race continues to be

significant" in the United States; (b) "U.S. society is based on property rights" rather than human

rights; and (c) "the intersection of race and property creates an analytical tool" for understanding

inequality (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 48). Furthermore, they stated that race continues to

be significant in attempting to explain or understand inequalities in school experience and

academic performance in the United States. Although Ladson-Billings and Tate conceded that

class and gender are also factors that contribute to such inequality, they emphasized that "class

and gender, taken alone or together, do not account for the extraordinarily high rates of school

dropout, suspension, expulsion, and failure among African American and Latino males"

(Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 51).

In underscoring the role that racism plays in contributing to educational inequality of

experience and outcomes, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) argued such inequality is due to

"institutional and structural racism," drawing on Wellman's definition of racism as "culturally

sanctioned beliefs that, regardless of intentions involved, defend the advantages Whites have

because of the subordinated positions of racial minorities" (Wellman, 1977, p. 42). Going a step

further, they problematized "the avoidance" of Euro Americans to push for "institutional change

and reorganization" that might threaten their advantage or assist People of Color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 55). Other CRT scholars (Patton, McEwen, Rendón, & Howard-Hamilton, 2007; Solorzano, Villalpando, & Oseguera, 2005) posited, as did McCoy and Rodricks (2015): "traditional aspects of education and the structures supporting educational systems perpetuate racism and maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions on college and university campuses" (McCoy and Rodricks, 2015, p. 16). McCoy and Rodricks further maintained,

> CRT … elucidates in depth the complex power differentials that exist within higher education institutions and critiques notions of color-blindness, meritocracy, and neutrality. This power is systematically framed by law and supported by institutional programs and policies that demonstrate an interest convergence. (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015, p. 33)

Critical race scholars have contended that racial analysis can be used to deepen understanding of educational barriers that People of Color encounter (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; McCoy & Rodricks, 2015). Beyond deconstructing educational barriers, scholars have used CRT to frame and "analyze and discuss issues of access, persistence, and achievement for both Students and Faculty of Color" (McCoy & Rodricks, 2015, p. 33).

Building on these insights and on the work of Ladson-Billings and Brown (2008), Gaztambide-Fernández (2012) discussed an approach of critical multiculturalism in which the process of "identity construction within a social/legal framework addresses the ways that power dynamics influence what comes to be seen as culturally relevant" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012, p. 44). Gaztambide-Fernández continued to assert critical multiculturalism as an approach that recognizes "school itself is a site for the co-creation of difference and not simply a point of reception" (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2012, p. 44) and where diverse cultural values of teachers

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and students intersect. As such, high school districts can be seen as dynamic spaces where school board members—along with students, teachers, administrators, and staff—have the potential to co-shape new constructs of identity. Furthermore, school board members share responsibility to critically co-assess the role that power dynamics play in this process of identity construction and either facilitating or thwarting what Freire (1970) considered the development of critical consciousness through dialogic participation.

As CRT scholars have considered the needs of Students of Color, they have posed critical questions about educational policies and practices that exclude the authentic voices of People of Color (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 58). Delgado Bernal (2002) further illuminated this point in her CRT reference to "the experiential knowledge of people of color as legitimate … and critical to understanding and teaching about racial subordination" (Delgado Bernal, 2002, p. 108). The comments of a high school graduate, "Tina," who took a CRT class best epitomized the potent way CRT can make education culturally relevant:

> We were juniors and seniors in high school and reading out of critical race theory books [and] Paulo Freire. Looking at our own history and culture was really important, it gives you pride and makes you feel like you belong … and really opened my eyes. (Cammarota & Romero, 2014, p. 30)

Tina's insightful reflection provides a useful way to exploring the connection between CRT and ES.

Connection of CRT to Ethnic Studies

Recalling the significance of storytelling and importance of "naming one's own reality," the notion of finding and honoring one's voice has also been ensconced in the work of critical race theorists (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 57). The tremendous academic and political value placed on voice is due to three primary reasons, each of which relates closely to ES

curricula. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) drawing on the work of Delgado, identified these three reasons as the following: "[1)]much of reality is socially constructed; 2) stories provide members of outgroups a vehicle of psychic self-preservation; and 3) exchange of stories can help overcome ethnocentrism and the dysconscious conviction of viewing the world in one way" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 57).

CRT scholars have often referred to the term "multiple consciousness," which is rooted in W. E. B. Dubois's (1961) notion of "double consciousness." Here, People of Color experience the world in different ways on different occasions because of the multifaceted lens through which they see the world. The notion here is that if attention is paid to the "multiplicity of social life," then institutions will "better address the complex social problems that plague institutions and society" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 56). Thus, as differently oppressed peoples all find that they suffer oppression, but in distinct forms, then CRT scholars explore how the "needs and political strategies of groups fighting for social change will differ from group to group" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 56). The concepts of multiple consciousness and intersectionality can prove useful to this study in the identification and analysis of various perspectives of multifaceted, diverse, California school board members toward ES curricula.

A strand of CRT has embraced the idea of "nationalism over assimilation" in discourses about race (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 59). Nationalists value ES and history through emphasizing cultural pride and preservation of language. This nationalist view is aligned with Acuña's (1972) notion that Latinos in the United States constitute "an internal colony" and should exploit this colonial status "to bring about awareness and resist the forces of oppression" (Acuña, 1972, pp. 3–5). Delgado and Stefancic, however, warned against "narrow nationalisms"

that could "impair the ability of groups to form coalitions" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 73).

Hence, contrary to ES detractors, cultural or racial nationalism within the context of ES serves

principally as means for community connection and political solidarity, rather than a means for

political upheaval.

CRT has also inspired a critical study of whiteness, which has been included in ES

curricula at some colleges and, more recently, some high school districts. Delgado and Stefanic

(2001) discussed a group of scholars including Peggy McIntosh, Ian Haney Lopez, Alexander

Saxton, Theodore Allen, and David Roediger who have put whiteness under the critical lens and

examined the construction of whiteness. CRT investigations of whiteness generally include

critical examinations of White power, the practice of White supremacy, White privilege, and the

manner in which certain groups "move in and out of the category of whiteness" (Delgado &

Stefancic, 2001, p. 75). These concepts have been integrated into a body of scholarship that CRT

scholars have referred to as Critical White Studies. Intimately connected with curricula is the

reality that White superiority and privilege has been reinforced by literature and that a

hegemonic standard of whiteness has been set by the government and persists, given the manner

in which historically groups such as "Native Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and African

Americans have been categorized as Non-Whites" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 76).

Particularly significant to CRT is an understanding of the way White privilege persists.

McIntosh (1988) completed research on White privilege in which she identified some of the

daily effects of White privilege and theorized based on her own experiences. White privilege

brings with it a power conferred systematically that consists of "unearned advantage and

conferred dominance" (McIntosh, 1988, p. 3). The systematic conferring is enacted in "invisible

systems" with "colossal unseen dimensions" (McIntosh, 1988, p. 3). This invisibility is what informs McIntosh's analogy of "unpacking the invisible knapsack" of White privilege in which "special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks" provide access to resources (McIntosh, 1988, p. 1). McIntosh asserted that one of the benefits of White privilege is being "sure that her [White] children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race" (McIntosh, 1988, p. 2), which has direct implications for ES.

White privilege, when acknowledged, helps to debunk the "myth of meritocracy" and opens eyes to the "interlocking oppressions" that dominant groups are not taught to see. Darder (2015) identified conditions of privilege as "carried out unintentionally by well-meaning subjects but are nevertheless enacted daily as microaggressions" (Darder, 2015, p. 50). The provisions of McIntosh's White privilege knapsack and institutional conditions of privilege that Darder unveiled "are enacted through attitudes and practices of individuals shaped by embedded asymmetrical relations of power – persistent attitudes and practices of privilege of another time" (Darder, 2015, p. 50). The outcome of using the CRT-inspired conception of White privilege is to "transform the curriculum in ways that would engage the longstanding historical inequalities and social exclusions that persisted" (Darder, 2016, p. 51).

Studied together, the CRT-inspired concepts of microaggressions, multiple consciousness, intersectionality, anti-essentialism, nationalism, and White privilege form an incisive lens through which a scholar-activist can examine attitudes toward ES, across diverse communities. In the context of this study, these CRT concepts can help analyze the assumptions, beliefs, biases, and power dynamics underlying the variety of perspectives shared by school board members toward ES curricula. But Buttaro (2010) succinctly articulated the view of CRT

scholars (Delgado-Gaitan & Trueba, 1991; Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1993; Stanton-Salazar, 1997) about this notion, when she argued that to fully understand students' cultural world and structural position, there must be a deliberate focus on "issues of race, difference, and power [that]. . . necessitates the abandonment of color-blind curriculum [and] a more profound and involved understanding of the socio-economic, linguistic, sociocultural, and structural barriers that obstruct the mobility" of youth (Buttaro, 2010, p. 9).

Chapter Summary

This literature has sought to link discussions of ES, the politics of school boards, and critical race theory to provide substantiating research that in combination can assist with an analysis of school board members' responses to ES. To this end, this literature review has included discussion of a history of ES, a history of school board politics; the benefits, critiques, and counters to ES, and its relationship to politics, policy, and social justice, as well as its connection to CRT. Through this discussion, the case was also made for the use of CRT as the theoretical framework best suited to analyze school board members' perspective of ES, by defining CRT and discussing its major tenets. Moreover, the relevance of CRT to the field of education was discussed, linking this approach to critical questions that have special meaning for ES curricula in high schools. Having brought together the literature on ES, school board politics, and CRT, the following chapter discusses the methodology and research design for this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Much of this [Chicano Studies] research departs from traditional academic concerns and in the process, has exposed the bias of many of the dominant paradigms in the social sciences. Much has also been done toward developing more accurate theoretical perspectives.

C. Muñoz, 1989, p. 167

This chapter includes an explanation of the mixed-methods approach that I utilized to consider board members' attitudes about ES curricula. I believe that understanding what drives current school board members could elucidate concrete steps in a larger call to action. I also have intentionally included interview questions that help identify the threshold at which school board members who are not already supportive of ES might show some level of openness to related concepts, such as culturally responsive pedagogy or culturally relevant curriculum. If my research has identified what I refer to as *critical crevices* or potential areas through which seeds of future collaboration can take root, such findings can inform future calls to action.

School board members who will not relinquish opposition to ES, but display a critical crevice related to culturally responsive pedagogy, could be willing to include the coverage of this teaching style in professional development workshops, professional learning communities, or other in-house training that has already been institutionalized as part of the district's culture. Also, school board members who relentlessly counter ES, but show a critical crevice related to culturally relevant curriculum could be willing to entertain the idea of including at least one module or unit within an existing course for a pilot period (long enough to measure potential

benefits to academic achievement, civic engagement, political awareness, and critical consciousness). Embracing a call to action is aligned with Creswell and Plano Clark's (2011) recommendations for incorporating "an emancipatory lens" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 49) into a mixed-methods study.

Research Questions

As stated earlier, the two central questions that drove this investigation were:

1. What are the perspectives of California high school board members toward the inclusion of ES programs?

2. To what extent do high school board member perspectives inform policies regarding the development and inclusion of ES curricula in California high school districts?

To address these research questions, I engaged in a "sequential quantitative-qualitative" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 122) mixed-methods design (Creswell, 2009) that included a survey sent to all California high school board members, followed by interviews with a stratified sample of survey participants.

Rationale for Mixed Methods

Several scholars have identified the roots of mixed methods through the work of Campbell and Fiske (1959), who used a "multi-trait-multimethod matrix" in the field of psychology to analyze information about psychological traits, and in the work of Jick (1979), who converged and triangulated different quantitative and qualitative data sources (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Several well-known scholars of quantitative research, including Campbell (1974) and Cronbach (1975) advocated for the inclusion of qualitative data in quantitative studies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Over a period of 50 years, various

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scholars used different terms to describe the type of inquiry that evolved into mixed-methods research, including "integrated," "blended," "hybrid," "methodological triangulation," "combined," and "mixed" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 22). The variety of terms has made it difficult to pinpoint the first research studies to utilize "mixed methods." Creswell and Plano Clark have claimed that the most frequently used term to describe these types of studies is "mixed methods research" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 22).

Although some of the elements of mixed-methods approaches were evident prior to the 1980s, several researchers from different disciplines and various nations crystallized the modern idea of mixed methods at roughly the same time—the late 1980s (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Researchers in the social sciences incorporated mixed-methods research in fields such as "occupational therapy, interpersonal communication, mental health, and middle-school science" (Creswell, 2009, p. 204) in the 1990s and early 2000s. In 2003, the *Handbook of Mixed Methods in the Social and Behavior Sciences* was published by Tashakkori and Teddlie, "providing the first comprehensive overview" (p. 204) of this type of research approach.

More specifically, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) placed the history and evolution of mixed methods into five overlapping time periods:

1. Formative period: "This period, which began in the 1950s and continued until the 1980s, included initial interest in using more than one method in a study. Momentum toward using multiple methods was generated in the psychology research and fieldwork on sociology."

2. Paradigm debate period: "This period, which developed in the 1970s and 1980s, included a debate involving scholars who argued whether qualitative and quantitative

data could be combined since they were each linked to different philosophical assumptions."

3. Procedural development period: "In this period, which began in the 1980s and continued in the 1990s, scholars focused on methods of data collection, data analysis, research design, and the purposes for conducting mixed methods studies."

4. Advocacy and expansion period: "In the first half of the first decade of the 21st century, scholars became advocates for mixed methods as a distinct methodology and interest in mixed methods spread to a variety of disciplines and countries."

5. Reflective period: "Starting in 2005 up until the present, this period has included two intersecting themes: a) current assessment of the field with a look to the future; and b) constructive criticisms that challenge the emergence of mixed methods and what mixed methods has become." (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, pp. 25–30)

Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) provided a foundation for mixed methods research while offering sample studies and methodological articles about mixed methods (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Creswell and Plano Clark, along with Morse (1991) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) contributed to the development of mixed-methods notation in which arrows ($\rightarrow$) are used to indicate sequential form of data collection, with one form building on the other, and plus signs (+) are used to indicate concurrent data collection. The method that drives the research is capitalized, while the other method informed by the first appears in lower-case letters. Furthermore, Creswell and Plano Clark (2009) produced a "checklist of questions for designing a mixed methods study" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2009, p. 204), inspiring the creation and use of mixed-methods strategies and models.

Creswell's research on mixed methods has enabled him to emerge as an expert in the field of mixed-methods procedures. Since mixed methods is a relatively recent method in comparison to the more widely known quantitative and qualitative research methods, Creswell's work has contributed to the development and perceived legitimacy of mixed-methods research, which has combined quantitative and qualitative approaches. Addressing various critiques concerning mixed methods, Creswell has "examined multiple sides of these issues" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 36) and has raised "lingering questions," which has contributed to further discussion and sparked ongoing interest in mixed methods.

Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) adapted the work of Crotty (1998) to conceptualize the role that philosophical assumptions play in mixed methods. Creswell and Plano Clark preferred the term worldview because they found that "mixed method researchers bring to their inquiry a worldview composed of beliefs and assumptions about knowledge that inform their study" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 39). Using Crotty's (1998) four major elements for a mixed-methods study, Creswell and Plano Clark identified four interrelated levels (see Figure 3.1) and showed how these levels inform a mixed-methods study.

| Paradigm worldview (beliefs, e.g., epistemology, e.g., ontology) |
| Theoretical lens (e.g., feminist, racial, social science theories) |
| Methodological approach (e.g., mixed methods, experiment) |
| Methods of data collection (e.g., interviews, surveys) |
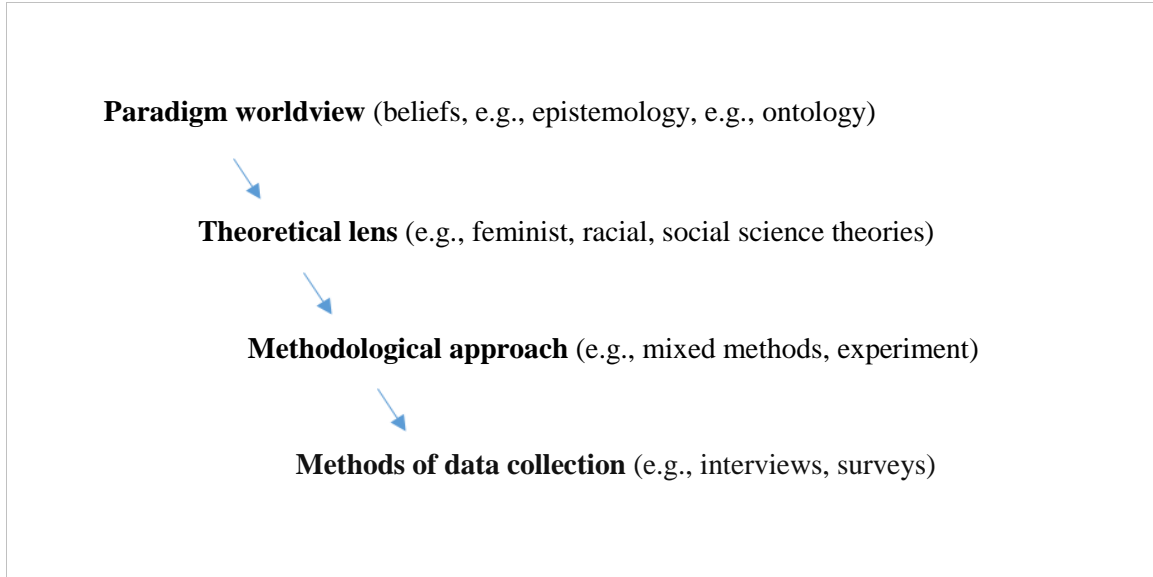
Figure 3.1. Four levels for developing a research study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Furthermore, Creswell's work with Plano Clark (2011) found that mixed-methods researchers can use a theoretical lens in their study, including one from an emancipatory perspective such as CRT. A lens can be chosen by the researcher to provide direction for the many phases of a mixed-methods project, including the "types of research questions asked, the procedures used in data collection, and the call for action advanced at the end of the study" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 51). An emancipatory theory is a lens that involves "taking a theoretical stance in favor of underrepresented or marginalized groups and calling for change" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 49) Creswell and Plano Clark have claimed that mixed-method studies with an emancipatory lens have become "more frequently reported in mixed methods literature" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 49). Creswell (2009), moreover, cited multiple reasons for embracing mixed methods, all consistent with this study:

1. Mixed methods utilize the "strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research."

2. Social science research problems are "complex," making the use of one method inadequate.

3. The "interdisciplinary nature of research [requires] diverse methodological approaches."

4. There is "more insight to be gained" by using a "combination" of both approaches since using both "provides expanded understanding" of complex problems. (Creswell, 2009, p. 203)

Flick (2014) advised researchers to "consider revisit of their research question" when deciding "which methods are appropriate" and when selecting research design (Flick, 2014, p. 145). With this in mind, this study surveyed school board members from all 71 high school districts and followed the survey with 11 semistandardized interviews. Table 3.1 summarizes four reasons for using mixed methods and contextualizes each with specific research questions that informed this study. The chart provides a breakdown of how each of these reasons is relevant to the intention of this study to explore school board members' perspectives of ES and how they inform public policy.

Furthermore, Creswell identified four aspects that influence the design of procedures in a mixed methods research study: "*timing, weighting, mixing, and theorizing*" (Creswell, 2009, p. 207). With reference to the timing of my qualitative and quantitative data, I used a sequential approach by collecting quantitative data before the qualitative (as opposed to a concurrent approach).

Table 3.1

Reasons for Using Mixed Methods and Relevance to My Research Questions

Reason	Relevance to my research questions
Utilizes strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research	Surveys elicited respondents' perspectives while interviews enabled deeper probes to unpack perspectives
Problems in social science are complex, which make quantitative or qualitative approaches inadequate	Perspectives regarding ES were complex, nuanced, and multifaceted
Interdisciplinary nature of social science research requires diverse methodological approaches	Interdisciplinary nature of ES required a mixed-methods approach
More insight gained by using combo of both approaches since using both expands understanding of complex problems	Using both surveys and interviews helped determine perspectives and how they shaped or did not shape approaches to policy

I began with the collection of quantitative data since it helped inform the identification and selection of respondents to complete follow-up qualitative interviews. With respect to mixing data, my initial quantitative data results from the survey informed the qualitative data collection. Finally, with regard to conceptual analysis, I used CRT to inform the type of questions asked, who participated, how data were collected, and the implications of data, which were oriented toward change and advocacy. Table 3.2 provides a visual representation of how these four aspects were addressed in my research.

Table 3.2

Four Key Aspects of Mixed Methods Procedures (Creswell, 2009)

Aspect of research design	How aspect was addressed in my research design
Timing	Used a sequential approach by collecting quantitative data before the qualitative
Weighting	Quantitative data given priority by appearing first; helped inform the process of selecting respondents to complete follow up-qualitative interviews
Mixing	Initial quantitative data resulting from the survey informed the secondary qualitative data collection
Theorizing	Use critical race theory as theoretical lens to shape data collection, participants, and policy implications

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative/qualitative or "QUAN→qual" (Creswell, 2009; Morse, 1991) mixed-methods approach, consisting of two sequential phases. A "two-phase mixed-methods approach with a theoretical lens [has been referred to as a] sequential, transformative strategy" (Creswell, 2009, p. 215). The transformative aspect of this strategy lies in the strategy's capacity—and my explicit intention as the researcher—to explore an issue of significance to marginalized groups and my intention to use this data to inform "a call to action" (Creswell, 2009, p. 212). Given my use of CRT as a theoretical lens, and given my bias in identifying strategies that could advance the adoption of ES curricula in high school districts, I chose the sequential, transformative strategy. Building on the explanation of sequential, transformative strategy by Creswell (2009), my purpose of this unique strategy was to utilize the CRT lens to:

1. Give voice to diverse perspectives on ES that emerged in the survey results and the follow-up interview results

2. Effectively advocate for all participants in my survey and interviews

3. Better understand a phenomenon or process that has changed as a result of being studied.

This mixed-methods research design helped to provide quantitative and qualitative data in an area of study that has been largely unexplored and undertheorized: identification of California high school board members' perspectives of ES, the values behind these perspectives, and the extent to which these views shape public policy. My status as a California high school board member aided in my work with the CSBA, in a manner that would not have been possible if I were not a current board member. A transformative focus enabled me to identify other potential change agents who might have been as committed to advancing ES in their respective high school districts and may have been interested in sharing their lessons learned and successful practices. It is noteworthy to add that change agents and decision makers such as policymakers and practitioners need multiple forms of evidence to document and inform research problems and cannot afford to exclusively rely on one type of data or the other (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Phase I: Quantitative Data Collection

I developed and disseminated a survey to all high school board members across California. This survey yielded the quantitative data for this study, which provided information related to survey participants' thoughts and perspectives related to the adoption of ES programs in their districts. To facilitate this process, I received approval from the CSBA to distribute the

survey to a list of high school board members across the state. Additionally, I obtained

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from the institution where I am completing my

doctoral studies—Loyola Marymount University. Through correspondence with the California

School Boards Association (CSBA), I determined that there were 366 high school board

members from 71 high school districts in California. With the assistance of a researcher at

CSBA, I identified and met the protocols needed to gain access to this list of high school board

members (see Appendix D). One of the first documents I needed to complete for CSBA was a

data agreement that asked for guaranteed anonymity of survey participants, preserved the

prerogative for CSBA to review (and decline) survey questions, and required that I co-author a

brief with CSBA to share the findings of the research study with fellow school board members.

Survey Participants

In the first research phase, a survey instrument was used and distributed to all high school

board members in California (see Appendix A). I ensured that this list was updated so that it

included all school board members who were elected or reelected in the November 2016

elections. While research suggests that survey studies generally can expect a 20% response rate,

working with the CSBA helped me to achieve a response rate of 26.5% (97 of 366 completed the

survey in its entirety). Furthermore, I shared a tentative timeline with my CSBA contact so that

CSBA officials knew when I needed to administer the survey link, how long the survey link

needed to be open, and the frequency of reminder messages.

Survey Instrument

The beginning of the survey instrument contained brief preamble text that described the research questions and explained the significance of the research. The survey instrument included 23 questions grouped into three sections:

1. Perspectives on ES

2. Future steps regarding ES, and

3. Demographic/background information (see Appendix A).

Section 1 asked board members to share their definition of ES and perspectives on ES. For example, one question asked respondents to select an option that best described the individual's perspective on ES, with options ranging on a Likert scale from *completely opposed to ES* to *very supportive of ES*. Board members were asked to select an option that best described their school district's view regarding ES. Section 2 consisted of two Likert scale questions that asked respondents to share their perspectives on future steps regarding ES. This information helped to assess levels of support (or opposition) to ES. The literature has shown that several large school districts in urban areas have passed board resolutions in support of ES, and the data from this survey helped determine if the responses were aligned with the literature.

Section 3 asked board members to provide demographic information about themselves and the districts they represented. Respondents had opportunities to indicate gender, ethnicity, educational attainment, generation, party affiliation, and languages spoken other than English. Furthermore, three questions prompted respondents to indicate whether respondents took an ES course in high school, undergraduate, or graduate school.

Analytical Plan

After I finalized the language of the survey instrument, Surveymonkey software was used to distribute the survey via a survey link provided by CSBA, and to keep track of survey results as they were completed. Since CSBA already had a registered account with Surveymonkey, which contained all the e-mail addresses of all California high school board members, Surveymonkey was used. Having all the completed data stored on the Surveymonkey site enabled the survey data to be exported to SPSS. With the quantitative data gleaned from the demographic section, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores and inferential statistics from results of t-tests and one-way ANOVAS were obtained. Running t-tests and one-way ANOVAS determined if a set of responses from one group of board members was significantly different statistically than a set of responses from another group of board members. The results of these tests helped illuminate the current landscape of board members' perspectives toward ES. Further, the data was disaggregated to help deepen understanding of the different perspectives of specific groups of school board members.

Toward the end of the survey, respondents had an opportunity to indicate interest in completing a follow-up interview and further exploring the topic of ES (Question 22). Respondents who answered "yes" to Question 22 were prompted to voluntarily self-identify and provide an e-mail address (Question 23). Information from Questions 22 and 23 were critical to the second phase of this sequential, transformative, QUAN→qual mixed-methods study—qualitative interviews.

Phase II: Qualitative Data Collection

In the second phase, semistructured, semistandardized interviews (see Appendix B), were conducted with 11 board members. Based on the board members' responses to the survey, I intended to purposefully select three to four board members who were supportive of ES, three to four board members who were opposed to ES, and three to four who were mixed. I also intended to identify alternate candidates in case any of my original eight to 12 participants needed to withdraw from the study. All interview participants and alternates were selected from the pool of survey participants who self-identified by providing names and e-mail addresses to express interest in being contacted for interviews (Question 23). Cross-indexing the information from the follow-up interview interest question (Questions 22) with the responses to the questions asking about individual attitudes toward ES (Questions 8 and 9) identified school board member respondents who were supportive, those who were opposed to ES, and those who were mixed.

Interviewee Criteria

There were various criteria used to determine which respondents were selected to be interviewed. To ensure geographic diversity, participants included board members from Southern, Northern, and Central California. Similarly, including a gender balance between male and female school board members was deliberate. To ensure roughly half of the interview participants were Members of Color, representation from different ethnic groups was sought for the interview pool. Furthermore, the participants included some who had long tenures (8 years or more) while also interviewing others who were relatively new board members (4 years or less). I attempted to stratify in my selection of interviewees based on the criteria reviewed above:

geographic location, gender, ethnicity, and length of tenure. Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2012) refer to stratified sampling as a means of "guaranteed desired representation of relevant subgroups within a sample" (Gay et al., 2012, p. 133). Stratified sampling involves strategically selecting participants from each subgroup, which facilitates comparing responses from different subgroups in the population.

     I completed all interviews with participants by phone. To schedule these interviews over the summer months, school board members were contacted during the first 2 weeks of June 2017 so that some were scheduled in late June, some in July, and some during the first 2 weeks of August. Conflicting vacation schedules of school board members required this 7-week window to conduct all 11 interviews. Adhering to this schedule enabled me to meet my goals of having all interviews completed by mid-August 2017 and all interview transcriptions completed by mid-September 2017.

Sample Questions

     Sample interview questions for school board members opposed to ES included, "Why are you opposed to ES?" and "What, if anything, could be done to make you change your mind about ES?" Sample questions for board members supportive of ES included, "Why are you supportive of ES?" and "What types of arguments or strategies are most effective in convincing other board members to join you in supporting ES"? (see Appendix B) Questions asked of both supportive and opposing board members included, "What kind of impact will AB2016 have on your school district?", "How does your taking an ES course/not taking an ES course influence your stance on ES, if at all?", and "What type of information might be helpful for you to receive when deciding whether or not to pursue ES as an elective or graduation requirement?" These

interviews questions enabled the identification of what Fullan (2016) has referred to as "drivers" of educational change. In this case, the intent was to unearth drivers of public policy, which might have included political ideology, public discourse, community demographics, and district practices.

Interview Methods

Semistandardized interviews were conducted since "thematic direction of the questioning [is given greater] reference and focus" (Flick, 2014, p. 200). My current status as a high school board member allowed me to connect with my interview participants via a qualitative method that Crane and Angrosino (1992) referred to as "priming the pump" (Crane & Angrosino, 1992, p. 80). In this manner, my own experience as a board member facilitated robust dialogue that yielded more information than a distanced approach. The priming the pump method facilitated sharing examples, which revealed snippets of life experience that were relevant, given my personal experience with taking ES and being a school board member.

I employed a method that DeVault (1990) has referred to as "active listening." Providing verbal responses such as "Mmmhmm," "Yeah," "Okay," "Right," or "Mmm" were instrumental in demonstrating to participants that they were heard, understood, and that all information shared by the interviewees was received. In addition, individual member checking was utilized with each interviewee to ensure accuracy of the prescribed interview text, and to give participants a sense of confidence in the competency of the researcher. Given the potential controversy of the topic of ES, I engaged with what Gumperz (1992) has referred to as "conversational negotiation," a process where "shared understanding is arrived" (Gumperz, 1992, p. 305).

These semistructured interviews provided qualitative data that enabled me to learn why school board members supported ES, why they did not, which implementation strategies might be most successful and which ones might produce limited success. In short, these interviews enabled me to ask questions that delved deeper than the initial survey questions so that assumptions, biases, and values could be uncovered and studied, especially as they related to themes of social justice and educational equity. While coding the interview results to uncover trends and themes, I identified the extent to which interview responses magnified, clarified, or contradicted the survey results. In this process, I attempted to explain the relationship between the two types of data and discuss what implications the data have for perspectives toward ES and how these perspectives shape public policy.

Potential Challenges

One of the potential challenges of using a sequential, transformative, QUAN→qual, mixed-methods research design is the "length of time" involved in "two separate data collections" (Creswell, 2009, p. 213). A sequential mixed-methods research design involves extensive data collection and time-intensive tasks of analyzing both text and numeric data. I was cognizant that various steps associated with the quantitative data (i.e., sending out friendly reminders to respondents to increase the number of surveys completed, entering the survey into Surveymonkey, running statistical tests in SPSS), and certain steps related to the qualitative data (i.e., scheduling or rescheduling interviews, transcribing interview notes, coding responses, identifying themes or findings) would take more time than I originally anticipated. Furthermore, in a mixed-methods research design, one must be familiar with quantitative and qualitative forms of research. Although I was familiar with both forms of research based on my coursework and

class projects, using both was demanding at times. I needed to employ strong organizational skills to keep the quantitative and qualitative data separate and easy to read.

As a researcher, I needed to make critical decisions about the data. First, what would I do if the data from the interviews contradict data already retrieved and analyzed from the surveys? How would I reconcile, account for, or at least explain any possible contradictions? According to Creswell (2009) a mixed-methods researcher's theoretical lens "shapes how data are collected" and shapes the "implications of the study" (Creswell, 2009, p. 208). Creswell has explained that for some QUAN→qual, mixed studies, more weight is usually given to the quantitative results since these initial results inform the qualitative data collection. However, with a sequential, transformative, QUAN→qual methodology, such as the type employed in this study, the researcher can choose to give more weight to either phase or can distribute evenly to both phases. Since my sequential, transformative study included a social, theoretical lens guiding the results (CRT), more importance was placed on advocacy than on the use of methods alone (Creswell, 2009).

Second, I needed to make key decisions about which findings from the survey results would inform the questions posed in the interviews. Although I had already prepared a list of interview questions, I wanted to give myself the flexibility of adding (or deleting) questions based on the results of the surveys. Morse (1991) suggested that if any surprises emerge with the quantitative data in the initial phase, qualitative data collection can be used to "explore unexpected findings" (Morse, 1991, p. 121) in more detail. An example of a surprise finding that generated an additional interview question was learning that some school board members were supportive of ES at K–8 school districts in the survey responses.

Limitations

My decision to limit the study to high school districts meant that I was not be able to ascertain attitudes of K–12 school board members, which excluded many California school board members' perspectives toward ES. That said, ES generally occurs at the high school level, not at the elementary or middle school levels, providing the rationale for delimiting this study to high school board members only. Limiting my study to California excluded school board members in other states, particularly in states such as Arizona, New York, and Texas, where ES programs in high school districts have developed (or been dismantled). Given the history of ES in California, and given my personal experience of serving as a school board member in California, I am comfortable with my focus on California. However, choosing to interview 11 school board members yielded a limited glimpse of the continuum of perspectives held by California school board members toward ES. In a large, diverse state like California, it was difficult to capture the entire spectrum of attitudes among school board members throughout the state. Morse (1991) advised that in QUAN→qual studies, qualitative interviews "should be conducted as if this method stands alone … and should be continued until saturation is reached" (Morse, 1991, p. 121). Due to time constraints, I was not able to continue interviewing until the saturation point. I was also limited by the number of board members who indicated on the survey they were willing to be interviewed (n = 39), and the number who responded to my e-mail message invitation and followed through with completed interviews (n = 11).

As mentioned previously, my study excluded K–8 school board members whose perspectives toward ES are understudied. This is noteworthy, as Ozer et al. (2010) emphasized the value of including participatory action research (PAR) as a means of achieving social justice

and equity goals during the transition from middle school to high school. These formative years are seen as critical in the development of identity, the direction of academic trajectory, and the formation of consciousness in students. The research of Ozer et al. has shown that students who are exposed to PAR inquiry and curricula in middle school demonstrate meaningful engagement with school activities, use of critical thinking, and community problem solving, which could have implications for ES curricula.

Limiting my study to school board members excluded other change agents who could have a lasting impact on ES curricula including superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, students, and community activists, who all have a stake in the impact of ES. Critics of my study could argue that reviewing the history of ES in California reveals that all the above change agents were more influential with the development and evolution of ES than school board members. This criticism carries weight when juxtaposed with the reality that school board members have less power today than they did a century ago, as mentioned in Chapter 2 in the discussion of the history of California school board members. Still, my interest in studying school board members has value in the context of the literature also described in Chapter 2. Analyzing the perspectives of school board members assumes growing importance at a time when board members are writing and passing board resolutions to support ES curricula in high school districts.

Lastly, completing some of my qualitative interviews by phone prevented the interpretation of nonverbal cues. DeVault (1990) posited that including "gestures and body language" (DeVault, 1990, p. 108) in interview transcriptions helps researchers to remember when emphasis is made so that they can ascribe the appropriate amount of meaning or value to

these expressions. Interviewing candidates via telephone meant that I was not able to keep track of gestures or other types of body language. During these phone interviews, I needed to be more attuned to "systematic differences in contextualization strategies" (Gumperz, 1992, p. 318) such as changes in pitch, pace, tone, or volume to assess meaning in expression.

Final Note

In this chapter, I have provided the history of mixed methods and explained why a mixed methods research design enabled me to best address my research questions. It is time to pivot toward the data that were generated by the survey and follow-up interviews. All quantitative and qualitative data are organized by research question and presented in the Findings chapter.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

[ES] brings me, again, the opportunity to do my job better. I'm on a school board, I need

to represent all … in my community and you've allowed me to do my job better. By doing

this, I'm allowing more voices to be heard than perhaps wouldn't have been heard.

Guinevere (S.P.)

In this chapter, I present a synopsis of the quantitative and qualitative data collected for

this mixed-methods study of board members' views of ES within secondary education. The first

section focuses on the quantitative data collection. I describe the survey pool and present the

results of the survey, which includes responses to several open-ended questions. In the second

section, I focus on the qualitative data as I present the interview responses. Also in this second

section, I describe the participant pool. In the third section, I summarize how the quantitative

data interrelate with the qualitative data, through an ongoing exploration of the research and

subresearch questions.

Quantitative Data

Survey Respondent Pool

The following provides specific information related to the respondent pool.

Completion rate. Surveys were sent to all 366 secondary education board members

across the state. Of these, 97 board members fully completed the survey for a 26.5% completion

rate (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Electronic Surveys Returned by Frequency and Percent

Response type	Frequency	%
Total population	366	100
Surveys completed	97	26.5
Surveys started, not completed	15	4.1

According to the CSBA, this 26.5% completion rate is comparable to rates of other surveys distributed to California school board members in previous research studies.

Gender. There are frequencies and percentages that describe the composition of the survey participant pool across a variety of demographic variables, which correspond to specific questions in the survey. Out of 97 school board members, six participants did not indicate gender. Males comprised a plurality percentage of survey respondents, (52.7%) however, this percentage was smaller than the percentage of male high school board members statewide (58.8%) (California High School District Websites, 2017). This means that women were slightly overrepresented in the survey pool (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2

Gender Distribution by Frequency and Percent (N = 91)

Respondents	Frequency	%
Males	48	52.7
Females	43	47.3
Total	91	100

Ethnicity. Respondents had an opportunity to select more than one ethnicity group, but all respondents chose one category. Out of 97 school board members who completed the survey, only 79 indicated their ethnicity. The category named "Missing" included all respondents (35.2%) who selected "Decline to State," "Other," and those who left the question blank. "Euro American/White" was the category most frequently chosen by respondents (69.6%). Euro Americans/Whites were slightly underrepresented in the survey pool since they comprise about 80% of total California high school board members. Conversely, according to the California High School District Websites (2017), People of Color were slightly overrepresented in the survey pool (30.4%), since they comprise about 19% of total high school board members in California (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3

Ethnicity Distribution by Frequency and Percent (N = 79)

Ethnicity group	Frequency	%
African American/Black	5	6.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	3.8
Euro American/White	55	69.6
Latinx	15	19.0
Native American	1	1.3
Total	79	100

Generational distribution. Categories included immigrant, first generation, second generation, third generation, and fourth generation or higher to represent generational status (see

Table 4.4). Out of 97 school board members who completed the survey, 90 indicated their generational status.

Table 4.4

Generational Distribution by Frequency and Percent (N = 90)

Generation category	Frequency	%
Immigrant	5	5.6
First-Generation	19	21.1
Second-Generation	20	22.2
Third-generation	16	17.8
Fourth-generation or higher	30	33.3
Total	90	100

The generation category most frequently chosen was "fourth generation or higher" (33.3%). The generation category least represented in the survey was "immigrant" (5.6%). The distribution of remaining survey participants was evenly distributed among first, second, and third generation subgroups.

Ethnic Studies experience. The survey asked school board members if they had previously taken ES courses (see Table 4.5). Respondents had the option to select "Yes," "No," or "Not Sure." All 97 school board members answered the question, but six were unsure if they had taken ES before. A plurality of respondents indicated they had not taken ES previously (59.8%). Thirty-four percent of respondents answered that they had taken ES previously.

Table 4.5

Previously Took ES Prior to Completing the Survey by Frequency and Percent (N = 97)

Response type	Frequency	%
Not sure	6	6.2
No	58	59.8
Yes	33	34.0
Total	97	

Educational attainment. The educational attainment breakdown indicates the number or

percentage of respondents whose highest educational level culminated in a high school diploma,

community college degree or certificate, 4-year degree, graduate or professional degree, or

postgraduate work (see Table 4.6). The most frequent category chosen was "graduate/

professional degree" (35.1%). The least frequent category chosen was "high school

diploma/GED" (3.1%). The "graduate/professional degree" category (35.1%)—when combined

with the "post graduate" category (23.7%)—comprised more than half (58.8%) of the survey

participants.

Table 4.6

Highest Level of Educational Attainment Distribution by Frequency and Percent (N = 97)

Educational attainment group	Frequency	%
High school diploma/GED	3	3.1
Community college degree	6	6.2
Four-year degree	31	32.0
Graduate/Professional degree	34	35.1
Post-graduate	23	23.7
Total	97	100

Perspectives toward Ethnic Studies

The following section details the perspectives of board members toward ES, according to the quantitative data gathered from the survey. First, the survey provided an opportunity for participants to indicate their level of understanding of ES. Next, the survey provided three opportunities to measure respondents' level of support or opposition toward ES: ES as a graduation requirement, ES as an elective, and support for AB2016.

Understanding ES. The survey determined how informed participants were about ES. In other words, did current board members understand what ES is and what it is not? Out of 97 school board members who completed the survey, 96 indicated their understanding level of ES. Table 4.7 includes frequency and percent scores across five categories that describe levels of understanding of ES in increasing order: with 1 as "no understanding," 2 as "limited understanding," 3 as "average understanding," 4 as "good understanding," and 5 as "excellent

understanding," The category most frequently chosen by respondents was "average understanding." The raw number of respondents who selected "no understanding" was the same as the raw number of respondents who selected "excellent understanding." See Table 4.7 for details.

Table 4.7

Levels of Understanding of ES Distribution by Frequency and Percent (N = 96)

Level of understanding	Frequency	%
No understanding	9	9.4
Limited understanding	18	18.7
Average understanding	30	31.3
Good understanding	26	27.1
Excellent understanding	13	13.5
Total	96	100

The mean level of understanding was 3.05 with a standard deviation of 1.21. These results show that a majority (71.9%) of board members professed to have at least an average understanding of ES. The inverse of this finding is that 28.1% of board members who responded to this question reported to have limited or no understanding of ES.

ES as an elective. The first opportunity to measure support or opposition to ES was in the "perspective toward ES as an elective" question (see Table 4.8). Frequencies, percentages, valid percentages, and cumulative percentages for four categories indicate levels of support toward ES: *completely opposed, somewhat opposed, somewhat supportive,* and *very supportive.* More than half (78.3%) of all respondents were either "very supportive" or "somewhat

supportive" of ES as an elective. In other words, more than three out of four California high

school board members who answered this question were supportive of ES as an elective. Only

9.3%—or less than one in 10 of respondents—were "completely opposed" to ES as an elective.

Table 4.8

Levels of Support Distribution Toward ES as an Elective by Frequency and Percent (N = 97)

Level of support	Frequency	%
Completely opposed	9	9.3
Somewhat opposed	12	12.4
Somewhat supportive	17	17.5
Very supportive	59	60.8
Total	97	100

ES as a graduation requirement. The second survey question that elicited levels of

support toward ES was the "perspective toward ES as a graduation requirement" question (see

Table 4.9). Roughly half of survey respondents (51.6%) were either "very" or "somewhat"

supportive of ES as a graduation requirement.

Table 4.9

Levels of Support Toward ES as Requirement by Frequency and Percentage (N=97)

Level of support	Frequency	%
Completely opposed	26	26.8
Somewhat opposed	21	21.6
Somewhat supportive	21	21.6
Very supportive	29	30.0
Total	97	100

This percentage is substantially lower than the percentage of respondents who were either "very" or "somewhat" supportive of ES as an elective (78.3 %).

AB2016 support*.* The third survey question that displayed levels of support for ES was the "perspective toward AB2016" question. AB2016, a bill sponsored by former assemblyman Alejo and signed into law by Governor Brown in 2016, chaptered the creation of a model ES curriculum to be established by the Instructional Quality Curriculum by 2018. This model curriculum could be used by high school districts to adopt their own ES curricula at the local level (see Table 4.10). More than half of respondents (35.4 + 34.4 = 69.8%) indicated that they either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with AB2016, which means that more than two out of three respondents agreed with AB2016. When compared to the previous two indicators, support for AB2016 was higher than the level of support toward ES as a graduation requirement, but slightly lower than the level of support toward ES as an elective.

Table 4.10

Levels of Support Distribution Toward AB2016 by Frequency and Percent (N = 96)

Level of support	Frequency	%
Strongly disagree	20	20.8
Somewhat disagree	9	9.4
Somewhat agree	33	34.4
Strongly agree	34	35.4
Total	96	100

Ninety-six respondents answered the question regarding their level of support toward AB2016. Mean scores are shown for each of the three questions that indicate levels of support toward ES: perspective toward ES as an elective, perspective toward ES as a graduation requirement, and perspective toward AB2016. The data showed that school board members were more supportive toward ES as an elective (M = 3.29) than they were of ES as a graduation requirement (M = 2.53).

The level of support toward AB2016 (M = 2.84) was higher than support toward ES as a graduation requirement and lower than support toward ES as an elective (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.11

Descriptive Statistics of Support Levels for ES for All Survey Respondents

Descriptive statistic	Perspective toward ES as an elective (N = 97)	Perspective toward ES as grad requirement (N = 97)	Perspective toward AB2016 (N = 96)
No. of responses	97	97	96
Missing responses	24	24	26
Mean	3.29	2.53	2.84
Median	4.00	3.00	3.00
Mode	4	4	4
Standard deviation	1.21	1.02	1.13

Open-ended responses. The survey offered three opportunities for respondents to submit open responses. Textboxes provided space for survey respondents to explain their perspectives toward ES. The first of these three text boxes occurred in Question Nine, immediately after respondents indicated their chosen level of support toward ES as an elective. In the Question Nine open response text box, respondents were asked to describe why they selected their perspective. There were 88 responses provided in this text box, with 57 comments that reflected support for ES as an elective, 14 that expressed opposition, and 17 comments that were neutral. Excluding the neutral comments, the ratio of supportive comments to nonsupportive comments was better than four to one.

The second of these three open response text boxes occurred in Question 11, after respondents indicated their chosen level of support toward ES as a graduation requirement. The open response text box gave respondents the chance to describe why they selected their

perspective. There were 75 responses provided in this text box, including 26 that were supportive toward ES as a graduation requirement, 44 that showed opposition, and five that were neutral. More than half of the responses expressed opposition toward ES as a graduation requirement.

The third of these open response text boxes occurred in Question 22, toward the end of the survey. The open response text box gave respondents the chance to share anything else they would have liked to add about their perspective on ES or AB2016. The quantity of comments supportive of ES was equal to the quantity of comments opposed to ES. Out of 24 total responses provided in this text box, there were 10 supportive, 10 nonsupportive, and four that were neutral. The total responses for Question 22 ($n = 24$) was smaller than the total responses from Questions Nine ($n = 88$) and 11 ($n = 75$). Of the 97 respondents who completed the entire survey, 73, or 75.3%, chose to leave Question 22 blank.

Which Board Members Are Supportive of Ethnic Studies?

To identify who was supportive of ES, I looked at the profile of survey respondents who expressed some level of support for ES. This profile consists of five identity elements that were included in the demographics section of the survey: gender, ethnicity, generation, political party, and previous experience with ES. I also looked at the responses to three survey questions to gauge the level of support for ES: Question Eight: perspective toward ES as an elective; Question 10: perspective toward ES as a graduation requirement; and Question 12: perspective toward AB2016.

In Question Eight, respondents had a chance to identify their perspective toward ES as an elective. The options "very supportive" or "somewhat supportive" of ES as an elective were the two responses among the options that indicated support in the five-point Likert scale. A total of

59 respondents expressed they were "very supportive" of ES as an elective and 17 answered they were "somewhat supportive." I examined the breakdown across gender, ethnicity, generation, political party, and previous experience with ES for the 76 respondents who expressed support for ES as an elective (see Table 4.12). There were many more "ES-as-elective" supporters who took ES before ($n = 35$) than those who did not ($n = 22$).

Table 4.12

Distribution of Board Members Who Were Supportive of ES as an Elective (N = 76)

Gender	Taken ES before	Ethnicity	Political party	Generation
38 (Male)	35 (Yes)	49 (Euro American/White)	6 (Republican)	3 (Immigrant)
37 (Female)	22 (No)	22 (MOC*)	51 (Democrat)	19 (First)
1 (Decline)	19 (Not Sure)	3 (Decline)	4 (Independent)	14 (Second)
		2 (Mixed)	9 (Decline)	11 (Third)
			6 (Other)	27 (Fourth Generation or Higher)
				1 (Decline)
				1 (Blank)

* MOC = Members of Color

The most frequent political party to express support was Democrat, which was slightly overrepresented ($51/76 = 67\%$) in the ES-as-elective-supporter pool compared to the overall survey respondent pool (54.7%). Looking at generational breakdown reveals that the fourth-generation and higher respondents were the most frequent generational subgroup to support ES as an elective. There were twice as many Euro American/White school board members ($n = 49$)

expressing support than school board Members of Color ($n = 22$). Male and female support toward ES as an elective was about equal.

In Question 10, respondents had a chance to indicate their perspective of ES as a graduation requirement. The options "very supportive" of ES as a requirement or "somewhat supportive" of ES as a requirement were the two responses that indicated support among the options in the five-point Likert scale. A total of 29 respondents indicated that they were "very supportive" of ES as a requirement, and 21 expressed they were "somewhat supportive." For these 50 who expressed some level of support for ES as a requirement, I examined the breakdown across gender, ethnicity, generation, political party, and previous experience with ES (see Table 4.13). Like the ES-as-elective responses, supportive ES-as-a-graduation requirement responses show the highest frequencies in the fourth-generation or higher category and in the Democrat political party. The ratio of ES-as-graduation requirement supporters who took ES before versus those who did not take ES before (>2:1) was even greater in this question than it was in the ES-as-elective question. The ratio of male supporters versus female supporters was exactly 1:1, which means women were slightly overrepresented among ES-as-graduation requirement supporters. There were more Euro American/White school board members who were supportive ($n = 30$) than school board Members of Color ($n = 18$).

Table 4.13

Distribution of Board Members Supportive of ES as Graduation Requirement (N = 50)

Gender	Taken ES before	Ethnicity	Political party	Generation
25 (Male)	26 (Yes)	30 (Euro American/White)	2 (Republican)	1 (Immigrant)
25 (Female)	12 (No)	18 (MOC*)	34 (Democrat)	13 (First)
	12 (Not Sure)	2 (Other)	4 (Independent)	7 (Second)
			6 (Decline)	7 (Third)
			1 (Non-partisan)	20 (Fourth Generation or Higher)
			2 (Other)	1 (Decline)
			1 (Blank)	1 (Blank)

* MOC = Members of Color

In Question 12, respondents had a chance to give their perspectives on AB2016 by indicating their level of agreement with the AB2016 law. The options "strongly agree with AB2016" or "somewhat agree with AB2016" were the two responses that expressed support among the options in the four-point Likert scale. Thirty-four respondents indicated that they strongly agreed with AB2016 and 33 indicated they somewhat agreed. For these 67 who expressed agreement with AB2016, I examined the breakdown across five demographic criteria (see Table 4.14). For the third consecutive time, fourth generation or higher respondents were the most frequent supporters of ES, with 27 expressing some level of agreement with AB2016. Also occurring for a third straight time, Democrats were the most frequent political party to express agreement with AB2016. Among those who expressed agreement with AB2016, those who took

ES before (*n* = 32) clearly outnumbered those who did not (*n* = 19). The number of male board

members who expressed agreement with AB2016 (*n* = 35) slightly edged the number of female

board members (*n* = 31). Euro American/White respondents supportive of AB2016 (*n* = 43)

outnumbered school board Members of Color (*n* = 19) by greater than two to one. Note that

subtotals did not add up to 67 due to some respondents who skipped demographic questions.

Table 4.14

Distribution of Board Members Who Agreed with AB2016 (N = 67)

Gender	Taken ES before	Ethnicity	Political party	Generation
35 (Male)	32 (Yes)	43 (Euro American/White)	5 (Republican)	2 (Immigrant)
33 (Female)	19 (No)	19 (MOC*)	45 (Democrat)	16 (First)
1 (Decline)	16 (Not Sure)	3 (Decline)	4 (Independent)	11 (Second)
		2 (Other)	8 (Decline)	9 (Third)
			3 (Other)	27 (Fourth Generation or Higher)
			2 (Non-partisan)	2 (Decline)
			1 (Blank)	1 (Blank)

* MOC = Members of Color

Why Are Board Members Supportive of Ethnic Studies?

Another subresearch question that relates to identification of current board member

perspectives toward ES is, "Why are California high school board members supportive of ES?"

The survey instrument provided three distinct text boxes to capture open-ended responses. There

were a combined 65 open-ended responses given in these three text boxes that related to reasons

for supporting ES. These responses coalesced into five themes. Of these 65 responses, 24 were

related to the theme of inclusivity/learning about other cultures, 15 were related to the theme of global citizenship, nine were related to the theme of sparking self-awareness, seven were related to the theme of demystifying power dynamics, and seven were related to the theme of better academic outcomes. There were other reasons for supporting ES that emerged from open-ended responses, but none was mentioned frequently enough to be categorized as a theme. One respondent supported ES since it may contribute to more civil discourse in society. Another respondent supported ES as it may help improve the optics of the school district culture. Another respondent supported ES since high school students who take ES courses could be tomorrow's teachers.

Which Board Members Are Opposed to Ethnic Studies?

It was important to know who was opposed to ES, to see if patterns existed among those who opposed ES. To identify who expressed opposition to ES in the survey, I looked at the profile of respondents who expressed some level of opposition to ES. I looked at the responses to the same three survey questions that I examined to gauge the level of support for ES: Question Eight: perspective toward ES as an elective; Question 10: perspective toward ES as a graduation requirement; and Question 12: perspective toward AB2016.

In Question Eight, respondents had a chance to indicate their perspective toward ES as an elective. The options "completely opposed" or "somewhat opposed" to ES as an elective were the two responses that indicated opposition among the options in the five-point Likert scale. Thirteen respondents indicated that they were "somewhat opposed" to ES as an elective and nine expressed they were "completely opposed." For these 22 who expressed some level of opposition to ES, I examined the breakdown across five demographic criteria (see Table 4.15). None of the

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identity categories appears to be overrepresented. In the gender, ethnicity, political party, and generation categories, the "decline to state" response was either the most frequent or second-most frequent response.

Table 4.15

Distribution of School Board Members Opposed to ES as an Elective (N = 22)

Gender	Taken ES before	Ethnicity	Political party	Generation
10 (Male)	8 (Yes)	7 (Euro American/White)	4 (Republican)	2 (Immigrant)
6 (Female)	9 (No)	4 (MOC*)	1 (Democrat)	0 (First)
5 (Decline)	4 (Not Sure)	7 (Decline)	4 (Independent)	1 (Second)
1 (Blank)	1 (Blank)	3 (Other)	10 (Decline)	5 (Third)
		1 (Blank)	1 (Non-partisan)	3 (Fourth Generation or Higher)
			2 (Blank)	4 (Decline)
				1 (Blank)

* MOC = Members of Color

In Question 10, respondents had a chance to indicate their perspective toward ES as a graduation requirement. The options "strongly opposed" or "somewhat opposed" to ES as a graduation requirement were the two responses that indicated opposition among the options in the five-point Likert scale. Twenty-one respondents indicated that they were "somewhat opposed" to ES as a graduation requirement and 27 expressed they were "completely opposed." I examined the breakdown across five demographic criteria for these 48 who expressed opposition to ES as a graduation requirement (see Table 4.16). Responses show that *n* was more than twice as large for Question 10 (*n* = 48) than it was for Question 8 (*n* = 22). There were fewer

respondents in Question 10 who selected "decline to state" as their response in the gender and generation categories when compared to respondents in Question Eight.

Table 4.16

Distribution of Board Members Opposed to ES as Graduation Requirement (N = 48)

Gender	Taken ES before	Ethnicity	Political party	Generation
24 (Male)	17 (Yes)	25 (Euro American/White)	8 (Republican)	4 (Immigrant)
17 (Female)	19 (No)	8 (MOC*)	18 (Democrat)	5 (First)
6 (Decline)	11 (Not Sure)	10 (Decline)	4 (Independent)	13 (Second)
1 (Blank)	1 (Blank)	4 (Other)	13 (Decline)	9 (Third)
		1 (Blank)	1 (Non-partisan)	11 (Fourth Generation or Higher)
			2 (Other)	5 (Decline)
			2 (Blank)	1 (Blank)

* MOC = Members of Color

The number of respondents who selected "decline to state" remained high in the ethnicity and political party questions. When looking at the generational category breakdown of opponents, those who claimed to be "second-generation" were most often opposed to ES as a graduation requirement, with the "fourth generation or higher" group a close second. There was virtually no difference in the number of respondents opposed to ES as a graduation requirement who took ES courses before ($n = 17$) and the number opposed to ES as a graduation requirement and did not take ES courses previously ($n = 19$).

In Question 12, respondents had a chance to offer perspectives on AB2016 by indicating their level of agreement with the law. The options "strongly disagree with AB2016" or

"somewhat disagree with AB2016" were the two responses that expressed disagreement among the four options in the Likert scale. Twenty respondents indicated they somewhat disagreed with AB2016 and nine indicated they strongly disagreed. For the 29 respondents who expressed some level of disagreement with AB2016, I examined the distribution across five demographic criteria (see Table 4.17).

Table 4.17

Distribution of Board Members Who Disagreed with AB2016 (N = 29)

Gender	Taken ES before	Ethnicity	Political party	Generation
13 (Male)	11 (Yes)	12 (Euro American/White)	5 (Republican)	3 (Immigrant)
10 (Female)	10 (No)	4 (MOC*)	6 (Democrat)	2 (First)
5 (Decline)	7 (Not Sure)	7 (Decline)	4 (Independent)	9 (Second)
1 (Blank)	1 (Blank)	5 (Other)	11 (Decline)	7 (Third)
		1 (Blank)	1 (Other)	3 (Fourth Generation or Higher)
			2 (Blank)	4 (Decline)
				1 (Blank)

* MOC = Members of Color

The second-generation respondents were the most frequent generation category to disagree with AB2016, just as they were in the question regarding opposition to ES as a graduation requirement. Also similar to the graduation requirement question were the large number of respondents who selected the "decline to state" option in response to the ethnicity and political party questions. Again, there is virtually no difference between the number of

respondents who disagree with AB2016 and took ES courses before ($n = 11$) and those who

disagree with AB2016 and did not take ES before ($n = 10$).

Why Are Board Members Opposed to Ethnic Studies?

Another subresearch question related to the identification of current board member

perspectives is, "Why are California high school board members opposed to ES?" The afore-

mentioned open-response text boxes yielded data that help explain reasons for opposition. There

were a combined 84 open-ended responses provided in these three text boxes that related to

reasons for opposing ES. These responses coalesced across five themes. Of the 84 responses, the

most frequent theme that appeared among the open-ended responses was limited course space or

schedule, which was mentioned 28 times. Eighteen respondents reported the theme of perceived

mandate. Twelve responses were related to the theme of divisive/exclusive. The fourth-highest

theme was antithetical to American culture, which was brought up six times. Five were related to

the theme of undefined. Four additional topics that did not emerge frequently enough to qualify

as themes included: financial cost, absence of a need for ES, wariness of political

ideologies/agendas; and lack of qualified instructors.

Which Board Members Are More or Less Likely to Support Ethnic Studies?

One way of determining if certain school board members are more (or less) likely to be supportive of ES is to examine whether subgroups of survey respondents indicated statistically different levels of support. The subgroups of survey respondents span demographic categories included in the survey such as gender, ethnicity, previous ES coursework, and languages spoken. In addition to these identity categories, a final comparison was made between board members representing school districts with majority Student of Color populations and board members representing districts without a majority of Students of Color.

Gender. Male and female school board members' perspectives toward ES were not significantly different in terms of being supportive of ES as an elective t(89) = 1.17, p = *NS*; of ES as a graduation requirement t(89) = 1.76, p = *NS*; and of AB2016 t(89) = 1.70, p = *NS*. Female board members tended to have slightly higher mean scores than male board members, but these differences were not statistically significant. Table 4.18 includes the results of male and female school board members across the same three questions that were included in previous tables. The data showed no significant differences between male and female school board members in terms of their support toward ES.

Table 4.18

T-test Results for Gender for Perspectives Toward ES (N = 91)

Level of support type	Gender SD		*t*	*df*
	Males (*n* = 48)	Females (*n* = 43)		
Level of support toward ES as an elective	3.31 (.90)	3.53 (.91)	-1.17	89
Level of support toward ES as a graduation requirement	2.44 (1.07)	2.86 (1.23)	-1.76	89
Level of support toward AB2016	2.94 (1.08)	2.98 (1.08)	-.17	87

SD: Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means

Ethnicity. Differences between school board members from various ethnic categories and their perspectives toward ES were also examined. To facilitate a comparison involving groups of similar size, all board members who indicated non-Euro American/White ethnicities were combined into a "School Board Members of Color" variable for the purposes of a valid statistical test. A comparison was made of the perspectives toward ES of Euro American/White school board members with school board Members of Color (see Table 4.19). The difference in support between Euro American/White school board members' and Members of Color was significant with respect to ES as an elective. Euro American/Whites had significantly higher scores (M = 3.51; SD = .86) on ES as an elective compared to Members of Color (M = 3.00; SD = 1.13). There was a significant difference between Euro American/Whites and Members of Color (t(76) = 2.45; p < .05) regarding their perspective toward ES as an elective. The difference

in support between Euro American/White school board members and Members of Color, however, was not significant with respect to ES as a graduation requirement and AB 2016.

Table 4.19

T-test Results for Ethnicity and Perspectives Toward ES (N = 97)

| Level of support type | Ethnicity dichotomy[SD] | | | |
	White SBMs ($n = 55$)	SBMs of color ($n = 42$)	t	df
Level of support toward ES as an elective	3.51 (.86)	3.00 (1.13)	2.45[MD]	76
Level of support toward ES as a graduation requirement	2.67 (1.17)	2.35 (1.19)	1.35	96
Level of support toward AB2016	3.05 (1.04)	2.56 (1.18)	2.16	94

SD: Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means
MD: Mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

Previous ES coursework. To continue exploring which groups might be more likely to be supportive of ES, perspectives toward ES were compared between school board members who had taken ES previously and school board members who had not taken ES (see Table 4.20) while school board members who took ES previously showed higher levels of support toward ES across all three questions; the amount of the difference between levels of support was not statistically significant. Therefore, exposure to ES previously was not a significant factor in determining support of ES.

Table 4.20

T-test Results for Previous ES Coursework and Perspectives Toward ES (N = 91)

Level of support type	Taken ES previously?[SD]		t	df
	No (*n* = 58)	Yes (*n* = 33)		
Level of support toward ES as an elective	3.24 (.98)	3.39 (1.09)	-.67	89
Level of support toward ES as a graduation requirement	2.38 (1.11)	2.70 (1.29)	-1.24	89
Level of support toward AB2016	2.89 (1.06)	2.88 (1.21)	.08	87

SD: Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means

Language. The next table compares school board members who spoke multiple languages to school board members who only spoke one language. In open-ended responses, board members had an opportunity to list languages other than English with which they had some level of fluency. Respondents who had some level of fluency in two or more languages were combined into a "multilingual" category, which became one of the independent variables. Respondents who only spoke English were combined into a "monolingual" category, which was the other independent variable (see Table 4.21). The difference in support between monolingual and multilingual board members was not statistically significant. Monolingual board members showed consistently higher levels of support on these three items compared to multilingual board members, yet this is not a statistically significant finding.

Table 4.21

T-test Results for Multiple Languages Spoken and Perspectives Toward ES (N = 96)

| Level of support type | Number of languages spoken[SD] | | | |
	Monolingual (*n* = 31)	Multilingual (*n* = 65)	*t*	*df*
Level of support toward ES as an elective	3.42 (1.03)	3.23 (1.01)	.85	89
Level of support toward ES as a graduation requirement	2.61 (1.15)	2.51 (1.21)	.40	89
Level of support toward AB2016	3.06 (1.15)	2.76 (1.10)	1.23	87

SD: Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means

Educational background. Board members with differing educational backgrounds were also compared. To facilitate a comparison involving groups of similar size, the small numbers of school board members who indicated "high school diploma/GED" (*n* = 3) or "community college degree/certificate" (*n* = 6) were not included in the comparison for the purposes of a valid statistical test. Based on responses to the survey question regarding highest level of education attained, only three categories were used, including 4-year college degree (*n* = 31), graduate/professional degree (*n* = 34), and postgraduate degree (*n* = 23). There were insignificant ANOVA results for different educational attainment levels (see Table 4.22). The data show that board members with differing levels of educational attainment did not statistically differ in terms of their support of ES. This means that one educational attainment subgroup is not more—or less—likely to be supportive of ES than another educational attainment subgroup.

Table 4.22

ANOVA Results Comparing Perspectives from Different Educational Levels Toward ES (N = 97)

Perspectives Toward AB2016

Perspective comparison type	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F	sig.
Between groups	3.68	2	1.84	1.63	.20
Within groups	93.58	83	1.13		
Total	97.23	85			

Generational status. Table 4.23 displays ANOVA results comparing board members of different generations. There were five generation categories represented among school board members who completed the survey: immigrants ($n = 5$), first generation ($n = 19$), second generation ($n = 20$), third generation ($n = 16$), and fourth generation or higher ($n = 30$). The results indicate a statistically significant difference among board members of different generational status (see Table 4.23). To determine which generational groups significantly differ, Tukey post-hoc comparison tests indicated that with respect to the "perspective toward AB2016" question, second-generation respondents (M = 2.50; SD = 1.28) were significantly less supportive compared to fourth-generation or higher school board members (M = 3.37; SD = .93) suggesting that the variance in support of AB2016 between second generation and fourth generation or higher respondents was due to more than chance.

Table 4.23

ANOVA Results Comparing Perspectives from Different Generational Groups Toward ES (N = 90)

Perspectives Toward AB2016

Perspective comparison type	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F	sig.
Between groups	10.36	3	3.45	3.18	.03**
Within groups	92.36	85	1.09		
Total	102.72	88			

** = p < .05

District differences. The final comparison explored whether perspectives toward ES were different between school board members who represented majority Student of Color school districts and school board members who represented minority Student of Color school districts. Majority Student of Color school districts are defined as districts where more than 50% of the students were Students of Color, while minority Student of Color districts are defined as those where less than 50% of the students were of color (see Table 4.24).

Table 4.24

T-test Results for Type of School District and Perspectives Toward ES (N = 66)

Level of support type	School District Composition[SD]		*t*	*df*
	Less than 50% students of color (*n* = 17)	Greater than 50% students of color (*n* = 49)		
Level of support toward ES as an elective	3.47 (.94)	3.61 (.73)	-.64	64
Level of support toward ES as a graduation requirement	2.94 (1.09)	2.86 (1.08)	.28	64
Level of support toward AB2016	3.06 (1.09)	3.15 (.97)	-.31	63

SD: Standard Deviations appear in parentheses below means

A total of 66 respondents indicated the name of their school district, making it possible to determine if their district had less than 50% or greater than 50% Students of Color.

There were no significant differences in support of ES among board members who represented majority Student of Color districts compared to minority Student of Color districts. The data showed more support toward ES as an elective and greater support toward AB2016 among school board members from majority Student of Color districts than their counterparts from minority Student of Color school districts. However, these differences were not statistically different and may have been due to chance. Conversely, school board members who represented minority Student of Color districts showed greater level of support toward ES as a graduation requirement than school board members who represented majority Student of Color districts, again, potentially due to chance.

Survey Question Related to Follow-Up Interviews

One of the questions within the survey prompted respondents to indicate if they were interested in being contacted for a follow-up interview to further explore their perspectives related to ES curricula. Thirty-nine of the 97, or 38%, answered "yes" to this question and provided their names and e-mail addresses. These 39 served as the pool from which I selected candidates for the semistandardized interviews. These interviews provided qualitative data that addressed the research and subresearch questions not addressed by the quantitative data.

Qualitative Data

Interview Respondent Pool

To strike balance among multiple variables, I identified 16 possible interview candidates, including 12 primary candidates I intended to schedule for interviews, and four alternates. When creating this list, I attempted to achieve gender, ethnicity, and geographical balance. I also wanted to achieve a balance of board members' self-identified perspectives toward ES (between pro, mixed, or con). Since I was only able to successfully schedule interview appointments for seven of the original 12 primary candidates, I identified the remaining three from the alternate pool and recruited a fourth candidate who I knew was opposed to ES (so I could have better balance in a pool that already leaned heavily to the "pro ES" side). I interviewed all 11 school board members via telephone between June 28 and August 11, 2017. The pool included six males and five females. There were six participants who were Euro American/White and five Participants of Color, including three African American/Black and two Latinx. The board member service tenure for these 11 participants ranged from six months to 20 years, with an average tenure of 7.5 years (see Table 4.25).

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Table 4.25

List of Interview Participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Geographic location	Ethnicity	Self-identified position on ES	Tenure
Abraham	Male	Central Valley	Euro American/White	Opposed to ES	7.5 years
Shirley	Female	Bay Area	African American/Black	Supportive of ES	5 years
Naomi	Female	Central Valley	Latina	Leaned in support of ES	0.5 years
John	Male	Northern California	Euro American/White	Leaned against ES	14 years
Teresa	Female	Bay Area	Euro American/White	Supportive of ES	6 years
Phillip	Male	Northern California	Latino	Leaned in support of ES	17 years
Guinevere	Female	Northern California	Euro American/White	Supportive of ES	2.5 years
Robert	Male	Bay Area	African American/Black	Supportive of ES	4 years
Mickey	Male	Southern California	African American/Black	Supportive of ES	4 years
Pauline	Female	Southern California	Euro American/White	Supportive of ES	2.5 years
Anson	Male	Southern California	Euro American/White	Opposed to ES	20 years

Why Are Board Members Supportive of Ethnic Studies?

The qualitative interviews produced data that addressed the subresearch question, "Why are California high school board members supportive of ES?" The data from the interviews can

be grouped into five primary themes. What follows is a brief discussion of each theme ranked in order of frequency. In the following section, I use pseudonyms that were chosen by interview participants. I use the initials S.P. after each pseudonym when attributing a quotation to a study participant.

Offers value in studying other cultures/promoting inclusivity. The most common theme ($n = 11$) in the qualitative interviews that explains why respondents supported ES was the "inclusivity" theme. In other words, participants supported ES because they found value in including other cultures besides the dominant one that is traditionally studied in high school curricula. Respondents saw value in studying cultures and perspectives that are traditionally excluded, ignored, or oppressed. For example, Participant Guinevere said that she was not taught history that included the perspectives of those who were not part of the dominant group. She claims this selective teaching of history functions "as if you ignore other people's realities and value to our country and to our world, for just a narrow interpretation of what human experience is" (Guinevere, S.P.). After taking an ES class, Guinevere began to learn what she was not taught, and said, "When I started realizing there was so much more to the narrative than I was familiar with, I was fascinated and appreciative and angry that I didn't have this from the beginning of my education" (Guinevere, S.P.).

Respondents also found value in the type of behavior or personal growth that resulted from studying other cultures and being inclusive. Participant Naomi referred to the "eye-opening" that occurred after "being exposed to ES," when she said,

> ES is a way to open those doors and to remove those blinders. Sometimes, the kids …
> they're so limited, they don't even know that there are blinders there. So, something like
> ES definitely opens their eyes to things. (Naomi, S.P.)

Guinevere saw ES as an entry point to critically analyze other aspects of identity.

> Everyone knows of Cesar Chavez, but you may not know about Dolores Huerta. . . it's easier to have a male be the icon than to include women. . . So, it breaks down, again about class and gender and race. (Guinevere, S.P.)

Participant Shirley also touched upon the intersectionality between ES and gender when she shared that ES not only connected her with "different people" whom she "had never heard of," but also taught her about women, too.

> It wasn't just a study of ethnicity. It was also learning a lot more about gender specifics, who was relevant in history and in government. . . that really changed my life a lot, really changed my perspective and how I looked at, how I fit in America. (Shirley, S.P.)

Shirley also shared that ES offered students "real educational learning" that recognized "the importance of all contributions from all genders and all ethnicities" (Shirley, S.P.). For Guinevere and Shirley, ES not only includes ethnic minorities and People of Color who have been traditionally excluded from history books, but also includes women, the working class, and other disadvantaged groups. In this same vein, Participant Mickey defined ES as teaching history of not only People of Color, but also of "women, poor people, and the LGBTQI community" (Mickey, S.P.).

Also linked to this theme is the ability to respect and relate to others who are different. Shirley discussed the current climate in the nation and how a lack of understanding and respect of others who are different, which is traditionally facilitated by ES, is conspicuously absent from modern society.

> Actually, now you can kind of see where not teaching a whole history where everyone is included is kind of playing out in America where people really don't understand the wealth of benefit of immigration. They don't understand differences in culture so there's a lot of cultural misunderstanding. (Shirley, S.P.)

Shirley continued to share that not teaching a whole history or "America's true history" is costly for Americans since, "we keep making the same mistakes over and over again" as we continue "teaching history from one perspective" (Shirley, S.P.). Also related to studying other cultures and inclusivity is the notion of exposure. Naomi claimed that ES exposed students to "things like music and culture" that "open doors to future possibilities" (Naomi, S.P.).

Prepares students to be global citizens in the future. The second most common theme ($n = 7$) that explained board members' support for ES was the "global citizenship" theme. The global citizenship theme centered on ES serving as a catalyst for preparing students to be global citizens, hence better prepared for a future in which there will be more diversity. Implicit in the relevance of this theme was the reality that local and global communities are becoming increasingly diverse in multiple ways. As such, ES was seen as instrumental in giving students the ability to navigate a world rich with diversity and to gain inter-cultural competence. Participant Pauline saw ES not just as a means of understanding the past, but also as a lens with which to view the world today.

> For me [ES] is studying about non-Whites, non-European peoples and their beliefs and their culture and their world from their historical perspectives and . . . how it formed. . . how it influences their country and how it shaped the world today (Pauline, S.P.).

Participant Phillip maintained that ES breeds "more confidence" with students, especially Students of Color. This increased confidence that results from taking ES helps students "have better relations with other people" since "traditional school does not teach us to do that" (Phillip, S.P.). Without this inter-cultural, cross-cultural, or global competence, students will not be as prepared for interacting with students of different backgrounds in college, nor sufficiently prepared for a diverse workplace.

Participant Teresa shared an anecdote in which she had an uncomfortable conversation about race and equity with a board Member of Color from another school district in the same county. She asserted that if she had taken ES in high school, she would have been better prepared to navigate this conversation, sharing,

> Well, I think we all need it, and certainly our kids need it. So, I wish I would've had it. Maybe I wouldn't be having these hard lessons now as we do this work in the county. (Teresa, S.P.)

Teresa also shared in another part of the interview that this uncomfortable conversation about race made her realize "for many of us who are well-educated, we sort of missed the boat on some of the basic understandings that we need when it comes to race and equity" (Teresa, S.P.).

Sparks an interest in knowing oneself and one's history. The third theme (n = 7) that addresses why board members expressed support for ES was the "spark self-awareness" theme. Just as a spark lights a fire, ES was perceived as an igniter that piques interest in one's ethnic background and history. Phillip described being a student in the tenth grade and helping a high school teacher select textbooks for a high school ES class. Phillip described the teacher as unprepared, so the process of selecting textbooks for this neophyte teacher sparked a fire within him to learn more about his ethnicity on his own.

> I was helping this guy select the textbooks for this class. . . [It] has always been important to me to know who in the hell I am because I was reading those books that my first mentor gave to me. I learned on my own. (Phillip, S.P.)

Phillip's process of learning on his own planted seeds continued to guide his exploration after high school. Phillip mentioned that as he "took more classes in college," he "learned a lot more on [his] own," and that this research made him feel "very confident" about himself (Phillip, S.P.).

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This thirst for knowing one's roots can enhance self-awareness and lead to interest in knowing the history of other people that may not have been included in traditional high school American or world history courses. Several respondents mentioned that ES helped open a door to learning about oneself or others that may not have been available otherwise, due to the dominance of Eurocentric perspectives. Shirley discussed how "blessed" she was to take an ES class in high school, which allowed her to learn about Shirley Chisholm, the first African American woman to run for U.S. President. Shirley shared that her knowledge of Shirley Chisholm and her learning about "a lot of different people she had never heard of" inspired her to run for school board.

> When I decided to run for political office I was surprised at how many people were shocked that 'You were going to run?' and I wasn't discouraged because I knew that there's been people before me that have done a lot bigger things than run for school board. (Shirley, S.P.)

Shirley's taking ES not only enabled her to learn about others who have gone before her, but also inspired her to run for, and become elected to, the board of her high school district.

Demystifies power dynamics. Much like the spark theme that described heightened interest in self-awareness, the "demystifies power dynamics" theme (n = 5) represents an awakened understanding of the complex power dynamics at work in society. When asked to define ES, Participant Guinevere made specific reference to the power structure of the dominant culture.

> [ES] is looking at how history and culture is defined by a dominant culture and those members that are not. . . identified as being a part of that culture. How their history and … value system might be different than what the dominant culture, the power structure of the dominant culture, is. (Guinevere, S.P.)

Guinevere also shared that ES can illuminate perspectives of those who are not part of the

dominant culture, thus revealing, "The status quo doesn't necessarily reflect everyone's

experiences" (Guinevere, S.P.). Participant Robert said ES helped him make sense of a world

that was much more complex than the sheltered environment in which he was raised.

> It was kind of like I left the nest and . . . my attitude [was] kind of, 'Oh, man, what the
> hell's going on here?' And so, you know, I had a telescopic view or tunnel view and it
> kind of opened my eyes to different visions of the world and my context is not the only
> context. (Robert, S.P.)

Robert also said that ES "opens your eyes" to the reality that "people come in all different colors,

backgrounds, and socioeconomic levels" (Robert, S.P.).

Integral to this demystification of power dynamics theme was the notion that ES helps to

"fill the gaps" of knowledge that are not taught or learned in traditional classes. Related to this

process of filling in gaps is the realization that ES can open one's eyes to see things that were

once hidden and to acknowledge one's ignorance. Robert commented on these new perspectives

never considered previously when he shared,

> I think that's the start here is to open people's eyes. You got to show you don't know
> what you don't know, or you don't know what you're missing because you don't
> understand it. I think that kind of material is helpful. (Robert, S.P.)

Contributes to better student performance. The fifth of the five primary themes

(n = 3) that explain why school board members support that ES was the "better academic

performance" theme. In the "better academic performance" theme, ES was seen as directly

responsible for improved academic performance of students who take ES courses. This improved

performance was seen not only in test scores and GPA, but also in engagement with the material,

involvement in the off-campus community, and overall self-confidence. Shirley discussed how

ES "improves outcomes" and discussed the importance of referring to data that offer evidence of

such outcomes. Shirley also referred to ES programs such as the Mexican American Studies (MAS) program in the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) and the pilot ES program in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) in which there was a "clear correlation" between taking ES courses and an "uptick" in academic performance (Shirley, S.P.). Phillip asserted that ES courses instill a curiosity and a hunger in ES students, which is integral to their academic success. Phillip added that this curiosity "makes them come to class every damn day" that can carry over to other classes, "because if they do [success] in your class, they're going to do [success] in somebody else's class" (Phillip, S.P.). Naomi shared that learning about different cultures is a determinant of success in the world beyond high school.

> To the extent that you can connect with people on whatever level, that's the part that kind of predicts your success. So, we're very . . . cognizant of … how it affects their success in the world. (Naomi, S.P.)

For Naomi, the connections with other groups that are made because of an inclusive, global view eventually set the stage for success in the future lives of ES students.

Why Are Board Members Opposed to Ethnic Studies?

There is qualitative data from the interviews that addresses the subresearch question, "Why are California high school board members opposed to ES?" Examining the qualitative interview responses reveals that they can be grouped into four primary themes. Below is a summary of each theme and responses from interview participants that provide examples of each theme and explain opposition to ES.

Divisive/exclusive. In the "divisive/exclusive" theme (n = 3), opponents claimed that ES divides groups of students or people from each other and makes certain groups feel excluded or marginalized. Participant Anson, who opposed ES, claimed that ES tends to,

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Divide people between of Color and White. Or divide people between men and women. Divide people between abled and disabled. Divide people, and divide people, and divide people. (Anson, S.P.)

Another participant who opposed ES, Abraham, shared that his firsthand experience with an ES class in high school showed him "that it can be more divisive … even amongst the people in the class or in that experience" (Abraham, S.P.).

Perceived mandate. In the "perceived mandate" theme (n = 3), opponents perceived ES as a curriculum forced upon local school districts in a way that erodes the local control high school districts have fought hard to maintain. It is important to use the verb "perceived" since AB2016 does not mandate ES, but strongly encourages districts to adopt an ES course based on the model ES curriculum that will be created by 2018. ES opponent Anson stated, "I don't particularly want anyone telling me as a school board member in my district that we need to have this [ES], or we don't have the right attitudes if we don't" (Anson, S.P.). Robert, one of the participants who was supportive of ES, stated that if board members say, "the state is going to make us offer it, so you might as well get on board," it invites resistance since "when people mandate stuff that almost brings everyone to put the brakes on" (Robert, S.P.). Robert later added that school board members are already sensitive to perceived mandates since there are so many other unfunded state mandates.

Undefined. In the "undefined" theme (n = 3) participants were unwilling to support ES due to ES being undefined, underdefined, or unknown. Participants either had little previous knowledge of ES, or found that the content, parameters, and purpose of ES were not well articulated in their minds. Abraham, who opposed ES, explained, "I think that my biggest question is, 'what, what does it mean? That's what I've been trying to figure out as a board

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member: what does Ethnic Studies mean" (Abraham, S.P.)? Later in the interview, Abraham

added, "I don't know enough about what they're promoting to, to ever approve it as a board

member" (Abraham, S.P.). That Shirley, who was an ES supporter, asked, "What is ES?" and

"What does a real program look like?" was critical to its development. Shirley said that clear

guidance and assistance with ES standards would help define ES for school board members.

Clarification of ES standards would also prevent ES from becoming overly neutralized or from

not being taught well, which was the case with Naomi, Shirley, and Abraham.

False assumptions. In the "false assumptions" theme (n = 3), participants opposed ES

due to their belief that ES is based on false assumptions, wrong judgments, and alleged suspect

research. Opponents believed ES encourages students to group students, and all people in

general, into membership categories (i.e., ethnic groups, gender groups, ability groups, etc.) to

which they may not necessarily want to belong. For example, Anson, who opposed ES, claimed

that ES is grounded in a "movement based on assumptions that aren't necessarily validated and

tend to be dangerous" and asserted that these assumptions contributed to "teaching students in a

factually inaccurate and evaluationally inappropriate way" (Anson, S.P.). Naomi, an ES

supporter, described how false assumptions made about her when she was a student in a Mexican

American Studies class left her feeling marginalized.

> So, I go into this class I think it's going to be, I'm not going to be uncomfortable in this
> class and I was kind of resoundly shouted down for a lot of my ideas and things like that.
> And it made me feel, it made me feel like this wasn't the place for me. (Naomi, S.P.)

Naomi later revealed that her not being fluent in Spanish contributed to assumptions being made

about her, which mirrored the concerns shared by Anson earlier.

What Is the Role of Race (or Racism) in Opposition to Ethnic Studies?

Though the role of race (or racism) in school board member opposition to ES was not explicitly addressed in an interview question, the topic of racism emerged frequently enough in several of the interviews for it to be considered a factor in board member opposition to ES. A few participants who were ES supporters mentioned racism as prevalent in the ES opposition they faced in their own personal experiences. After reviewing quotes that either directly or indirectly referred to race, it was possible to see three primary themes emerging: (a) encounters with blatant racism or subtle racism, including the sanitization of history; (b) the fear or refusal to enter a dialogue about race; and (c) the presence of pushback or resistance to ES.

Experience with blatant and subtle racism. The most frequently mentioned theme relating to race was experience with blatant or subtle racism. Subtle racism includes the sanitization of history, in which the experiences of People of Color with racism are discounted or excluded from historical narratives. Robert shared, "I hear a lot of comments … not meant to be heard" and later added, "racism probably won't go away," but still thought that ES could educate everyone (Robert, S.P.). Phillip referred to the presence of racism in a portion of his school district's region when he stated, "I know that schools in the Valley probably have a hell of a time because they're dealing with a lot of racism in the Valley still" (Phillip, S.P.). Guinevere shared that "internalized racism" and a "fear of losing entitlements" fueled opposition to ES (Guinevere, S.P.).

Fear of dialogue on race. Six of the 11 interview participants (or more than half) made direct reference to the fear of having any dialogue on race or ethnicity. This fear of race dialogue emerged as a prominent factor in opposition to ES. Robert, who was supportive of ES,

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exclaimed, "The whole country is scared to death of having honest dialogue on race" (Robert, S.P.). Guinevere (S.P.) shared, "people don't like to talk about race" since it reminds us of a "brutal history" in the U.S. (Guinevere, S.P.). Shirley said, "Any time you get into this discussion about race and ethnicity, it always gets really sticky and tricky and people automatically become defensive" (Shirley, S.P.).

To corroborate Robert, Guinevere, and Shirley's point, two participants who were opponents of ES were explicit about their resistance to race dialogue. When referring to social justice movements on college campuses, Anson articulated opposition to "focusing on microaggressions and things of that nature." Anson added, "I think none of that is good, helpful, healthy development, and I would want to keep it miles away from schools in my district" (Anson, S.P.). Anson wanted assurance that discussions in ES classes would,

> Not put students of any color or any circumstance on the spot or start making comparisons about privilege and non-privilege and oppression and stuff like that, that can be, I would think, hurtful to people on both sides of that perceived divide. (Anson, S.P.)

Abraham, another opponent of ES, claimed, "If we start dividing Ethnic Studies … and mixing in race … I think that can be divisive" (Abraham, S.P.).

Resistance or pushback to ES. Five interview participants referred to ongoing resistance or pushback to ES, with which they had direct encounters or knowledge. Guinevere pointed to the "backlash against affirmative action" where the "actual oppressor tries to take on the mantle that, 'I'm the oppressed one'" (Guinevere, S.P.). Guinevere's point in bringing up this backlash was to show that it emanates from fear of relinquishing power that also drives similar backlash against ES. Robert claimed, "We're seeing, in these political times … all kinds of backlashes" (Robert, S.P.). Robert made a veiled reference to the Trump Administration stating,

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We've got people who are trying to take. . . 'Make America Great' [and] they want to take us back to whatever the worst times you can remember are. Yeah, we want to make America for African Americans like it was either the late 1800s or in the 1950s, those kind of things. (Robert, S.P.)

Shirley added,

In areas where I am . . . there is a fear of White feelings and panic where they're afraid of the pushback having to talk about … funding an Ethnic Studies program and that there is going to be pushback from their community about why, where it's necessary. (Shirley, S.P.)

Shirley's reference to fear of "pushback" partially explains how removing race and ethnicity from the argument for why ES is needed could neutralize pushback and make a more "comfortable conversation for districts to have" (Shirley, S.P).

Also included within the resistance to ES was the denial of the need for ES. One comment from Anson epitomizes this denial. When discussing the process of making high school curriculum decisions, Anson exclaimed, "I mean it's not as though people teach American history from a 'White is right' point of view, for crying out loud. That's so preposterous" (Anson, S.P.). When reflecting upon ES courses that highlighted a "victim mentality," Abraham shared, "there's not a place for that, a good place for that in education. I don't think that's educating people" (Abraham S.P.). Here, Abraham made it clear that he did not see a need for any ES course that facilitated a discussion of who is a "victim," much less who is a "victimizer."

To What Extent Do Perspectives on Ethnic Studies Inform Policy?

Beyond identifying supporters and opponents and explaining why they supported or opposed ES, the qualitative data elucidated the extent to which these perspectives on ES could inform public policy. The reality that race is identified as a factor in opposition to ES further underscores the importance of how perspectives shape policy. Although the question of how

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perspectives informing public policy was not explicitly included in the interviews, there were a couple of interview questions that related to this topic. The question asking participants to gauge the potential impact of AB2016 on their school district (Question Eight) and the question asking participants if they are willing to encourage their districts to adopt ES as an elective or a graduation requirement (Question 9a) both shed light on how perspectives could inform public policy. Furthermore, some interview participants freely explained why they were supportive (or not supportive) of ES as an elective or as a graduation requirement (Question 2), which provided additional data on their policy positions. All the qualitative data help address how school board member perspectives influence public policy.

How Do Perspectives Inform Public Policy?

The responses provided during the interviews can be categorized in four, distinct public policy positions. These positions encompass the school board member perspectives toward ES and explain how these perspectives could or do influence public policy toward ES. I will provide short descriptions of each policy position along with examples of each position that interview participants provided in their qualitative responses.

Opposition. This policy position is defined as complete opposition to ES as an elective or as a graduation requirement. In this policy position, school board members would be completely opposed to the idea of ES in their districts and would actively counter any efforts to include ES. I interviewed three board members who identified in the survey as completely opposed to ES as an elective and as a graduation requirement. However, when I interviewed them, none of them continued to express complete opposition, but discussed conditions under which some type of culturally relevant curriculum or other version of ES would be accepted.

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Mixed support. The second policy position, "mixed support," describes unwillingness to support ES as a graduation requirement, but possible support for ES as an elective. Similarly, this category includes the converse—openness to support ES as a graduation requirement, but not as an elective. Three participants—including Anson, Abraham, and Naomi—provided responses that suggest they could be categorized under this position, including two who identified as "leaning against ES" at the beginning of the interview. When asked how he would respond if fellow school board members urged him to support ES as an elective or as a graduation requirement (Question 9) Anson answered,

> I would be opposed to it as a graduation requirement. . . I think as an elective, I would want to be assured pretty clearly and reliably that it was going to. . . avoid the ideological issues that I focused my attention on. (Anson, S.P.)

When asked the same question, Abraham responded,

> I would think that we'd start out as an elective and . . . I would think our school board would not be supportive of a mandatory class, but they would be supportive of an elective. (Abraham, S.P.)

Naomi articulated her mixed support when she responded, "I don't think my community would kind of agree that it should be a requirement," but later added that she thought her community would be open to ES as an option (Naomi, S.P.).

Supportive. The third policy position is simply defined as being supportive of ES as an elective and/or as a graduation requirement in theory. These school board members attest to the benefits of ES and acknowledge the value in advocating for them but have not yet determined how to effectively implement ES in their school districts. School board members in this category are willing to meet with their superintendents, fellow trustees, or other district officials to express support for ES, but are still determining best strategies for how ES can be implemented. Five

participants—including Guinevere, Shirley, Pauline, Robert, and Teresa—can be grouped within this policy position.

Teresa and Robert were the most cautiously supportive among this group of five. Though Teresa indicated support for ES as an elective or graduation requirement, she referred to "an elective issue" that may lead to an "ES elective not being a good fit in her district" (Teresa, S.P.). However, Teresa later shared she was willing to "agendize this topic of ES" to see what kind of "choice" could be provided to the students (Teresa, S.P.). Robert stated, "I want to see it as an elective … then I'll look at it after we roll it out, whether we make it as part of a graduation requirement" (Robert, S.P.).

Pauline, Guinevere, and Shirley were a little more demonstrative in their support and were willing to commit to doing more to explore the possibility of ES as an elective and/or a graduation requirement. With respect to describing her fellow school board members' positions, Pauline commented, "we are definitely moving in that direction, and I will be following up on that too" (Pauline, S.P.). Guinevere committed to approach her superintendent and her fellow board members to see if ES is already being put in place. She explained, "If they have not, I'll ask … it's something I would love to do this year," and later added, "I would be honored to do both" (Guinevere, S.P.). Shirley stated, "I'm really working on the gradual progression of starting it out as an elective and then hopefully moving forward as a graduation requirement" (Shirley, S.P.). The support of these board members is more aspirational and has not yet translated to concrete results, which is why they are categorized in the third policy position and not the change agent policy position.

Change agent. School board members grouped within the "change agent" position expressed full support for ES in all forms and had already acted to implement ES as an elective or as a graduation requirement or both. Furthermore, change agents have already altered (or are in the process of taking steps to alter) the organizational culture of the school district so that district leaders can better facilitate the development of ES at multiple school sites. In addition, change agent school board members are willing to help their counterparts at other high school districts throughout the region, state, or nation to create and implement ES programs. Phillip and Mickey were identified as change agents. Phillip reported,

> I'm the one that took the LA Unified and the Oakland school district resolutions and combined them into one and just made changes, a couple of changes and presented that as a resolution for our board and it did pass. (Phillip, S.P.)

Phillip further discussed the impact of this resolution adding,

> We already have an elective on the books. That was the result of a resolution and this summer we had the class and we had students from three high schools in that class. (Phillip, S.P.)

When Mickey, the other change agent, was asked if he was willing to encourage his fellow board members to support ES, he responded, "I've already done it with the pilot" and continued to share that he had had "conversations about the impact" of the pilot with fellow board members (Mickey, S.P.).

What Strategies Are Most Effective in Advocating for Ethnic Studies?

There were two interview questions that prompted responses regarding strategies. One of these questions asked respondents to identify effective strategies in convincing other board members to support ES (Question Five). This question was asked two different ways, but each was intended to yield similar results. School board members who self-identified as "leaning

toward" ES were asked the question, "What types of arguments or strategies do you believe can be most effective in convincing other board members to join you in supporting ES curricula?" School board members who self-identified as "leaning against" ES were asked the question, "What types of arguments, if any, could persuade you to change your perspective regarding ES curricula?" Participants provided a litany of responses to these questions, which can be categorized into five primary effective strategy themes. Furthermore, there were some responses that, though interesting to note, were not mentioned frequently enough to be identified as primary themes but are included for consideration. The top five effective strategy themes were:

1. Citing studies that show ES helps students to develop skills that contribute to present and future academic success;

2. Fostering inclusivity through building an awareness of broad, balanced alternative histories that permits learning about different cultures;

3. Showing how A through G requirements (a sequence of courses high school students must complete to be eligible for CSU/UC colleges) can be addressed by ES courses;

4. Sharing templates of existing ES courses and graduation requirements with teachers in other high school districts;

5. Starting with ES as an elective and then moving incrementally toward ES as a graduation requirement.

The following describes the five effective strategies along with the interview responses most salient to this study.

Citing studies that show ES helps students develop skills. Several participants stated that citing research, which explains how ES helps students to be more successful, could be

effective in advocating for ES. Shirley said she found it most helpful to "talk about outcomes" and to refer to "data that show when districts or states embrace this type of curriculum, it improves outcomes" (Shirley, S.P.). Phillip discovered it best to,

> Always talk about the Stanford [Dee & Penner] study and the UCLA study and how [ES] improves attendance and increases GPA and causes more students to graduate, and in particular males. (Phillip, S.P.)

Guinevere discussed the importance of referring to studies "that show if you have a more diverse set of values in approaching any problem, often we'll come up with more creative solutions," that can facilitate innovation and limit groupthink (Guinevere, S.P.).

Fostering inclusivity through building awareness of balanced history. Various participants claimed that explaining how ES builds awareness of a broad, balanced history is an effective means of advocating for ES. Mickey shared that his being a history teacher enabled him to "remind people of their history," particularly with "a lot of board members [his] age and older" (Mickey, S.P.). Mickey appealed to them in a manner that is grounded in shared history. Naomi thought that presenting ES as a means of fostering "inclusivity and exposure" was effective since it could facilitate connections with others on multiple levels (Naomi, S.P.).

Showing how A through G requirements are addressed by ES. Participants claimed that explaining how ES satisfies A through G requirements would elucidate the nexus between ES and higher education for board members. For example, Pauline suggested "involving universities right into that conversation for whatever we develop," adding that "universities would have to review" before board members accept any courses or graduation requirements (Pauline, S.P.). Shirley also emphasized the importance of ensuring that ES was presented as

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"something that is enriching" and something essential that "fulfills A through G requirements" (Shirley, S.P.).

Sharing templates of existing ES courses and graduation requirements. Participants acknowledged that distributing ES course descriptions, syllabi, and ES graduation requirement language would be helpful. Naomi stated she would like to know what other districts have done with ES.

> So, what [helps] is language that already exists and . . . framework that makes the work a little easier and it convinces more people if you say, 'Look, all these other school districts have done it.' So that's why it's helpful. One, it reduces some of the work. And it gives, for lack of a better term, legitimacy, right (Naomi, S.P.)?

Furthermore, Teresa asserted that sharing "best practices at the high school level … and an understanding of how many school districts are implementing ES" would help her with her board (Teresa, S.P.). Abraham, who identified as an ES opponent, conceded it would be helpful for him "to have some examples of other Ethnic Studies courses or textbooks that are already in existence" (Abraham, S.P.).

Starting with ES as an elective and then moving toward a graduation requirement. Participants expressed that introducing a pilot, measuring successful outcomes from this pilot, and using this initial success to create an opportunity to propose a requirement was a successful, three-part strategy. Shirley revealed she wanted to move incrementally through "gradual progression of starting out as an elective and hopefully moving forward as a graduation requirement" (Shirley, S.P.). Robert opted for the incremental approach, stating that he would assess the impact of an elective first, and then consider a requirement afterward, adding, "Let's run pilots. Let's migrate. Maybe it's not as flashy, but it's not as disruptive. It's sort of, let's understand the full implications of making changes" (Robert, S.P.).

What Strategies Are Least Effective in Advocating for Ethnic Studies?

In Question Six from the interview, participants were asked to identify *least* effective strategies in convincing other board members to support ES. This question was asked two different ways, but each was intended to yield similar results. School board members who self-identified as "leaning toward" ES were asked the question, "What types of arguments or strategies do you believe are least effective in convincing other board members to join you in supporting ES curricula?" School board members who self-identified as leaning against ES were asked the question, "What types of arguments, if any, are least likely to persuade you to change your perspective regarding ES curricula?"

The responses to Question Six can be categorized into five primary strategies-to-avoid themes. The top five strategies-to-avoid themes included:

1. racialization/radicalization;

2. mandate/erosion of local control;

3. exclusion/invocation of fear;

4. false assumptions/misreading organizational culture; and

5. placement of guilt/victimization

Each of these themes contains multiple themes that were combined under one heading due to the overlap between them. The only other strategy that a participant identified as one to avoid was presenting ES in a way that would incur anxiety about costs. Below are explanations that describe each strategy-to-avoid theme along with citations of interview response data.

Racialization/radicalization. Racialization/radicalization strategies are those in which school board members focus on race or ethnicity as the primary reason for supporting ES. The

racialization/radicalization argument was the most frequently mentioned strategy-to-avoid by

participants. This theme also includes instances in which school board members take political

positions that are perceived as radical within the context of the school board district culture.

Robert likened the radicalization of a strategy to incorporate ES in a wholesale manner to trying

to fix an airplane while it was flying in the air, saying,

> We've got some people that just want to change the whole thing out and basically really risk, okay, let's change all four engines and crash and burn. That's part of it and then we got casualties and we got kids who get screwed over. (Robert, S.P.)

Robert later shared that his personal experience showed him that it is better to run pilots since

they are not as disruptive to school operations and enable "full implications of making changes"

(Robert, S.P.). Shirley, one of the participants who supported ES, said that in her experience it

was best to avoid approaching school board members "in a way that's not solely focused on

race" (Shirley, S.P.).

Mandating change/erosion of local control. Participants identified the mandating

change argument that has been linked with erosion of local control. When asked which argument

is least effective, Mickey responded,

> The state is going to make us offer it, so you might as well get on board. When people mandate stuff, that almost brings everybody to put the brakes on. And you know, in California so much is stuff mandated. (Mickey, S.P.)

Shirley added, "I know there's a lot of pushback into anything that gets in the way of local

control" (Shirley, S.P.).

Exclusion of others/invocation of fear. Advocating for ES courses in a way that

excludes others or invokes fear was another strategy-to-avoid. Guinevere acknowledged, "It's

very hard to present things in a way that doesn't scare people," and added people tend to "fear

change" and "fear that they'll have to give up something" with the adoption of ES curriculum (Guinevere, S.P.). Pauline stated, "When I hear people talking about [opposition], it's fear-based. They're afraid, they're coming from a very conservative viewpoint." Pauline asserted that some of this fear-based opposition could stem from fear of the unknown, adding, "They cannot support [ES] 'cause they don't know if that means going out and just doing away with traditional classroom instruction" (Pauline, S.P.).

Naomi drew upon her own experience in critiquing an ES course that was too limited in a certain lens since the ES teacher would not stray from this narrow view to encompass multiple perspectives. Naomi lamented that some narrow-minded ES teachers stick with a specific lens that has the effect of alienating students.

> It has to be about Latino culture, it has to be about Asian culture, it has to be about African culture. Anything that's too specific and uh, I mean in the offering like at the beginning, it's going to uh, send people running for the hills. (Naomi, S.P.)

In this strategy-to-avoid, ES courses that are focused on certain cultures or topics—and are not inclusive—will not be accepted. Similarly, Abraham took exception with ES courses that focus too heavily on the "perceived, uh, poor treatment of individual groups that would promote singling out" and would only want an ES course that included all ethnic groups (Abraham, S.P.).

False assumptions/misreads of culture. Relying on what are perceived as false assumptions was mentioned as another main strategy-to-avoid. Also included in this category are instances in which board members misread or ignore the cultural context of the school district or the surrounding community. Anson insisted that ES is part of a movement that is "based in assumptions that aren't necessarily validated" (Anson, S.P.). Naomi, a participant who stated that teachers who made false assumptions about her contributed to her having a mixed experience in

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her high school ES class, urged that approaches to ES steer clear of making judgments and bring

"zero assumptions" (Naomi, S.P.).

Other board members mentioned that context matters when determining which arguments

to select and which ones to avoid, as they try to persuade other board members to support ES

curricula. When asked if a certain argument that appeals to the notion of White, male privilege

would be effective, Mickey answered, "Depends on where you're at and depends on who you're

talking to and where they are. You can't approach strangers with that notion" (Mickey, S.P.).

Robert discussed the importance of "understanding context" as a means of "breaking down

barriers" that could lead to groups who are different "to honor and respect each other" (Robert,

S.P.).

Placement of guilt/victimization. Several participants discussed how assigning guilt

about past events or teaching others they are victims is a sure way to cultivate opposition to ES.

Mickey, an ES supporter, said,

> The most important thing to not do is to try and make people feel guilty about the past.
> They can't do a damn thing about it. Trying to make people feel guilty [means] they'll
> get resentful and they'll just be your adversaries. (Mickey, S.P.)

Mickey's point underscores the possibility that reminding White, male school board members

they are guilty of, or at least might be complicit with, oppression could not only impair efforts to

cultivate support, but could do the opposite and create adversaries.

Included in this argument is the notion of victimization. Two participants claimed that

teaching students they are victims would hinder support for ES. Abraham reported that

emphasizing "poor treatment of individual groups that would promote singling out or um, kind

of victim mentality type thing" would raise questions since "there's not a place for that in

education" (Abraham, S.P.). Similarly, Anson took issue with ES courses that teach, "you're a victim … we want to help you nurse that grievance." (Anson, S.P.) Anson believed victimization hinders students from thinking what they can do to be more effective.

Research Field Notes

The experience of contacting the participants and scheduling the interviews was a rich one that merits discussion. As was discussed in the methodology section, I completed 11 interviews, but invited 18 participants to attain these 11 interviews. Since I originally intended to interview three or four participants who leaned against ES, three or four who were somewhat divided in their opinion on ES, and three or four who leaned toward support for ES, I contacted school board members who I identified as "lean against," "mixed," or "lean for" based on their survey responses.

Three of the five "mixed" candidates could not be contacted, but the remaining two were contacted and agreed to be interviewed. Two of the four interview candidates who identified as "leaning against" ES proved difficult to reach. One did not respond to three invitations to participate, nor did he provide a phone number at which I could call him. The other scheduled an interview time, but she did not provide a contact number. In the days leading up to the interview, she did not respond to reminders to provide the contact number. On the day after the scheduled interview, she wrote that she did not recall that she made an appointment.

I attempted to contact other interview candidates who were part of my "back up pool" just in case my primary choices and my alternates did not respond. However, none of these candidates responded to my e-mail messages, nor could I retrieve phone numbers for any of them. Consequently, I decided to contact a board member who I knew was opposed to ES, based

on previous conversations. I was grateful for his willingness to be interviewed as his participation allowed me to interview a third board member who identified as leaning against ES. This experience suggests that while some board members may be comfortable sharing their opposition to ES in writing—and even went through the trouble of giving their name and e-mail address to be contacted for a follow-up interview—their interest in sharing their perspectives may have waned for unknown reasons.

The experience of completing the interviews was a rewarding one in which I noticed several patterns emerge. I combined most of my "field notes" observations into four primary categories: (a) my positionality as a board member, (b) the power of storytelling and its relevance to ES, (c) the rapport I was able to build with participants, and (d) the enthusiasm expressed for the topic of ES. These four categories are extensively interrelated, which is not surprising given the intersectionality and interdisciplinarity of ES.

Positionality. First, due to my *positionality* as a high school board member, I learned it was easy to put myself in the shoes of board member participants. I think it would not have been as easy to understand the tensions involved in making difficult decisions or weighing competing interests, if I were not a school board member. For the most part, I kept my being a school board member hidden to minimize bias in the responses of the participants. However, I did reveal my being a school board member toward the end of a few interviews where information about my familiarity with board perspectives was relevant to the dynamics of the research moment.

Storytelling. Second, it was fascinating to witness and participate in the power of *storytelling* through these interviews. As participants recalled past experiences and current perspectives while formulating responses, a few shared stories that related to the topics of the

interview questions. Although listening to these stories involved more time and effort on their part as well as mine, the investment was worth it, since the stories contributed additional perspectives that could not be assessed if using only the survey method. For example, after I asked Teresa to provide more detail about a specific topic, she discussed an initiative that was started by an African American female school board member and colleague who "challenged" her to "dig deeper into issues of race and equity" (Teresa, S.P.). Teresa's sharing of this story demonstrates the power that a single board member can have on others who are willing to listen and respond to a call to action. Furthermore, the act of sharing personal narratives contributes to the building of good rapport, which is the next theme.

Building rapport. Third, during the interviews I was able to cultivate rapport with participants. I established this *confianza* (a sense of trust) by repeating what I heard to make sure I listened correctly, validating experiences, and carefully sharing my own reactions when I felt it was helpful to the process. Phillip repeatedly offered to connect me with other scholar-activists within his ES network so that I could learn from his contacts and share my research with them. Two board members, one who leaned supportive of ES and another who leaned against ES, asked if they could speak to me about a related topic "off the record." I believe these participants would not have asked had they felt uncomfortable with me. Another participant invited me to tour his school district and asked if I would consider working in some capacity for his district. Member checking—by sharing my tentative list of qualitative data themes and policy positions with interview participants—also helped maintain rapport. Cultivating rapport with participants enabled greater breadth and depth of expression of perspectives, which at times emerged in the form of enthusiasm.

Enthusiasm for ES. Fourth, I noticed *enthusiasm* for ES expressed by the participants in

a variety of ways. Some indicated that they were interested in attending the California School

Boards Association (CSBA) Annual Education Conference to hear the results of my research.

More than half of the participants expressed laughter at some point during the interview,

indicating that they enjoyed the experience of being interviewed, or at least the topic of ES. For

example, toward the end of the interview, Guinevere shared,

> I'm so glad you told me about this. This is great. You know, I feel embarrassed that I
> don't know [AB2016], but therefore I was so excited about participating in your study
> because I haven't been able to think about and talk about these issues in a while.
> (Guinevere, S.P.)

This excerpt shows how grateful Guinevere was to participate, become aware of ES research,

and have space to discuss ES with another. Shirley was so enthusiastic about hearing the research

results, she committed to bringing her colleagues when she said, "If you can let me know when,

I'll be sure to let all of my board member colleagues know so they can be there. I would love to

hear it" (Shirley, S.P.). After completing my final interview, I had a sense of relief, but also a

sense of profound gratitude that each of these busy elected officials took time from their packed

schedules to be interviewed without compensation.

Interaction of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

This section provides a summary of how the quantitative and qualitative data compare

and contrast. As was discussed in Chapter 3, combining qualitative and quantitative data in a

study can generate more insight and expand understanding of complex issues than using one type

of data (Creswell, 2009). When I proposed my methodology, I envisioned that the survey would

yield quantitative data to help identify current perspectives of high school board members toward

ES and imagined the follow-up interviews would yield qualitative data to explain how such

perspectives inform public policy regarding ES. Though these visualizations were realized, there were a few instances in which the qualitative data contributed to the first research question and a few occasions where the quantitative data addressed the second research question.

The quantitative data were helpful in addressing *who was supportive of ES*. Supporters were primarily Euro American, Democrat, fourth generation or higher, and had taken ES before. Gender was not a factor since ES supporters were just as likely to be either male or female. The quantitative data contained open-ended responses that offered reasons why participants were supportive of ES. The five primary reasons were: inclusivity of other cultures, global citizenship, sparking self-awareness, demystifying power dynamics, and better academic outcomes.

The qualitative data also addressed why school board members were supportive, revealing the same five reasons listed above. Looking at both the quantitative data and qualitative data shows that the data in the survey were corroborated by data in the follow-up interviews. Therefore, the top five reasons that emerged from both the survey and interview data are themes that best explain the reasons school board members support ES. I have chosen a one- or two-word name to capture the essence of the five primary themes (see Table 4.26) and placed these theme names in the left-hand column. The middle column offers one-sentence theme descriptions that explain how they relate to ES.

Table 4.26

Primary Themes and Short Descriptions that Explain Support for ES

Theme name	Theme description	n(I)/n(S)
Inclusivity	ES offers value in studying other cultures/promoting inclusivity	11/22
Global citizenship	ES prepares students to be global citizens in the future	7/13
Spark self-awareness	ES sparks an interest in knowing more about oneself; one's history	7/6
Demystifies power	ES demystifies power by opening eyes to power dynamics	5/8
Better performance	ES contributes to better academic performance in multiple aspects	3/7

These descriptions encompass multiple subthemes that were combined into larger primary themes. The n(I)/n(S) column on the right contains two numbers separated by a backslash. The number on the left-hand side of the slash represents the number of times the theme was mentioned by an interview participant. The number on the right-hand side represents the number of times the theme was mentioned by a survey respondent.

The quantitative data helped address those *who were opposed to ES.* Survey data revealed that there were no particular subgroups of respondents who were more likely to oppose ES than any other subgroup. The quantitative data explained reasons why some board members were opposed. The top reasons for opposing ES (see Table 4.27) included: limited course space/schedule ($n = 28$), perceived mandate ($n = 18$), divisive/exclusive ($n = 12$), antithetical to American culture ($n = 6$), and undefined ($n = 5$). The qualitative data identified four primary

reasons for opposing ES including: ES is divisive/ exclusive ($n = 3$), ES is perceived as a mandate that erodes local control ($n = 3$), ES is undefined ($n = 3$), and ES is based on false assumptions ($n = 3$).

I have chosen a brief theme name to capture the essence of the four primary themes and placed these names in the left-hand column. The middle column offers brief one-sentence descriptions of how the themes relate to ES.

Table 4.27

Primary Themes and Descriptions That Explain Board Member Opposition to ES

Quantitative data			Qualitative data		
Theme name	Theme description	*n*	Theme name	Theme description	*n*
Limited course space	There is limited space in the course schedule	28	Divisive / exclusive	ES is seen as divisive and exclusive	3
Perceived mandate	ES perceived as mandate that threatens local control	18	Perceived mandate	ES perceived as mandate that threatens local control	3
Divisive / exclusive	ES is seen as divisive and exclusive	12	Undefined	ES is undefined or not well-defined or unknown	3
Antithetical to American culture	ES seen as antithetical to American culture and unity	6	False assumptions	ES is based on false assumptions or perceptions	3
Undefined	ES is undefined or not well-defined or unknown	5			

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The *n* columns on each side represent the number of times the theme was mentioned by a participant. The themes from the qualitative data are shown on the right-hand side of Table 4.27. Looking at the quantitative and qualitative data side-by-side reveals that despite slight discrepancy in the reasons, the themes that appear in both types of data are: divisive/exclusive, perceived mandate, and undefined.

The quantitative data offered two additional reasons that did not appear in the interview data (limited course schedule and antithetical to American culture). The qualitative data offered one additional reason that was not reflected in the quantitative data (false assumptions).

In exploring *what role racism played in board member opposition to ES*, the qualitative data showed that racism emerged in three primary ways (see Table 4.28). Racism emerged as a factor in: (a) encounters with blatant racism or subtle racism, including the sanitization of history; (b) the fear or refusal to enter a dialogue about race or microaggressions; and (c) the presence of pushback or resistance to ES. The survey did not offer any quantitative data related to the role of racism in opposition to ES, but a few scattered responses in the open-ended text boxes could be perceived as veiled or blatant racism.

Table 4.28

Primary Themes Related to Role of Racism in Opposition to ES

Theme name	Theme description	*n*
Encounters with blatant/subtle racism	History of people of color is replaced by a more sanitized version of history; blatant racism is experienced, but is discounted	8
Fear of dialogue on race	A refusal or fear of having constructive dialogue about race or ethnicity; there is also an unwillingness to discuss microaggressions	6
Resistance or pushback to ES	An awareness of or direct encounter with resistance or pushback to ES; includes belief that white nationalism and racism are dead	5

With respect to the question about which board members are more likely (or less) likely to support ES, the quantitative data shed some light on this question. In summary, statistical tests revealed that the only subgroups significantly more likely to be supportive were board members who identified as fourth generation or higher, in comparison to those who identified as second-generation. With respect to the second research question about how board member perspectives inform public policy, the qualitative data were primarily helpful, while the quantitative data were marginally helpful. The responses provided during the interviews can be represented along a continuum of responses (see Diagram 4.1) presented within a four-point spectrum of public policy positions or actions.

Least supportive toward ES   Most supportive toward ES

OPPOSITION   MIXED SUPPORT   SUPPORTIVE   CHANGE AGENT

| Completely opposed to ES as an elective or as a graduation requirement | Opposed to ES as a graduation requirement but open to supportive of ES as an elective; or vice versa | Supportive of ES as both elective and graduation requirement in theory; willing to meet with district officials and gather more information to prepare action | Very supportive of ES as both elective and graduation requirement; has already acted; willing to help other school |

Diagram 4.1: Continuum of Public Policy Positions Toward ES

These positions encompass school board member perspectives toward ES and explain how these perspectives could or do influence public policy toward ES. Diagram 4.1 includes a four-point spectrum that ranges from the public policy position least supportive toward ES on the left and continues to the right with increasing levels of support toward ES. I identified these four public policy positions after considering the full range of recommendations, and actions that were mentioned by the 11 interview participants. Naomi, Anson, and Abraham can be categorized as "mixed support." Shirley, Teresa, Robert, Guinevere, and Pauline can be identified as "supportive." Phillip and Mickey fall under the "change agent" position.

With respect to answering the questions regarding which strategies would be most effective in advocating for ES, the qualitative *and* quantitative data proved insightful. The top five effective strategy themes, with the most frequent strategy listed first, included: (a) citing studies, (b) building awareness of a balanced history and different cultures, (c) showing how A

through G requirements can be addressed by ES courses, (d) sharing templates of ES courses and graduation requirements, and (e) starting with ES as an elective and progressing incrementally. In Table 4.29, the names of the top five effective strategies are listed in the left-hand column. Brief descriptions of each strategy are provided in the middle column. The number of times the strategy was mentioned by participants is provided in the right-hand column.

Table 4.29

List of Effective ES Advocacy Strategy Themes

Effective strategy	Effective strategy description	$n(\text{I})/n(\text{S})$
Citing studies	Referring to qualitative and quantitative strategies that quantify academic success, future benefits to student	8/19
Fostering inclusivity through broader awareness of histories/cultures	Taking a historical perspective to help students understand a broader history and to learn about different cultures	7/10
Reconciling with A through G requirements	Explaining how ES elective or graduation requirement can satisfy A through G requirements or at least be reconciled with them	5/6
Sharing ES templates with other high school districts	Sharing ES course and graduation requirement templates with other school districts; teachers talking with teachers about ES	1/10
Incrementalizing from elective to requirement	Starting with advocating for ES as an elective before advocating for ES as a graduation requirement	4/5

Within the $n(\text{I})/n(\text{S})$ column, the number on the left of the backslash indicates the number of times the strategy was mentioned in the qualitative data, and the number on the right represents the number of times the strategy was mentioned in the quantitative data.

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In addition to the top five effective strategy themes, five additional ES advocacy strategies were shared by interview participants, but not mentioned frequently enough to be included within the top five themes (see Table 4.30).

Table 4.30

List of Additional ES Advocacy Strategies Identified as Most Effective

Additional ES advocacy strategy	N
Raising awareness of AB2016	3
Hearing directly from high school students who took ES	2
Building on progress already made with respect to diversity	1
Pooling resources with other districts on a countywide basis	1
Calling ES by another name (e.g. culturally relevant curriculum)	1

The interview data also produced the top five strategies-to-avoid for ES advocates, with the most frequent strategy-to-avoid listed first, including: (a) racialization/radicalization, (b) mandating change/erosion of local control, (c) exclusion/invocation of fear, (d) false assumptions/misreading organizational culture, and (e) placement of guilt/victimization. The names of the top five strategies-to-avoid are listed in the left-hand column of Table 4.31. Brief descriptions of each strategy are provided in the middle column. The number of times the strategy was mentioned by participants is provided in the right-hand column, labeled $n(\text{I})/n(\text{S})$. Within the frequency column, the number on the left of the backslash indicates the number of times the strategy was mentioned in the qualitative data and the number on the right represents the number of times the strategy was mentioned in the quantitative data.

Table 4.31

List of ES Advocacy Strategies-to-Avoid Themes

Name of strategy-to-avoid	Description of strategy-to-avoid	n(I)/n(S)
Racialization/radicalization	Over-relying on race or ethnicity when advocating for ES; invoking White privilege; being too radical or extreme with methods	12/5
Mandating change/erosion of local control	Perceiving that ES is mandated by the state in a way that requires or forces school districts to take action that yields control	6/8
Exclusion/invocation of fear	Teaching ES in a way that excludes or separates groups of people; presenting ES in a way that invokes fear or loss	7/4
False assumptions/misreading of organizational culture	Misreading organizational culture; failing to consider local context; making false assumptions	9/0
Placement of guilt/victimization	Telling Students of Color that they are victimized, oppressed, or disadvantaged; invoking guilt, assessing blame	7/1

The qualitative data gleaned from the follow-up interviews also illuminated how previous experience with ES informs public policy positions. Seven of the 11 interview participants reported that they took ES either in high school or in college. Six of these seven participants identified as "lean-supportive toward ES" in the survey, and all six testified their previous experience with ES impacted their present position on ES. For example, Robert shared that taking ES "contributed a great deal" and that ES inspired him to "devote his life to education to try and open people's minds" (Robert, S.P.). Shirley stated that she was "very blessed" to have taken an ES course in high school, claiming that ES "really changed my life a lot, really changed

my perspective," and it moved her to run for the school board to "extend the opportunity to take ES to as many students as possible" (Shirley, S.P.).

Overall, looking at the quantitative and qualitative data together tells us that the types of ES advocacy strategies adopted by school board members matter and that these strategies can be implemented by board members of any ethnicity. However, the caveat here is that these strategies could be potentiated by an increase in board Member of Color representation. Board member representation that more closely reflects the majority of students in California could make conditions more amenable to coalition building in support of W. E. B. DuBois's (1961) notion of "double consciousness," which is central in CRT research, highlights that board Members of Color experience the world in multiple ways because of the multifaceted lens with which they see the issues and approach strategies.

Second, context matters with respect to what type of ES advocacy strategies are employed. Incremental strategies such as advocating for pilot projects or starting with ES electives are better received in high school districts where ES advocates are still in the minority on their boards, or where the community is more sensitized to the benefits of ES. Ambitious strategies such as establishing graduation requirements in high school districts and supporting feeder districts to adopt ES, might be appropriate in districts where ES advocates comprise the majority on their school boards. Third, education about what ES is, and what ES is not, is crucial, given that nearly one-third of board members in the survey indicated that had limited or no understanding of ES.

Conclusion

The sequential, transformative, QUAN-qual, mixed-methods approach yielded quantitative and qualitative data that helped address two research questions:

1. What are the perspectives of California high school board members toward ES curricula?

2. How do these perspectives inform their approach to public policy?

The quantitative data results (and the small amount of qualitative data) from the survey addressed the first question, while the qualitative data results from the interviews addressed the second question. As was intended, the semistandardized interviews enabled me to explore responses initially provided in the survey in a multidimensional manner.

One of the overarching themes that emerged from the results is that *strategies matter*. This is not to say that the characteristics of board members are not important, nor does it mean that change agent champions are unnecessary to advance ES curricula. Strategies that board members utilize are extremely instrumental in determining if ES curricula can be introduced, approved, and implemented in some form within a high school district. Another major finding is that two identity elements seem to matter with respect to perspectives on ES: generation (especially 4th vs. 2nd generation) and ethnicity (especially Euro American/Whites vs. People of Color). Given the large number of school board members with limited exposure to ES, ongoing education on ES and dialogue about the benefits of ES seem to stand out as strategies that merit further study.

An analysis of the findings presented and their implications, along with recommendations and conclusions, is provided in Chapter 5. Special focus is spent on policy implications, which

are driven by policy positions identified and described earlier in the "How Do Perspectives Inform Public Policy?" section. Also, to be discussed in Chapter 5, are the implications of this study for social justice, especially when analyzed through the lens of CRT. What does emancipatory public policy toward ES look like? These questions, along with others, are explored in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We need to make sure that people truly understand America's true history … because history right now is being repeated. We keep making the same mistakes over and over again because we always keep teaching history from one perspective.

Shirley (S.P.)

The dominance of Euro American perspectives in mainstream curricula leads many students to disengage from academic learning.

--C. Sleeter, 2011, p. 5

The epigraphs above epitomize why ES is important and why it is needed today more than ever. On a macro level, ES helps highlight an informed understanding of a true history that includes all peoples. On a micro level, ES for high school students can bust doors wide open to new possibilities and awaken minds to grasp histories they did not know existed. This enduring influence of ES was documented in the responses of participants in this study, who described how ES inspired them to run for office, pursue higher education, and share what they had learned with their children and grandchildren. In this concluding chapter, I analyze the data and discuss the results using the lens of CRT. My positionality as a California high school board member motivated me to consider implications, strategies, and recommendations related to introducing ES curricula in California high school districts. This chapter is divided into five sections: discussion of findings, limitations, areas of future research, implications and recommendations for practitioners, and a call to action for social justice in high schools in California.

Summary of Findings

The findings section is organized into two parts. The first part of the findings section discusses findings related to the first research question. Under the first research question fall specific subresearch questions including, "Which board members are more likely to support (or oppose) ES?", "Why are some board members supportive (or opposed to) ES?", and "What role does racism play (if any) in opposition to ES?" The latter part of the findings section discusses findings related to the second research question. Under this second research question fall subresearch questions including, "How do (or how could) perspectives inform public policy?", "What strategies should ES advocates embrace?", and "What strategies should ES advocates avoid?"

What Are Board Member Perspectives Toward Ethnic Studies?

With respect to identifying current perspectives toward ES, I learned the following: (a) there were higher levels of support toward ES as an elective than as a graduation requirement; and (b) most school board members who supported ES were Euro American/White, fourth generation or higher, identified as Democrats, and claimed to have had previous experience with taking ES. Also included among these findings are the top five primary reasons why school board members supported or opposed ES and the role racism played in opposition to ES curricula. The last two findings in this section deal with subgroups more likely to support ES. Each of these findings are described below.

Higher levels of support toward ES as elective. Board members in the survey showed higher levels of support toward ES as an elective than ES as a graduation requirement. It is clear that a majority of California school board members found value in ES as an option to consider,

but this value has a limit. This ceiling was realized when ES was presented as a graduation requirement that must be taken to obtain a high school diploma. The comparatively tepid support for ES as a graduation requirement is a reminder that determining graduation requirements is a complex process that requires significant institutional commitment. One school board member who claimed to be supportive of ES conceded that mandating ES as a graduation requirement was problematic, claiming "districts cannot force students to appreciate ES [and] … cannot legislate sensitivity."

Critical race theorists would point to the potential transformative nature that instituting ES as a graduation requirement would have on students' ability to understand the "relationship among race, racism, and power" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 2) in the district, the community, and the world. However, some school board members worked in school districts where dialogue regarding race was not encouraged and where ES graduation requirements would be anathema. CRT scholars would also point to graduation requirements as more likely to be seen as the type of "institutional change and reorganization that might affect" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 55) Euro American advantage or advance People of Color.

Most ES supporters Were Euro American, fourth generation or higher, Democrats, who have taken ES. The data indicated that most of the board members who expressed support of ES happened to be to be Euro American, fourth generation or higher, Democrat, and had previous experience taking ES. I expected most school board members who were supportive of ES to be board Members of Color. Clearly, this was not the case. One reason is due to sheer numbers since Euro American high school board members outnumber Members of Color nearly four-to-one statewide and about two-to-one within the survey pool. The other parts of the profile

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were not as surprising, given that I expected ES supporters to lean Democrat and have experience taking ES. With respect to fourth generation or higher status, I will address this dynamic in a separate paragraph later in this section.

This finding is promising for ES champions who work, teach, or serve in school districts led by school boards that are majority Euro American. This finding does not support the notion that ES advocates were more likely to be identified in school districts as Members of Color forming the majority. In light of this finding, those eager to advance ES would be well-advised to engage Sleeter's (2011) research, which shows the benefits accrued to Euro American students who take ES. These benefits include a heightened sensitivity and understanding of issues related to power and privilege and improved cross-race/ethnicity group interaction. Still, CRT literature underscores the enduring relevance of race with respect to political strategies involving social justice, as will be explored further in a subsequent section in this chapter.

Reasons for supporting ES can be categorized into five themes. Most of the reasons that explain high board member support for ES can be categorized into five distinct, yet interrelated themes: (a) inclusivity of other cultures, (b) global citizenship, (c) spark for self-awareness, (d) demystification of power dynamics, and (e) improved academic performance. These five themes align closely with the benefits to ES discussed in the qualitative and quantitative studies referenced in the literature review in Chapter 2. This alignment is expected given that several of the interview candidates cited research related to ES that was referenced in Chapter 2 (Acuña, 1972; Dee & Penner, 2015; Sleeter, 2011; Takaki, 1992). The primary themes why school board members supported ES show that some board members were familiar with research that demonstrates the benefits of ES.

Additionally, the work of Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) in applying CRT to education can be helpful in analyzing the social justice implications of one of these benefit themes. One of the top five reasons for supporting ES—improved academic performance—is critical in school districts' efforts to help some students for whom academic success has been elusive. Ladson-Billings and Tate argued that race continues to be significant in explaining and understanding inequalities in student academic performance in the United States. These inequalities disproportionately impact African American and Latino males. If ES is shown to be helpful in improving the academic performance of struggling African American and Latino males, then closing the achievement gap, as was discussed in Chapter 2, can be sufficient rationale in some high school districts for implementing ES pilot programs.

Reasons for opposing ES can be categorized into five themes. Most of the reasons explaining board member opposition to ES can be grouped into five themes: (a) limited course schedule, (b) divisive/exclusive, (c) perceived mandates that erode local control, (d) antithetical to American culture, and (e) lack of definition. At least two of these five themes are mirrored in the literature discussed in Chapter 2. Boggess (2016), Orozco (2012), and Ramirez (2014) summarized the critics who claim that ES can cause divisiveness, which aligns with the "divisive/exclusive" theme above. Orozco (2012), Alexander (2011), and Winkler-Morey (2010) also documented the contention that some critics claim ES foments anti-Americanism, which is closely related to the "antithetical to American culture" theme.

The other three primary themes that explain board member opposition relate to policy and, at first glance, may not appear to be race-related. However, CRT scholars Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) would argue that even reasons such as "limited course space in schedule,"

"perceived mandates eroding local control," and "lack of definition" could have roots in "institutional or structural racism." Using Wellman's (1977) definition of racism, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) unveiled "culturally sanctioned beliefs that, regardless of intentions involved, defend the advantages Whites have because of the subordinated positions of racial minorities," and concurrently avoid, "the possibility of institutional change and reorganization that might affect them" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 55). The key phrase here is, "regardless of intentions involved" because board members who claimed they cannot support ES due to a perceived lack of space in the schedule, the (mis)perception that ES is being mandated by the State, or the perception that ES is poorly defined, can still find ways of supporting some type of ES program, if they are motivated and embrace the value of ES for students.

One of the top five reasons school board members were opposed to ES was referred to as the "antithetical to the American experience" theme. Opponents of ES who claimed ES was anti-American wrote comments such as "just be an American," "We're all Americans," "This is one united nation," and "Many of these [ES] courses seek to denigrate the American experience." Survey respondents who shared such comments seemed to subscribe to the belief that ES prevents students from identifying with being American and did not support embracing multiple identities. Ironically, one of the tenets of CRT maintains that everyone has potentially overlapping, conflicting identities and no person has a unitary identity. Darder echoed this tenet when she asserted, "We all forge a multitude of identities" (Darder, 2015, p. 165) and continued to argue that ethnic identity is especially significant since it links us to histories of survival and the struggle to be fully human.

Racism or race-related dynamics mattered in opposition to ES. Racism or race-related dynamics was a factor in board member opposition to ES in three primary forms: (a) encounters with blatant or subtle racism, (b) fear of dialogue on race, and (c) resistance or pushback to ES. CRT teaches us that a function of White privilege is the systematic enacting of "unearned privilege and conferred dominance" (McIntosh, 1988, p. 11). School board Members of Color, and People of Color in general, do not have the "privilege" or "luxury" of ignoring encounters with blatant or subtle racism. Similarly, several interview participants highlighted the reticence or outright refusal of their peers to enter a dialogue about race (Guinevere, Robert, Shirley, Teresa) and expressed concern about pushback against ES (Guinevere, Robert Shirley, Naomi). CRT scholars have referred to the refusal to enter dialogue about race as an enactment of White privilege. Springer (2014) referred to the myth of the "post-race nation" as a "sophisticated form of racism that allows the benefactors of White privilege an opportunity to escape the discomfort that discussions of race incur" (Springer, 2014, p. 7).

The critical importance of entering dialogue cannot be overstated. Freire and Darder consider dialogue a critical antecedent to addressing social and educational injustice. Darder et al. (2009) posited that dialogue engages an emancipatory process committed to the sociopolitical empowerment of communities by respecting them as rightful historical subjects of their world. Dialogue can facilitate the discussion of differences that can then contribute to finding commonality and, ultimately, create a well-informed policy. Dialogue is central to overcoming the fear and racism that factors in opposition to ES. Teresa shared, "We've had courageous, difficult conversations about [race]. As an example, our own White privilege. So, they made us realize we missed the boat" (Teresa, S.P.). In other words, without conversations about race,

Euro American/White school board members could persist in their lack of awareness of privilege. An integral part of dialogue is listening. I learned during my interviews that it is especially challenging, yet informative, to listen to those who have different perspectives with respect to ES. Another school board member shared a story about receiving valuable feedback from a student that she would not have received had she not taken the time to listen to a student who wanted to introduce an ES course at her high school.

Fourth generation or higher members were more likely to support ES than second generation. Comparing subgroups of board members across and within various identity categories revealed that one subgroup was more likely to be supportive of ES (at least with respect to AB2016): fourth generation or higher board members (compared to second generation board members). People who are fourth generation or higher may have successfully assimilated into mainstream society and might be eager to reconnect with their roots. One of the five major tenets of CRT states that People of Color have a unique voice that must be included in storytelling of counter narratives (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). It is possible that fourth generation or higher school board members were more motivated to reclaim their history and gain an understanding of their identity by learning stories about their ancestors. It is also conceivable that fourth generation or higher school board members were eager to share their stories with students in ES courses, which is the impression I got in each of the five interview participants who identified as fourth generation or higher.

One study that analyzed differences between third- and second-generation Hispanic Americans found that second-generation Latinx were more likely to identify with their parents' country of origin (i.e., Mexico or Puerto Rico), while third-generation Latinx were more likely to

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identify as American (Pew Research Center, 2002). This gap between how second- and third-generation residents identify could be mirrored with other ethnic groups and could be even more pronounced between second- and fourth-generation residents. Fourth-generation or higher residents may feel further removed from the immigrant experience and from the stories of their ancestors that may have been absent from their educational experience. It thus becomes a form of reclamation. This may be one explanation why fourth-generation or higher school board members might be more supportive of AB2016 and thus, more eager to see ES curricula introduced in high school districts than second-generation school board members.

Euro American board members were more likely to be supportive of ES as elective. Euro American board members were more supportive of ES as elective than board Members of Color. This higher level of support by Euro American board members toward ES as elective was due to more than just chance. I expected the opposite finding—that board Members of Color would show statistically significant higher levels of support toward ES across all indicators. It is difficult to extrapolate this same level of support to a larger population given that Euro American board members who responded to the survey may have been more progressive, hence more supportive of ES than the typical Euro American board members in California. However, this possibility is minimized by the reality that self-selection bias could also have occurred with school board Members of Color, which would fail to explain the significant difference between Euro American board members and board Members of Color. Through the CRT lens, another explanation is that Euro American board members were more eager than their Members of Color counterparts to opt for electives, since electives would not necessitate the aggressive institutional change that graduate requirements would necessitate. The findings do reveal that Board

Members of Color were slightly overrepresented in their support of a graduation requirement, while Euro American respondents were slightly underrepresented in their support of ES as a graduation requirement.

No other subgroups of school board members across categories of gender, educational attainment, previous experience with ES, number of languages spoken, or type of school district were more or less likely to support ES across three different indicators. This is surprising given that I expected significantly more support from certain subgroups (i.e., board Members of Color, women, those with experience taking previous ES courses, school board members who are multilingual, school board members from majority SOC districts) to be more supportive of ES in at least one of the three ES perspective indicators.

To What Extent Do Perspectives Inform Public Policy?

With respect to the research question, *To what extent do current board member perspectives inform public policy on ES curricula*, there were three major types of findings: school board members' policy positions can be understood on a policy position continuum; strategies identified as most effective in promoting ES-friendly policies can be grouped into five main categories; and strategies identified as least effective in implementing ES-friendly policies can also be grouped into five main categories.

School board members' policy positions can be understood on a continuum. As was shared in Chapter 4, the policy positions related to advocacy for (or opposition to) ES can be identified on a four-point policy position continuum that ranges from complete opposition to ES to full-fledged support for ES. These four positions are labeled as "opposition," "mixed support," "supportive," and "change agent." Although most of the interview participants shared

perspectives that could be identified in the supportive and change agent positions on the continuum, it should be noted that the participants who were categorized in the mixed support position provided feedback that was especially enlightening.

In Chapter 2, the "personal becoming political phenomenon" was illustrated when it was reported that some current school board members relied on personal experience to advance ES in school board resolutions and how a state legislator did the same to advance state legislation in the form of AB2016. This phenomenon was mirrored in the interview responses of "change agent" board members Phillip and Mickey, who recounted their own personal narratives with ES courses to inform their advocacy within their own school districts. But how can school board members who did not have personal experience with ES courses become change agents in their own right? This question will be addressed later in the Implications/Recommendations section.

Strategies most effective in advocating for ES. The top five strategy themes included: (a) citing studies that show ES helps students develop skills that contribute to academic success; (b) fostering inclusivity through building awareness of broad, balanced alternative histories and different cultures; (c) showing how A through G requirements can be addressed by ES courses; (d) sharing templates of existing ES courses with other high school districts; and (e) starting with ES as an elective and then moving incrementally toward ES as a graduation requirement. The California School Boards Association (CSBA) underscores the authority of board members to "review curriculum with the intent of improving instruction" (CSBA, 1981, p. 5). Meanwhile, education state code stipulates that school board members ensure that high school curriculum is "free from biased materials, which reflect adversely upon certain people based on race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, or occupation" (CSBA, 1981, p. 5). When armed with

CSBA language and state code, board members are well within their right and duty to employ each of the above strategies given their authority over reviewing and approving curricula.

The CSBA describes a two-part framework to define board policy as "what the Board wants done and why the board wants it done," describing this framework as a "guide to action" (McCormack Brown et al., 2004, p. 52). When school board members commit themselves to advocating for ES and understand why it is of critical importance, the above top five strategies could help school board members to understand how to best advocate for ES in their respective districts. However, which strategies to employ and the extent to which they must be driven by local context will be addressed in the Implications/Recommendations section.

Strategies-to-avoid in advocating for ES curricula. The top five strategies-to-avoid were: (a) racialization/radicalization, (b) mandating change/erosion of local control, (c) exclusion/invocation of fear, (d) false assumptions/misreading of organizational culture, and (e) placement of guilt/victimization. A few of these strategies align closely with the critiques of ES that are found in the literature. The exclusion/invocation of fear theme relates to the argument that ES can be too narrow in scope (Caban, 2003) and that ES causes divisiveness (Boggess, 2016; Orozco, 2012; Ramirez, 2014). The placement of guilt theme is somewhat related to the contention that ES builds "resentment toward a particular race or class of people" (Cabrera, 2013 et al., 2013, p. 9).

A phenomenon underlying each of the strategies to avoid is fear. Fear is the common denominator in all the reasons school board members expressed opposition to ES. This notion of fear emerged explicitly in several interviews and indirectly in nearly all of them. Fear of the

unknown manifested in what school board members did not know sufficiently or understand.

Gay (2004) mentioned that this fear is intensified by demographics.

> People coming from Asia, Middle East, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa differ greatly from earlier generations of immigrants from Western and Northern Europe. These unfamiliar groups can produce anxieties, prejudices, and racist behaviors among those who do not understand the newcomers or who perceive them as threats to their safety and security. (Gay, 2004, p. 30)

Gay concluded that these dynamics have "profound implications for developing institutional programs and practices [that can] respond positively and constructively to diversity" (Gay, 2004, p. 30).

There is a sharp tension between the tenets of CRT and the strategies to avoid. As was summarized in Chapter 4, the theme of racialization/radicalization warns potential ES advocates to not overrely on race and to refrain from invoking the notion of White privilege when advocating for ES. The first tenet of CRT posits that racism is a "common, everyday experience of most People of Color" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 7). More tension is also found between CRT and the theme of placement of guilt/victimization. CRT scholars value counter narratives for People of Color who have been marginalized, while some participants in this study believe that reminding students that People of Color have been oppressed cultivates a sense of grievance in Students of Color and guilt among Euro American students.

CRT explains that People of Color have a unique voice that must be included in storytelling or counternarratives that differ from master or hegemonic narratives (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Counternarratives or stories of People of Color can and do include experiences of being disadvantaged, oppressed, or victimized. To not acknowledge this experience is to collude in what one interview participant referred to as the "sanitization of history," or what

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another participant called "the selective teaching of history." With respect to the tension above, ES advocates must take a nuanced approach in which they balance the need between staying true to the spirit of ES and acknowledging arguments for ES that may temporarily alienate a portion of their constituencies. I will revisit the consideration of local context and this notion of a balanced approach to policymaking in the Implications/Recommendations section.

The strategies identified here as the most effective by board members with respect to ES advocacy, and the strategies identified as least effective, can offer guidance to board members on *how to* or *how not to* best advocate for ES in their respective districts. However, these strategies are offered as touchstones to consider and not as prescriptive panaceas for all high school districts. School board members must remember that "context matters" as they reflect upon local concerns such as organizational culture, board dynamics, district budget, student body demographics and voters' attitudes toward ES.

Implications/Recommendations

Education, as a specifically human experience, is a form of intervention in the world.

--P. Freire, 1998, pp. 90–91

The following section discusses the implications of this study and draws from the findings to provide recommendations for board members when considering policy issues related to ES within the high school context.

Implications

The implications drawn from this study were formulated along two major considerations—one tied to theoretical implications and the other to policy implications.

Theoretical implications. CRT helps explicate the dynamics of race and power embedded in the board members' responses to questions about their perspectives toward ES and how these perspectives shape public policy. The purpose of CRT is to transform structures and organizations plagued by institutional racism. Board members who adopt a "change agent" policy position come closest to fulfilling this purpose. Change agents commit themselves to entering conversations and enacting policies that can alter conditions to improve the organizational culture of institutions and structures not already supportive of ES. CRT can be a helpful lens for change agents by serving as an "x-ray machine" that sheds light on hidden cancers of prejudice that corrode institutions and infect its policies to the point where they cause disproportionate harm to Communities of Color.

However, as was stated previously, tenets of CRT can create tension with some of the "strategies to avoid" themes identified in the interview responses of not only ES opponents, but also ES supporters. Board members aspiring to successfully implement ES curricula may need to exercise moderation when using racialized language or making race-based arguments for ES curricula, especially in districts where such discourse has not yet taken place. For example, as one interview participant noted, mentioning the notion of White privilege when trying to make the case for ES curricula will send school board members "running for the hills" (Robert, S.P.) and render them unwilling to consider ES in any form, let alone enter a dialogue about ES. Still, as a few of the interview participants stated, some board members might be more open to language such as culturally relevant curriculum or culturally relevant pedagogy. The tenets of CRT may not be comfortable touchstones for conversations in some high school districts, but

they offer a solid foothold for change agents who are eager to scale structures of institutional racism and make further advances for academic success for all students.

Policy implications. Given the resurgence of local control in California, and the passage of AB2016 (which was misunderstood by many school board members to be a state mandate), high priority will be given in this discussion to local school district policy, less priority to state policy, and no priority to federal policy. The findings of this study cast a shadow of skepticism on state action, evident by respondents' common misperception of AB2016 as a state mandate. Concomitantly, nearly all respondents expressed affirmation for local control. Furthermore, local focus is validated as I consider these policy implications from the perspective of a high school board member, given my positionality as a high school board member.

The first three policy implications noted here are intended for school board members and local district leaders who work with school board members such as superintendents and perhaps, to a lesser extent, assistant superintendents. The remaining two target statewide organizations, are the California Department of Education, and the California State Legislature. One of the findings was that board members who opposed ES did so because of an inability to understand what ES is and what it is not. This "lack of definition" or "undefined theme" is a powerful reminder that all who work in the field of ES have an important responsibility to define it. Board members have a critical role to define ES in a way that is inclusive, yet incisive. In other words, board members who are supportive of ES must find a balance between championing an ES course that creates room for all ethnic groups, yet also creates space for critical dialogue of race and power dynamics.

All school board members have the capability to work incrementally (or urgently) toward becoming change agents to lead change within their own districts and to help their counterparts propel ES in neighboring districts. One of the "change agent" interview participants cautioned that school board members seeking to be change agents for ES require a healthy balance of financial support and political support from the state to make ES work. Both are needed to address any deep-seeded problems of educational inequity in California. With all this in mind, school board members who might be completely opposed to ES are encouraged to at least consider the possibility of including some type of culturally relevant curriculum or culturally relevant material in existing courses.

Recommendations

The following recommendations flow from the implications of the findings, are grounded in literature, and can be situated within the local context of each district. These recommendations extend beyond implementation or promotion of ES and elucidate how educational leaders can alter school district culture and the state's political climate to be more conducive to ES. They range from practices that can be replicated across multiple school sites to specific action items that can be initiated at the state level.

Centering on students. Although not specifically identified as a primary effective strategy in the quantitative data, there is a strategy involving students that emerged in the interviews and merits brief discussion. Participants Teresa and Pauline argued that board members in favor of ES can increase the comfort level for board members who may not be as familiar with ES by inviting ES students to other districts to provide testimony on the benefits of ES. Participant Abraham, who leaned against ES, conceded that a video clip that features ES

students providing explanations of how ES contributed to their academic success, would be helpful in the effort to win over skeptics or detractors. There is intrinsic value in placing students at the center of an advocacy strategy, since the process of taking an ES course, reflecting on growth, preparing remarks, presenting in front of others, and answering questions at open houses—such as has already been done at the El Rancho Unified School District—could be empowering for students.

   Embracing collaboration via co-participation. Another recommendation valuable to consider is the idea of collaboration. Proposing or passing board resolutions, engaging with fellow board members, or asking district superintendents to consider pilots, are good first steps in some high school districts. However, for ES programs to have a shelf life longer than the terms of individual board members, board members need to work with their superintendents to engage with a variety of district and community entities. Interview participant Guinevere referred to this engagement when she suggested meeting with her superintendent, creating a taskforce charged with exploring ES, and soliciting input via constructive dialogue at open sessions with the community. These steps could be concrete manifestations of Freire's (1998) *co-participation* process, in which educators work together to "link right thinking with right doing" thus sharing a collective spirit of solidarity with communities (Freire, 1998, p. 42). This co-participation breeds liberatory dialogue and elevates community consciousness. Board members should be well prepared to work collectively with a multitude of stakeholders. Carjuzaa, Baldwin, and Munson (2015) noted that "individual teachers can do phenomenal things, but nothing can [change systematically] until power is shared" (Carjuzaa et al., 2015, p. 203).

Fostering community dialogue. As was shared earlier in the findings section, robust dialogue can facilitate the discussion of differences regarding a topic such as ES, which can help identify common ground and contribute to a well-informed policy. Since dialogue is central to overcoming fear and racism that factors in opposition to ES, it is of critical importance that school board members urge their superintendents to plan and host community dialogues with teachers, students, parents, and all other parties who would potentially benefit from ES. Given that California already mandates regular community input sessions that are linked to the local control accountability plans (LCAP), school districts already have structured opportunities to host such dialogues.

The need for dialogue on ES intensifies as one considers the number of survey respondents who selected "decline to state" when asked to indicate ethnicity, generation, political party, and educational attainment. Hiding under the cover of anonymity might be reflective of the current conservative political climate and may reflect an ambivalence toward ES among some board members. This ambivalence may also help explain why many school board members never opened the original e-mail message that invited participation in the survey and why there were 15 participants who began the survey but did not complete it. This ambivalence is further evidenced in the responses of participants who at first indicated they would be open to participating in a follow-up interview but did not return multiple messages to schedule an interview. Furthermore, school board members preoccupied with getting reelected and remaining in office may be reluctant to be transparent about their views toward ES and may not trust that their views will remain anonymous.

Disseminating literature regarding ES curricula. Given that the strategies identified to be most effective include citing research, trumpeting the benefits, and publicizing best practices related to ES, it would be helpful for statewide or national educational organizations to solicit, publish, and distribute articles on the benefits of ES to all school districts, educational nonprofits, elected officials, and so forth. The California School Boards Association (CSBA), School Services Inc., and other state and regional policy organizations to which California high school districts regularly subscribe can be especially helpful. Having articles appear in journals and reports that are regularly read by school board members increases awareness of AB2016, understanding of ES benefits, and appreciation for successful models of existing ES electives or graduation requirements. As shown in Chapter 2, there is literature that examines the arguments for or against ES; however, the findings of this study indicate there is not enough understanding of ES or knowledge of ES course templates or syllabi.

Creating an ES clearinghouse. Beyond sharing literature, the CSBA, the California Department of Education, and the State Superintendent's Office should work together to create a clearinghouse that could be accessed by all high school districts that have ES programs, and perhaps those considering ES. Having access to this information would enable districts interested in pursuing ES to research current practices, realize benefits accrued, and obtain resources for school board members, superintendents, administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students. The state legislature should appropriate funding for the apparatus, software, and staff training required to maintain this clearinghouse, which should be compatible with existing databases that are used by school districts such as CALPADS and TOMS.

Board members are also advised to recall El-Haj's (2011) *relational view of difference* mentioned in Chapter 2. The relational view of difference is a justice framework that "moves beyond focusing on differences between groups to critically examining how dominant values and assumptions of our educational system perpetuate educational inequities" (El-Haj, 2011, p. 188). Pursuing effective strategies will only have limited success if embedded values or assumptions that perpetuate unjust policies and practices are not addressed. Shirley underscored this point when she asked, "When are we going to stop the cycle? When is it going to be okay to talk and learn about us and do that at a place where I am paying taxes into?" (Shirley, S.P.). Underlying this comment is the threat of perpetuating exclusionary history that spreads insidiously from one generation to the next. To counter this bias, how can one find a humanizing pedagogy to teach ES curricula, which can help uproot hidden values and assumptions that spawn unjust policies and practices? It is not enough to add a single ES course to a district curriculum, if it is not linked to a pedagogy of care and a tradition of authentic student involvement, engrained in the DNA of the district's culture.

Call to Action and Social Justice

Our curricular choices reflect our beliefs as policymakers and they directly affect students. As citizens of the pluralistic democracy known as the U.S., we have instructional responsibility, a moral imperative, and a civic duty to teach the histories and heritages of all groups.

<div align="right">--J. Carjuzaa et al., 2015, p. 204</div>

The results of this mixed-methods research study should encourage board members to craft policies that facilitate the development of ES and thus create programs that are conducive to the advocacy of social justice. Recalling Darder's (2012) critical theory of cultural democracy

asserts that knowing one's history and place in society can help strengthen one's sense of commitment to and deepen one's level of participation in democracy. Furthermore, since it is reported that students who take ES "learn to see strength in diversity and are prepared to take stands against social injustice" (Carjuzaa et al., 2015, p. 204), including ES curricula, creates the opportunity for high school students to fight for social justice. ES teachers who facilitate emancipatory dialogue and urge historical events to be viewed from multiple perspectives in these courses also have opportunities to counter social injustice that People of Color face in schools and society.

As school board members face the political motives inherent in the policy making process, it is helpful to recall the work of Fullan (2016) with respect to identifying the "right policy drivers." Fullan argued that "right drivers," such as capacity building, collaboration, and pedagogy can result in positive educational change. I would cite Freire's notion of *love as a political force* as a critical driver in the crusade for ES-friendly policy. In *Freire and Education*, Darder (2015) defined it as "a love that is born and emerges directly out of social participation and unwavering political commitment" to counter "dehumanizing forces" that Freire referred to as "armed love" (Darder, 2015, pp. 50–51). Integral to using the appropriate drivers is an understanding of how local context can uncover *critical crevices.*

CRT scholars Delgado and Stefancic summarized the reality that "needs and political strategies of groups fighting for social change will differ from group to group" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 56). Fulfilling this important role requires board members to have multiple strategies in their repertoire so that appropriate strategies can be employed in the context of their high school districts' unique cultures. School board members should identify critical crevices

within their own districts, which could include individual teachers who are keenly interested in ES, curious students who show a proclivity to ES, or parents who bring familiarity with ES based on their own professional or educational background.

CRT scholar Gaztambide-Fernández (2012) described high schools as dynamic spaces in which school board members have the potential to help students co-shape new constructs of identity and to critically co-assess the role that power dynamics play in this process of identity construction. Drawing on Freire's work, Darder (2015) described an ongoing dialectical process, or praxis, in which educators, students, and community members working together gain greater insight into the historical process by:

1. "naming and changing the world to help construction of meaning", which leads to;

2. "learning to be historical subjects of our own lives", which leads to;

3. "acting upon the world in meaningful ways", which leads to;

4. "developing a voice and social agency", which leads to;

5. "constituting a significant, liberatory process of political formation of self-esteem and community empowerment." (Darder, 2015, p. 16)

This liberating praxis of empowerment helps educators, students and communities achieve insight with respect to a new challenge, which can begin the cycle anew. The regenerative nature of this dynamic process is illustrated in Diagram 5.1.
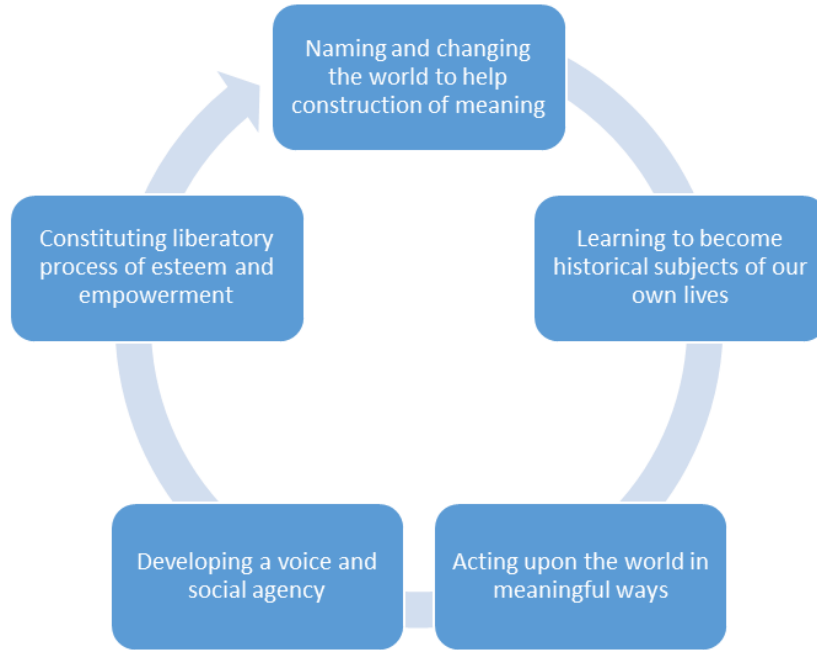
Diagram 5.1. Dialectical Process to Define History (Darder, 2015)

School board members are responsible for approving curricula for school districts. As noted by Carjuzaa et al. (2015), these curricular choices represent beliefs for which school board members should be held accountable given that these choices directly affect students. The moral imperative to teach all histories and heritages should encompass narratives of Communities of Color that have been too often neglected or entirely erased. CRT reminds us that everyone has a story and board members can harness this power of individual and communal storytelling to inform future steps and strategies. An example that illustrates the power storytelling could have on policy was shared in Chapter 1 when I described Miztla's speech at a school board meeting, in which she shared her interest in taking ES courses in college not available in high school. Listening, valuing, and responding with respect to stories like Miztla's can galvanize board

members to pursue ES in ways that can better meet the needs of students living and learning within an ever more diverse society.

As the familiar adage suggests, knowledge is power. School board members committed to implementing ES curricula should articulate the benefits of ES with fellow school board members and superintendents, so that they, in turn, can share with administrators, instructors, parents, and students. Involving a wide variety of high school district community members in a collective effort to build ES programs can help generate powerful political pressure on high school districts to at least be open to ES pilot programs. Such pilot programs could pave the road to future ES expansion. Introducing an ES pilot at one high school site and tracking potential benefits can help supporters make the case for replicating ES at other sites. Sharing success and best practices can help awaken community consciousness and spark political change needed for ES-supportive policy.

Areas for Future Research

To address important issues unexplored by my research, I suggest seven areas of future research for those interested in further study into the perspectives of board members toward ES and how these perspectives may shape public policy.

Perspectives of K–12 and K–8 School Board Members

The first unexplored area of research is that of the perspectives of K–12 and K–8 board members toward ES curricula. This is a potentially rich terrain from which to unearth perspectives, since K–8 and K–12 school board members comprise two-thirds of all school board members in California. Teaching ES to K-8 students was also identified as a possible strategy in the interviews for effectively implementing ES at high school districts. If K–12 and K–8 school

board members were to be asked about including ES, it would need to be clearly defined and the pedagogy would need to be age-appropriate.

Perspectives of High School Board Members Outside of California

Another unexplored area of research is the need to identify the perspectives of high school board members in states outside of California. Would school board members in other states be more or less supportive of including ES curricula? Is ES called something else in other parts of the nation, and does calling it something else matter with respect to implementation strategy? These are just a few examples of research questions that could be addressed when studying other states. Exploring ES in other states is intriguing, especially given the events in Bridgeport, Connecticut. In the Bridgeport School District, the school board unanimously approved a requirement in October 2017 to make ES a high school graduation requirement, becoming one of just a few in the country to have raised ES courses above the status of an elective (Iasevoli, 2017).

Education Regarding ES

Asking California school board members about their level of understanding of ES revealed that 28.1% had limited to no understanding of ES. Since nearly one out of three policymakers are in a position to make policy without sufficient understanding of what ES is (or is not), the reality is that ignorance of ES is expensive. As shown in the qualitative interviews, a lack of definition of ES can lead to opposition to ES. There is a need to educate all school board members about ES, particularly the benefits of ES. Research that addresses the content, location, timing, and extent of this board member education could be explored. Such board member

education could be paired with high school teacher training programs that include an ES component, so board members and teachers can receive ES education concurrently.

Delegate vs. Trustee

In political science and philosophy literature, there are two schools of thought with reference to the role of elected (and appointed) officials, which includes all school board members. Some school board members see themselves as *delegates* of their constituents, which means they are elected to solely represent the intentions, values, and preferences of their constituents. School board members who ascribe to the delegate school of thought refrain from including their own bias when making decisions and are more intent to regurgitate their constituents' preferences. On the other hand, school board members who see themselves as *trustees* see themselves as entrusted by their constituents to represent them. School board members who perceive themselves as trustees will listen to their constituents' preferences, but then form their own opinions on what is best for the entire body politic. Trustees have no qualms about including their own lens when making decisions, since they understand or assume that constituents expect their school board members to include their personal experiences and bias when making decisions (Mill, 1861). Although it is conceivable that some California board members perceive themselves to exist in some hybrid form of these two styles of representation, it would be fascinating to explore whether self-identification on the delegate versus trustee continuum would influence perspectives and determine how perspectives would shape public policy. It would be equally enlightening to understand the extent to which delegates or trustees would be interventionists, as this could influence the type, depth, and effectiveness of advocacy for ES.

Participatory Action Research (PAR)

As discussed in Chapter 2, PAR is a research method in which educational researchers function as full collaborators with community members to study societal problems and transform their communities. Youth participatory action research (YPAR) includes the radical inclusion of youth participation through research and action that cultivates critical consciousness (Tintiangco-Cubales et al., 2014). This critical consciousness, in turn, fosters empathy for others, which manifests through engagement in social justice activities. Scholars have already studied the connection between ES, the capacity-building of YPAR, and the development of agency, social awareness, civic engagement, and academic achievement (de los Rios et al., 2015). Perhaps future research can explore ES partnerships between school board members, students, and teachers within school districts. What if these partners collaborated to co-design an ES pilot with content reflective of the history of the surrounding community and with research questions that address the social and educational injustices in the local community? School board members familiar with the history of their districts could bring rich context to inform the PAR projects in ES courses. The fruits of such research could be numerous, not the least of which could be a broader coalition of support for ES.

Superintendent-Board Partnerships

There is literature that explores partnerships between high school district superintendents and board members who oversee them. Baldridge (1995) analyzed this partnership in the context of policy making when he discussed intertwining the policy roles of superintendents and board members. Baldridge referred to this overlap as "comingling," in which superintendents and board members regard the policy arena as a "shared domain" that is strengthened by "openness in

communication and trust" (Baldridge, 1995, p. 7). What impact could this partnership have on advocacy for ES curricula in California high schools?

Impact of Personal Bias on Public Policy

One response by Anson, an interview participant who was opposed to ES, epitomizes the subtle influence that personal bias or experience has on a board member's approach to policy. Anson referred to research that quantified the benefits of ES as "suspect," and claimed that ES is grounded in a movement based on "assumptions that aren't validated" (Anson, S.P.). Future research that examines the impact of personal bias on policy—especially policy issues that are politically charged, such as ES—is warranted. If board members like Anson respond from the standpoint of their own personal experience or implicit bias, what would this mean for community organizing or advocacy strategies regarding ES; public policy regarding ES; and efforts to promote dialogue concerning difficult conversations?

Conclusion

When I was I think the tenth grade, we had begun hearing about the people doing their thing in Southern California with the walkouts ... Ultimately, we had to make a presentation to the school board to let us have Mexican American history.

--Phillip (S.P.)

Who lives, who dies, who tells your story?

--L-M Miranda and J. McCarter, 2016, p. 281

March 2018 marks the 50th anniversary of the East Los Angeles walkouts or blowouts in which high school students from six urban high schools in Los Angeles walked out to demand equity and justice for their schools. Since one of the demands was instilling curricula that

reflected the histories of Mexican American students, it is important to see what impact this watershed event has had on subsequent efforts to include ES. Besides inspiring Phillip to introduce ES curriculum at his high school district, the ELA Walkouts motivated the inclusion of ES in the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) in Arizona (Carjuzaa et al., 2015). We know that the Mexican American Studies (MAS) program in the TUSD gave then-assemblyman Luis Alejo the drive to persist and persevere multiple times to pass AB2016. In summary, the ELA Walkouts set into motion a "domino effect" that created reverberations still palpable today. ES advocates can seize the opportunity to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the walkouts to rededicate efforts to the struggle for ES.

When I thanked Phillip for sharing one of his many responses regarding ES, he simply replied, "It's our life" (Phillip, S.P.). Succinct, yet profound, this quote epitomizes the critical role ES has played, does play, and will continue to play for those in search of their identity, especially high school students. To paraphrase Phillip, ES helps students know who they are. When students develop a strong sense of identity and self-awareness, the seeds of confidence and self-efficacy are planted and eventually blossom into social-justice-oriented action. ES is the *palanca*, or the Archimedean lever, with which an entire consciousness can be lifted as students who take ES reclaim their identity, story, space in history books, location in American democracy, and their terrain of social justice advocacy.

With such a large percentage of students not reaching their potential, particularly young Men of Color not performing as well as their peers, it is at best negligent and at worst criminal to not pursue ES as a means of helping these students succeed. Gay (2004) discussed the costs of offering culturally *irrelevant* education, which contributes to lower achievement rates among

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students due to loss of interest and lack of identification with curricula. School board members wanting to make progress by reducing the achievement gap between Euro American students and Students of Color are encouraged to consider introducing some form of ES curricula, given the benefits shown in academic achievement.

Graduation marks the culmination of one chapter in a student's life, but also marks the commencement of a new chapter. Similarly, though the conclusion of this study culminates over two years of research, it still represents the beginning of new research in the field of ES. I am buoyed by the enthusiasm of survey and interview participants who had their interest in ES piqued, and equally inspired by ES pioneers who shared that their decades-long commitment to ES was renewed. I look forward to other scholars pursuing one or more areas of future research to further explore the role of ES curricula in the lives of high school students, and perhaps middle and elementary school students.

I cannot travel back in time and enlighten the 19-year old Mexican American freshman at Stanford about Cesar Chavez or urge him to attend the lecture by the famed civil rights leader. However, I can look in the mirror and remind the 45-year old Chicano school board member to remain vigilant about fighting for ES. As a high school board member, I anticipate working with our high school district to adopt a strategy regarding an ES curriculum that is best for our students and aligned with our district's culture. As a parent of three children in elementary and middle school, I envision my three children being the beneficiaries of whatever ES curriculum is in place by the time they arrive at our high school district. As an educator dedicated to social justice for all, I dream that high school students from all backgrounds have opportunities to take ES, learn about their own histories, and learn about others' histories. In this way, these students

can, as Freire says, "discover their vocation to find completeness and to become more" (Freire, 1998, p. 79). ES is a means not only to construct one's identity but also to become all one can be.

Epilogue

After the conclusion of my first year in this doctoral program, I participated in a panel with fellow students as we provided brief summaries of our research topics to incoming first-year doctoral students. I compared the process of considering multiple topics and finally deciding on ES to the world of dating and relationships. Although I did not know it at the time, this analogy would help me better understand ES and my relationship to ES. Observers of couples in a long-term relationship sometimes assert that the individuals begin to resemble each other, due to picking up traits or idiosyncrasies of their partners. If I were to see myself "married" to ES, I would ask myself, "Am I starting to resemble ES? Would others who did not know me be able to ascertain that I am a student of, and an advocate for, ES?"

I hope the answer to the question would be a resounding "yes." I have embraced the multidisciplinarity of ES as I delved into the fields of history, sociology, education, political science, psychology, and public policy, and scoured literature that was relevant to my ES-centered research questions. As I reflect on my undergraduate years, I realize that I took courses in each of these disciplines, including multiple courses in ES. I welcomed the intersectionality celebrated in ES, as I acknowledged my identity as a cisgender male, heterosexual, 2.5 generation Chicano. I realize that my seminal experiences in school and work occurred when I brought people from various identity backgrounds together for a common cause. I have taken seriously a commitment to explore the power dynamics in institutional structures, which is

reflected in my ongoing struggle to come to terms with my own male, heterosexual, able-bodied, upper-middle class privilege.

This study changed my trajectory as a policy practitioner. At first, I intended to finish my second four-year term as a board member and not run for a third term. My thinking was that I should focus on my dissertation and my children, especially since my youngest child was diagnosed with a serious illness. However, somewhere along the way, after interviewing school board members and reading the transcripts, I became motivated to stay on the board at least a little longer. I wanted to see if I could be successful in working with the superintendent, principal, and teachers to create an ES pilot within my high school district. Consequently, between the end of data collection and the start of data analysis, I decided to run for reelection. In November 2017, I was reelected to a third term, thanks to the parents, teachers, staff members, administrators, community leaders, students, and district voters who supported me. As I write this epilogue, I await an update from the superintendent about the results of an ES pilot at one of the high school sites within the district I serve.

Asking fellow board members to identify strategies that are least likely and most likely to be effective in advocating for ES has profoundly affected me as an incumbent board member. I have grown particularly aware of how nuanced a board member's approach toward supporting ES must be in the context of his or her school district. On a more general level, I am aware of how any board member eager to fight for educational justice must place his or her strategy squarely within the context and culture of their local district. Having researched the history of board member roles and how these roles have evolved over time in the United States, I have a renewed respect for my role as a board member in this moment in history. I remain cognizant of

the critical importance of creating public policy and advocating socially just curricula for all students in my district.

As a school board member, I am keenly aware of my challenge to straddle two different worlds. On one side, I act as a policy member with a responsibility to work collegially with a board to best serve the interests of our students. On the other, I strive to be a change agent so that I can be a champion of ES within the school district I attended. I want to contribute to a tradition of resistance. Darder defines Freire's spirit of resistance as a "symptom of advancement towards a more complete humanity" (Darder, 2015, p. 107). I remain acutely aware that I am only doing research in ES because I stand on the shoulders of civil rights freedom fighters and activists-scholars who sacrificed to advance and defend ES to this day. I deeply internalize what Darder named "the need for ongoing political process of personal and community struggle" (p. 45).

From where will I gather courage for this ongoing struggle? Last year I spent over five months in a hospital with my daughter who was diagnosed with acute myeloblastic leukemia. She taught me so much as I witnessed her struggle through the painful symptoms of leukemia and the brutal side effects of ongoing aggressive chemotherapy. I purposefully mention my daughter's journey since her battle inspired me to keep writing and will continue to inspire me as I fight for ES in my high school district. Much like my daughter's road to recovery, I know that the struggle for ES in my high school district will not be linear, will include setbacks, and will promise heavy resistance along the *camino* (way). As my daughter encountered challenges due to unforeseen reactions to various types of chemotherapy, I too, will encounter resistance from familiar foes and unexpected opponents. Just as my daughter relied on the village of doctors, nurses, family members, and friends to survive, so too, will I need to rely on a coalition of board

members, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and community members if ES is to blossom within our district.

I look forward to my presentation at the CSBA's Annual Education Conference in San Francisco, CA, in December 2018. I imagine that presenting the highlights of my research to fellow board members will be a rewarding experience. I am especially eager to co-write the policy brief with CSBA that will be distributed to school districts across California. As an aspiring scholar-activist, I wish to publish the findings of my research and relish the opportunity to engage in dialogue with other board members as I advocate for ES. This CSBA presentation is an initial step in a sustained, lifelong call to action. I commit myself to lifelong struggle for ES as a board member, scholar-activist, parent, and student. I intentionally include this language so that I can hold myself accountable and so that others can remind me of my pledge to fight for ES. Including ES curricula is central in the struggle for socially just curricula, instrumental to student success, and essential to constructing identity. Only when we are free to construct our identities, share our narratives, speak our truths, and shape our histories can we be fully human.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Survey Instrument to Identify Board Members' Perspectives re: Ethnic Studies

Preamble

The purpose of this survey is to identify current perspectives of California high school board members toward Ethnic Studies. As a current high school board member in California, I am interested in better understanding your view and perspective on Ethnic Studies, especially in light of AB2016, which mandates the creation of a model Ethnic Studies curriculum to be used by high school districts across the state.

This survey is the first part of a mixed methods study that is the basis of my doctoral dissertation at Loyola Marymount University. The survey should approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Survey results will only be analyzed collectively, to ensure individual responses will remain anonymous and their responses to the survey confidential. Thank you in advance for your time and contribution to this study.

I. Perspectives on Ethnic Studies

1. How well would you say you understand the content and objectives of Ethnic Studies curricula?
    a. No understanding of the content and objectives
    b. Limited understanding of the content and objectives
    c. Average understanding of the content and objectives
    d. Good understanding of the content and objectives
    e. Excellent understanding of the content and objectives

2. What is your understanding of the content and objectives of Ethnic Studies curricula?

    _____

3. Does your district offer an Ethnic Studies course?
    Yes _____   No _____   Not sure
    _____

4. Does your district have an Ethnic Studies program (two or more courses)?

    Yes _____   No _____   Not sure
    _____

5. Please circle all that apply
    a. Ethnic Studies is a graduation requirement for all students in my district
    b. Ethnic Studies is offered as an optional elective in my district
    c. Other _____

6. Please indicate grade levels students are eligible to take Ethnic Studies courses? Please circle all that apply.
   a. Grade 9
   b. Grade 10
   c. Grade 11
   d. Grade 12
   e. All of the above

7. Please select the best option that describes your district's situation.
   a. District is currently working toward implementation of Ethnic Studies
   b. District is exploring possibility of Ethnic Studies, but it is unclear if it will be implemented
   c. District will not be pursuing Ethnic Studies in the near future
   d. Other _____

8. Please select the option which best describes your individual perspective on an Ethnic Studies course as an elective.
   a. Completely opposed to an Ethnic Studies course as an elective
   b. Somewhat opposed to an Ethnic Studies course as an elective, but could support it if it is called something else
   c. Somewhat supportive of an Ethnic Studies course as an elective
   d. Very supportive of an Ethnic Studies course as an elective

   TEXTBOX to appear here asking respondents to offer brief, two-line free response to explain why they have this particular perspective.

9. Please select option which best describes your individual perspective on Ethnic Studies courses as a high school graduation requirement.
   a. Completely opposed to Ethnic Studies courses as a graduation requirement
   b. Somewhat opposed to Ethnic Studies courses as a graduation requirement
   c. Somewhat supportive of Ethnic Studies courses as a graduation requirement
   d. Very supportive of Ethnic Studies courses as a graduation requirement

   TEXTBOX to appear here asking respondents to offer brief, two-line free response to explain why they have this particular perspective.

II. Future Steps regarding Ethnic Studies

10. How committed are you to implementing Ethnic Studies curriculum in your high school district?
    a. Not at all committed to implementing Ethnic Studies curriculum
    b. Not very committed to implementing Ethnic Studies curriculum
    c. Somewhat committed to implementing Ethnic Studies curriculum
    d. Very committed to implementing Ethnic Studies curriculum

11. Please indicate your perspective on **AB2016**, a law that was signed by the Governor in September 2016, which requires the Instructional Quality Commission to develop, and the state board to adopt, a model curriculum in Ethnic Studies. The law urges all high school districts in California to offer an Ethnic Studies course based on this model curriculum.
    a. Strongly disagree with AB2016
    b. Somewhat disagree with AB2016
    c. Somewhat agree with AB2016
    d. Strongly agree with AB2016

III. Demographic/Background Information

12. Please indicate your gender.
    Female _____   Male_____
              Other/prefer not to state_____

13. Please indicate your ethnicity (select all that apply).
    a. African American/Black
    b. Asian American/Pacific Islander
    c. Euro American/Caucasian/White
    d. Hispanic/Latino
    e. Native American/American Indian
    f. Other_____

14. Please indicate your highest level of education attained.
    a. High school diploma/GED
    b. Community college degree/certificate
    c. Four-year college degree
    d. Graduate/professional degree
    e. Post-graduate work

15. Please indicate the name of your high school district. _____

16. Please indicate your length of tenure on the school board (in years). _____

17. In addition to English, what languages do you have some level of fluency (if any)?
_____, _____, _____, _____

18. Did you take an Ethnic Studies class in either high school, undergraduate, or graduate school?

Yes _____   No _____   Not sure _____

19. If "Yes" at what grade level did you take this Ethnic Studies course? Please select all that apply
    a. Prior to high school
    b. High school
    c. Undergraduate school
    d. Graduate school
    e. Post graduate work

20. Please indicate your generation in the United States.
    a. Immigrant (born in a country other than United States)
    b. First-generation resident (born in the United States; one or more parents born in another country)
    c. Second-generation resident (one or more set of grandparents born in another country)
    d. Third-generation resident (one or more set of great-grandparents born in another country)
    e. Fourth-generation or higher resident (one or more great-great-grandparents born in another country)
    f. Decline to state

21. Please indicate your party affiliation.
    a. Democrat
    b. Republican
    c. Independent
    d. Decline to State
    e. Other_____

[Appendix A: Survey Instrument continued on next page]

Appendix A: Survey Instrument (continued)

22. Would you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview to further explore the topic of Ethnic Studies? Yes _____   No _____   Not sure
_____

23. If you answered YES, enter your contact information here:

   Name (First and Last): _____

   E-mail address: _____

End of [Appendix A: Survey Instrument]

Appendix B: Interview Questions

- **Initial "Pre-interview" Questions**

  A1. (RECORD) I will now read the Informed Consent language to preface your participation in this interview. READ LANGUAGE. Do you consent to participate in this interview? WAIT FOR YES before proceeding to next "pre-interview" questions. PAUSE TO SEE IF THERE ARE ANY GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT INTERVIEW

  A2. You have the opportunity to pick a pseudonym. Among the following three options, which would you like? Trinity, Naomi, Esther, Sandra

  A3. How long have you served on the board of your high school district?

  A4. Have you served as a board member of any other school districts prior to the high school district? If so? Where and how long?

- **Introductory Questions (Priming the Respondent)**

  1a. According to your survey responses, you are _____supportive of/ _____opposed to the inclusion of Ethnic Studies as an elective in high school curricula and   _____supportive of/ _____opposed to the inclusion of Ethnic Studies as a graduation requirement. Do these positions still accurately describe your thoughts on Ethnic Studies?

  OR (in the case of any inconsistencies that need to be reconciled or explained)

  1b. I noticed that you answered _____ toward ES as an elective yet answered_____ toward ES as a graduation requirement in the survey. How do you explain or reconcile these responses? (*assuming they can or should be*)

[Appendix B: Interview Questions continued on next page]

- **For high school board member interviewees who are *supportive* of Ethnic Studies:**

  2. How do you define Ethnic Studies?

  3. Why are you supportive of Ethnic Studies?

  4. I noticed that you answered _____ when asked if you took an Ethnic Studies class. How *does your taking an ES course/not taking an ES course/not sure if you took ES course* influence your stance on Ethnic Studies, if at all?

  5. What types of arguments or strategies do you believe can be most effective in convincing other board members to join you in supporting Ethnic Studies curricula?

  6. What types of arguments or strategies do you believe are least effective in convincing other board members to join you in supporting Ethnic Studies curricula?

  7. Are you aware of AB 2016?

     a. If NO, read summary of AB 2016 then proceed to follow up question #10

     b. If YES, proceed directly to follow up question #10

  8. Follow-Up Question: What kind of impact, if any, will AB 2016 have on your district?

  9. Are you willing to encourage your district to adopt an Ethnic Studies elective, Ethnic Studies graduation requirement, or both?

     a. If YES, what course of action would you be willing to take to encourage adoption?

     b. If NO, why not?

  10. What type of information might be helpful for you to receive when deciding whether or not to pursue ES as an elective or graduation requirement?

  11. Are you supportive of the inclusion of Ethnic Studies in elementary or middle school curriculum?

  12. Is there anything else you would like to add re: your views on Ethnic Studies curriculum that you have not already shared?

- **For high school board member interviewees who are *opposed* to Ethnic Studies:**

    2. How do you define Ethnic Studies?

    3. Why are you opposed to Ethnic Studies?

    4. I noticed that you answered _____ when asked if you took an Ethnic Studies class. How *does your taking an ES course/not taking an ES course/not sure if you took ES course* influence your stance on Ethnic Studies, if at all?

    5. What type of arguments, if any, could persuade to change your perspective re: Ethnic Studies curricula?

    6. What types of arguments, if any, are least likely to persuade you to change your perspective re: Ethnic Studies curricula?

    7. Are you aware of AB 2016?
        a. If NO, read summary of AB 2016 then proceed to follow up question #10
        b. If YES, proceed directly to follow up question #10

    8. Follow-Up Question: What kind of impact, if any, will AB 2016 have on your district?

    9. If any of your fellow board members urge your District to adopt an Ethnic Studies elective, or Ethnic Studies graduation requirement, how would you respond?

    10. What type of information might be helpful for you to receive when deciding whether or not to pursue ES as an elective or graduation requirement?

    11. Are you supportive of the inclusion of Ethnic Studies in elementary or middle school curriculum?

    12. Is there anything else you would like to add re: your views on Ethnic Studies curriculum that you have not already shared?

EXPLANATION OF NEXT STEPS

THANK YOU

STOP RECORDING

End of [Appendix B: Interview Question]

Appendix C: List of Key Terms and Acronyms

List of Key Terms

African American instead of Black

Asian American/Pacific Islander instead of Asian

Board member instead of trustee, governing board member, school board member

Euro American instead of European American, Caucasian, or White

Latinx instead of Hispanic

Native Americans instead of American Indian, Indian or Indigenous

People of Color instead of ethnic minorities

List of Acronyms

AB for Assembly Bill

BOT for Board of Trustees

CALPADS for California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System

CES for Critical Ethnic Studies

CRT for Critical Race Theory

CSBA for California School Boards Association

ERUSD for El Rancho Unified School District

ESN for Ethnic Studies Now

LGBTQI for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersexual community

LMU for Loyola Marymount University

MAS for Mexican American Studies

MEChA for Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan

NSBA for National School Board Association

RIF for Reduction-In-Force

SFSU for San Francisco State University

TOMS for Test Operations Management System

UCB for University of California at Berkeley

UCSB for University of California at Santa Barbara

WUHSD for Whittier Union High School District

Appendix D: E-Mail Correspondence with CSBA

E-mail message from Dr. Julie Maxwell-Jolly, Senior Director, Policy and Programs, CSBA

Dated 8-31-16

Good afternoon Russell,

Thank you for your patience with regard your proposed survey research of CSBA members about their experience and views of Ethnic Studies. Vernon Billy has approved the study, and as Senior Director of Policy and Programs, I will be your point of contact.

You note that you will be taking your proposal to the IRB in April or May of 2017. Please let me know what you need from us before you do that. If you have an updated version of your survey questions it would be great to see those; we also need to know how many participants you need so that we can prepare our IT team to compile the contact information you need. I am assuming a random selection of a representative sample of secondary board members, but please advise what you and your committee are expecting, including when you expect to administer the survey and by when you will need the contact information for those in your sample.

Finally, we ask all researchers with whom we work to sign a data agreement. Essentially it asks for guaranteed anonymity of the survey participants, gives us the prerogative of reviewing (and declining) your survey questions, and requires that you author or co-author a brief published by CSBA sharing your findings with your fellow school board members.

Please feel free to get in touch. I'd be happy to talk by phone and you can reach me at the number below. I spent a number of years as an education researcher at UC Davis and am delighted to do what I can to support your project.

Best regards,
Julie

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