



# 132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2025

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Legislative Document

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H.P. 616

House of Representatives, March 11, 2025

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R B. Hunt".

ROBERT B. HUNT  
Clerk

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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**SUMMARY**

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