

**THE POLITICS OF TEACHING HISTORY: AFROCENTRICITY AS A
MODALITY FOR THE NEW JERSEY AMISTAD LAW – THE
PEDAGOGIES OF LOCATION, AGENCY AND
VOICE IN PRAXIS**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how legislated policy, the New Jersey Amistad Bill, and the subsequently created Amistad Commission, shifted the mandated educational landscape in regard to the teaching of social studies in the state of New Jersey—by legislative edict and enforcement, within *every* class in the state. Through a century of debates, reforms, and legislations, there has been a demand to include the contributions, achievements, and perspectives of people of the African Diaspora that deconstruct the European narrative of history.

It is my belief that the formation of an educational public policy that is reflective of the Afrocentric paradigm in its interpretation and operation, such as the Amistad law, with subsequent policy manifestations that result in curriculum development and legalized institutionalization in classrooms across the country is central to creating the curriculum that will neutralize mis-education and will help American students to obtain an understanding of African American agency and the development of our collective history.

The Amistad Commission, created by legal mandate in the state of New Jersey in 2002, is groundbreaking because it is a legal decree in educational policymaking that codifies the full infusion and inclusion of African American historical content into New Jersey's K-12 Social Studies curriculum and statewide Social Studies standards. This infusion, directed by the executive leadership team, is a statewide overhaul and redirection for Social Studies and the Humanities in all grades in every district throughout the state. The Commission's choice of the Afrocentric theoretical construct—a cultural-intellectual framework that centers the African historical, social, economic, spiritual and political experience as pertains to any intellectual experience involving Africans and people of African descent—as its organizing ethos and central ideology was central in framing the resulting curriculum products and programmatic directives. This study's conclusive premise in utilization of the Afrocentricity construct is evidenced in the Amistad curriculum's Afrocentric tenets: de-

marginalization of African historical contribution and agency; the importance of voice and first person narrative when transcribing history, and how shifting of —as in, correcting—the entire Eurocentric structure is important. Rather than an additive prescription of historical tokenisms, or a contributive prescription that does not allow for a centralized locality from within the culture, Afrocentricity allows for a cultural ideology when applicable to the Amistad law. Thus the use of Afrocentricity in the implementation of the Amistad law transforms the *entire* narrative of American history in the state of New Jersey, one of the original thirteen colonies.

The study seeks to remedy the void of research as to how the incorporation of the particular theoretical framework of Afrocentricity impacted the decision guiding the policy directives, programmatic and the curriculum outcomes within the implementation of the New Jersey Amistad Commission mandate. The case study asserts that the Afrocentric theory was put into praxis when operationalizing the New Jersey Amistad law and the work of the Amistad Commission. It chronicles the history of similar mandates focused on the incorporation of African American history in American classrooms that led to the Amistad law. It also enumerates the Amistad law’s subsequent operationalization and curriculum development efforts elucidating practical application of the Afrocentric theory. It has direct implications for teacher education, practicing teachers, and policymakers interested in understanding how Afrocentricity and its tenets are paramount in curriculum development efforts, especially as it pertains to New Jersey, New York, and Illinois. These three states have passed legislations that have attempted to proactively remedy their educational policies. The disparities in knowledge and education about African diaspora people in our Social Studies classrooms are targeted by these states.

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"O ye Daughters of Africa! What have ye done to immortalize your names beyond the grave? What examples have ye set before the rising generation? O, ye daughters of Africa, awake! awake! arise! no longer sleep nor slumber, but distinguish yourselves, Show forth to the world that ye are endowed with noble and exalted faculties"

by Maria Stewart, Productions of Mrs. Maria W Stewart (1835)

The insatiable personal yearning to study and understand African American history comes from my mother, a Philadelphia public school educator who poured responses and ideas into me when I sought answers about our various powerful cultural legacies. She planted seeds with countless visits to the African American Museum in Philadelphia as well as with biographies and works of African-American nonfiction and fiction that lined my bookshelves.

Questions about my future career aspirations began to crystalize during my undergraduate matriculation at University of Maryland College Park and was solidified at Temple University. The above Maria Stewart reading spoke to my soul. Her words became and remain my inspiration and wake-up call. Their power was solidified as I choose a career in K-12 educational policy that focused on the inclusion and promotion of African American history in our nation's classroom. In my career I have had shining exemplar of distinguished African American female intelligentsia; many female academicians and scholars that have stirred and inspired me to pursue a career within African American Studies. I would like to thank them for their influence and encouragement; Dr. Shirley Wilson Logan, Nellie Pharr, Dr. Sharon Harley, Dr. Kariamuwelsh, Dr. Sandra Collins, Dr. Lillie Johnson Edwards, Dr. Sandra Lewis, Dr. Rochelle Hendricks, Deborah Johnson, Nona Martin, Elaine Wideman Vaughn, Dr. Joyce Wilson Harley, Dr. LaToya K. Bailey, Jeanette Bland, Carolynne Carter, Joyce Watson, Professor Ruby Peters, Iman Al-Aqqudus, Glender Terrell, Shara Floyd, Tashanna Williams, Maryam Al-Aqqudus, and most especially Dr. Nilgun Anadolu Okur (who has honored me by working with me intimately as my Major Advisor), continued to push me towards being my best

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I will forever be indebted for the gift of my parent's belief in me. I am the daughter, and niece of a family of Educators yet I never envisioned it as a remote career aspiration for me. I didn't see it as one of my gifting's; until I entered the classroom and stood in front of students for the first time. My spirit lifted, and it still does at every opportunity to teach African American history. My parents, Dr. Frank Stanley James and Mrs. Sandra Carter James have, without ceasing, lovingly invested tremendously in me since the day I took my first breath. They have been unwavering in their support and encouragement in my pursuit of my Ph.D. Without them, none of this would be possible.

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To my children, Joel Christopher Carter Wilson and Jordan Xavier Carter Wilson, my nephews Gavin Alexander Carter Pennington and Gabriel Ashton Carter Pennington (our legendary “Carter Boys”), my step-daughters Krystle and Mya Harris, and our Elijah; you are my legacy, my heartbeats, and my reason for everything. I beseech you to not let this work be in vain: Carry our Ancestors’ stories forward, and teach at every instance you can. Whether well-received or challenged, it is necessary work and our duty to their memories and countless sacrifices. If my life’s work is successful, your children will live in a world where our history will not be siloed but intrinsically taught every day, because, like our Ancestor Langston Hughes, “We too sing America.”

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*I am My Ancestors Wildest Dream.
A woman with ambition, a fire for justice, a thirst for truth
Blackness embraced.*

*My Strength is my battleship
My fire, my core
My love is my compassion
My desire, my life.*

*I am My Ancestors Wildest Dream.
A woman with ambition, a fire for justice, a thirst for truth
Blackness embraced.*

*My zeal for adventure cannot be relinquished
My hunger for justice cannot be diminished
My propensity for authenticity cannot be silenced
My yearning for peace cannot be quashed.*

*I am my Ancestors Wildest Dream.
A woman with ambition, a fire for justice, a thirst for truth
Blackness embraced.*

*They died for my freedom
They cried for my joy
They bled for my children
They rose for my delight.*

*I am my Ancestors wildest dream
A woman with ambition, a fire for justice, a thirst for truth
Blackness embraced.*

*I am my Ancestors Wildest Dream.
Annalisa Toccara, 2016*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Education is power – it shapes perspective, it alters realities, it prescribes and reinforces beliefs, and it provides a theoretical framework for societal growths. The development of curriculum, and the powerful policymaking as to what will both be included and excluded, by specified omission or benign oversight, is indeed a battleground in educational policy as well as in instruction. It is, in essence, a battle over how past and present socio-historical reality will be defined, and subsequently disseminated, into the minds of those who will shape the future of the United States and the world. Therefore, the collective indoctrination of the base of knowledge that shapes our collective consciousness is a fundamental underpinning for future generations. This makes the pedagogy focusing on the totality of our k-12 public education system and the teaching and learning of our nation's students one of utmost importance. Pablo Freire symbolizes this notion when he declared that Education is politics, and that once the educator discovers that he or she is a politician as well, they must ask themselves what kind political statement they are making in the classroom. As an Africologist, it is my belief that educational policymaking decisions should be central to our foci for shifting the discourse and creating institutional shifts that incorporate the homogeneity of our philosophical framework. Afrocentric homogeneity must forever battle Eurocentric hegemony.

Molefi K. Asante proposes that Africologists must dismantle the structural adjustment to black disorientation, de-centeredness, and lack of African agency. If knowledge is indeed power, then policies that determine our knowledge bases must align to an epistemology and ontology of liberation. According to Maulana Karenga, in his seminal work *Introduction to Black Studies*, the theoretical concept of Afrocentricity is an intellectual (and social and cultural) liberating paradigm, because it is: a) is inclusive of knowledge acquisition for social change, b) it disrupts and destroys

European intellectual hegemony. Implementing those two prongs, Karenga argues, should shift humanity's intellectual discourse (Karenga, 1982).

Before the abolition of slavery, the United States struggled and made specific decisions regarding the recognition of people of color, specifically African-Americans. They were not considered equal citizens worthy of equal education, and their access to public education was denied. For several generations, within the curriculums of American schools, students have been taught the narrative of American History with a Eurocentric perspective that objectifies the histories of African people throughout the African Diaspora and eliminates agency. This perspective objectified Africans, reducing them to single-dimensional passive observers and reactionary responders to the alienation and isolation towards them. This narrative displays African people as lacking self-determination in their intersections with other cultures and peoples. African Diasporan populations have been fed this narrative as a by-product of colonization and enslavement. From the inception of the African Free school movement in the 1700s, there has been a push from within the African Diasporan community, motivated by various leaders, researchers, and scholars to question the validity of this narrative and offer solutions to an alternative interpretation of American History instruction for American children, most especially for the holistic education of African American children. Thereby the utilization of the Afrocentric paradigm in national K-12 educational policy becomes a subsequent step in the hierarchical development of the mandated curriculum development efforts that serve to liberate the marginalized historiography of African Diasporan people.

In *The Afrocentric Idea* (1997), Asante defines Afrocentricity as a revolutionary idea that should be holistically incorporated into the politics of education and the amalgamated by public policy stakeholders. The design of a statewide K-12 culturally competent and proficient curriculum, focused on history instruction for children utilizing the Afrocentric paradigm, allows for the study of ideas, concepts, events, personalities, and political and economic processes from a standpoint of black

people as active and equal subjects and not as objects. It is based upon authentic interrogation of location and equalizing the objectification of African Diasporan people in our nation's classrooms.

The New Jersey Amistad Bill, and its subsequent mandate, charges its executive staff, now placed within the executive leadership of the New Jersey Department of Education, with the responsibility of ensuring that African Americans' contribution and experiences are historically infused and adequately taught in all the state's classrooms. According to the legislation, New Jersey did not design a separate African American Studies course for New Jersey's school districts; however, it guarantees that African American content is taught in all levels of Social Studies and the Humanities curricula.

This groundbreaking, state-mandated educational initiative, is tasked with the full infusion model of curriculum development with the inclusion of African American historical content into New Jersey's K-12 Social Studies curriculum and statewide Social Studies standards. This infusion was mandated by New Jersey legislation in 2002, and is a statewide overhaul that will redirect Social Studies and the Humanities in all grades in every public, private and parochial school district throughout the state of New Jersey.

The Amistad Bill created the state level agency entitled the Amistad Commission, the government agency tasked with operationalizing the Amistad bill. The primary focus of the Amistad Commission, under its executive leadership, is threefold: 1) it strives to become the repository for Social Studies resources to every school in the state; 2) it develops the evolving Amistad curriculum, and 3) it disseminates curriculum materials to all district curriculum offices and teams. Under the legislation, the Amistad executive director is responsible for creating and overseeing the direction, design, and content for the Amistad Commission teacher on-line textbook resource and curriculum mapping called, "The Amistad Web-based Curriculum - An Inclusive Journey through American

History”. This curriculum resource is parallel to the state curriculum benchmarks for Social Studies, Civics, and History and is referenced directly in the revised 2004, 2009 and 2012 New Jersey Department of Education’s state standards. The Amistad executive director as well as several members of Amistad Commissioners were key stakeholders and decision makers in the creation of those benchmarks. The Amistad Commission has two public tasks, designed to influence the state’s schoolteachers: first, it frequently conducts professional development workshops throughout the state on the utilization of the curriculum resources in compliance with the statewide mandate, and secondly, it stresses the importance and praxis of infusing African American historical content into any presentation of American history. It is also responsible for correlating a list of recommendations for experts in the field that can provide professional development in support of the new statewide mandate for Social Studies.

As a case study for educational shifts that move towards African American agency in educational policy design and inclusions, the Amistad Commission’s story is important to chronicle in a nation with a brutal history of racial oppression and present-day diversity struggles. In America, where racial confrontations are commonplace because the effects of oppression still permeate the institutions of America from the political to the educational arena. Messages of superiority and inferiority continue to be passed down from generation to generation in public school around the country through history curricula that magnifies the mainstream story of European dominance and downplays the roles of so many other key contributors.

Nilgun Anadolu-Okur in “Out of Borrowed Space” (2013) asserts that in contrast to hegemonic and universalist claims of Eurocentric discourse in historiography, the Afrocentric or African-centered perspective offers an alternative world view about culture, ethnicity, race and religion based on pluralism without hierarchy. Okur further postulates that white oppression in America has been reinforced through dominant white control of city and state governments, school

boards, armed forces, defense industries, and legislative bodies. The shift of discourse that embraces the tenets of Afrocentricity within the operationalization of the Amistad law allows for a deconstruction of national myths and a challenging of our collective treatise that undergird the American pathos and ethos. African American history, then, must be infused as set forth by the Amistad legislation because it is indisputable American history, located undeniably at the center of the making of the American republic. Special consideration should be made as to how we present and articulate the notion of the African American experience to students, as we understand the challenge of Social Studies to reveal an understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

Since the abolition of slavery, the United States has struggled to recognize African Americans as equal citizens worthy of equal representation in the nations' classrooms. This is a question of institutionalized racism's hierarchy, perspective, and parity. The American narrative, as presented within the history curriculum, has systematically failed to position or discuss the African American perspective as central to understanding of the American past. As Asante asserts, the Amistad legislation ushers in a confrontation with history it thrashes the false notion of our American altruistic and patriotic discourse often found in American textbooks, which have dominated our historic narrative and out teaching praxis (Asante, 2008). Winston Churchill is infamous for his quote that history is written by the victors; or as in many cases those in power and the authority to draft it. A perfect exemplar is 2016 textbook controversy in the state of Texas that is still ongoing. According to National Education Association's website article entitled "Don't Know Much about History" (2016) by Tim Walker educational policy shifts are ongoing in Austin, Texas with the State Board of Education. The unified voting bloc on the 15 member Texas State Board of Education made a decision to orchestrate and dictate a year-long review and revisions to the state standards for Social Studies, as well as the statewide social studies curriculum. These revisions deteriorated into a political and divisive national spectacle; because they were primarily erased the historical contributions of

minorities in the nation, redefined terminology and sanitizing historic narratives (Walker 2016) Texas's action are not in a vacuum and have far reaching repercussions which is why they should be watched closely. Walker illustrated in his article that Texas is a state with a textbook central purchasing office - thereby textbook purchases carry immense weight with textbook publishing companies. National publishers usually cater to demands of Texas because of the sheer size and monetary value of textbook purchases (second only to California). Texas buys 48 million textbooks every year (Walker 2016). The shifts in the Texas state standards and curriculum imposed by the current state school board will lead to the rewriting of Social Studies textbooks to accommodate Texas's new curriculum and K-12 history standards. Large scale textbook purchases will make publishers rewrite their textbooks for alignment to classroom instruction directives in such a large state. Over the next decade, those rewritten textbooks that align with the historical narrative that was sanitized to accommodate the ideologies of the Texas State Board, will be sold within Texas and across the nation (Walker 2016).

James Loewen in *Lies My Teacher Told Me* (1995), asserts that American history textbooks promote the belief that most important developments in world history are traceable to Europe. To grant too much human potential to pre-Christopher Columbian "discovery," instead of enumerating African Diasporan expertise, upsets European American sensibilities. Loewen addresses certain facts, grievances, misrepresentations and he deems are absent from high school text and curriculum of the American educational system. Historian John Henry Clarke says it best when he declares in his book *Africans at the Crossroads: Notes for African World Revolution* (1991) that the greatest accomplishment of the European was that he not just colonized the world, but also colonized information about the world (Clarke, 1991).

American children and young adults don't often question what they are taught and this, according to Loewen, is problematic for proper education and eventual success of today's students.

Loewen argues that history is abbreviated and cleaned up before being immortalized in text and classroom and presented to American youth. Students during learning, are not in the position to make judgement calls as to what historical mistruths or perspectives in which they should disagree or entirely disregard among the information presented to them during their formative years in the classroom. It often becomes cyclical for students, to have the previous content knowledge to know what to question while being taught daily content that should be questioned, without being aware of what knowledge has mistruths or omissions that warrant questioning. Loewen assesses that many students are presented with facts used inappropriately or out of context, or half-truths and even preconceived lies. Information which is intentionally or deliberately suppressed has left American children ignorant of much of the accuracies of U.S. history as well as creating an utter disinterest in broadening their knowledge of said history (Loewen, 1995)

For years, the history of the people of the African Diaspora has been set-aside in the history curriculum. Nilgun Anadolu Okur positions that the development of history as a major discipline has almost always focused on origins and links to ancient Greece rather than the whole of ancient Africa and the Middle East, or specifically Egypt or Sumer. She asserts that Egyptian and Sumerian civilizations preceded the Greeks; yet, Eurocentrists, defined as those that use Europe as their central locality for all discourse, offer no explanation for 4,500-years of relative discrepancy between the rise of Egyptian and Sumerian civilizations and the emergence of the first Greek city-states around the 6th century B.C. They do not include the African history or its legacies in American classrooms or textbooks. To those Eurocentrists, for example, Egypt is not part of Africa, regardless of its land-locked status on the continent (Okur, 2013).

If African Diasporan historical “factoids” are included in the nation’s curriculum, they are often presented within a quasi-token one dimensional representation. As James Banks (2002) explains, schools and classrooms traditionally use the contribution or additive approach to curriculum

reform. Another approach to the inclusionary curriculum reform, the “contribution approach”—or the simple focus on Black History Month or leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., does not change the structure of the curriculum, but simply adds the content, concepts, themes, and perspectives to the already existing cultural hegemony. Such approaches fail to provide students with opportunities to view history from the perspective of diverse ethnic and cultural groups and do not allow students to take action and formulate solutions to important social concerns.

In *Afrocentricity* (1988), Asante outlined the premises of an African-centered cultural consciousness for African American people. Asante’s theoretical approach postulates the difficulty of living in the midst of a racially divided and highly polarized nation as a marginalized people. In the book *Decolonizing the African Mind*, Chinweizu Ibekwe (1987) asserted that overthrowing the colonial inheritance and Eurocentricity discourse required African Americans “to reform everything” to define their objectives, set their own standards, and pick their own heroes from among those who outstandingly serve their own interests” (Chinweizu, 1987). This included educational reform, including the idea of establishing school curriculum.

Educational policymakers who are interested in liberating curriculum development from the annals of Eurocentricity focus a portion of their efforts attempting to counteract the racial micro-aggressions that covertly become prevalent in the classroom. Conscious-minded policymakers who strive to be culturally competent will alternatively utilize the homogeneity of Ethnic Studies, Afrocentricity, and Multiculturalism. These are the three commonly used theoretical and educational approaches to the incorporation of “race and culture” within the history curriculum. In this study, Afrocentricity rises as most liberating praxis in curriculum development for students.

Racial micro-aggressions, which are often intrinsically imbedded in the traditional historiography of American history education, have to be confronted by America’s educators. Psychologist Derald Wing Sue in his article titled *Racial Micro aggressions in the Life Experiences*

of *Black Americans*, defines micro-aggressions as brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership. Sue describes how micro-aggressions generally happen below the level of awareness of well-intentioned members of the dominant culture. Racial micro-aggressions are different from overt, deliberate acts of bigotry, such as the use of racist epithets, because the people perpetrating micro-aggressions often intend no offense and are unaware they are causing harm and yet they are injurious (Sue, 2007).

The Amistad law and its curriculum platform elucidated the racial micro-aggressions that were inherently taught along with the digestion of Eurocentric presentations of important peoples, places, and dates. The proliferations of micro-aggressions become the natural offspring of not only the absence of “others” in the nation’s curriculum, but also in the educational policymaking that creates such curricula. Without Afrocentricity and its liberating praxis in curriculum development, it is my argument as an educator and policymaker and Africologists that those micro-aggressions would not be eradicated. Additive and the contributive approaches are still steeped in one-dimensionality and do not address issues of marginalization, either in their presentation or in curricula choices. The example of the Amistad Commission counters both the micro-aggressions of New Jersey and the micro- and macro-aggressions of Eurocentric educational policy nationwide.

If curriculum policymakers are not cognizant and vigilant, history coursework will continue to prevail with racial micro-aggressions. For example, New Jersey State Assemblyman William Payne, author of the Amistad legislation, recounts in his February 9th, 2008 *USA Today* op-ed article entitled, “Some say Black History lacking in Schools,” that the first book that he ever recalls as a kindergartner in the 1940s was a children’s book, *The Story of Little Black Sambo*. He never forgot the black stereotypes, like those epitomized by the Sambo character, that filled the 19th and early 20th century children's books that were required reading in the Jim-Crowed decades before the Civil Rights Movement. Payne recounted in the article that in addition to that *blatant* attack on his African

psyche, he grew up with *subliminal* messages that everything good was white. This spurred anger and resentment, because his white classmates associated him with Sambo, while they self-identified with classic 20th century children’s book characters “Dick and Jane” and their dog, Spot. He found it hurtful that those things were sanctioned by the Board of Education. (Payne, 2008) The memory was part of what drove Payne decades later as he wrote and lobbied for a state law — the nation's first — mandating that New Jersey schools statewide infuse African American history fully into the K-12 Social Studies curriculum. This was the first in the nation (Payne, 2008).

Afrocentricity was chosen as the organizing principle for the Commission’s implementation strategy because without its transformative and liberating principles, and its utilization of voice and perspective, the curriculum shifts in New Jersey would not lead to increased cultural competencies and eradication of racial micro-aggressions among students and their teachers—one the long-term goals in institutionalizing this law. There is not one specific definition of cultural competence. Definitions of cultural competence have evolved from diverse perspectives, interests and needs. These are incorporated in state legislation, federal statutes and programs, private sector organizations and academic settings. The seminal work of Cross (1989) offered a definition of cultural competence. That definition has been widely adapted and modified; however, the core concepts and principles Cross espoused remain constant as they are viewed as universally applicable across multiple systems. Cross defines cultural competence as a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency or those professions to work effectively and be insightfully aware in cross-cultural situations. Cultural competence requires that professionals operate in a fashion that value diversity, conduct self-assessment regarding belief systems, manage the dynamics of difference, acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of communities they serve and, above

all else, incorporate the above in all aspects of policymaking, administration, practice and service delivery, systematically.

Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period and is a key factor in enabling educators to be effective with students from cultures other than their own. Cultural competence leads to cultural proficiency in the classroom, which, in turn, eliminates racial micro-aggressions. Cultural proficiency is defined here as the mastering of awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families. It is the ability to understand the within-group differences that make each student unique, while celebrating the between-group variations that make our country a tapestry. This understanding informs and expands teaching practices in the culturally competent educator's classroom, minus the alienation or objectification of anyone's history.

Cultural competence is a salient issue in American public education today. Education scholars emphasize the need for educators to provide an environment of respect and reciprocity of ideas as a methodology of de-marginalizing competing and conflicting narratives in curricula. They illustrate how the ability for educators to learn how to teach students from different backgrounds is critical to the success of the educational system, most especially as it relates to the prevalence of Eurocentric as the prevailing dominant paradigm in most history curriculums and standards that must be identified and eliminated. Per the latest U.S. Census Data Reports our country is diverse and needs educational policies reflective of that diversity. Census records with U.S. government defined racial categorizations, indicated that America is currently 61% White, 14% African American, 18% Hispanic, 6% Asian, 1% American Indian/ Alaska Native (2016). Those statistics suggest that America and its classrooms, are approaching 50% of what the US government defines minority populations (2016).

The need for the Amistad law and the work of the Commission Executive staff to address and redress the issues of racial micro-aggressions, cultural competency and cultural proficiency is identified in the professional development trainings with teachers throughout the state of New Jersey charged with operationalizing this mandate daily but identify themselves as ill-equipped in their understanding of their affect with their students in their delivery and curricula choices. This is a current and future problem that must be address immediately, for many reasons including the demographics of the state of New Jersey. The U.S. Census Data Report with U.S. government defined racial categorizations, indicated that New Jersey is currently 56% White, 13% African American, 18% Hispanic, 11% Asian, 1% American Indian/ Alaska Native (2016). Those statistics suggest that New Jersey and its classrooms, are also approaching 50% of what the US government defines minority populations (2016).

Asante asserts in *The Afrocentric Idea* that Afrocentricity is not merely cultural sensitivity or a modality for the boasting of one's self esteem. It is a codification of procedures for inquiry, analysis and synthesis that undergirds the ideology of centeredness in a narrative that is applicable to varied areas of interest and disciplines, such as educational policy.

Proponents of Afrocentricity are not alone in their examination of educational reform from a cultural perspective. In 2013, the Anti-Defamation League put forth a proposal for teaching directives that call into account cultural competencies and cultural proficiencies to eliminate the racial micro-aggressions that often spring forth without forethought in teaching praxis and presentation based on a Eurocentric paradigm. The suggestions from the Anti-Defamation League for Educators reveal paradigms that are reflective of voice, perspective, and location within Afrocentricity and support its utilization within the classroom as the preferred modality of the Amistad law; these suggestions are as follows:

- Educators should be aware of words, images and situations that suggest that all or most members of a group are the same. Stereotypes often lead to assumptions that are unsupportable and offensive.
- Avoid qualifiers that reinforce stereotypes. A qualifier is added information that suggests what is being said is an exception to what is expected or the stereotypical normative for the group- positioning it as an outlier of the group. Examples
- Identify people by identity characteristics only when relevant- because they are often used to reinforce stereotypes or social/political vantage points of the speaker - very few situations require such identification.
- Be aware of language that, to some people, has questionable racial or ethnic connotations. While a word or phrase may not be personally offensive to you, it may be to others. Examples: Culturally deprived or culturally disadvantaged. These terms imply superiority of one culture over another. In fact, people so labeled are often bicultural and bilingual. Non-white – this word implies that white is the standard. In North American language, similar phrases such as “non-black” or “non-yellow” do not exist. Minority – this word is often statistically inaccurate; its use ignores the fact that people of color comprise the majority of the world’s population (and may comprise the majority of one’s immediate locale).
- Be aware of the possible negative implications of color symbolic words. Choose language and usage that do not offend people or reinforce bias. For example, in some instances, the colors black and yellow have become associated with race and utilized to reinforce negativity.
- Avoid patronizing language and tokenism toward any racial or ethnic group. Example: Once-a-year articles or special editions about a particular group may be interpreted as cultural tokenism, especially when such a group constitutes a large part of your community. This approach reinforces marginalization of that racial or ethnic group outside of the mainstream.
- Substitute substantive information for ethnic clichés or racially specific characteristics or events. Do not let ethnic clichés substitute for in-depth information. Example: A person of Spanish heritage might prefer to be asked about family history or political experiences than about fiestas or African Americans about rap music.
- Review resources to see if all groups are fairly represented. Examples: Are persons portrayed in positions of authority almost invariably white? Does your selection of resources provide racial and ethnic role models? (Anti-Defamation League 2013)

Since its inception, the Amistad law, and subsequently the Amistad Commission, has worked diligently, with hard fought success, to demonstrate to the state of New Jersey, its K-12 teachers and administrators, and community stakeholders that the Amistad curriculum is *not* just a Black Studies

curriculum. This is a mandate that encompasses the totality of American history; its historiography is a chronicle of the greater American narrative, cognizant of the necessary cultural competencies that should become benchmarked. The Social Studies curriculum for the state of New Jersey would shift so that African Diaspora historical facts are centered within their proper chronologies to guarantee that Africa and the African diaspora histories were infused, seamlessly, into U.S. and World History—not on the periphery, but at the center of defining U.S. and global change. This does not preclude the Commission’s work from focusing on the African American narrative, with centrality of voice and perspective, or creating a divide of whether the foci is Social Studies, as it is traditionally known, or a course in Black Studies. There is no need for separation, because a full understanding of Social Studies / History can only be grasped by the full inclusion of the African American narrative. The transmission of this narrative was defined by Asante in the article “African American Studies: The Future of the Discipline” (1992) as “pluralism without hierarchy.” (Asante, 1992) Such an approach, Asante argues, eradicates domination of Eurocentric hegemonic universalist ideology in educational policy manifestations. This is the same premise that guided the Amistad Commission. It also informed and designed the narration in the new Smithsonian’s new National Museum of African American Culture in Washington, D.C. This point was elucidated brilliantly in the dedication remarks of President Barack Obama from the White House Office of the Press Secretary, dated September 24th, 2016. President Obama asserted that:

As Americans, we rightfully passed on the tales of the giants who built this country; who led armies into battle and waged seminal debates in the halls of Congress and the corridors of power. But too often, we ignored or forgot the stories of millions upon millions of others, who built this nation just as surely, whose humble eloquence, whose calloused hands, whose steady drive helped to create cities, erect industries, build the arsenals of democracy. And so this national museum helps to tell a richer and fuller story of who we are. It helps us better understand the lives, yes, of the President, but also the slave; the industrialist, but also the porter; the keeper of the status quo, but also of the activist seeking to overthrow that status quo; the teacher or the cook, alongside the statesman. And by knowing this other story, we better understand

ourselves and each other. It binds us together. It reaffirms that all of us are America -- that African-American history is not somehow separate from our larger American story, it's not the underside of the American story, it is central to the American story. That our glory derives not just from our most obvious triumphs, but how we've wrested triumph from tragedy, and how we've been able to remake ourselves, again and again and again, in accordance with our highest ideals. I, too, am America. (Obama 2016)

The Commission's executive leadership led the charge and utilized the development of the Amistad's educational initiatives as a platform to address this on-going challenge by designing curriculum and its programmatic work aligned to that prescribed ideology. It is not a contradiction in the messaging that the Amistad curriculum is not exclusively an African American studies curriculum. Those versed in the field for African American education policy know the historiography that the work of the Amistad Commission is not a new concept, just one whose time had arrived for national policy implementation.

African American educators, historians and cultural and political personalities such as Frederick Douglass, Nannie Helen Burroughs, Fannie Jackson Coppin, Maria Stewart, Mary Church Terrell, George Washington Williams, W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, Mary McLeod Bethune, Benjamin Quarles as well as Afrocentric scholars such as Molefi K. Asante, Nilgun Anadolu Okur, Ama Mazama, James Stewart, Maulana Karenga, James Turner, James Conyers and among those who codified the Afrocentric philosophical framework. They chronicled our centered history, carved out the educational policy space in America that deconstructed the misguided ideologies surrounding African Americans, and authored African Diasporan history through research and education. Armed with the pedagogical praxis of Afrocentricity, we must continue the discourse on educational praxis that enunciates African Diasporan history and perspective within educational institutions today. Without this fight within the politics of education and scholarship, the infusion model that the Amistad Commission embraces could never have occurred. It is on that premise that the Amistad mandate has become part of a larger historiography of Black studies evolution and continuity.

Through the modality of the Amistad law guided by the culturally grounded discourse of the Commission's curriculum committee and executive leadership all private, charter, parochial, and public, K-12 educators and administrators, and Department of Education (DOE) bureaucrats & NJ legislators have been instructed—*but not mandated*—to operationalize an Afrocentric paradigm shift within American history to be implemented in every classroom in their state.

As translating theory into praxis within New Jersey's K-12 Social Studies /history curriculum is chronicled in this case study. This study will examine how legislated policy, the New Jersey Amistad Bill, and the subsequently created Amistad Commission, transformed the entire Social Studies landscape in the state of New Jersey.

CHAPTER 2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE STUDY

Research Questions for Study and Methodology:

For this research, I have utilized a case study methodology to explore all aspects of the Amistad Commission, its legislation, its authorship, appointment of Commissioners, the executive staff, its guiding principles for infusion plans, the curriculum development project, teacher training and professional development initiatives, and all aspects of its cultural and community programming. This was done to postulate and discover whether the Amistad Commission is an exemplar of an operationalized public policy manifestation of the precepts of Afrocentric theoretical framework. The Amistad Commission and its works, as legislated by the Amistad bill, was a perfect case study for the adoption of an Afrocentric pedagogy in the deconstruction and reconstruction of national educational policy creation and implementation.

Per Lawrence Neuman in *Social Research Methods* (2007), a case study can be defined as an up-close, in-depth, and detailed examination of a subject of study (the case), as well as its related contextual conditions. It is an examination of a person, group, or situation that has been studied over time, or a situation in real life that can be looked at or studied to learn about something from its inner working. Neuman states that case study analysis often requires immersion in the data which gives the researcher an intimate familiarity with the research subject and topic. The case study is not itself a research method, but researchers select methods of data collection and analysis that will generate material suitable for case studies. Amongst the sources of data collected when carrying out our case study are observations of praxis, personal notes (e.g. letters, photographs, notes) or official documents (e.g. public records, case notes, office correspondences, curriculum notes, appraisal reports, etc.). Most of this information for this case study is *ideographic* in its approach, i.e., it focuses on the singular case subject without reference to a comparison group. The procedure used in a case study

means that the researcher is descriptive of the subject. The researcher also reports detail of events from his or her point of view. The researcher then writes up the information from both sources above as the case study, and interprets the information. The development of social science research projects entail nine primary components according to Earl Babbie in his book titled *The Practice of Social Research*, which are: 1) purpose, 2) conceptualization, 3) method, 4) operationalization, 5) data collection, 6) data processing, 7) data analysis, and 8) application (Babbie, 2010) Those components are all effectuated by the researcher's methodology and explanatory framework.

The framework of this case study is Afrocentric; the methodological tools utilized in the execution of the study is grounded in Afrocentric consciousness. Within Afrocentric project design, the researcher must assess whether the purpose of the study is antithetical to African diaspora people and whether it is liberation orientated. Thereby the researcher must themselves be intimately grounded within the culture and history of the African Diasporan peoples so that data collection and data analysis is Afrocentric in its orientation, and that practical application is contextualized in a new narrative of the African diaspora that articulates honest African Diasporan historiographies, literatures, social realities, and/or educational policies as well as postulates an action-oriented valuation of the research topic, with recommendations and suggestions for future research that extends toward consciousness (Asante 2007).

In full disclosure to the study, I have served as the current executive director of the New Jersey Amistad Commission, a statewide commission that has been in—but not of—both the New Jersey Departments of Education and State; I am (self-)identified throughout this study as the executive leader of the Amistad Commission. My work with the Amistad Commission has been with the Amistad Commission since June 2005. My Commission work has granted me access to its historical documentation (its archival documents and records) and an intimate (theoretical) knowledge of its documented decision-making. The Commission material is utilized throughout this case study.

This case study examines and chronicles the Amistad Commission data and archival history, including the original short and long-term objectives and directives from the last decade from the executive staff, to the Executive Director's reports and Commission meeting transcripts, curriculum committee field notes, documents and finally an explication of the Amistad World Wide Web-based curriculum resource for New Jersey teachers. Through the application of theoretical analysis procedures, assertions are noted and themes are identified within the study to demonstrate the alignment of the Amistad's work with Afrocentric theory. The use of triangulation within the data collection and data analysis processes will be used to establish reliability and validity for this study using multiple data collection methods. In *The Handbook of Black Studies* (2006), Ama Mazama delineates the foci of Afrocentric oestmology. Mazama quotes Asante in asserting that "Afrocentricity is not data but the orientation to data". (Mazama 2006). This orientation allows for the Afrocentrist to interpret the data, how they perceive what they might confront, and how they analyze the African phenomena and denote value in the data. James Conyers states the approach is a new orientation to interpreting data that is creating a robust intellectual discipline with new research documents and interpretation of text (Conyers 2003).

The researcher's worldview manifests itself in research projects as well as in project manifestations and directives. Vernon Dixon in his article titled "African-oriented and Euro-American-oriented worldviews," Linda James Myers in the book *Understanding an Afrocentric World View*, and Kobi Kamron in the article, "The Afrocentric Paradigm and African-American Psychological Liberation", all provide sufficient examples to support the existence of this value in their research projects. Dixon asserts, "axiological or value orientations implicitly influence the content and, therefore, models or hypotheses". (Dixon 1997) Thus, given the value of independence at the expense of interdependence, or collective responsibility in comparison to individual rights, or even communalism as opposed to individualism, the value orientations influence the nature of your

research methodology. This is evident within the nature of the hypotheses and models that were used to interrogate in this case study research project. Within the process of research, assumptions constrain the research methodology. Thereby acknowledgement of the importance of assumptions must be understood and stated. It is also important to state that unequivocally, the sources for these assumptions are included in a person's worldview. Therefore, a researcher's worldview must be identified to properly understand the cultural implications on research projects on and about people of African Diasporan descent. As Dixon argues,

there are certain philosophical characteristics in any given world view which determine the choice of assumptions and research methodology in general. Research methodology has world view specificity, which results from differences in axiology, epistemology, and logic. If the model is valid, then it will be possible to set forth different approaches to research, each consistent with its respective world view (Dixon 1997).

Since worldviews are products of culture, it is pertinent to acknowledge one's worldview orientation within the research project. Dixon, in his article titled "African-oriented and Euro-American-oriented worldviews", assesses that the African view is Affect-Symbolic Imagery Cognition. According to T. Owens Moore in his article, titled "Affect-symbolic imagery Revisited", affect-symbolic imagery is defined as both a psychological and an epistemological construct that defines the orientation towards knowledge acquisition in African/African American culture. Symbolic imagery is the use of phenomena such as words, gestures, tones, rhythms, and objects to convey meaning. Within that meaning ways of knowing are elucidated in the African Diasporan worldview, the knower attempts to be a part of the phenomena as she or he attempts to understand. Dixon in his article titled "African-oriented and Euro-American-oriented worldviews" offers this assessment, that:

Affect personalizes the phenomenal world. It is one factor in the affect mode of knowing. Affect, however, is not intuition, for the latter term means direct knowledge or immediate knowledge (instinctive knowledge) without resource to reference from reason or reason about evidence. Affect does interact with evidence, evidence in the form of Symbolic Imagery (Dixon 1997).

For Dixon, “the use of phenomena (words, gestures, tones, rhythms, objects, etc.) Convey meaning”. The question of epistemology—or our theories of knowledge, the truth of what we believe in and the justification for it, particularly in relation to worldview—is extremely important especially in relation to the role of objectivity within social science research. Dixon asserts that "object," which is at the core of the words "objectivity" and "objective," refers directly to separation. Thus for Dixon, the heart of objectivity and/or being objective is the need to throw space or distance between yourself and what you are studying. In "African-oriented and Euro-American-oriented worldviews", Dixon summarizes the epistemological assumption of the Euro-American worldview by stating, “I step back from phenomena, I reflect; I measure; I think; I know; and therefore, I am and I feel" (Dixon 1997). He also assessed that the African Diasporan epistemological assumption, states, "I feel phenomena; therefore, I think; I know". Thereby, the Afrocentric researcher does not step back, but immerses oneself in the subject (Dixon, 1997).

Furthermore, Dixon contends accordingly that axiology, epistemology and logic play central roles in defining the worldview orientation of research methodologies. A researcher's values and logic shape the content and form of assumptions implemented in the research process. These assumptions are in turn developed into models and/or hypotheses that are then verified through a way of knowing, the assumption impacts an Afrocentric research methodology in that it suggests that there is an intended goal for the research, scholarship and intellectual projects that is produced. This is not the attainment of the established axiom "knowledge for knowledge sake” but research that is immersed in for relevant and functional scholarship with a methodology must reflect the interests and needs of Africana people.

Dixon concludes that the assumption of objectivity is an affront to the African Diasporan cosmological and epistemological assumptions, as previously mentioned. But more importantly,

The African worldview immerses us in a vibrant universe. It seeks to close gaps--to do away with discontinuity--to bring us close to the essence of life. The epistemology it generates does away with distance. Since there is no distance, there are no mediators. The mode of our epistemological method is that of participation, and relationship rather than separation and control (Dixon 1997).

Terry Kershaw concurs, and believes that Afrocentric research must be derived from scholar-activists. Scholar-activists are defined as researchers/implementers, grounded in the discourse of Afrocentricity, who also see research's importance in not just academic excellence or exploration for enquiry's sake, but combined with social responsibility that creates ideas/data/theories that improve life chances and life experiences and social/educational/ political policymaking (Kershaw 2009).

Scholar-activists are centered in the discourse to perform the necessary critical analysis for African Diasporan liberation and empowerment. They move the research from simply descriptive analysis to a clarion call for empowering viable solutions to the research postulation with empowering problem-solving (Kershaw 2003). In this study, recognition and recommendations for Afrocentric theoretical orientation and paradigm operationalization of educational policy were conceived, listed and then implemented in praxis in New Jersey. My dual role as case study researcher for this analysis as well as policy implementer is inclusion of my centered orientation as an Afrocentrist who has immersed myself in the Afrocentric paradigm and research, and scholarship, the creation of this case study, and this educational policy work.

Throughout the case study, to understand how the particular interpretation of the legislative edict, the New Jersey Amistad Bill is discussed via the respective outcomes in schools and classrooms it is designed to create. The questions that guided the research are follows:

1. What is the clear definition of Afrocentricity, its parameters, theoretical framework and pedagogy; and how can it be used, most especially, in regards to public policy educational implementations?
2. Are there other theoretical frameworks that possibly speak to curricula paradigm shifts that address the inclusion of cultural representations or foci in the classroom?
3. What is the Amistad law and is there historiography of other legislated attempts across the nation to manifest the directive of mandating African American history inclusions in America's classroom?
4. How did the Amistad Commission come about – the tenets of the legislation, the exigency of its authorship, and selection of the Commission executive leadership, and its subsequent infusion plans and policy within New Jersey?
5. In analyzing the Amistad law, the selection of the centralizing ethos for policy implementation, the progression from legislation to an operationalized codified curriculum establishment within all NJ classrooms, how did the application of Afrocentricity defines the subsequent program outcomes and curriculum decisions?
6. How did the tenets of Afrocentricity, its philosophies and guiding principles result in Amistad Commission's initial directives, current outcomes and curriculum deliverables within New Jersey's classrooms, result in the shifting of the educational landscape in the state of New Jersey- by legislative edict and enforcement, within every history classrooms?

Theories Behind the Case Study

In the article, "Writing History and Reading Text", Nilgun Anadolu Okur pays homage to the late neoliberal philosopher Samuel Huntington, who believes that the distribution of power and the distribution of cultures worldwide are reflective, and that it was out of that power and the struggles that accompanied it came the defined American hegemony that validated and extended Western culture (Huntington 1996). In concurrence, Okur cites Maghan Keita (2000), who articulates a position that the Eurocentric and/or Western power structure that has dominated the philosophy clashes control historiography, which attempted to eradicate and then construct Western epistemology based on racial hierarchies and exclusions (Okur 2016).

Since the abolition of slavery, the United States has struggled to recognize people of color, specifically African-Americans, as equal citizens worthy of equal education policy and/or equal within curriculum inclusion. For several generations, within the curriculum of American schools, students have been taught the narrative of American History with a Eurocentric perspective, and with an absence of curriculum inclusions that allowed for the American student to understand the significance contributions and active agency of African Diasporan people.

However, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s motivated various leaders, researchers, and scholars to not only question the validity of this narrative it the realities educational policies via legalized mandates. Through debates, reforms, and legislations, there has been a demand for the contributions, achievements, and perspectives of people of the African Diaspora to become included within the historic narrative. The guiding philosophies delineate from Ancient Egyptian scholars, through the work of W.E.B. Du Bois, Carter G. Woodson, and other scholars who sought to learn the history and culture of African Diasporan peoples in a holistic learning experience (Karenga 2002). These demands were birthed *alongside* the development of Black Studies. These holistic, continent-based approaches are not intellectual spaces that postulate African American history for American students, but rather, as Asante stated in *The Afrocentric Idea*. Instead, they are meeting the need for the culturally-centered exposure of contributions, achievements, and perspectives of people of the African Diaspora. Although research and academic literature examines the need for the inclusion of multiple perspectives within the history curriculum, few studies go in depth to explicate how mandated curriculum relate to the inclusion of race and race relations within the history curriculum. African American history has been an additive to the American Eurocentric narrative, rather than an adopted methodology of deconstruction and reconstruction of history curriculum for multicultural, world justice and equality. Carter G. Woodson exclaims that notion in his famous quote on the “Negro” in history as opposed to an emphasis on “Negro” History. Woodson strived to see with a de-

emphasis on histories of the races and nations, but rather a history of the world void of national bias, race hate, and religious prejudice.

Based on the acknowledgement that the Amistad bill and its ramifications, historical educational policy across the nation is, in itself, a part of the historical narrative. The purpose of this study sought to chronicle the exigency, strategic framework foundation and implementation of the New Jersey Amistad Bill.

The framework of the legal mandate was redefined from the “literal translation” of the legislative directives by challenging the adoption of a pedagogy that simply subscribed to an insertion of “African American factoids” into a Eurocentric monolithic of history, which could be a representation of African American token representation centering on the history of American slavery, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and its outcomes.

A new curriculum ethos (Afrocentricity) allowed for the development of the Amistad Commission as a transformative historical agency. The approach demystified the untruths that: African Americans did not have a history, had no influence and power, and were not active agents in their life experiences and world events.

Hence, in conclusion to the case study hypothesis, the result was an implementation strategy selected by those steeped in Afrocentric theory and orientation that was layered, multidimensional, multi-voiced, and multi-perspective-d but is not steeped in multiculturalism. The rejection of multiculturalism is a rejection of a position which postulates inclusion without cultural worldview. The goal must be epistemological harmony, done holistically in both theory and praxis. It must synthesize multiple perspectives. It must be an epistemology of inclusion. The culmination of the work identified the theoretical framework of Afrocentricity and allowed for active agency of all the compositions of African Diasporan people into a full historic narrative, one. That Afrocentric paradigm, applied to the history of New Jersey, as will be discussed throughout the case study.

Future Projections for the Case Study Results

This study may have many direct implications to many audiences, including teacher education programs, practicing K-12 teachers and administrators, higher education departments (African American Studies and other Humanities) as well as policymakers and scholars in academia interested in the codification of the Afrocentric paradigm in policy development. The goal is to operationalize cultural-centered liberating curricula that negates ideologies of supremacy and a falsely constructed universalism and instead embraces active agency and perspective in its manifestation for students. Pre-service teachers might use this study to become aware of the tenets and directives of how this law should be infused within their preparation for the classroom instruction, so that they might be versed in the requisite historic narratives and ideologies. There should be exposed to the supporting resources and how to utilize them to support the exigence and ideology of their creation.

Educators should understand the legislative requirements, while practicing teachers should be required to attend workshops that address the complexity of an infusion model that expands the historic narrative in New Jersey classrooms. The curriculum and lesson plan rubrics for classroom instruction should align with the inclusive framework of Afrocentricity; the decentralization of the Eurocentric historic narrative, and a historic narrative in New Jersey classroom that establishes principles of shared power, agency, and voice among all participants. With administrative support, oversight, and enforcement, educators should learn how to manifest the mandated edict in a history course in a New Jersey classroom.

Often, K-12 educators who are the practitioners in the classroom with students look to academics, such as African American Studies departments, social science departments and intellectual repositories, to deliver the cutting-edge scholarship, recent theories, and current research that provide the cannon of written resources that will further codify the Afrocentric paradigm in

curriculum development. Thereby, this work propels scholar-activism with research and creates a case study development that has implication and recommendations for educational policy creation, particularly in New Jersey under the Amistad law.

Finally, policymakers can use the results of this study to provide administrators and teachers with curriculum maps for K-12 that scaffolds (builds on) infused historical content standards that support the mandated edict. Coupled with virtual on-line resources, curriculum and library resources for schools, and mandated workshops, there is a need to address the complexity of an infusion model and expands the historic narrative in New Jersey classrooms. Therefore, this study can contribute to the repository of work that serve to fill the gaps in literature as well as provide a manual for effective implementation strategies of Afrocentricity in educational public policy.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Per Epstein (2009), Moreau (2003), and Zimmerman (2002), European dominance is evident within the history curriculum and textbooks for they “have structured national history around the contributions, experiences and interpretations of elite white men, marginalized the contributions and experiences of people of color and women” (Epstein, 2009). Since racism has permeated the fabric of the American society, it manifests itself in the form of European superiority. A review of the history of the American history textbooks serves as an example of how the European perspective dominates the way history has been told in American classrooms.

Over the past twenty years, historians, such as James W. Loewen (1995), have become increasingly aware of the racism inherent in school policies and the materials used, such as textbooks. “Even though the books bulge with detail...our teachers and our textbooks still leave out most of what we need to know about American past. Some of the factoids they present are flatly wrong or unverifiable” (Loewen, 1995). Most history books about United States history tell the American story through stereotypes, distortions and omissions.

According to Sleeter and Grant (1991), textbooks and curriculum always represent “somebody’s version of what constitutes important knowledge and a legitimate world view” (Apple & Christian-Smith). Within the curriculum, the textbook becomes the hard copy of how the curriculum legitimizes the dominant status of particular social groups by positioning their interpretations as valued judgments and social realities and providing selective access to ideas and information (Sleeter and Grant 1991).

Through the presentation of distorted images and simplified explanations of America’s racial history, students come to understand history through the dominant Eurocentrism. Wolf (1992) provided a comprehensive summary of the research conducted from 1945 to 1985 on the role of

minorities in the United States history textbooks. The dominant discourse within the American history narrative has been of a European point of view and through multiple studies, textbooks confirm this point of view as a legitimate way to interpret American history.

As Loewen (1995) explained, most textbooks inadvertently still take a white supremacist viewpoint. Their rhetoric makes African Americans rather than whites the problem, for example, some textbooks attribute the success of the Underground Railroad to the Quakers. On the contrary, scholars such as David Blight in his book *Passages to Freedom: the Underground Railroad in History and Memory* (2001) state that research discovered black ministers, enslaved black people, and free black people were a major part of the Underground Railroad's success. (Blight 2001)

In Wolf's article "Minorities in U.S. history textbooks", the analysis of five major history textbooks of the late 1970s, found that the books gave "the impression that the advances that blacks have made in their struggle to gain full citizenship were the consequences of white people's efforts" (Wolf). The efforts from the Civil War and during the Reconstruction period were solely attributed to white Americans – discounting the efforts of black Americans and the resistance of white Americans to the progress of and equality of black Americans.

The textbook portrayal of the dependency of black Americans on the white Americans was also revealed in a textbook study conducted by Loewen (1995). In this study, Loewen discovered that textbooks were structured to explain the Reconstruction period as a moment in history when African Americans were dependent on mainstream Americans to help bring them into American society socially, economically, and politically. African Americans are positioned in a way that eliminates their efforts within the general American narrative. As Loewen stated, "as long as history textbooks make white racism invisible in the nineteenth century, neither they nor the students who use them will be able to analyze racism intelligently in the present" (Loewen 1995).

In a 1976 analysis of how Native Americans were portrayed in the history textbooks, the Council on Interracial Books concluded that the textbooks positioned Europeans as the Native American saviors. As Wolf (1992) explained in his article the history textbooks of the 1960s portray Native American peoples as possessing a simple culture, backwards, warlike, and waiting for the Europeans to civilize them. These textbooks omitted the ideas of racism, violence, and power from the historical narrative and introduced ideas of superiority and inferiority to the historical discussion (Wolf 1992).

In an analysis of the treatment of minorities in secondary school textbooks, Marcus (1961) revealed a consistent portrayal of black Americans after the Civil War as complacent within an inferior and simple life. In his analysis of textbooks, Wolf found that Blacks freed after the Civil War were portrayed as frightened, confused, and helpless, perpetuating the stereotypes that blacks are inferior and simple” (Wolf, 1992). To explain how black people reacted to their newfound freedom, these textbooks perpetuated the stereotypes that black people were inferior and simple by only providing an aerial view of the black American culture from the European perspective rather than an account of the prominent and successful contributions of black people during that time in society.

McLaurin conducted a study in 1971 on the effects of interest groups on the textbook market. He discovered that textbooks that remained uncontroversial and neutral [to whites] tended to be more marketable in some states. As Wolf (1992) summarized in his textbook assessment, the books giving comprehensive and truthful accounts about the history of black Americans would not be purchased by schools in some states. Therefore, according to Wolf textbook writers and publishers omitted details about the racist and oppressive past of our country to please the buyers (Wolf 1992).

The Council on Interracial Books for Children also discovered the omission of relevant information in a 1977 study of early 1970s textbooks. The textbooks gave a cursory mention to

European and African interactions prior to the European Slave Trade and the atrocities of the *MAAFA*; Marimba Ani in her book *Yorugu: An African-Centered Critique of European Cultural Thought and Behavior* asserts that the *MAAFA* is a Kiswahili term meaning disaster, great occurrence, and human tragedy” (Ani, 1988, 1994). It a reference to the period of horrific African Enslavement, or the “African Holocaust” (Ani, *ibid.*). In *The Afrocentric Manifesto*, Asante asserts that an understanding of the role of pedagogy helps to identify location culturally and psychologically for students and teachers (Asante 2007). The narrative choices in textbooks only compounds the necessity for pedagogy. The textbooks used in most American classrooms misappropriate liberating educational opportunities in the classroom. For example, the textbooks skim over the details of the enslaved Angolans brought to Virginia in 1619, or how the slavery of African Diasporan people intentionally upheld the South’s abundant agricultural economic system. They often fail to mention the indenture-hood and wealth acquisition of Anthony Johnson in Tidewater Virginia, yet the books might highlight how they believe that the Civil Rights Movement was beneficial to African Americans, as if those gains were the first to usher in advancements. However, they yet omit the realities and living experiences of the free, successful African Americans communities that have existed since the inception of this nation, living throughout the colonies, or the legality of the creation by legal mandate of racialized slavery in this nation. They also miss the parameters of gradual emancipation and the plethora of northerners who participated in the slave trade. They do not mention the exclusionary laws that banned African Americans from residing in Midwestern states surrounding the Great Lakes, or the “separate but equal” policy which actually fostered and created a second-class treatment of black people. They also omit the sociological reality of white economic, political, and social power which remained firmly entrenched within white institutions despite the Civil Rights Movement (Wolf, 1992). The council concluded that not only did the textbooks fail to provide the facts about how African Americans were exploited economically and socially, but they also removed and excluded the

violence that existed inflicted on African Diasporan people throughout history, as well as the triumphs and collective histories and experiences of those same African Diasporan peoples.

Through policies and curricula, the European narrative has become the primary story, leaving various “minorities” feeling excluded from the historical accounts of America. As Nash et al. (2000) expounded in *History on Trial: Culture wars and the teaching of the Past*, academic scholars continued to define world history as the story of Western progress, one that largely excluded the experiences of Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans (Nash et al. 2000).

The construction and inclusion of African American historiography, if implemented correctly, leads to the eradication of historic inaccuracies and ushers in the deconstruction of the Eurocentricity framework. Education is political; therefore, the educator and the curriculum developers in our collective school districts make strategic, deliberate, radical decisions each day that establish the agency, locality, and voice that permeate throughout our educational institutions. School curricula has become a mechanism through which African American educators, historians and scholars who have dedicated their lives to the preservation of our collective agency, combat mistruths about our culture. School curricula is an area identified as a battleground for our truthful representation. In *Mass Media History*, the scholar Paul Starr calls this phenomenon “constitutive choices” in his 2003 book *The Creation of the Media: Political Origins of Modern Communications*. Starr describes "constitutive choice," as one that sets the conditions for future development of an institution by strategic choices (Starr 2003). African Americans such as George Washington Williams (1882), Booker T. Washington (1909), and W. E. B. Du Bois (1915), have fought to address racial oppression by transforming the misconception that racially marginalized “minorities” had limited impacts on American history. William Katz’s quote exemplifies this phenomenon. Katz states that the “Negro” has played a significant role in history since the dawn of civilization yet his contributions have been ignored by historians and his face has rarely appeared in history texts. The distortion of the Negro’s

past has always had a purpose. The assertion that the Negro has no history worth mentioning is basic to the theory that has he no humanity worth defending. Deliberate mis-information has been used to justify slavery ad discrimination (Katz, 1967)

In recent years school districts and textbook publishers have acknowledged and attempted to reform their curriculum to reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of the students in their classrooms. These efforts are also the result of the realization of many scholars and educators that in general today's curriculum serves as a primary means of powerful social normalization (Nieto, 2000). For example, in the article "*Affirming Diversity: the social-political context of multicultural education*", Nieto states that schools often negate what students learn is meaningful at home (Nieto, 2000).

In response to European dominance within the curriculum, the Amistad legislation, in conjunction with the New Jersey Core Curricula Standards that were revised to include the Amistad mandate, responds to Loewen's critique of how time periods in history, such as the Reconstruction period, should be addressed within the classroom. For example, in Colin Palmer's essay to the educator in unit 7 of the Amistad Commission's web-based curriculum resource, students learn that the Reconstruction Period arose due to the civil wars over the ideals of the nation, and that enslavement of African Diasporan people contradicted the ideals and reality of the nation. This is, frankly, historically incorrect and perhaps even anti-historical. A close reading of the Constitution clearly elucidates a contract with America and its citizenry that is an eloquently stated *pro*-slavery doctrine with polite speech that omits the mention of slavery while regulating the reality (Palmer 2008). The enslavement of African people did not contradict the ideals of the nation because the Founding Fathers, in their implicit endorsement of the slavery of African people, did not consider African people human enough to be part of the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution. This historical fact—that white Americans, for well more than a century, did not consider Blacks in

America *human*, and acted on that belief in both social contact and public policy—is rarely stated in such stark terms in American public school hegemonic material.

According to the Amistad Bill, students are challenged to shift perceptions when they use the tenets of Afrocentricity as an example for agency and location. To provide an example, the years following the Civil War are traditionally postulated as the following: The nation was going through presidential and congressional Reconstruction, often depicted by Southern decimation, poverty and hopelessness. What is not depicted, or not emphasized, is that, espousing a varied perspective of liberation and active agency, newly freed African Americans in the South were actually constructing lives and communities through the extension of education, identity, career, education, and family. Using the Afrocentric paradigm transforms the narrative and expands the narrow scope of historic presentation—one which excludes African American agency and community development during the period after emancipation from enslavement in the South. After the transformation, the history contains the multitudes of thriving African American communities.

There is a need to incorporate pedagogy, framework or standards into culturally proficient strategies for teaching. In the absence of statewide regulatory approach like the Amistad bill, most schools continue to value one set of cultural knowledge and skills over others. Individual educators who seek to increase children’s access to culturally proficient and culturally centered K-12 education are too often left to work in their isolation.

Given the educational disparities experienced by American children, it is time for a comprehensive public policy intervention aimed at creating a supportive environment for bidirectional learning. Rather than expecting students and their families to accommodate to the schools’ cultural structures and norms, school leaders and teachers should welcome cultural differences, and be prepared to integrate the students’ wealth of cultural knowledge into the academic activities for all children. By creating institutional mechanisms for accountability, regulatory

approaches can ensure equal access to quality education, foster a more diverse pool of teachers, and incentivize schools to make progression the ideologies that prompted the policy initiative (Wilson 2009).

Public policy must frame itself around those ideals, and for laws like the Amistad mandate, must address and spell out how the recompense will be operationalized by the new dogma. For the Amistad mandate, public policy has conjoined with scholars who continue to debate the accuracy of American history, the dominance of the European perspective has limited the narratives of people of the African Diaspora from the governing discourse

An effective public policy approach, like the Amistad law, will provide educational experiences for all children that are inclusive of the narratives that are reflective of the faces in the classroom (as reflective of the US Census data across the nation and in New Jersey specifically). The Amistad mandate and the policy approach establish laws and a set of standards for the development of a culturally proficient and centered and demarginalized K-12 education curriculum; to include a funding allocation for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop appropriate partnerships with academic institutions that train teachers and other education. It also mandates the utilization of performance measurements to assess progress toward cultural proficiency of entire school systems, curriculums and their individual components (Wilson 2009).

In the review of literature, I will explore two key responses to the need for a shift in the American history curriculum: 1) academic response 2) a legislative response. Within the academic response, I would like to first focus on the differences in three key fields of study that have surfaced during the review of educational policy literature, as theoretical and educational responses to address the exclusion of perspectives within the historical narrative: Ethnic Studies, Africology/Africana Studies, and Multicultural Education. Secondly, I will look at the historiography of varied attempts at

curricula rewrites, culminating with the public policy initiative that created and operationalized Amistad law in New Jersey classrooms.

Ethnic Studies, Multicultural Studies, and Africana Studies

In general, Ethnic Studies is the overall study of ethnicities within separate units yet with the goal of providing an equal level of information per unit. Africana Studies can be seen as an area that has emerged from Ethnic Studies that specifically studies the African Diaspora with the intent of bringing this perspective to the forefront to reconstruct and transcend the dominant European perspective. Multicultural Education is the collective study of multiple cultures within a shared space, with the intent of demonstrating how multiple cultures co-exist.

Epstein (2009) conducted a study examining how six teachers from Oakdale, California taught racial groups, race relations, and individual rights in the United States. According to Epstein, white and black children and adolescents in Oakdale entered and exited U.S. history classrooms with conflicting concepts of race and rights. Developed from their experiences and interactions with family members and other trusted adults, as well as with peers, mainstream and popular media and their experiences as members of privileged and marginalized racial groups, the differences shaped their overall interpretations of U.S. history, school knowledge, national identity and civic responsibility (Epstein, 2009).

Students bring to the racial discussion a wide range of opinions, assumptions, and experiences that affect how the racial past and present of America should be taught.

Research illuminates the roles played by Ethnic Studies, Africana Studies, and Multicultural Education, the three theoretical and educational approaches to the incorporation of race and culture within the history curriculum. The paradigms of each framework can transform teaching of the past and create inquisitive and centered scholarship among students.

Academic Response #1: Ethnic Studies

Ethnic Studies surfaced in the late 1960s during the Civil Rights Movement as a response to the misrepresentation of the history of various ethnic groups. Activists fought through literature, politics, and protests to divide the American history dialogue into separate opportunities to include the voices of African Americans, Asian Americans, Latino Americans, and Native Americans. However, it was the 1968-1969 mass protests at San Francisco State University (SFSU) that established Ethnic Studies as a university level discipline.

Due to the evidence of systematic discrimination, issues of access and neglect, and the misrepresentation of histories and cultures of the people of the African Diaspora, the black Student Union and Third World Liberation Front united with the staff and faculty of SFSU and the Bay Area community in several protests against campus courses and activities at San Francisco State University. Because of the noted inequalities, these protestors demanded the establishment of an Ethnic Studies Department that would focus on Asian American Studies, Black Studies, La Raza Studies (Mexican/Hispanic), and Native American Studies. After countless campus sit-ins and protests, the College of Ethnic Studies was established in the fall of 1969, hosting four departments: Asian American Studies, Africana Studies, La Raza Studies, and American Indian Studies (www.library.sfsu.edu).

Over the past thirty years, the field of Ethnic Studies has manifested into a discipline set up to adhere to the fact that non-European groups have been ignored in the historical narrative. There are hundreds of Ethnic Studies departments in United States colleges that focus on the separate studies of Asian Americans, Africana Studies, Latino Studies, and American Indian Studies, and which have developed their own curricula and agendas based on the needs of their communities. Due to recent comparative studies and transnational research, Ethnic Studies has stretched into the global arena and opened doors to several racial groups, ethnicities, and cultures beyond the American borders.

Ethnic Studies has led to an expansion of the entire American past and an alteration of knowledge and the meaning of America itself, yet it has not allowed for a reinterpretation. In general, the Ethnic Studies approach to the issue of the misrepresentation of the people of the African Diaspora in the American history narrative is to bring the history of disenfranchised groups alongside the traditional European perspective. The structure is based on a believe that all ethnic groups should be presented equally yet comparatively within the curriculum yet kept separate for a thorough examination of how identities are formed and how each group has struggled and survived. Rejection of Ethnic Studies as an universal choice for curriculum reforms is ensconced in the separation of ethnic groups in historical studies; it is that juxtaposition that can still allow for disparities of marginalization and the victimization of varied Ethnic groups because it does not deconstruct the underlying premises of Eurocentric interpretations.

From an Ethnic Studies perspective, the curriculum, based on the New Jersey Amistad Bill, would be considered a portion of the overall goal of educating students on the identities, histories, and cultures of all non-European groups. To utilize ethnic studies, as the standard bearer for the implementation of the Amistad legislation would have resulted in the creation of curriculum that did not demarginalize, deconstruct, infuse and fully reconstruct the state's history curriculum, but it would be position in silo, the perspectives of Asian Americans, Native Americans, Latino Americans, and European Americans as a comparative analysis that objectifies all cultural histories as the history of "others," instead of being intricately infused.

Academic Response #2: Multicultural Studies

The multicultural approach focuses on the inclusion of all ethnic groups as a part of the American cultural fabric and how history can present the role of multiple cultures in American history through the mainstream perspective as well as through the perspective of each ethnic group. Fuller, in his article, believes that multiculturalism should be seen as a paradigm for a global educational

reform where bounded notions of culture, including the notion of white, are constantly contested and challenged (Fuller, 2000). As the European influence on Western civilization is glorified, the other cultures must remain in the waiting room of historical acknowledgement. However, Mahalingam says that multiculturalism is used as a pedagogical device to essentialize culture” and became the political goal to challenge Eurocentric influences politically and culturally (Mahalingam, 2000).

Along with Ethnic Studies and Africana Studies, Multicultural Education emerged primarily from the Civil Rights Movement as an alternative approach to including the stories of those traditionally marginalized in the United States. As historically oppressed groups fought for equality and a voice within the American narrative, scholars such as James Banks (1988) introduced the idea of multicultural education to the academic arena. However, multicultural activists went beyond the Ethnic Studies approach of proposed inclusion of multiple perspectives within the history curriculum and pushed for a parallel implementation of these perspectives within the curriculum. But the multiple perspectives are included and taught from their unification as narratives of the oppressed, thereby unknowingly reinforcing the messaging of European dominance. The narratives, albeit well-meaning, are not liberating and not located.

Banks envisioned multicultural education as a transformation of the entire school system whereby practices, procedures, and policies would become beneficial to all. According to Nieto (2000), multicultural education is defined as a form of anti-racist education, for it not only emphasizes the teaching of multiple worldviews and perspectives but also fights racism and discrimination and addresses diversity and equality in school. It epitomizes a shift in school culture and climate for multicultural tolerance and can occasionally cover up benign neglect of real pragmatic competency paradigm shifts and curriculum restructuring.

Steve Gruenert in his article “School Climate,” defines it as a term that denotes the ethos, or spirit, of the school organizationally. More recently, school climate is thought to represent the attitude

of an organization. The collective mood, or morale, of a group of people has become a topic of concern, especially in our new age of accountability. Whenever a group of people spend a significant amount of time together, they develop a common set of expectations. These expectations evolve into unwritten rules to which group members conform to remain in good standing with their colleagues. Groups develop a common culture to pass on information to the next generation. That information, however, represents a set of beliefs that have been passed down by imperfect humans with personal preferences. In schools, new teachers arrive with their own ideas about how to do their jobs. Through their schooling, they will have been immersed in theories of best practices and cutting-edge methodologies. If the culture of their first job does not embrace these new ideas, they will soon learn that to fit in they will need to assimilate. Because new teachers want to fit in and to feel like experienced teachers, they are vulnerable to the school's culture and all the unwritten rules that have been passed on through the decades. Gruenert goes on to say that an organization's culture dictates its collective personality. Many school leaders believe that organizational culture and organizational climate are the same thing. The distinction that I will describe is not an exercise in semantics. Although these two terms have similar characteristics, they express two separate concepts. Once educators understand the difference, they will develop the capacity to be more precise in their diagnoses and treatments of the two. If culture is the personality of the organization, then climate represents that organization's attitude. Gruenert's final premise in the article is that it is much easier to change an organization's attitude (climate) than it is to change its personality (culture). Curriculum shifts and inclusions are considerations of defining a school's ability to shift its fixated culture (Gruenert 2008).

Nieto stated that "multicultural education should be an integral part of the school experience of all students" (Nieto 2000). In theory, multicultural education improves teacher-to-student relations and cross-cultural understanding, improves the school climate, and increases students' educational opportunities but it does not often root out racial micro-aggressions that are imbedded in our

subconscious and in our teaching and learning, because the reality of the teachings are based in their unity as cultures of the oppressed and underdogs.

Academic Response #3: Afrocentric Studies/Africology

Within the realm of Ethnic Studies, the field of Africology/Afrocentric Studies took on a separate approach—one that spanned the historiography of African Americans insistence on defining their own experiences *from within*, writing their own narrative and chronicling their own histories. From early twentieth century research and writings, like W.E.B. Du Bois and Carter G. Woodson, leading up to the Civil Rights Movement/ Black Power movements and the creation of Black Studies programs and the theoretical framing of Afrocentric theory, there has been an effort to misrepresent the history and perspectives of Africans and African Americans in the United States. This must be remedied accurately. The advocacy for the proper history of African Americans to be acknowledged and infused on a national level within all American classrooms will remedy the present situation.

As examined in Greg Wiggins’s 2010 article in the *Journal of Pan African Studies* entitled “Afrocentricity and the Black Intellectual Tradition and Education: Carter G. Woodson, W.E.B. Du Bois, and E. Franklin Frazier,” Carter G. Woodson embarked on his life’s mission of making the history of African Americans recorded, chronicled, visible and respected. Woodson was correct in his assertions and concerns that African American intellectuals had been traditionally marginalized and the white historians tended towards myopia in their historical narratives. In fact, one of Woodson's professors at Harvard, Edward Channing, had asserted that the Negro had no history (Wiggins 2010). Wiggins chronicles that Channing was not alone in his misguided sentiment, and the standard U.S. history textbook and coursework did and still does primarily emphasize political history, covering the experiences and histories of white, middle-class and affluent men in power (Wiggins 2010).

Woodson's first book was on the history of African-American education *The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861*, published in 1915. In his preface, he asserted both the importance and the glory of the African-American story: The accounts of the successful strivings of Negroes for enlightenment under most adverse circumstances read like beautiful romances of a people in an heroic age. The same year his first book came out, Woodson took the important step of creating an organization to promote the study of African-American history and culture, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, which has now become the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASAALH). In 1920, Woodson was appointed the dean of the School of Liberal Arts at Howard University, and it was there he created a formal African-American history survey course. As early as 1920, Woodson urged black civic organizations to promote the achievements that researchers were uncovering about the depth and breadth of the African Diasporan contributions to the world.

According to the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASAALH) chronicling of their history as well as Jacqueline Goggin's 1997 biography *Carter G. Woodson: A Life in Black History*; Woodson established Negro History Week in 1926 and 50 years later in 1976 the week that week became a month-long celebration that today is supported nationally and internationally. Negro History Week appeared across the country in schools and via public programs. Teachers demanded materials to instruct their pupils, and educational policy across the nation that were not centered in cultural discourse humored and/or tolerated the curriculum inclusions in silo within the month of February (Goggin 1997).

Goggin accounts that Woodson and the Association scrambled to meet the demand for curriculum materials, research and scholarship on African American agency across academic disciplines. He provided study materials—pictures, lessons for teachers, plays for historical performances, and posters of important dates and people as well as scholarly journal for the extension

of research and historical promotion. Provisioned with a steady flow of knowledge, high schools in progressive communities formed Negro History Clubs. Increasingly publishing houses that had previously ignored black topics and authors rushed to put books on the market and in the schools to support these efforts (Goggin 1997).

Goggin chronicles that Woodson pressed for schools to use Negro History Week to demonstrate what students should learn all year; for it to become in essence infused within the daily instructions of all its history teachers and move it extend it from only February. In the same vein, he established a black studies extension program to reach adults throughout the year. It was in this sense that American students, most especially African American students would begin to learn of their past on a daily basis within their schools. Woodson believed that black history was too important to America and the world to be crammed into a limited time frame or into marginalized celebrations outside the tenets of mainstream history instruction. He spoke of a shift from Negro History Week to Negro History Year (Goggin 1997).

In the 1940s, efforts began slowly within the black community to expand the study of black history in the schools and black history celebrations before the public. In the South, black teachers often taught Negro History intertwined with United States history. During the Civil Rights Movement in the South, the Freedom Schools incorporated black history into the curriculum to advance social change. The Negro History movement was an intellectual insurgency that was part of every larger effort to transform race relations (Goggin 1997).

Works by African American journalists, scholars, and historians contributed to the field and to the development of the discipline. For instance, we can look at the works of Lerone Bennet and John Hope Franklin, noted for his 1954 article, "Thomas Jefferson's Negro Grandchildren," about the 20th-century lives of individuals claiming to be descendants of President Thomas Jefferson and Sally

Hemings, the young women he enslaved. It brought African American oral history into the public world of journalism and published histories (Bennet 1954). In addition Bennett has written several books, including numerous histories of the African-American experience. These include his first work, *Before the Mayflower: A History of Black America, 1619–1962* (1962), which discusses the contributions of African Americans in the United States from its earliest years.

John Hope Franklin, a prolific historian who authored numerous books, articles and anthologies of African American history, is best known for his work *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans*, first published in 1947, and continually updated. More than three million copies of that work of scholarship have been sold to date and is still utilized as a textbook resource in many high school and secondary education classrooms.

W.E.B. Dubois contributed a plethora of work during this time period such as exemplars *Phylon, The World and Africa*. Benjamin Arthur Quarles another historian, scholar, and educator authored major books including *The Negro in the Civil War* (1953), *The Negro in the American Revolution* (1961), *Lincoln and the Negro* (1962), and *Black Abolitionists* (1969); books that chronicled African American agency and participation in major conflicts within American history. These works and countless others, contributed to the canon of African American history for the classroom.

Historically, African American Studies emerged out of the Civil Rights movements' identification with renewed racial and cultural centeredness and aesthetic reclamation. It surfaced from the 1960's "Black Studies" programs and departments in an effort to include the experiences of those from the continent of Africa as well as those of the African Diaspora into the academic dialogue. In general, this field of study was interdisciplinary and encompasses the history and culture of all those tracing their roots back to the continent of Africa. Scholars supporting African American

Studies viewed it as a transformative discipline to properly study the history, culture, and politics of the people of the African Diaspora with the necessary loci of centeredness, agency and grounding.

Asante in *The Afrocentric Idea* (Asante 1989) argues that the paradigm serves as a structuring of concepts, theories, and methodologies. In effect, constructing paradigms play a vital role in African American Studies, and those paradigms should orient the study of people of African descent from a location of African centeredness. Thus, it is Afrocentric in its nature. Asante asserts that Afrocentricity establishes a frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African, the African sense of being-ness in the world, grounded from within themselves, their community, and their perspective. It centers on placing people of African origin in control of their lives and attitudes about the world. Thus, the discipline challenges every aspect of the dislocation of African people; culture, economics, psychology, health and religion. As an intellectual theory, Afrocentricity is the study of the ideas and events from the standpoint of Africans as key players with agency, rather than sidelined victims. This theory becomes, by an authentic relationship to the centrality of African American's own reality, a fundamentally empirical project; it is the African Diaspora asserting itself intellectually and psychologically, breaking the bonds of Western domination in the mind as an analogue for breaking those bonds in every other field (Asante 1989). By centering the African at the core of his/her own sociological, social, spiritual, psychological, cosmological reality, this qualifies the Afrocentric study of African peoples throughout the world from a position of not only de-marginalization, but also intellectual de-colonization. An Afrocentric orientation is imbedded in self-conscious action – it a purposed and deliberate response to racial prescriptions of omission and positions of benign observers (Asante 1989).

In his book *Afrocentricity*, Asante states that there are two aspects of consciousness: 1) toward oppression, where one is able to verbalize the conditions of oppression; 2) toward victory, where a

victorious historical will is emphasized. Through consciousness, agency is enacted and liberation can be brought about. Thus, the direction of Afrocentric consciousness is liberation, and thus a key concept of African American Studies and the central exigency of the Amistad legislation (which is revealed in the curriculum choices and directives of the Commission) as a change agent for cultural proficiencies and knowledge acquisition of African Diasporan people within the educational policy of New Jersey (Asante 2003).

The goal of African American/Africana Studies/Africology is to re-position the African Diaspora back into the historical narrative as active agents centered with their own cultural context, in opposition to the traditional Eurocentric perspective. Asante in *Kemet, Afrocentricity and Knowledge* (1990) defines this type of approach as a human science; that is, it is committed to discovering in human experiences, historical and contemporary, and all the ways African people have tried to make their physical, social, and cultural environments serve the end of harmony (Asante 1990).

African American Studies focuses not only on the history, culture, sociology, economy, politics, and religion of the people of the African Diaspora but also studies the global interactions that have affected this history. Therefore, the African American Studies perspective positions the role of the New Jersey Amistad legislation to correct the white racist European dominant perspective in the white racist American narrative. It is a way to address the inequalities within the educational system of the United States.

The field of Africology has been rooted in the work of scholars such as Cheikh Anta Diop, George Washington Williams, Carter G. Woodson, Charles H. Wesley, Rayford W. Logan, and W. E. B. Du Bois and has continued in the present-day research of Molefi K. Asante, Janice E. Hale, James Conyers, Maulana Karenga, Ama Mazama and Nilgun Anadolu-Okur. As it relates to its transference to a paradigm for K-12 education in the U.S., the focus has often been on what

information should be included in the history curriculum, how it should be integrated, and where it should be taught – separately or as a part of traditional schooling.

With the rise of the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement, Afrocentricity has evolved primarily within the academic realms of colleges and universities, and tangentially, as defined by this discussion, on Black radio, on Black public affairs television and in Black community forums. Scholars interested in the need for Afrocentric studies within the educational system began to see a direct association between the lack of non-European representation in the curriculum and the identity and disengagement of Black students in American classrooms. According to Asante in *The Afrocentric Manifesto* (2007) Woodson recognized from the onset of his career that if Blacks would assume they were the same as Europeans—if they accepted the cultural indoctrination of a land, people and worldview alien to their own—it would mean their psychological and cultural death (Asante 2007). The African narrative must include the historiography of the whole diaspora so that it eradicates dislocation and miseducation that is experienced with African children, in their classrooms across the world. Asante reiterates the necessity for Afrocentricity in education, because it seeks to respond to the dislocation of the African student in such an educational system by providing philosophical and theoretical guidelines and criteria which are centered in the African perception of reality (Asante 2007).

Asante contends that any educational system built on the ideology of white supremacy and systematic racism, which “endeavor to protect white advantage in education, economics, and politics by teaching them as ‘universals’ is wrong” (Asante, 2007). One symptom of this national and international proliferation has been an identity struggle within the community of African American students and African Diasporan students that forces them to accept classrooms where those who had defamed their culture and people are the heroes while making them non-human or inferior and creating cultural dislocation and the rejection of cultural appreciation. It alleviates the cultural balance

that should be the byproduct of an education; “a truly educated person would view both African and European education as significant and useful; indeed” even a student of European descent that was “educated in such a system could no longer assume any superiority based upon false education” (Asante 2007).

In this view, African American children become more alienated from the traditional curriculum of European dominant ideology. L. Delpit noted that struggles between the home and school cultures leave many African American students with an understanding and consciousness that shapes their identities at the foundation level that is aware of the contradictions. At home or within the community, African American students are taught to understand where they come from, understand who they are, and hope for a better future.

Janice E. Hale (2001) described how African American students could benefit from being taught with an Afrocentric approach. She described a Los Angeles program called “Saturday ethnic school” where children were taught black history and culture within organized classes. As Hale explains that school provides experiences for building a strong self-image, self-respect, and self-understanding. It teaches black love without teaching white hate (Hale, 2001).

Families and communities teach children how to cope with the injustices in the world through example. Hale (2001) explained that throughout history, most African American families have promoted a sense of community. The child is a representative of the family. What they strive to do and how they act reflects on the entire family. Young people are raised to value their culture and have pride in what their ancestors have accomplished.

However, as these students enter the American public school system, the message changes. As Delpit stated, “To provide schooling for everyone’s children that reflects liberal, middle-class aspirations is to ensure the maintenance of the status quo, to ensure that power, the culture of power, remains in the hands of those who already have it” (1995, p. 28). As previously articulated, most

history books present a story that eliminates the contributions of African Americans thereby eliminating the cultural competencies and knowledge base of African American peoples that should be extended.

Throughout the standard history curriculum in most states, African American culture seems to be ignored, studied in silo, or downgraded. Individualism is a common theme. Capitalism becomes the heart of the American Dream – fostering an “every man for themselves” mentality. Based on her research, Hale (2000) recommended the need to incorporate the African principle, “It takes a whole village to raise a child” (p. 112). This concept contradicts the individualism of the American society. However, within Hale’s current reform proposal, she explained the need for the school to conceptualize the family and for the community to operate as the village.

Without this principle incorporated within the school culture, African American children grow up with a post-modern of the Du Boisian double consciousness – often with conflicting cultural identities as to their importance and agency within the historical narrative; meanwhile, white students often will remain confused and disconnected regarding the importance and influence of the historical contributions of African Americans. Asante offers the revolutionary challenge and reforms that the adoption of Afrocentricity in education creates; he asserts that it challenges institutional racism at its core through three ways: First, it deconstructs the universal messaging of white superiority as a given. Secondly, it assaults ignorance by refuting multiculturalism. Lastly, it enforces a pluralistic optic of the world by offering Afrocentricity as a valid, non-hegemonic perspective for the interpretation of world events and histories.

In the Herbert Aptheker collection of W.E.B. Du Bois’ essay titled the *Education of Black Peoples* noted that in order to maintain a common school for all students within the American school system, the black student is forced to attend a school that uses a language and provides concepts that do not relate to his or her identity. On the other hand, Asante assesses that Afrocentricity allows the

child to be centered in the history and culture imparted in the classroom. Du Bois would have agreed that materials are presented to highlight the achievements and philosophies of all those “except that of the Negro race: Negro children educated in integrated schools and northern colleges often know nothing of Negro history. Know nothing of Negro leadership and doubt if there ever have been leaders in Africa, the West Indies and the United States who equal white folk. Leading some are ashamed of themselves and their folk. They mis-guidingly regard the study of the Negro biography and the writing of Negro literature as a vain attempt to pretend that Negroes are really the equal of whites (Aptheker 2001).

Through the conquering stories and victimization tales of persecution that permeate tales of enslavement so often taught, the African American child is left to believe that he or she comes from a race that is not strong and is consistently oppressed. As a consequence, the student may perceive his or her own future as hopeless. African American students are taught the history of the world through the dominance of the European race and not about the influence of their own. As James Banks (1997) noted, “The current school curriculum is not preparing most students to function successfully within the ethnically and culturally diverse world of the future” (Banks 1997). African American students assume that the European culture is more preferred and if valued will make public—and now, charter—schooling better. However, such recognition does not parallel the home values. Murrell claims that without the connections to African American students forged from an authentic understanding of experiences, abilities, and cultural norms, classrooms are not supportive environments but become intellectually, spiritually, and socially destructive environments (Murrell, 1993).

As students struggle to understand and connect with the knowledge of what contradicts their own culture, the identity of the African American student becomes muddled, leaving the student to struggle to survive and cope with the confusion that is generated by American educational system.

Murrell argued that the achievement levels of African American students are dependent on how they view themselves within the context of the curriculum; therefore, public schooling as it stands outside of the implementation of laws like the Amistad mandate, “is *congenitally incapable* of providing developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive education for children of color” without concerted efforts and overhaul (Murrell 1993). Implementation or inclusion of African American Studies, through mandates such as the Amistad Bill, not only connect African American students to their historical backgrounds, but also has the potential to improve the level of educational achievement and raise self-esteem.

As Du Bois advocated, it is up to the African American community to instill certain fundamental facts upon our children. Du Bois also thought it was necessary that a sense of a freedom spirit, self-knowledge, and a recognition of the truth drive our educational efforts. (Aptheker 2001) Yet, in regards to truth, students are left learning only a part of someone else’s version of the story. Du Bois argued that educators must not allow that fallacy to exist. They should not teach just certain parts of the truth but all the other parts that educators in the past has hesitated to do. For Du Bois, educational freedom means that the African American student not only receives exposure to the necessary trades and skills related to the vocational part of his or her life but also the knowledge to think beyond the present condition in hopes for a better tomorrow. For not only African Americans but also all those that have been marginalized. (Aptheker 2001) In her essay “Out of Borrowed Space,” Okur says that there is an assumption that understanding how we have inscribed our histories to books requires one’s education to be centered within the (European) orientation in which the (European) story is written. This leads to the Eurocentric mythology of the European experience being the “universal,” “objective” experience, while non-Europeans get delineated as “others.” Okur believes this lends itself to non-European cultures feeling the need to borrow or impose someone else’s centeredness while analyzing history (Okur 2013).

Charles Taylor (1994) stated that a greater place ought to be made for women, and for people of non-European races and cultures. The reality is that African American students are given, either directly or by omission, a demeaning picture of themselves by omission, as though all creativity and worth is attributed to males of European provenance (Taylor, 1994). Hence, all cultures must participate in the dialogue of truth to better understand and deconstruct the human story to expand inclusions. As Carter G. Woodson explained, “If you teach the Negro that he has accomplished as much good as any other race he will aspire to equality and justice without regard to race” (Woodson 1990).

Joyce E. King in the article “Culture-centered Knowledge: Black Studies, Curriculum Transformation, and Social Action,” believed that the curriculum must be used to examine racial hierarchy, racial exclusion, and racial vulnerability (King 2004). According to the tenets of participatory Afrocentric research, culturally relevant educational reforms must engage participants in thinking critically about changing themselves and society and allow researchers and participants to collectively decipher and recuperate cultural knowledge usable in families, schools, and communities.

King (2004) notes that Du Bois believed that the education of his people pushed them towards liberation as well as the breakdown of racial barriers through education. It is true that African history and culture are valuable contributions to modern civilization. Hence, it is possible, within the cultural recuperation agenda, that the works of Williams, Woodson, and Du Bois can be perceived as transformative research and praxis in African American education, for they challenge existing knowledge paradigms of history, identity, culture, and cultural resistance (King, 2004).

Unlike Ethnic Studies, an Amistad curriculum framed by Afrocentricity would primarily center and allow for cultural congruency on the identities, histories, and cultures of the people of the African Diaspora, which would then be infused and incorporated into the reconstructed historical

narrative within the classroom. The content would not focus or prescribe to be presented as simply a counter- reaction to the European perspective of the current American history curriculum but would decentralize the European dominant perspective currently prescribed within the history curriculum.

As proposed by Asante in *The Afrocentric Manifesto*, Afrocentricity, as a theoretical framework for the implementation of curricular policy decisions, can be seen as a “shout-out for rationality in the midst of confusion, order in the presence of chaos, and respect for cultures in a world that tramples on both the rights and the definitions of the rights of human” (Asante 2007).

In a *New York Times* article entitled “Why Afrocentricity?” dated May 7th, 2015, Asante responded to the question of the canonization of materials that is regularly included in curriculum, which should also be effectuated by considerations of Afrocentricity. Asante was asked the question as to how and in what ways do Afrocentricity seek to rethink the canon of Western intellectual and philosophical space? Asante’s response identified the need for Afrocentricity’s utilization as a philosophical framework to rethink the canon of works that become identified as the normative in teaching and instruction. Asante states that there is nothing wrong about the European canon; the issue stems from its assumptions of being the sole canon; it is a European canon, not a universal canon. The broader question is in inclusion and expansions of the canon. African and to a lesser degree Asian scholars are demanding Europeans do what others have not done. Asante asserts that we have privileged Europe and European people as the ones who should set the canon, with gracious allowance with one or two books outside of their culture. Asante shifts the discourse to the issue of centrality, infusion, locality and demarginalization which deconstructs its supremacy or exclusionary rights for decision making for inclusions, the same premises that are illustrated in the operationalization of the Amistad law. Asante believes that:

Afrocentricity understands that the European canon...purpose is to canonize European thought and thinkers. Yet in a diverse society like ours we must have space for all people who share this land with us. This requires knowledge... Thales must be paired with Imhotep and the pyramids must be seen as the monumental icons of the ancient world long before the creation of the “Iliad” and the “Odyssey.” You cannot have a canon in the United States world that avoids...David Walker, Marcus Garvey, W. E. B. Du Bois, James Baldwin, James Weldon Johnson, Toni Morrison, Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes and E. Franklin Frazier... it is important to say that Afrocentricity is in opposition to the imposition of particularisms as if they are universal. There has to be cultural and intellectual opportunity in the curriculum for cultures and people other than European. Intellectual space must be shared because all humans have contributed to human civilization. The ancient African philosophers such as Amenhotep, the son of Hapu, Imhotep, Ptahhotep, Amenemhat, Merikare and Akhenaten lived hundreds, even thousands of years before Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Why is it that children do not learn that the African Imhotep built the first pyramid? Our children do not know that Hypatia, Plotinus and St. Augustine were born in Africa (Asante 2015).

Approaches for Inclusiveness in Teaching

James A. Banks (1996) identified four common approaches to teaching content that is prescriptive of inclusion: the contributions approach, the additive approach, the transformation approach, and the social action approach. On the first level, the contributions approach, the curriculum is sprinkled with brief and surface-level celebrations or acknowledgements of heroes, holidays, and isolated cultural elements. This level is most common in American schools in the form of celebrations, such as Black History Month, and fosters a materialistic and disconnected demonstration of a subordinate culture that lacks the depth or breadth to extend to any understanding of the peoples highlighted.

In the additive approach, ethnic concepts, themes, and perspectives are allowed to enter the curriculum, but remain as an addition, ancillary to what is already there. Topics, such as the American Revolution, are taught as it was before; however, a fact or two will be added to the lesson to demonstrate to students how ethnic groups fit into the American puzzle. This approach introduces

ethnicity through the perspective of the point of view of the mainstream, thereby reinforcing dominance.

In the third level, the transformation approach, the curriculum is restructured to include the perspectives, actions, culturally centeredness and voices of various ethnic groups. Banks (1996) best describes this level as the infusion of various perspectives, frames of reference, and content from different groups that will extend students' understandings of the nature, development, and complexity of the United States and the world. This level presents various perspectives for the goal of understanding the commonalities as well as the differences. It allows students to look at an individual event in history and understand it in various ways through various perspectives. That shift is most closely aligned with the Afrocentric paradigm (Banks 2006).

Within the social action approach, the decisions and actions of the educators and the learners are essential for relating to a concept, issue, or problem studied. Through an understanding of how other groups perceive a particular situation, students must learn how to critically analyze the problem and create an action plan for the solution. Critical reflection requires one to seek deeper levels of self-knowledge (Howard, 2003). Within a culturally relevant pedagogy, both the teacher and the student must allow their critical analyses to effectively reflect their social actions. This inclusion of social action and agency is mirrored in the Afrocentric paradigm (Banks 1995).

Goals within Curriculum Development

Banks (1996) provided ten goals in curriculum development. These could be aligned, transmuted and extended within the creation of curriculum that is reflective of a position of location, agency, and centeredness and postulates liberation with an underlying exigency of educating. In order to understand how the Amistad legislation is an exemplar of the Afrocentric paradigm in educational praxis. First, this transformation of the curriculum must develop decision-making and social action skills. Second, the curriculum must promote the ability of reflection on issues centered

in the discourse and the culture of the respective people, and encourage the necessary personal, social, and civic action that will solve these racial and ethnic problems locally, nationally, and globally from within, allowing for the active agency of all, that eliminates objectification as passive observers. Third, the curriculum must help students understand various issues through multiple perspectives but with the locality from within the learner, which promotes an intrinsic understanding of their own ethnic identification and history, and exist civically within their own community, it must extend cultural competencies and proficiencies and overcome any notions of tokenism.

The fourth and fifth goals are similar. For the curriculum must help students function within a range of cultures, teach them how to interact within members from other cultural groups, and provide them with the skills to solve conflicts with others, expanding cultural proficiencies. Next, it is important for the curriculum to provide students with alternate cultural and ethnic connections, confronting racial micro-aggressions that persist benignly or overtly. There are subcultures within cultures; therefore, it is important for students to understand that there are alternate perspectives and ways within groups. The last three goals focus on the individual's understanding of himself or herself. Overall, Banks recommended that the curriculum help students understand how to view themselves through various perspectives, and what his or her cultural identity means within a particular cultural context, it is the ability for identification with one's self, and one's world (Banks 1996).

These last goals fully contextualize the synonymous nature of the Afrocentric paradigm with the development of transformative curriculum that encompasses our study of our "social" interactions and Social Studies /history instruction with our nation's classrooms.

Asante, Mazama, Okur and Karenga all overlap in their belief that Afrocentrism is centered around the following precepts:

- The highest value of life lies in the interpersonal relationships between humans
 - One should live in harmony with nature.
 - There is a oneness between human and nature.
 - The survival of the group holds the utmost importance.
 - Humans should appropriately utilize the materials around them.
 - One's self is complementary to others.
 - Change occurs in a natural, evolutionary cycle.
 - Spirituality and inner divinities hold the most significance.
 - Cooperation, collective responsibility, and interdependence are the key values to which all should strive to achieve.
 - All humans are considered to be equal, share a common bond, and be a part of the group.
 - The Afrocentric worldview is a circular one, in which all events are tied together with one another and can metamorphosize the nature of curriculum design and instruction.
- (Asante 1990)

In opposition, in the article “Ethnographic studies of multicultural education in classrooms and schools,” Wills, Lintz, and Mehan (2004) conducted a literature review of ethnographic studies of transformative and inclusive curriculum in American classrooms and schools. Some studies translate multiculturalism to achieving cultural competencies and equitable representation and perspective in classroom interactions, some studies attempt to define multicultural education as the implementation of contributions, experiences, and perspectives of women and racial and ethnic groups, and other studies focus on building an ethno-racial identity. However, Wills, Lintz, and Mehan believed that developing of curriculum that exposes students to the multiplicity of narratives that make up U.S. society, teaches them about the contested nature of our history, and encourages

them to challenge inequality and to rethink American identity becomes difficult to achieve in practice (2004) and has not been done. The operationalization of the Amistad law, now documented by this dissertation, proves them incorrect.

Wills, Lintz, and Mehan (2004) state that there has still been virtually no ethnographic research on multicultural curriculum practice in actual classroom that there is a need for research to explore the social, cultural, and institutional practices that transform official curriculum into classroom knowledge of U.S. history and society (2004). My premise is that Wills, Lintz, and Mehan are not clear on what a classroom that achieves this goal would look like, and they need an understanding how curricula that uses the tenets of Afrocentricity in its development and implementation as constructed in classroom lessons and activities can not only transform teachers' representations of historical figures and events and their narrations of U.S. history, but delineate the differentials in delivery of these practices for students and society (Wills, 2004).

Asante avows that since institutions like schools are modeled the character of the nation in which they are founded upon, American education is generally oriented towards Eurocentricity. The utilization of Afrocentricity allows for the "transmission of values and attitudes" in a way that forever changes the educational experience for all students (Asante, 2007).

In an effort to quantify characteristics for analysis of the Afrocentric paradigm in operation, and remove all speculation as to the transformative power, perspective or centeredness of any discourse, Nilgun Anadolu Okur constructed a checklist for deconstructing phenomena that is reflective of the epistemological ideology of the Afrocentric methodology. The following illustrates Okur's 2003 list for recognizing the tenets of Afrocentricity that can be aligned with an Afrocentric philosophical framework, and can be applicable in any phenomena for pedagogical identification of African people. These pedagogical characteristics can be juxtaposed with differing aspects of this case study-for analysis of curricula, textbook selections, lesson plan development, or educational

policy strategies. Though Okur's methodology speaks to literary texts, these steps can be applied to any text in a classroom designed for African American students. Nilgun Anadolu-Okur, has given permission for the inclusion of this list in this study.

AFROCENTRIC METHODOLOGY FOR THE ANALYSIS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN DISCOURSE

Nilgun Anadolu-Okur, PhD (copyrighted)

(Paragraphed additives are the Researcher's)

1. CENTER THE AUTHOR/ IN THE HISTORICAL LITERATURES/ORATURES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN PEOPLE
2. TRANSCEND EUROCENTRIC NEGATIONS ABOUT AFRICAN/AFRICAN AMERICAN SOCIETY
 - (PROVIDE A) COUNTER ARGUMENT
 - TRANSCENDING THE EUROCENTRIC PREOCCUPATION /TRANSCENDING STEREOTYPICAL ELEMENTS
 - EMBRACING MORE INCLUSIVE VISIONS OF REALITY
3. USING THE THREE FUNDAMENTAL THEMES OF TRANSCENDENT DISCOURSE
 - HUMAN RELATIONS
 - HUMAN AND SUPERNATURAL
 - HUMAN RELATIONSHIP TO SELF
4. PRESENT THE PRINCIPAL CONTEXTS OF RESISTANCE, LIBERATION AND ACTION
5. ADDRESSING THE WORK TO A PARTICULAR AUDIENCE
6. EMPLOYING THE AFRICAN AMERICAN/AFRICAN CULTURAL MYTHOFORMS THAT INFORM THE CREATIVE EXPRESSION IN THE DISCOURSE
7. (IS THERE EVIDENCE OF) THE SOCIAL POLITICAL CONTEXT
8. (ARE THERE) LYRICAL QUALITIES IN THE TEXT?
9. (DOES THE TEXT PROMOTE) THE IDEAS OF UNITY AND HARMONY
10. (DOES THE TEXT DEVELOP AROUND CENTERED PERSEPECTIVES) AND DOES IT DEVELOP CENTERED PERSPECTIVES IN KNOWLEDGE AND AUTHORITY?

CHAPTER 4

A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF INCLUSION POLICIES: THE LEGISLATIVE RESPONSE - THE HISTORY OF CURRICULUM INCLUSION OF MARGINALIZED PEOPLE INTO AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL CURRICULA

According to the *National United States History Content Standards for Grades 5-12*, outside of the State of New Jersey, and a few school districts across the nation have prescribed to the same ideology. The teaching of African American history in America’s public schools is topical, and unit-based— i.e. it is limited to discussions of slavery, the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement, with a narration that delineates the black experience as a separate entity, only worth noting in dramatic moments of social change. For students to have a fair chance of living in a more equitable society, considerations must be made for the overhauling of how they are instructed in Social Studies and Social histories. Students shouldn’t have to ask their teachers about deficits most are unaware of; thereby, we can restate the necessity for an Amistad law. How often have students, once enlightened on the deficits in the narrative they have been taught, turned back to their teachers, re-examining reflectively on their curricula and asked themselves, outside of the topical inclusions of several units, *and* asked the question - where are the African Americans the rest of the time in the version of history you have taught me all year?

We need to broaden what is considered important to impart to our students so that the default history of America isn’t a white, male-only view that is not reflective of our global society, but plays out within the classroom daily. Revising our vision of what constitutes “Black History” is especially crucial now. In 2017, more than 50% of American children born were nonwhite- those groups classified as “minorities” collectively are the majority. Pablo Freire said it best when he stated that if a structure does not permit dialogue, then the structure must be changed.

The politics of both teaching and educational policymaking control the school's content inside and outside the classroom. Curriculum decision-making finds itself in transition between government sanctioned- and controlled- decision-making and the political and social requests for expansions and inclusions which have now fully imbedded itself at the national, state, and local levels. Curriculum design, development, and evaluation are, always have been, and always will be exemplars in political behavior. They are acts that extend the influence or controlling decisions surrounding the allocation of value in individuals. Deciding who should have access to what knowledge, and how that knowledge is to be selected, organized, and presented, is clearly a process of allocating values. It is political reality that the authority to set these educational policy decisions has been held by a small minority of individuals—ones that have undergird their social/political agendas. So whether with full intent, or benign neglect, there is no effort to include any complimentary or conflicting narratives of “others”. Over the last 100 plus years, there have been many formidable battles to grapple away from established educational policy power structures their status quo.

Terrie Epstein in *Interpreting National History, Race, Identity, and Pedagogy in Classroom and Communities* (2009) described the importance of national, state, and school district curricular frameworks in determining how American history is interpreted in public schools. In recent years, these frameworks have highlighted the contributions and experiences of oppressed groups but emphasized democracy rather than the inequalities that still exist in society. Epstein conducted an ethnographic study on black and white students' interpretation of U.S. history. Within this study, Epstein revealed that teachers positioned elite white men as the nation's founders who created and extended democracy and white immigrants as those who rose above discrimination to build an infrastructure and contribute to cultural diversity (Epstein, 2009).

Epstein (2009) explained that these frameworks present nationalist views of American history and government, and position the contributions of people of color as an occasional

phenomenon. Within this American-nationalist view, the contributions of each racial and ethnic group are presented as part of the national development. As Epstein analyzed the curricular frameworks of the states of California and Michigan, the contributions tend to favor that of the European culture. Based on examples provided within the curriculum, the European culture was the dominant contributor towards the development of the nation. However, Epstein (2009) noted the framework did not acknowledge that the nation systematically violated people's rights, enslaved or expropriated people of color, or legally considered women to be second class citizens. The American-nationalist approach fails to acknowledge the exclusion and persecution of African American history and removes white racism and other forms of inequalities from the historical dialogue.

In the next section, I will analyze research that addresses governmental guidelines necessary for a successful implementation of legislative change. The Amistad Bill is a unique legislative response to the exclusion of the African and African American perspectives within the curriculum but it is far from an effort in silo; it is the result of a historiography that pushes for educational policy amendments that have spanned more than a century. Although the Amistad Bill is one of the few successfully operationalized attempts to legislate curricular change at a state level on behalf of African Americans, it is important to understand how this state mandated curriculum is interpreted and implemented within New Jersey classrooms. New Jersey has created a bill that fundamentally transformed the American history curriculum within New Jersey classrooms, and nationwide, for as Michael Fullan (2001) stated, governments have the potential to be a major force for transformation" (Fullan 2001).

In recent years, not only have textbook authors and publishers been challenged to respond to the growing demand for the inclusion of all Americans, but also federal, state and local politicians and legislators. These reforms have allowed for the extension of policy that will extend the collective

histories of all peoples in the nation’s classroom. What will be most indicative of the curricular shifts will be what Nathan Hare refers to in his article *Questions and Answers about Black Studies*, is the underlying “pedagogical devices” utilized and manifested within the public policy (Hare 1969). In the case of the Amistad mandate, the underlying pedagogical ethos is Afrocentricity.

Thereby, as a unifying discourse, Afrocentricity should link the academic and social communities to the development of policy agendas and implementation. According to black political scientist Ronald Walters, traditionally the public policy realm—federal, state and local—has actively refused to function for the empowerment or betterment of African Americans.

Therefore, the involvement of Afrocentricity as a paradigm for policy construction is most critical in all aspects of policy formation, adoption, implementations, and evaluation, if it is to be transformative and liberating for the African American community. Although many policymakers have made efforts to primarily incorporate the histories of Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans into the American narrative, researchers such as Wolf (1992), warn legislators, textbook writers and publishers to be careful not to reinforce and re-tread a dominant European discourse within educational policy. Therefore, policies and mandates without effective implementation and pedagogy would likely undermine even the most well-intentioned educational reform efforts.

Afrocentric scholarship and leadership is an integral and a key component to policy design and actualization. As Nathaniel Norment, Jr. states in his article titled “African American Studies and Public Policy”, they serve the purpose of theorist, reformer and policymaker; and in the case of the Amistad mandate, direct the depth, breadth and scope of the educational policy actualization (Norment 2009).

Schools are social agencies that are expected to reflect and deal with current and critical issues that affect and influence our society and culture. Secondly, one of the major functions of an

educational system is the selection and reservation of carefully chosen traditions and culture. Educators have concluded that the way American history has been taught in the public school is largely responsible for the views, prejudices, racial micro-aggressions, misconceptions, beliefs, and attitudes. They have created racially distorted perceived roles and historical content knowledge of African Americans and other non-white minorities.

Policy analysis in the field has led to a shift in foci that has opened the door for a wave of educators and community stakeholders. This shift has crystalized the necessity of the teaching and learning of African American content within our nation's classrooms.

In 1970, federal hearings were conducted before the General Subcommittee on Education and Labor in the House of Representatives, 91st Congress. HR bill 14910 was being debated that was designed to provide students elementary through high school cultural heritage studies as mandated by federal oversight. Its exigency and underlying theory is that the creation of ethnically oriented programs related to curriculum reform and designed to encourage desired attitudes and values can be developed within the framework of the existing American education system; and that such programs should be developed and considered consistent with the already stated goals of the system.

This policy shift was well intentioned, but it inferred a contributive and additive approach to the teaching of history without shifting cultural paradigms or expanding theoretical frameworks. April 1971 brought further hearings that led to the introduction of a U.S. Senate bill that was recommending rudimentary curricula revision and proposals related to the placement of black studies and other ethnic groups into regular school programs, with new curricula and instructional methods to support a program of instruction that included the teaching cultural heritage of minority groups.

The precursor to these efforts can be linked as far back as colonial American Free African Society schools movement which began in the 1780s thanks to the combined efforts of Quakers and free African American communities. The Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and the New York Manumission Society supported manumitted and freed slaves with legal, educational and economic aid. Out of these efforts came the establishment of educational institutions for African American children. Charles Andrew chronicles in his 2015 book *History of the New-York African Free-Schools: From Their Establishment in 1787, to the Present Time; Embracing a Period of More Than Forty Years; Also a Brief Account of the Successful Labors, of the New-York Manumission Society* how The New York African Free School provided education for African American students in New York City for more than six decades (Andrews 2015).

In the state of Pennsylvania alone, the African Free School was established in 1787, along with the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and the Free African Society, **under** the leadership of individuals like Bishop Richard Allen and Educator Anthony Benezet. In the 2010 publication the *Centennial Anniversary Of The Pennsylvania Society, For Promoting The Abolition Of Slavery, The Relief Of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held In Bondage, And For Improving The Condition Of The African Race* by the Pennsylvania Society For Promoting The Abolition Of Slavery, accounted that the Philadelphia African Free School in its first 20 years, enrolled between 100 and 200 students annually, registering and educating a total of eight hundred pupils by 1822. Subject matter included reading, writing, grammar, math, and geography. Surviving records suggest students were being prepared for a middle-class standing in society (2010).

Although “common,” or public, elementary schools for poor and/or white boys had sprung up in hundreds of northern towns and cities after American independence, educational access was denied to African American students. In the South, the African American clergy were often

clandestine active agents in the spread of literacy and educational attainments; they held secret classes for black children to help them read the Bible.

The ideology of the liberation power of literacy is exemplified in the autographical account of Frederick Douglass during America's period of African American enslavement. Douglass's life as a previously enslaved African to becoming a major political voice of slavery abolition and black liberation, was hinged on his focus on the saving grace of his voice (his *Nommo*) and his literacy. His life is used as a gateway for knowledge acquisition that challenged the era's racist status quo. Douglass's literacy and knowledge that was grounded in holistic global history inclusive of African Diasporan contributions (including the Black church), allowed him to speak truth to power.

Nilgun Anadolu Okur in her 2016 article "Writing History and Reading Texts: An Afrocentric Narrative of Cultures" in Contemporary Critical thought in Africology and Africana Studies records an account in 1854 when Frederick Douglass, African American abolitionist orator, debunks the essay written by French aristocrat Joseph Arthur, Comte de Gobineau. Gobineau had written a series of essays on racial hierarchy and classifications that equated Africans with sub-humanness. (Okur 2016) Douglass decidedly challenged these notions. He had published an article that was the antithesis to Gobineau's racist claims. In the social/political context of the day, the articulation of the debate, writing and publication of Douglass's response was sufficient to demystify Gobineau's white supremacist premise of the sub-human nature of African Diasporan peoples. Douglass was previously enslaved, ingeniously escaped, was a self-taught, articulate advocate, writer, researcher and orator. Okur recounts that Douglass took his advocacy for African American intellect a step further. From the podium in front of an assembly of abolitionists, he narrated orally his written arguments. Douglass's written and oral rebuttal to Gobineau and the world involved Egypt, as a foundational civilization, gave the globe exemplary contributions that were ascribed to its humanity and intellect.

Okur goes on to enumerate Douglass's concluding premise. The racial/cultural identification of the Egyptian peoples were of the same "race" as those that were being denigrated and enslaved at that time in the America nation and categorized as sub-human. It deflated every congruity of African American with sub-humanness and inferiority that Gobineau was attempting to quantify (Okur 2016). Douglass's real strength was in the Diasporan centeredness of his discourse and the active agency of his *Nommo* - words that advocated for equality via the debunking of European universalism and African inferiority.

Okur accounts in her 2016 book *Dismantling Slavery Frederick Douglass, William Lloyd Garrison, and Formation of the Abolitionist Discourse, 1841–1851* that Douglass's literacy and his attainment of knowledge of African Diasporan history grounded him and shifted his agency and discourse. Okur attributes this to the power of his centeredness in education:

Douglass's determination to conquer and transcend illiteracy made him not only the master of discourse on protest, but proved to the European that his accomplishments in literacy and self-determination were undeniably a testament to Africans' humanity and intelligence (Okur 2016).

The use of literacy as a vehicle for education and social/political indoctrination was not a new conceptualization. It was integral to the 19th century abolition movement. These shifts were the causation of an ideological and physical rift from his white abolitionist counterparts and his benefactors, such as William Lloyd Garrison, whose differentials in strategy and advocacy for abolition did not necessarily reject Eurocentricity, or include a transformative narrative of African Diasporan inclusion (Okur 2016). Egyptian excellence had a legacy and Douglass was one of its heirs. The pursuit for knowledge, for literacy, that Douglas exemplifies, resulted in a discourse that only extended the quest for education opportunities for African Americans post emancipation.

After the Civil War, Northern Union generals were tasked to control civil government by the establishment of the Freedman's Bureau or the 1864 Port Royal experiment. Freedman's Bureau

agents established compulsory public school systems for children in the former Confederate states. Newly elected African American legislators across Southern communities directed state budgets to be inclusive of monetary support for the building of common schools, open to all children, black and white. Simultaneously, African American missionary societies sent thousands of teachers to institute schools focused on the education of formerly enslaved people.

When Southern states regained home rule in the 1870s with the political collapse of Reconstruction, mandated segregation policy were reestablished and educational prioritization for African Americans was reduced among white communities that were re-codifying white supremacy. States drastically slashed budgets earmarked for African American schools. Educational goals among the African American community did not dwindle, public schools continued to operate, African American colleges expanded their offering and created secondary (normal) schools, and churches operated day schools as well as Sunday schools. Despite the political climate of the era that attempted to temper the elevation of educational attainment opportunities, there was a dramatic increase in the number of schools and colleges for African Americans.

By 1895, the United States Department of Education's report *White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities* (2015) cites that there were 62 secondary schools and 43 colleges across the nation, in addition to the 3 that had been founded before the Civil War in the states of Ohio and Pennsylvania. By 1900, more than half the graduates of these institutions had become teachers, with an additional 20% becoming clergymen, most of whom were either directly or indirectly involved with education within their ministry.

To most African Americans, literacy was symbolic of liberation. The focus on literacy served as a blockade to the extensions of the indoctrination of inferiority that society had imposed; education stymied those negative effects and provided alternative possibilities. Tunde Adeleke echoes those ideologies in the article "Will the Real Father of Afrocentricity Please Stand" in *The Western Journal*

of *Black Studies*, commented that scholars such as W.E.B. Du Bois and Carter G. Woodson understood and reflected Afrocentricity in their works:

[T]hat after centuries of historical misrepresentation of African Diasporan genius, disconnection with African Diasporan world contributions, and institutionalized dislocation of historical consciousness of Blacks in Diaspora, manifested in the denial and abuse of their history, couples with blatant utilization of history as a weapon of control. Since the misuse and abuse of the Black/African historical experience and heritage constitute the Afrocentric springboard, it is pertinent to revisit the past in order to establish the proper historical foundation of the core elements of the Afrocentric genre... the struggles of nineteenth century African American intellectuals against the aristocratic historiography that shaped western conception of the African/Black historical experience from the dawn of enslavement... Slavery nurtured in Blacks the tragic conception of history contrived to destroy any desire for self-fulfillment (Adeleke 2001).

Tunde Adeleke quotes C. Eric Lincoln, who states that essence of slavery was the suspension of history” and alignment to a knowledge “ that part out of which all status and relationships derive, and which constitute the only sure reality in African cosmology, was summarily denied or leached away. American slavery offered no place to be somebody” (Lincoln, 1996) and erased the narrative that served to provide a foundation legacy for cultural history and generational advancement.

In response, Carter G. Woodson and W.E.B. Du Bois and others, espoused a culturally-centered ideology in their works and research. Both maintained that African Americans would be unable to debunk the misnomers in the narrative heaped upon them and participate in American life on an equal basis until they gained a complete knowledge and understanding of their own African Diasporan heritage. Their pursuit was to produce, publish and provide for African Americans knowledge acquisition that unearthed their history, heritage, contributions, and agency. If traditional education as it had existed in the United States had robbed African Americans of their heritage and alienated them from their traditional values, then an infusion of holistic representations and codified

historical narrative that rectified the Eurocentric historiography that had excluded or misrepresented them could bring them back.

This ideology of liberation through a grounded cultural education extended through the Civil Rights movement in the United States the 1960s. It provided a foundational theoretical framework for the Black Studies movement, which grew out of the social and political climate of the time. It echoed the liberation ideologies and experiences of the last century.

The nommo (the power of the word) that spurred Frederick Douglass's first address in 1841, or W.E.B. Du Bois's creation of *The Crisis* magazine, or Carter G. Woodson's creation of scholarly resources for classrooms and his founding of Negro History Week (now Black/African American History Month), was their collective resistance to oppression, from a positioned of centered discourse. That resistance was birthed out of holistic education opportunities that denied European universalisms, demarginalized African Diasporan peoples and knocked down "the barriers established by the color line, including denial of agency, and equality for the African American in the twentieth century" (Okur 2017).

The Black Studies movements of the late 1960s to early 1980s created a legacy of active agency. It was spurred on by the social/political urgencies of the times that forced public and private black and white universities to contend with the expansions of higher education curricula and course offerings to include African Diasporan history and culture. On the campuses across the nation, students protested, via sit-ins and lock-ins, to extend the notion of self-determination and cultural awareness grounded intrinsically in the Black Diasporan experience to their universities. They fought for academic environments that embraced an African aesthetic and perspective.

The emergence of these programs in higher education institutions—the ivy tower that often legitimized and upheld the academic canon that trickled down to secondary education in this

country—continued to expand the intellectual space that Woodson and Du Bois and countless other African American scholars had vested in this liberating work.

The students occupied and conquered academic space in the 1970s and 1980s, debunking racial privilege and racial superiority. Their activism resulted in the creation of: Africa Diasporan cultural centers; Black Studies departments in-silo (as in, distinct from the traditional Humanities and Social sciences departments); Black history lecture series; increased scholarship and publishing in the field of Black history and culture; the hiring of Black faculty, and expanded and new course offerings created and established from within the university's dominant culture. This was an educational revolt against the ivy tower's status quo, and it was a successful one.

Maulana Karenga conceptualized the theoretical framework of the academic field in his 1979 book titled *Introduction to Black Studies*. Within this seminal work, Karenga crystalized a directive for the intellectual arena, by organizing the field into seven key areas: 1) agency; 2) self-defining experiences and centeredness; 3) history; 4) mythology; 5) motif; 6) ethos; 7) social organization, political organization, and economic organization (Karenga 1979). The intellectual and educational revolution represented an escape from traditional Western hegemony in teaching; it was not in-silo and it spiraled down to K-12 education throughout the country.

Education USA (1970) surveys that same year of state departments of education for K-12 and found seven states whose legislatures had passed laws requiring or recommending the contributions and achievements of “minority” groups be included in the school curricula in some manifestation within elementary and secondary education institutions. Ethnic groups historically have challenged state legislatures to require the inclusion of their stories within the history curriculum. In the 1960s and 1970s citizens and interest groups impacted curriculum through legislative change by presenting “a quest for a more inclusive, more diverse, more functional

learning program which respects the presence of the major profiles of the American citizenry” (Boyer & Baptiste, Jr., 1996, p. 33).

In 1970, they were the states of California, Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, and Oklahoma. Six more states, Kentucky, Missouri, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont, were at that point trying to accomplish the same purpose through policy statements issued by their state boards or state departments of education. However none of the policy mandates in any of the states included punitive measures for non-compliance.

According to the survey, the first law relating to minority history was passed in California in 1961. The law forbade the state department to approve any textbook that did not correctly portray the role and contribution of the American Negro and members of other ethnic groups in the total development of the United States and of the state of California. Furthermore, a 1965 resolution in California required the state board to adopt textbooks for civics and history courses in elementary and high schools that correctly portray the role and contribution of the American Negro and members of the other ethnic group in the total development of the United States and California.

Oklahoma in 1965, Illinois in 1967 both subsequently passed resolutions that covered the history of all ethnic groups in the region with proper bibliographies made available to schools. New Jersey in 1967 passed a joint resolution and provided a onetime budget line item designation of \$60,000 that recommended that the Commissioner of Education provide in-service professional development for teachers to assure that the role of the American Negro was included in the curriculum. But it was development by recommendations, not a legislative directive or policy shift. Nebraska, Connecticut and Michigan in 1969 recommendation the adoptions of textbooks that included ethnic and minority history, and to periodically survey Social Studies textbooks to determine how well they meet the objective but set no objectives and did not include a shift to any curriculum.

The only additive to be included in curriculum reforms was a furnishing of an outline of black leaders and bibliographies by grade level. The wholehearted inclusion of the outline would represent a contributive or additive approach, resulting in the inclusion of black personalities on a white curricular landscape with no shifts in worldview or theoretical structures.

In the 1970 Education USA Special Report, *Black Studies in Schools*, it was reported that of the six states that were working “through” their state boards, Kentucky and Pennsylvania took the strongest positions that year; they both ordered all state high schools to include adequate treatment of the historical significance and the important role of the “Negro” and other minority races in our nation’s growth and progress (Education USA 1970). This directive was accompanied with a resource unit and a comprehensive bibliography created to suggest a variety of approaches, resources and methods, but with no specific prescription of its implementation. The directive did, however, encourage districts to create separate courses in Negro or minority history where local communities demanded it (interpretation - in African American epicenters that expressed desire) (Education USA 1970).

The City of Philadelphia was an applicable enclave under the directive of creating specified coursework as the need emerges. Officials in the Philadelphia Public Schools in the 1940s were the first to begin academic program in Negro history. The program was expanded in 1967, as a result of student protest and marches demanding a wider implementation across the city, with a well-rounded program for every Philadelphia student. As chronicled in the 2002 article written by Ron Whitehorne for *The Philadelphia Notebook*, 1967 was a pivotal year in which African American students all across the nation’s college campuses were shutting down campuses, sitting in administration offices, and walking out of classes to demand Black Studies and the recognition from university faculties that the study of history is not in silo synonymous with the canon of literature that highlighted the doings and viewpoints of white Europeans to the detriment of all others.

The students were part of a broader movement for Black Power— for an end to the exclusion of African Americans from those institutions that control their lives. According to Whitehorne, Philadelphia were a case in point. Philadelphia public schools were predominately African American, with curricula policymaking primarily in the hands of white elites and politicians. The overwhelming majority of African American students attended segregated schools, with inadequate resources and a curriculum that reinforced the racial and social status quo. Inspired by the activism on the campuses and in the community, African American high school students in Philadelphia organized to demand changes in their education.

On November 17, 1967, 3,500 Philadelphia students walked out of their classes and marched to the Board of Education building to present their demands; for the teaching of African American history, the right to wear African dress and the renaming of several predominantly Black high schools after African Americans who have contributed to the historical narrative. The students were met by a hostile police riot determined to prevent them access to the board building. Whitehorne purports that students attempting to assemble peacefully at the Board of Education headquarters were confronted by two busloads of police, led by Philadelphia Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo, who was overheard telling his officers to “get their Black asses. (Whitehorne 2002). Twenty-two people emerged from the altercation seriously injured, fifty-seven were arrested. Many city leaders vocalized outrage against the unprovoked attack on the students, while others defended the police’s actions. In the end, the result of the student’s protest demonstration was the formation of an ad-hoc Committee for the Infusion of African and Afro-American Heritage. The committee made a series of recommendations which became the basis for school district policy.

In April 1969, a directive from the Deputy Superintendent of Instruction announced that “the policy of the School District of Philadelphia would require every school to provide a well-rounded

program of African and Afro-American history and culture for every child as an integral part of his total school experience” (Whitehorne 2002).

A nine-point plan for implementation included staff development, curriculum reform, courses for parents, and the production of instructional materials. The district published a range of resource guides, model curricula, and other instructional material. Local activists and historians as well as scholars with national reputations were involved in creating these materials. A curriculum specialist position in African and Afro-American Studies was also created. By 1970, the school district of Philadelphia had extended its curriculum to include forty-four separate African American course proposals within the high schools.

In Philadelphia, the city’s Board of Education psychologists, students, parents, educators, and members of the Philadelphia communities they served, were wed to the mission to rectify the absence within the traditional curriculum of any adequate emphasis on African and Afro-American history and culture- an omission that had deprived thousands of students with any deep sense of their own heritage, and their sense of self where personal identity is built. Conversely, that omission had permitted decades of Philadelphia school students up to that point, to have a distorted perceptions of African American people amongst other populations (Whitehorne 2002)

In 1971, the Philadelphia Mayor’s office slowed the reforms to the curriculum including the infusion of African American studies. But that struggle was far from over or defeated. By the 1990’s the District has publicly reaffirmed its commitment to the inclusion of African and African American studies and prioritized these goals in the curriculum. The struggle became the translation of the goals identified in the curriculum into pervasive and effective classroom practice. But the inclusion of African American experiences and perspectives became codified Philadelphia School District policy.

By the 1990s, the city of Philadelphia had reaffirmed its commitment and orchestrated a policy decision to fully implement a course of study requirement for graduation. This commitment was issued as a District policy statement in 1969 and later reaffirmed by districtwide implemented policy by the year 2000. Despite the district's positioning for agreement with community advocates for inclusion of African and African American studies, the parents and advocates for the cultural inclusions had protested for years afterward because of the lack of follow-through. Finally, in 2002, because of the assistance of a roundtable of community stakeholders, historians and educators, spearheaded by Molefi Asante, the district began the process of the codification of the proposals and curriculum development. Asante was hired by the Superintendent to create the Philadelphia School District's African and African American History course. I also had the pleasure of serving on the curriculum committee from 2002-2004, at the time I was the Director of Education and Public Programs at the African American Museum in Philadelphia.

On February 16, 2005, the School Reform Commission which currently still oversees Philadelphia public schools, unanimously passed SRC-1, which mandated the African and African American history course that had been created by Asante become a graduation requirement in all Philadelphia high schools during the sophomore year.

Philadelphia educator Sandra Dungee Glenn, Philadelphia Reform Commission member from 2002-2009, along with fellow Philadelphia School Reform Commissioners heralded the actions. Glenn navigated the passage of SRC-1 with the Commissioners. As a result, the Commissioners demanded, and got, a high school history class allowed a specialized focus in the context of world and American history most especially, since it was their contention that African American history is a particularly important component of world and American history and therefore should be a separate course at the high school level (Whitehorne 2002).

Afrocentricity in Education Policy: Extending Beyond Contributive and Additive Curriculum Revision

What must be noted is the underlying legal deficit in each of these states. All the policy statements from each one of these states urge schools and/or districts to give some attention to minority groups, but they do not *require* it. Mandated curriculum across the board that constitutes a succinct paradigm shift in educational policy can only be done through the enacting of state law. Philadelphia, although large and influential, is a single city in the state of Pennsylvania; the city requirement for a high school sophomore course that specializes in African American history does not extend beyond its borders. A student in Haverford, Harrisburg, or Beaver, Pa. have no such requisite curricula or the resources.

Other states diversify their curricula even less. Devoid of official policy statements or resolutions, these states developed bibliographies and teaching guides on all their “minority” groups. These actions are precarious and subjective to the whims of the political leanings of the legislators and policymakers. As of 2017, these states include Arizona, Alaska, and Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, and Washington. As a result of such efforts, schools in Arizona, Alaska and New Mexico, for example, recommended teaching the perspective and experience of Native Americans/American Indians.

Arizona becomes a perfect example to further enunciate the necessity of the premise of a statewide legal mandate to permanently shift and entrench educational policy. The political landscape swings during the last decade in Arizona has led to a hotbed of conservative inclinations. These political fluctuations has steered the eradication of any gains in inclusions of Ethnic and cultural studies in curricula. Tucson, Arizona was the epicenter of the conflict. A Mexican-American studies course was formulated as a response to the increasing populations’ shifts and the demand for lesson plans that were culturally reflective. The educators and activists hoped to address what they viewed

as a pressing need to make coursework reflect the experience of Latino, black and Asian-American students by studying more works by authors of color and introducing in-depth study of issues like race and the history of Americans descended from places other than Europe.

According to Nolan L. Cabrera, Elisa L. Meza, and Roberto Dr. Cintli Rodriguez in the article, “The Fight for Mexican American Studies in Tucson”, such coursework, supporters said, helped engage students whose history and perspective were previously shortchanged at school, and improved students’ self-image by valuing their history and culture in the classroom. The struggle for equitable, relevant education through Mexican American Studies had not occurred in a vacuum but came because of consistent political educational policy momenta. Since 2006, TUSD’s Mexican American Studies program has come under political attack on a statewide level from the presently-serving (as of 2017) Arizona State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne. From 2006 to 2010, Horne wrote three separate pieces of legislation to eliminate Mexican American Studies from the Tucson Unified School District. In the summer of 2009, hundreds of community members ran from Tucson to the state capitol in Phoenix to raise awareness about the proposed anti-Mexican American Studies law. As Superintendent Horne continued his campaign, the students in the district responded with a series of meetings, protests, marches, and rallies. The year 2010 saw the shift in political ideology towards conservatism, made complete with a much more xenophobic thrust. In 2010, growing fears around immigration, a recession, and a midterm election made Mexican American Studies a perfect wedge issue to feed the Arizona Republican base.

Arizona legislators became involved and legally deconstructed the Mexican American Studies course directive. In response to a Mexican-American studies curriculum in the 60-percent Hispanic Tucson Unified School District, the state Legislature in 2010 passed HB 2281, which banned courses that were aimed at a specific ethnic group. The legislators specified that courses such

as the one in Tucson divested students from universal community solidarity to the greater American society and would lead to the overthrow of the U.S. government by promoting ethnic isolation.

Cabrera, Meza, Roberto and Rodriguez assert in their article that Tucson teachers and students filed suit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona to reinstate the course and curriculum. Advocates for Mexican-American studies courses in the classroom have claimed that the ban on Mexican American studies violates Hispanic students' equal protection rights. They cite research showing student participation in Mexican-American studies can be linked to better outcomes on state standardized tests and increased chances of earning a high school diploma. Their claims were dismissed in 2013 after an Arizona judge said the law only targeted the curriculum, not individuals. The curricula battle in Arizona is ongoing and still unfolding. But it does demonstrate the politics and the dynamics of power of cultural curriculum narratives and inclusions.

Beginning in the 1990's in Florida and many other states, curriculum units have also been created to recognize the histories of Latinos, Haitians, and women as well as the history of the Holocaust. Legislation was introduced in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Oregon, Maryland, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Nebraska, Illinois, California and Pennsylvania for Irish Famine education to become a part of the curriculum also in the mid 1990's; however, according to the Journal of Irish Studies, the Irish Famine Curriculum has so far only been implemented in New Jersey and New York with the creation of the New Jersey Department of Education Famine Curriculum for schools (Mullin, 2002).

The Maryland State legislature also created a state Negro History and Culture Commission in 2000 to study these issues, and a concerted effort in the ensuing years was mounted with other states conjoining to craft a National Commission on Afro-American History and Culture, with Presidential appointments that would integrate the Negro's role and heritage into history books, schools, libraries, museums, and press; that has not happened to date. However, these efforts have

resulted in the state of Maryland moving towards the preservation of African American sites and the expansion of cultural heritage tourism throughout the state; including the construction of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad State Park which will open in March 2017 and the solidification of the “Network to Freedom Underground Railroad Tour” throughout the Eastern Shore which began in 2015.

In New Jersey, the approach to institutionalizing inclusion of culturally-centered education was a legislatively-mandated, systematic overhaul of the entirety of its state educated policy, codified with government oversight and monitoring. On August 27, 2002, the Governor of New Jersey signed into law the Amistad Bill (A1301), sponsored by Assemblymen William D. Payne and Craig A. Stanley. The bill’s passage created an “Amistad Commission” in honor of the enslaved Africans who gained their freedom after overthrowing the crew of the slave ship *Amistad* in 1839. The alignment with the 1839 event and New Jersey’s legislation is in the active agency for the pursuit of their liberation; the kidnapped Africans spoke truth to power to liberate their narrative from inaccurate interpretation that was condemning them. In New Jersey, the creation of the legislation engaged in the same tenets.

The Commission’s mandate was to promote a wider implementation of educational awareness programs regarding the African slave trade, slavery in America, and the many contributions Africans have made to American society. The Amistad Bill created historic legislation for not only the state of New Jersey but also for opening a transformative and revolutionary new chapter. The new territory was the establishment of teaching the nation’s history in a way inclusive of Afrocentric methodology with an emphasis of centered voice and active agency. The New Jersey legislation was and remains an important, national model for Afrocentricity in praxis codified by legal mandate (Wilson 2012).

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF AMISTAD LAW: THE NEW JERSEY AMISTAD BILL - NEW JERSEY'S LEGISLATIVE RESPONSE TO THE INCLUSION OF BLACK HISTORY –AFROCENTRICITY IN PRAXIS

In recent years, there have been attempts to reform ongoing curricular deficits and remedy the inability for national curricular revamping and enforcement, through the enactment of enforceable state law that was introduced to address and remedy the quasi-compliance of the preceding policy statements and recommendation; such enforceable mandates were ushered in by the New Jersey Amistad Law. By the 1970s, New Jersey politicians had made numerous efforts for three decades to recognize the need for the inclusion of multiple perspectives and narratives within the history curriculum. Recognizing the cultural shift in the population of the state of New Jersey, civil rights activists fought for equality in educational policy enforcement through legislative change.

Although, the New Jersey state codes for school operation (NJSA 18A:35-1, 2) mandates two years of U.S. history in the high schools, including the teaching of African American History, it was the specified 1994 mandate of teaching of the Holocaust Genocide curriculum for primary and secondary schools that changed the narrative on statewide enforceable content reforms, followed by the creation of the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education housed within the Department of Education.

Consequently, New Jersey Assemblymen William D. Payne (D) and Craig A. Stanley (D) began to push for an equivalent mandate for African and African American education in the state of New Jersey. They proposed the Amistad Law (A1301) to recognize African Americans as an integral part of American history and to foster and create a greater level of academic awareness for New Jersey students. In 2002 the New Jersey State Assembly passed the New Jersey Amistad Bill

(A1301) mandatorily requiring by law that New Jersey public schools incorporate African American history into their Social Studies and history curriculum.

According to the Amistad archival transcripts from the April 2004 Amistad Board of Commissioners public meeting. This journey began when Assemblyman William Payne in 1998 introduced Assembly Bill 1300 to create the Amistad Commission. It was met with some initial resistance to its necessity as a legislative action rather than simply as a request for African American content inclusion directive to the Department of Education. That was not the intention of Assemblyman Payne; he wanted a legally codified state mandate that would be enforceable. The bill gained momentum for passage by 2002, with bipartisan support in the New Jersey Assembly and Senate. It passed as a bipartisan bill in its final vote and sponsorship, with representation coming from both sides of the Statehouse Assembly and Senate and from all twenty-one (21) New Jersey counties. Assemblyman Payne had lobbied long and hard within the hallowed halls of New Jersey Senate and Assembly to guarantee that the passage of the bill and its signers and final sponsors reflected the racial and political diversity of the state. Payne understood politically for statewide implementation across New Jersey, a state that according to 2016 educational data collected by Washington D.C think-tank Realize the Dream The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights classifies New Jersey as the 5th most segregated state in the nation for African Americans, with 50.8% of Black students in extremely segregated schools (those with a 90-100% minority student body) and the 4th most segregated state in the nation for Hispanics, with 41.8% of Hispanic students in extremely segregated schools (those with a 90-100% minority student body) (2016). No state should be proud of concentrating a substantial share of its African American and Latin students in segregated school. Although New Jersey is a rich, largely suburban state with an educated population, with growing diversity, and a tradition of strong public schools, its African American students face far more extreme school segregation than African American students in the South, the

region where segregation was long mandated by state law and state constitutions. New Jersey is an extremely diverse state yet conversely it is a state that historically has a majority of neighborhoods and communities that are still effected with the legacies of New Jersey neighborhood and community residential segregation. (2016)

Therefore Assemblyman Payne knew that legislation in New Jersey embrace the narrative of inclusion and diversification within its curriculum which would usher in a policy shift that could not be ignored within the states classrooms if he garnered bipartisan support from every corner of the state, regardless of realities of residential segregation.

The strength of the bill and its subsequent policy implementation lay in its foci—what Nathaniel Norment assesses as *applied* African American Studies, a theoretical framework that seeks to transform institutions that affect African peoples and is a mechanism of social change.

So how was this systematic overhaul operationalized with the passage of the Amistad bill, in the spirit of the goals and desires of the legislation’s authors? It is the premise of this study that the answer is found in the ideology and methodology that was chosen as the organizing ethos, Afrocentricity. As the Amistad law moved from bill authorship to daily operation, the organizing paradigms that guided the interpretation, direction, expansions, execution and operationalization of the Amistad law to become a national model for the deconstruction and reconstruction of Social Studies education infused with African American content, resulted in policy execution by state law, that in its manifestation, that would be neither additive nor contributive to the existing curriculum but would specifically seek to overhaul and transcend the previously established and codified curriculum, instruction and teachers training. The Amistad Commission by legislation does not report to any particular state department, but is a direct report to the two members of the Governor’s cabinet. The

Commission is a separately staffed autonomous state agency, i.e. commission, “in but not of” the Department of Education, which gave it full authority over of course of action direction, with its own governing board and state appropriation budget originally directly from the state legislature and then from within the Department of Education. In regards to enforcement of the Amistad law, as with any other educational policy ever adopted within New Jersey, specifically charged with the oversight of the state’s curriculum, it is codified by law to have enforceable powers for adoption across the state. The Amistad Commission in New Jersey is the first, and is currently still, the only agency in the United States in that unique positioning.

The Uniqueness of the New Jersey Amistad Bill (A1301)

New Jersey was the first state to legislate the inclusion of the perspective and experiences of African Americans within the United States history curriculum, thereby allowing the overhaul and reconstruction of the entire course of study K-12 in every public, private, parochial and charter school district in the state.

In a strict recitation of the law - the first section of the Amistad Bill has four parts:

- 1) slavery and its legacy;
- 2) the need to teach about the human carnage and dehumanizing atrocities committed during the African slave trade;
- 3) clarification of policy implementation, and
- 4) the creation of a State-level commission.

The legislation acknowledges the enslavement of millions of people of African origin within the Western Hemisphere, the physical and psychological terrorism that removed groups of people of African descent from the basic American opportunities, and the legacy of slavery within the fabric of the American society. Second, the bill states that students must learn about the history of racism in America. Third, the bill explains the need to teach about the history of the African slave trade, slavery

in America, the impact and triumphs of Africans in America. Finally, the bill justifies the need for a commission to survey, design, encourage, and promote the implementation of education and awareness programs related to the content mentioned within the bill.

Ironically this bill, with all its good will, only reflects a small chapter in the history of African American history in the world, with all its energies and authorities on a position of oppression for African Americans. If it were to be implemented as it was written, it would support the continued narrative of victimization as the totality and exemplar of African American legacy, with a theoretical framework that supports an Eurocentric worldview.

That would not suffice for New Jersey. With the passage of the law, opportunity had been presented that could transform the educational public policy landscape. Other states were watching such as Illinois, New York, Delaware, New Mexico, California, and Arkansas. Neighboring state's such as Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York legislators were willing to march identical bills into their cabinets. This opportunity would not be wasted.

Strict interpretation of the bill in operation would not transcend the historical narrative, only prescribe the inclusion of specific facts. The real strength of this bill came in its interpretation and implementation, and the theoretical framework and praxis from which the strategies of Afrocentricity were employed and changed the directive of the policies enactments. Without this application of Afrocentricity to the implementation, this one-dimensionality of a strict implementation does not allow for the law to have life – although the words utilized in the bill were detrimental to the spirit of the Nommo that birthed it. The challenge was to re-align the ideology of Payne's Nommo that spoke it into existence and the evidence of its manifestation, despite the words on the legal mandate that would kill the spirit of it. That assignment was left to the Executive Leadership and the Curriculum Committee.

In the *Afrocentric Idea*, Asante recounts that for many black history in America is incorrectly most closely aligned and dominated by the historic legacies of enslavement (Asante 1988). Thereby a strict interpretation of this legislation would have followed this same ideology. The use of Afrocentricity with its focus on of centering discourse from within, agency and liberation was a necessity for transcending the limitations of the legislation.

Assemblymen William D. Payne and Craig A. Stanley evoked the principle of *Nommo* to create their desired reality in New Jersey classrooms. They crafted legislation that in its manifestation and institutionalization ensured that schools in the Garden State are moving to teach the integral part African Americans have played at every turn in this world's history and this nation's history, transforming the reality the narrative that had historically imposed on them a position of victimization and marginalization in textbooks, curriculum, and in instructional pedagogy.

The Amistad law requires all New Jersey schools to incorporate African-American history into their Social Studies curriculum. This legislation also created the Amistad Commission, a 23-member body charged with guaranteeing that African-American history, contributions and experience are taught in the state's classrooms. The Amistad Commission agency office and Executive staff is responsible for ensuring that the Department of Education and public schools of New Jersey implement the revised curriculum standards, cumulative progress indicators, curricular mapping, benchmarks, instructional materials, teachers and library resources as well as classroom texts which integrate the history and contributions of African-Americans and the descendants of the African Diaspora.

The goals of the Commission as overseen by the staff and directed by its Executive Director, outlaid in the Commission mission statement (*see Appendix B*) are as follows:

- 1) To infuse the history of Africans and African-Americans into a deconstructed and rebuild Social Studies curriculum in order to provide an accurate, complete and inclusive history;
- 2) Guarantee that New Jersey teachers are equipped to effectively teach the revised Social Studies core curriculum content standards by designing and executing professional development opportunities and trainings throughout the state;
- 3) to create the curriculum materials and coordinate the workshops, seminars, institutes, memorials and events which raise public awareness about the importance of the history of African-Americans to the growth and development of American society in global context.

In regular meetings among its commissioners, and through the work of its staff, the Amistad Commission first:

- 1) Surveyed and inventoried for recommendation educational programs, materials and curricula being used to teach American history in New Jersey schools; designed and distributed curriculum and instructional materials to *all* New Jersey schools;
- 2) Built a directory of volunteer and professional consultants who can share their knowledge of African-American roles in American History;
- 3) Created and coordinated professional development workshops, seminars, institutes for Educators in the content area of Social Studies / History inclusive of African-Americans contributions to our collective global history;
- 4) Guides and acts as a liaison with textbook publishers, schools, resource organizations and federal and state legislatures to ensure that American history curricula are consistent with the *Commission's* goals – ones adopted by the Department of Education in the area of Social Studies.

This last point is salient because it speaks to the positioning and the authority of the Commission. The Commission had the power to both create and manifest without interruption or interference by any other agency that might have a differing priority, position or strategy. This work was able to be done in-silo under the authority and protections of the Amistad law. The Amistad Commission mandate allowed the Executive leadership and the Curriculum committee to create the end product and curriculum foci *outside* of the preceding standards for the Department of Education, and what it would create would legally would override any individual New Jersey district's prerogative. The Commission's implementation strategies, by-products and recommendations and curriculum materials were then espoused and implemented by the State Board of Education for enactment and statewide implementation and oversight.

It should be noted, that with the utilization of the Afrocentric paradigm in the policy pragmatic interpretation and enactment of this legislation, the scope and depth of this bill was transformed and extended and evolved, into the operation of its strategic plans for educational policy execution.

The Amistad Bill passage is a historic legislation not only for the state of New Jersey. It opens a revolutionary new chapter for teaching our nation's history by including the historiography of liberation and empowering narrative of inclusion. Many K-12 Educators and stakeholders mistakenly thought the goal would be to introduce African-American history into the K-12 curriculum and to develop public programs on African-American history for children, families, and communities as other states and cities had done. But they got something much more than that.

By adopting a liberating and empowering narrative of inclusion, New Jersey took a more complex challenge that, in my assertion, exemplifies the Afrocentric paradigm. I argue that because the implementation of the legislation shifted a literal interpretation of the goal. The Amistad Commission's goal was to change the landscape for the study of United States and world history by

placing Africans and African Americans at the center of the narrative as agents rather than as bystanders or victims who live on the margins of the United States and the world.

Okur refers to this kind of elitism as “peripheral essentialism” in “Out of Borrowed Spaces” (Okur 2016). In another article, titled “Afrocentricity and Theoretical Approaches to African American Discourse” she asserts that *Nommo*, the African spoken word has power to transform language discourse, one’s knowledge about his or her own self, the desire to learn and be educated. *Nommo* has the power to transcend peripheral essentialism and attain truthful existence beyond institutionalized education governed by biased powers of the state (Okur 2016).

Okur’s counter of essentialism is essential to understanding the paradigm shift Amistad symbolizes. Essentialism supports a view that all children should be taught the traditional views and ideologies that undergird the legacies of the prevalent culture. In opposition, the community of responsible, conscious beings reject that mindset of essentialism’s indoctrination of labels, roles, stereotypes, definitions, or other preconceived categories. That mindset is the liberating pedagogy of Afrocentricity. It aligns human beings, through their own consciousness, create their own values and determine a meaning to their life often out of the expanse of educational opportunities and narratives afforded them.

As accounted in Okur’s 2015 article entitled “Ma’at, Afrocentricity and the Critique of African American Drama,” *nommo* centers discourse in the legacies of a particular people’s historic narrative. It transcends Eurocentric negation of a people and their history and culture. It transcends the pre-occupation with Eurocentric perspective. It embraces inclusion as a reality; it uses fundamental themes of transcendent discourse in its delivery; it is capable of articulating the aspects of resistance, liberation, and action. *Nommo* is centered in African culture. It employs cultural mythoforms as a methodology of expression. It elucidates the social political context that shapes the work and dictates the narrative. It frames how the heart and soul of the work translated into the

rhythmic patterns of speech centered in the culture. And finally, it identifies whether the ideology of unity and harmony that prevails and sustains the people of African origin (Okur 2015).

The utilization of Afrocentricity as a theoretical framework for implementation shifted the focus of the Amistad law from one of inclusion (which is additive or contributive) to one of infusion (which changes the paradigm, deconstructs the framework, demystifies any idea of universalism that are masking supremacy, thereby de-marginalizes those placed on the peripheral of history). The goals became revolutionary because they challenge the “either-or” notion that if you infuse African Americans into a narrative, you have to make choices that must leave out other important events and people in the national narrative – as if both histories happened in-silo instead of intertwined daily.

The New Jersey Amistad Commission’s revolutionary goal is to demonstrate that everyone on the national stage not only plays a major role, but also the lives of the powerful and the less powerful are intertwined. These roles are sometimes interdependent, and sometimes reversed; as it is stated in the Fifth Book of Matthew in The New Testament, “the meek shall inherit the Earth.” We do not exclude the traditional historical narrative or its players. Rather, the Commission’s curriculum committee asserts that African Americans, and all others excluded from the national narrative, shaped this nation’s trajectory in important ways. The Commission asserts the significance of African Americans and others who have been devalued in K-12 classrooms. The primary work of this Commission is to provide an inclusive Social Studies curriculum, infused together that allows for active agency to be brought forth in the narrative, especially in United States and world history (Wilson 2009).

According to the legislation, the Board of Amistad Commissioners consists of 19 members with 2 public vacancies, including the New Jersey Secretary of State, the New Jersey Commissioner of Education, the Secretary of Higher Education the Chair of the Executive Board of the President’s

Council, the Executive Director and 16 public members. As noted by the Senate Education Committee within the Statement to Assembly, No. 1301:

The Department of Education will support the Amistad Commission in distributing to school districts information on the African slave trade and the contributions of African Americans to our society; conduct at least one teacher workshop annually on those subjects; assist the commission in monitoring the inclusion of those subjects in school curricula; and respond accordingly to the recommendations of the commission on ways to expand those subjects in the Core Curriculum Content Standards (Amistad Bill, 1301, 2002).

Hence, the commission will also designate appropriate textbooks that accurately chronicle the African American experience in the United States. Or secondarily, as it manifested create textbook materials that support the spirit and direction of the law.

As stated in the legislation, the goals of the Commission are to accurately infuse the history of Africans and African Americans into the Social Studies and history curriculum, to conduct public programming and community events promoting the contributions of people of the African Diaspora, and to provide training, seminars, workshops, institutes, and professional development to raise awareness and ensure the accurate, complete portrayal of American history. As indicated in the legislation, the Commission was formed and the required constituencies must be appointed to represent the state. When the legislation was passed and enacted, the Governor's office sent invitations to several university African American Studies and History Department directors and chairs across the state. Legislators from both the Senate and Assembly were appointed, public membership nominations included Educators and Community Stakeholders such as the standing President of the State Caucus of the NAACP and the standing President of the State Council of University President's took their positions of the Board of Commissioners. The responses to these invitations created the original body of Amistad Commissioners that help shape the framework of the law's implementation.

The Amistad legislation that was drafted by Payne was an expression of nommo in action; it was creative spoken word that was manifesting into reality. Assemblyman William Payne

subconsciously evoked Nommo delineated by Nilgun Anadolu Okur in her seminal work *Contemporary African American Theater* Okur articulates that Nommo, the creative spirit of birthing a thing, begins with the naming of a thing, where the word itself produces, commands, and conjures – both in past and present... projecting (that life manifests) from within (Okur 1997). Payne represents Muntu, the concept of the authoritative human being whose force that is capable of the magic and power of Nommo. His authorship of this legislation holds the position as transformer who ingenuity speaks into the word and transfigures it into an image, bringing force into action by means of Nommo or utterance - the driving force that gives life and efficacy to all things (Okur 1997). Payne’s goal is congruent with Okur’s ideology of the traditionally African concepts of creativity and the collective accountability of their words’ manifestations. Payne’s desires created this legislation, made him the conduit for the negation of Eurocentric values that adhere to the misnomer of European universalism through the transformative drafting of a mandate that would shift the homily on inclusive American history teaching and praxis. The transformative nature of Payne’s Nommo, was the antithesis of his experiences and feelings of being an objectified African American boy child in the classrooms during 1940s. He embraced the transformative ideology of the Civil Rights, Black Power and Black Arts movements that freed African Americans from victimization and marginality. The goal was the liberation of African American minds from Western lexicon, metonym, and configuration to reclaim for the masses an African Diasporan consciousness that ensures their cultural fortitude in the future. (Okur 1997)

Nommo’s exigency was presented to Payne in his youth in the 1940s, the labor of love for its conceptualization began in 1997- his initial year in the state legislature; its birthing in 2002 the legal mandate’s passage, the enactment was liberating agency in theory and praxis. The law’s ambitious goals were not concerned with the operational limitations or structural status quo in educational policy

development across New Jersey. It was not concerned with the nature of what was, but was centered in the discourse of what could be.

The legislation was brilliant in its specificity to establish a holistic community that would usher in this law. It gathered by mandate a community consisted of educators from across the state in varied grade demographics. They included African American Studies and African American history scholar-activists, immersed in scholarship and who shared a collective orientation towards agency, liberation and centeredness. The Commission scholars recognized that their positions and research behind university ivory towers must be accompanied with strategies for transformative praxis in action across the state. The legally mandated inclusion of certain public stakeholders specified continuous engagement with the larger community—for example, a standing committee seat was mandated in perpetuity for both the President of the statewide NAACP and the President of University Presidents Roundtables to ensure higher education representation and support among university leaders who provided access to repositories of research and scholarship. The Board of Commissioners legislators represented the higher and lower chamber of the statehouse, and were bipartisan in their composition, thereby guaranteeing that this movement would be embraced in both caucuses in the statehouse. The Secretary of State, New Jersey's chief administrator, was appointed joint chair, alongside the State Commission of Education; the Secretary of Higher Education was an ex-officio member of the Board to guarantee the curriculum extensions extended as a K-16 initiative with the inclusion of pre-service teacher programs. The nature of a Commission structure of governance, freed the Board from being limited by the oversight of any agency that might stymie their Executive staff's methodology development.

Relative to the nature of their appointments but uniform in their foci, the entirety of the board understood the gravity of the moment, their selection as the original governing board of the Commission, was primarily because they had been identified by William Payne as being intellectually

de-colonized, thereby intrinsically in consensus regarding the importance of the opportunity to de-colonize New Jersey's educational policy they were on the precipice of shifting the national landscape of educational policy development. These activities and assignments were subdivided into Committee work - Fundraising, Human Resources, Budget and Curriculum. The work of the Commission would be in oversight and governance. These volunteer community reformers would not be operationalized by the Board of public Commissioners, but by executive leadership that would guide and define the work of the Commission.

The nommo that had created the legislation was metamorphosing. The nature of nommo's fluidity would present itself visa-vie the active shifts that would be operationalized by the Executive leadership, to shape and guide the theoretical foci and implementation strategies of this legal mandate. The transformative power of the Executive leadership for the law's strategic development and policy implantation was in the extension of nommo's principles; the staff had the ability to speak into existence an implementation plan dedicated to the law's functionality, collective conscious building, and commitment to both represent and speak to the community of educator, stakeholders, administrators, and students they were serving.

For that to happen, many components had to be carefully considered and addressed in an holistic implementation strategy and policy execution that would fully align with the nommo that had created the law.

The perspective of the people of the African Diaspora should not be left out of the history curriculum, whether on purpose or by traditional curricula default. The Amistad law, as a national model utilizing the Afrocentric philosophical framework, showcases how mandated curriculum can be implemented in a way that allows teachers to respond to the needs of the students and presents a model of how to infuse the history of the people of the African Diaspora into the fabric of American history that transcends the narrative.

CHAPTER 6

THE AMISTAD BILL AND THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF THE AMISTAD ONLINE TEXTBOOK FOR TEACHERS - “AN INCLUSIVE JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY”

Fullan stated, “Implementation is where the action is” (2001). The Amistad Commission’s ability to dictate the theoretical orientation of the legal mandate prescribed the infusion plan, the inclusions, and the expansion of the historical narrative and instruction data, is the true strength of the law’s manifestation. In the beginning of the 2005 – 2006 academic year, the Amistad Commission board was authorized to formulate its office and hired an Executive director, a Deputy Executive Director and subsequent staff to oversee and set the course for implementation. The hiring of the executive staff, designated New Jersey as the *only* state in the nation, even to date, to not only pass an Amistad bill, but also have an office that direct the path of the work. While that might make the office sound important or historical in nature, in actuality it speaks to America’s relationship with African American history within the classroom. The New Jersey Commission should in 2017, have 49 other counterparts in every state department of Education, its work is still in silo.

The ability of the Executive Director, with the assistance of the Amistad Board of Commissioner’s curriculum sub-committee to interpret and expand on a strict literal interpretation of the legal mandate, to work in silo outside of the limitations of how traditional bureaucratic educational decrees have been orchestrated by the state Department of Education, was *pivotal* to the selection of Afrocentricity as the centralizing, and natural philosophical framework for the course for implementation.

The position of Executive Director was vacant for the first two years of the Commission, when the Board of Commissioners decided that implementation would require staffing dedicated to Commission operations, armed with the law and instructions to see it become reality in school districts throughout the New Jersey. The first decision of the Executive Director was that a strict

interpretation of the law would not yield a de-colonized curriculum. A strict interpretation of the law in implementation would create a curriculum that simply added African American factoid to the current narrative. A strict interpretation of the law would have prescribed a different course and yielded a different curriculum result in fulfillment of the law than what manifested in New Jersey. By shying away from the strict interpretation of the law, which as a legal mandate incorporates the study of the African slave trade, slavery in America, and the many contributions that African Americans have made throughout United States history into the curriculum; the aim of expansion, infusion, and harmony, and cultural grounding to include the voices of the all historical participants, especially African Americans, was intended to transform the way American history is taught forever in New Jersey. The adoption and identification of Afrocentricity as the interpretative theoretical framework for operationalizing this law eradicated the strict interpretation of the mandate's foci—that African American or Diasporan enslavement could not be the entry point for the historiographic and cultural presentation of African American history in New Jersey classrooms.

It was the collective belief of the Executive leadership and the Curriculum committee that their centeredness in a commitment to liberation curricula development that espoused the active agency of African Diasporan peoples in American history pedagogy, was converse to African American enslavement is the entry point for the entirety of the history for students as stipulated by the law. To adhere to that interpretation would eradicate reverence, respect, and understanding of the historical legacies, philosophical views, civilizations, and humanity of the Africa diaspora. Cheikh Anta Diop says is best when he is quoted that it is indispensable to us to unfreeze and defossilize African history which was there at hand, lifeless, imprisoned in the documents.

Nell Irvin Painter in her 2007 book, *Creating Black Americans : African-American History and Its Meanings, 1619 to the Present*, articulates that at least 70,000 years ago, evidence of modern men and women have been found deep in South Africa. She recounts that in 2002, in the Blombos

caves of South Africa, the earliest abstract art was discovered and believed to be from that period — the earliest art ever found. In Africa, traces of migration routes, art and civilization take us all the way through the Nubian kingdoms that began 7,000 years ago. During that time, not hundreds, or thousands, but millions of African peoples lived and died before the idea of the Maafa (the trans-Atlantic slave trade genocide) would come into being (Painter 2007).

Thousands of years before the onset of American enslavement, African kingdoms like the Axum Empire ruled. Other civilizations like the Ghana or Songhai empires have so much to tell that they alone could fill months of classroom lessons. Painter goes on to clarify that nearly 300 years before American enslavement of African Diasporan peoples, Mansa Musa, who ruled the Mali Empire, was the richest man alive. Adjusted for inflation, his wealth is estimated to have been more than \$400 billion — which would make him the richest man to have ever lived. Of course, this means he oversaw a complex economy with a rich culture — facts overlooked in historical retellings of World cultures or economic history (Painter 2007).

In the 1500s, Leo Africanus wrote of Timbuktu that its king had 3,000 horsemen (and) a great store of doctors, judges, priests and other learned men, that are bountifully maintained at the king's cost and charges (King 2016).

Painter's argument for why the experiences of African American enslavement as the entry point for the knowledge base for the peoples of African diaspora is egregious is the reality that the 246 years of American slavery represent less than 1% of known black history from around the world. Although Frederick Douglass, or Sojourner Truth, or the active agency of Harriet Tubman is heroic and deserves to be highlighted, but the history of black people did not begin with her courageous efforts on the Underground Railroad in 1850. Africans had already been in the United States for 231 years by the time Tubman began her efforts.

Painter articulates the notion that to begin the study of history with enslavement is a formative, emotional, psychological mistake because it introduces the history of black people with them as subjugated, enslaved peoples. Beyond the inaccuracy of that reality, it actually does damage — not just to young African American children, but to all children, when they are given the distinct impression that African Diasporan people began as inferior subjects and somehow found their way out of enslavement at the hands of others (Painter 2007).

To understand the contours of African American culture, serious scholarship must begin in Africa— so students can understand it is a vast and complex continent with numerous languages and societies that each lend their legacies to American culture and African American culture. Some similarities exist across African societies, but we should avoid simplifying Africa when teaching the African background. In the spirit of Kemetic guiding principle of *MAAT* -- that is, truth, justice, and righteousness with an accompanying emphasis on the value of ritual and traditions -- the historiographies depicted to our students must be de-centered to allow space for the mammoth inheritances of African time immemorial to be rightfully and straightforwardly ascribed to the African diaspora.

Nilgun Anadolu Okur in her introduction to Contemporary African American Theatre, also echoes the legacies of African antiquity that is often overlooked in the incongruity of Eurocentric historical and cultural universalism within classrooms and in thematic lessons on antiquity with students. Using drama and theatre as a backdrop, Okur re-centers the discourse on the origins of the dramatic arts that has mistakenly been ascribed to ancient Greece. Yet the evidences indicate that Kemetic (Egyptian) cultural and religious rituals and ceremonies offered to the deities in the Nile Valley civilizations (Okur 1997). These rituals, festivals, and ceremonies and coronations were recorded in relief sculptures and Pyramid texts dating back to 2500 B.C., as dramatic scripts or recordings of ritual performance directives such as the “Abydos Passion Play” dedicated to

mythology of Osiris with a thematic legacy of death and resurrection that were later bequeathed to Greek theater; or the “Memphite Drama”, a majestic annual production that celebrated King Menes’s unification of Lower and Upper Egypt- this script is documented in stone in the British Museum, rewritten in 700 B.C. by Shabako (Okur 1997).

Okur references the debates that still attempt to disqualify the reality that these documentations of the world’s earliest recorded theatrical productions with all the characteristics of live performances spaces with elaborate scenery and prop development preceded the Greek Dionysian rites extolled as the origin and seeds which germinated into global theatrical arts by European centered canons. In fact, Okur references Barbara and Carlton Mollette, who in their book *Black Theater: Premise and Presentation*, concluded that in 2778 B.C. the first stage was used in scenery was in Saqqara, Egypt, designed by the 3rd Dynasty Egyptian polymath Imhotep. This is not the narrative that is often espoused in American classrooms, even in courses considered World Cultures and/or History.

Okur’s final premise to this point is in the importance of why these heritages can’t be ignored. She argues that when these theatrical legacies are revealed for students, it fosters an appreciation for a broader context of ancient Africa’s contributions, and allows for a continuity with its prodigies across the diaspora; and explicitly centered on the issue of theater. It frames the future ideologies of African American dramatic arts, illuminating their value system and historical foci throughout African American history (Okur 1997).

The essentialism for inclusions such as these is grounded in their invisibleness within the classroom, which is an offshoot of the politicization of the curriculum canon which supports Eurocentric discourse and ideologies. In a world where superiority and inferiority are invoked based on implicit and explicit social indoctrinations that are often reflective in educational policies. An inclusive holistic narrative negates the inaccuracy of the continuity of prejudicial ideals that limit

content choices. These choices are often grounded in the historical vilification of ethnic and cultural differences throughout the world. This vilification has done irrefutable harm in constructing the mindsets of our students and the concepts that still shape them and their curricula.

The legacies of the creation of hierarchical assignments have generated the invisibility of these narratives of African Diasporan contributions. Yet, in ancient times, physical appearance, language, religion, status, and class distinctions were more observances, not attributions that would impede homage to cultural contributions. The social/ political and scientific conceptualization of race helped corroborate prejudicial ideas and "prove" a natural hierarchy of groups. Historical racial creation and categorization were not neutral or objective. The search for racial differences has been fueled by the codification of notions of inferiority and superiority. Ideas and definitions of race have changed over time, depending on social and political climates. Groups were differentiated so they could be excluded or disadvantaged, often in explicit ways. Ideas of racial inferiority have been institutionalized - both overtly and covertly - within our laws, government, and public policies (including education).

Examining the African antecedents of African American culture provides a good opportunity for explicating and refuting the exigency of race as a social and political construction that provides the backdrop for scientific racism. It also has influenced the selections within curricula canons, narratives and education policy directives. Many students see race as immutable, a fixed concept that has changed little over time. They assume that Europeans have always been biased against African Diasporan peoples and that racism today is just an extension of ancient practices. Thereby, by illuminating legacies of African Diasporan history, where the cultures on the continent are rightfully centralized and included as foundational spaces for world contributions, we assist students in looking past contemporary perceptions of "Europe" and "Africa" – which dishonorably implicitly or explicitly invoke superiority or inferiority. We need to help students understand that racial classification and its

heirlooms of supremacy, is a scientific concept and an 18th-century invention. The designations "European" and "African" for distinguishing groups of people gained relevance only in the 19th century and took on greater significance in this country than in Europe and Africa themselves (Ernest 2004). In our classrooms, if we begin with a narrative of enslavement, we only further indoctrinate African Diasporan invisibility and victimization.

Those who called themselves Akan, Ashanti, Ewe, Igbo, Wolof, and Yoruba experienced the attempted erasure of cultural identity via the *Maafa* and enslavement. Heirlooms from the Diaspora societies merged in the encounter with American society to form the African Americans—thereby an inclusion of these invaluable heirlooms makes classroom instruction holistic.

When Africa and its legacies are ignored, a utilization of a Eurocentric framework for teaching history permits young students of all races to appreciate the legacies of European Diasporan peoples; from the onset of the recitation of the history of this hemisphere Europeans are postulated as world contributors while excluding and marginalizing any other people's narratives. Europeans are depicted in the classroom as travelers, inventors, and as statesman; like Christopher Columbus, Ben Franklin, and George Washington, but what of Hannu, Imhotep, or Mansa Munsu. They may learn about John Calhoun or Lewis and Clark but never Robert Smalls or York.

Furthermore, students are likely to study European history in a course incongruity called "World Cultures" (with traditional absences of African Diasporan civilizations) which exposes them to Michelangelo, Mozart, or Galileo and yet they lack the historiography nor the exposures to garner the same appreciations for African Diasporan contributions, legacies, and donations to global developments, the arts, science, and scholarship. The Amistad Commission is currently writing units on World History in fulfillment of the full composite of Social Studies subsets.

Within the context of the teaching of "American" history in most classrooms across the nation, African peoples enslavement shapes and defines the African American experience in this hemisphere.

King believes that the trans-Atlantic slave trade is an important piece in the total history of the African Diaspora, but starting it off there is in King's assertion, "a sublime form of white supremacy" (King 2016). What impact do you think that has on student's worldview if we begin with enslavement instead of with the grandeur of ancient civilizations on the continent of Africa? The messages King feels it leaves are this: that young white students first see that historical heroes who look like them were the glorious leaders of the world, while the first African Diasporan people that both African American and white students encounter and learn about were owned like property and lived as physically oppressed work horses in the development of this nation's capitalist pursuits?

In conclusion, Painter proposes an approach to the teaching of African American content. Painter suggest that the teaching begins in pre-historic South Africa or in early African Kingdoms to show the true depth and breadth and beauty of blackness or alternately to start off in present day and work ourselves backwards, introducing children first to healthy, relevant, modern examples of African American leaders before we move through slavery then back to Africa. To teach from either perspective dictates that there is full knowledge of the African Diasporan history in order to centralize the voice, agency, and narrative of the people (Painter 2007).

Afrocentric Implementation

The Amistad Commission Executive Director and curriculum sub-committee worked in a way that matched Painter's assessment. They made a joint decision that the primary need of thorough historical content exposures and knowledge bases, a sufficient supply of library resources, promotes knowledge acquisition of African American content for every educator in New Jersey teaching within the parameters of Social Studies in this state. This fact was foundational to the law, that any decentralization of the Eurocentric foci of "traditional" Social Studies teachings must be anchored in a knowledge base of African American and African Diasporan contributions and a pedagogical and

philosophical paradigm shift across the board, not in tokenism or simplistic curriculum additives of “black facts”.

According to Molefi Asante in *The New York Times* article “Why Afrocentricity”, Afrocentricity as an intellectual idea is a paradigm that suggests all discourse about African people should be grounded in the centrality of Africans in their own narratives. In his book *The Afrocentric Idea*, Asante suggested that the objective of the oppressed, the victimized and the exploited, that is chronicled so often in our history curriculum as the legacies of the African American in this nation is always to seize the accouterments of power in order to correct the imbalance when the mastering force least expect assaults on the ramparts of villainy that seek to marginalize them” (Asante 2010).

The modality for the curricula shifts utilizing these tenets of Afrocentricity was defined as a holistic “infusion” model. It was a methodology that would allow for the deconstruction of Eurocentricity, demarginalization of minorities from the fringes of historical teachings, the enclosure of active agency, inclusive voice, and locality of perspective among those groups that had been traditionally victimized or seen as benign observers to important historical events. These tenets are also the epistemology of Afrocentricity. *The history is not being recreated, or converted to mythology to “uplift” the African American populations; it is the inclusion and expansion of the historical and instructional data included in the narratives for students and how these expansions shift and challenge the traditional narrative and re-writing it for inclusion.*

As was recounted via the historiography of the hard fought battles for the teaching of African American history in American classrooms and educational entities throughout the nation in the last century, the differential in effectuating an additive or contributive approaches is in the choice of radical orientation alterations towards the presenting of the narrative that the use of Afrocentricity decrees. Recounting the historiography of the Amistad mandates operationalization illuminates this notion, and the orientation interchanges necessitate

transformative liberating, demarginalized knowledge in Social Studies classrooms. The Amistad Commission was initially placed as a separate agency--*in but not of* the Department of State –along with the Historical Commission. New Jersey has had an African American Secretary of State consistently since the 1990s. The Amistad Commission was from its inception in 2001, in but not of the Department of State, under an African American Secretary of state that served as Board of Commissioner co-chair. Because of this, the Secretary of State had traditionally requested the Amistad Commission to be placed under their purview since its inception. Offices in the Department of State were in the statehouse complex in Trenton New Jersey—a locality that gave the Amistad Commission Executive staff a favorable optic of influence when dealing with the a sundry school districts, community stakeholders, and legislators as well as with the Governor’s office. Under the powers and authorities of state-level Commissions, direct appropriations for Commission come from the state’s legislature that approve the budget amount set forth by the Amistad Commission Executive leadership. Per the legislation, the Commission is authorized by law with far reaching powers to call on *any* state agency to support and uphold the legal mandate. This authorization was meant to allow the Amistad Commission authority to deconstruct and reconstruct educational policy even from within state government agencies with no oversight to block them and with the authority to demand compliance from every other state department or agency. Per the legislation the Commission was also authorized to call of any other state agency or department for assistance for operation, evaluation, and monitoring, or compliance as needed (see Appendix A).

Initial steps in the operationalization of the legislation, aimed at identifying the best methodology establishing the practicums of the mandates, was a best practice inquisition throughout the state visa-vie a self-reporting survey send to each district to be returned by

the superintendent to the Amistad office in the Department of State. It also requested that the New Jersey Department of Education in support of providing enforcement of the legislation send monitoring compliance surveys to the 593 operating school districts in New Jersey.

According to the legislation, the Commission was expected to survey the districts to gain an understanding as to the extent and breadth of education offerings concerning the African slave trade, slavery in America in the states classroom and, as a result of the survey, catalog the extent and breadth of the best practices, professional developments, teachers knowledge base of African American history, as well as the instructional materials that supports the mandate and the implementation directives. (*See Amistad Survey Appendix B and C*). In addition, the goal of the survey was to determine at that time the New Jersey school districts' current compliance with the New Jersey state law of teaching two years of United States History including African American history, the Amistad legislation, and the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (N.J.A.C. 6A:8) of teaching United States History with the infusion of African American history.

In addition, the Amistad Law (C52:16A-86) requires that the teaching of the African and American slave experience be incorporated into the school curriculum at appropriate places in the curriculum (Payne 2002). The New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards (N.J.A.C. 6A:8) specify African-American topics in history as an important part of US history. The purpose of this survey was to determine compliance with these requirements in New Jersey public school districts.

The Amistad Commission sent out a self-reporting evaluation survey to every district in the state to determine state-wide compliance of the law and to identify classroom best practices for lesson plans and activities, under the signature of the Commissioner of

Education in 2005, 2007, 2013, and 2016. The self-reporting survey was sent to each of the twenty-one (21) County Executive Superintendents, 593 School District Superintendents, and more than 400 Social Studies supervisors in the state for them to do a deep analysis of their district and to be able to codify their inclusion of African American history, each of the social economic strata for schools funding were included so that there could be a determination as to whether these answers could be hypothesized as relational to high achieving, or social economic or racial based compositions.

The first question was directed to elementary school, since New Jersey State Law requires the teaching of two years of United States History including African-American History in NJ public schools. (18A:35-1, 2) The question was crafted to determine instruction time/sessions dedicated to the subject area looking at elementary American History Program (Schools that include grade levels K-4, K-6 or K-8) for each grade, districts were asked to report the number of sessions per week of instruction in US/African-American history and culture as well as to indicate length of sessions; and scheduling format code (see below). If the number of sessions varies from week to week, then districts were asked to list the average number of sessions. Looking at Secondary/High School American History Program (Schools with grades 7-12, 8-12, or 9- 12.) using the scheduling format above, indicate F, H, Q, or N: F= classes throughout the year; H= classes for half of the year; Q= classes for a quarter of the year; O= classes for another configuration; N= Not offered and whether the course is R (required of all students) or E (an elective). Including which topics are covered in their US/African- American History program at both elementary and secondary levels for example – the limited course availability - with titles restricted to such topics as African Slave Trade, Expansion of Slavery, Harlem Renaissance, Creation of the NAACP, and Creation of the NAACP Civil Rights Movement.

In regards to whether there are supplemental instruction availability. The question was asked as to whether history instruction was available at other institutions: and the availability of district granting course credit to students who take American history (with African-American history infused) courses at colleges or universities, private schools, or schools in other public school districts or have specific policy allowing such granting of credits to students. Or, does the history staff regularly and systemically usage of distance learning as a tool for instruction and/or allow students to take entire American/African-American history courses via distance learning?

Next the survey questioned extracurricular activities in US/African-American History with a report on the number of students participating in the listed extracurricular activities. For programs that have fluctuating participation, districts were asked to report the average for a typical week during the year including world language activities not listed here with each student listed only once in each activity.

The next question involved resources – and asked if districts/schools devoted to the infusion of African-American history into Social Studies /American History Instruction. Offered specific clubs or groups to students who wish to study African-American History and Culture; determining whether districts have highly qualified history staff with specific training in African-American History? And whether the district would you be interested in receiving training or professional development on African American History?

According to public meeting transcripts from the April 2006 public Commission meeting, the curriculum subcommittee of the Amistad Commission, which consisted of the Executive Director Stephanie Wilson, and the public members of the Commission who were higher Education professionals and Educators throughout the state; i.e. Lillie Johnson Edwards, PhD at Drew University and Colin Palmer, PhD.; analyzed the data from the survey to determine if the recommendations of

the New Jersey Amistad Commission were already being implemented within the New Jersey public school classrooms.

Although self-reporting survey responses asserted by district administrators that New Jersey public schools were all 100% applying the recommendations of the New Jersey Amistad Commission to the Social Studies and history curricula previously, which was to be expected from Superintendents who were responding to questions regarding their compliance to a mandate that was sent out under the signature of the Secretary of State and the Commissioner of Education.

The true illumination of the survey was in its failure to explain quantitatively how the teachers responsible for implementation were specifically incorporating this mandate within their history curricula. This inability to demonstrate infusion of the laws mandates, revealed important gaps in enforcement and oversight that would have to be remedied despite districts claims that they were *all* in 100% compliance.

The self-reporting survey also revealed that most districts misperceived that the Amistad Commission mandate was creating an African American curriculum, as opposed to the mandated transformative infusion of African American content into American History. In addition, the Amistad Commission was being underutilized as a professional development solution; districts simply wanted to check the boxes and *say* to the authorities questioning them, without any actions or concrete evidence, that American history was being enhanced with an African American narrative through additive, contributive, or by infusion.

Elementary schools seemed to be the locality where the deficit gleamed the most following the survey. Social Studies was being relegated to brief academic preludes and did no more than introduce heroes and holidays with a sprinkling of African Americans. The immediate response was for a list of culturally centered literacy titles by elementary grades that could immediately be introduced to their classroom libraries, and guided reading books that would fulfill the directive and spirit of the law. In

addition, directives were given to elementary teachers to get them to better process their cultural competencies and proficiencies with their students and understand their blind spots when selecting texts that would indoctrinate ideologies of invisibilities and Eurocentric universalisms among young students (*See Appendix D*).

The premise of the exigence of the legislation that motivated William Payne when he authored this mandate was that African American history is American history, and by using Afrocentricity as the organizing agent for the legislation; deconstruction of Eurocentricity, demarginalization of minorities from the fringes of historical teachings, the enclosure of active agency, inclusive voice, locality of perspective among those groups that had been traditionally victimized or seen as benign observers to important historical events could not be discarded if we were going to do a holistic and truthful retelling of the American story with students.

Often educational legislative mandates present the required manifestation for the law, but does not enumerate the specific content additives, but does not advise on how content should be implemented within the classroom. Potentially transformative reforms can fall by the wayside due to the lack of long-term planning and effective classroom strategies. Michael Fullan (2001) provided a general guideline for the implementation of government reform and/or state-mandated curriculum.

First, governments must seek the public willingness to endorse the mandated curriculum. It is important for the national, state, or local government to position the curriculum in a way that the community understands the need and supports efforts to incorporate the vision into the schools. It is the public that must implement and maintain the reform on a long-term basis. The public will be there long after the government officials that supported the idea have left office; therefore, the success of mandated curriculum depends upon public support.

Second, the proposed mandated curriculum had to foster a sense of direction by creating a framework for accountability. The government must formulate a framework that clearly explains what

is to be implemented, how it should be done, and what should be the outcome. To guarantee effective implementation of the mandated curriculum, this sense of direction and expectations for accountability must be clear to all involved.

Third, governments must strive to create the capacity necessary for deep and lasting change. The capacity required takes shape in the confidence each district needs in the implementation of this legislative change and competence in the way the framework is being implemented. Successful implementations exist in districts, schools, and classrooms when educators understand the expectations, support the overarching vision, and are capable of presenting the required content. Mandated curriculum should not become a quick fix for a problem but a permanent solution to an important issue.

Finally, it is important for governments to provide educators with sufficient and steady resources to effectively implement the mandated curriculum. Not only must these resources be accessible and user-friendly to all educators but also readily available at any time. By providing access to a vast amount of resources, teachers will better understand what to implement and the possible approaches to take within their classrooms.

Ideally, the manifestation of this law required a daily infusion of the history curriculum inclusive of not just perfunctory contributions of African American history into the curriculum on a regular basis, but a seismic shift vis-a-vis the utilization of Afrocentricity allowed for a deconstruction of the usual strategies of tokenism. Curriculum developers, textbook writers, and educators attempted the integration of the African American experience into their U.S. History materials, which expressly were deficit in their African American content, but the ways that they do so (especially in older texts) often fall short of full integration.

The Amistad Commission looked at the plethora of U.S. history courses and textbooks across the state. Because the Amistad Commission's work effectuated the course entitled U.S. history, the commission looked at textbooks that were designed for that course description. A plethora of African American history textbooks were excellent exemplars of the legal mandate, including Darleen and William Hines' *African American Odyssey* (2010) *African Americans: A Concise History* (2011), John Hope Franklin's *From Slavery to Freedom*, Molefi Asante's *African American History: A Journey of Liberation* (1995) and *The African American People* (2011).

The Commission found that traditional US history textbook, from all the publishing companies oftentimes fell into one of three broad approaches that were both additive and contributive but not transformative to the historical narrative: the three more simplistic approaches, which were rejected by the Amistad Commission, were quantify by the Commission's leadership in archived curriculum notes as, "Big Moments in African American History," "Great Men and Women in African American History," or "Add African Americans and Stir."

A more effective infusion plan that also shifts the narrative of history of all Americans might be historical themes from their perspective (location). This shifts demarginalized Americans of various backgrounds and away from the powerful groups (typically, wealthy white men) that tend to dominate stories of the American past. The focus on voice and perspective and it makes history more relevant and interesting to *all* students.

The following are the additive and contributive methodologies that were rejected by the Commission in their pursuit of utilizing the tenets of the Afrocentric framework in the creation of the curriculum; as chronicled by Amistad Commission curriculum committee notes and the Executive Director's reports in the Amistad archives:

- Primarily, when attempting to be inclusion of African American factoids or histories into Eurocentric narratives- most books cover times of great crisis and change for African Americans — or in the narrative of Great moments in African American history; slavery, Reconstruction, and the Civil Rights movement — but they often fail to fully cover what happened in the lives of African Americans in between those watershed events (Wilson 2006). Executive Director Wilson enumerated a quick perusal through most school district history curriculum maps for an academic year of their US History courses, and perfunctory review of the history textbooks in circulation in New Jersey, taking special notation to the insertion of African Americans – the method would lead one to believe that the story of African American history begins with Frederick Douglas, Harriet Tubman, and Sojourner Truth (with the likes of Benjamin Banneker, Phyllis Wheatley, Crispus Attacks being historical outliers of the previous era – but honorable mentions) proceeds through the Civil War, pauses briefly to mention the Harlem Renaissance writers or the Tuskegee Airmen, and then travels directly to Rosa Parks’ refusal to get off the bus in Montgomery and the entry of Martin Luther King, Jr. – post Civil Rights does not exist, unless we cover the obligatory mention of the fear-inducing Black Panthers and Black Power.

However what is never covered or delved into, for example, was the litany of active agents and experiences that produce the colonial agrarian entrepreneurship Anthony Johnson, or the Cuffee brothers and their lawsuit for no taxation without representation, the plethora of African American State Senators and Congressman who crafted the majority of Southern state constitutions, or the experiences of African Americans in the 1890s, and how did it vary by region? Or perhaps the resourcefulness of black communities during the Great Depression? Or- Post Civil Rights Era agency like the challenges to African Americans during the conservative revolution of the 1980s? Or in the hypocrisy of post racial America?

The deficit with the "great moments in African American history" approach, that was out rightly rejected by the Amistad Commission, is its inability to allow for voice and location from within the community the legal mandate stipulates must be obligatorily included; it largely leaves these questions largely unanswered in an effort for token additions to the Eurocentric narrative. In addition, this approach seems to discuss African Americans only when it is absolutely unavoidable — one can't talk about Civil Rights without talking about the black experience, so it appears in that chapter, but does the African American perspective also show up in sections on the progressive era, industrialization, The New Deal, Vietnam, or Reaganomics?

- The secondary method that was rejected by the Commission for a plan for operationalizing the law was the concept of African American exceptionalism that is quantified by the silo of particular individuals that uplift them above the ordinary men and women who make up the community. A perusal of textbooks usually have a special topics section in the margins of most chapters, that focus on individual African Americans who history has identified as making a marked difference in U.S. history. This individualized model of exceptionalism tell the stories of politicians, military officials, business leaders, inventors, or famous entertainers, discussing the contributions of these individuals to the broader culture. While this approach certainly emphasizes the significant historical contributions made by African Americans, it is only as useful as the criteria used to select the featured individuals. This model is as problematic as the "great moments" modality; it is a symbolic effort that teaches superficially a few key events and their leaders, but little about the full narrative of the African American experience. In addition, Eurocentric ideals often dictate the definition of exceptionalism of these individuals, and effectuates the selection the individuals singled out are only those whose actions are acceptable to people in power (typically, wealthy white men) i.e. Nat Turner will never be emphasized and recognized as a freedom fighter in the same notion as Nathaniel

Bacon. If a textbook or course excludes movements, individuals, and groups that challenged the dominant culture, (i.e. Maroon Societies, UNIA, Black Power Movement) it may present a view of African American history that remains centered on the beliefs and values of Eurocentrism. The students may learn about Booker T. Washington or George Washington Carver but never hear about Stokely Carmichael or Gil Scott-Heron. Like all historical approaches that center on the lives of "great men" or "great women," this approach provides a misrepresentation of history from the vantage point and life experience of a "few" that are chosen as representative of the "whole". Individuals with power, wealth, or authority receive a great deal of attention, while the experiences, contributions, and beliefs of the vast majority of Americans are virtually ignored. Such a view of American history can alienate students, giving them a sense that history is not about "people like me" and is not relevant to their own lives.

- Finally, the last additive approach that would not shift the historic narrative, but in actuality would have been a natural choice of the Commission if they took a strict interpretation of the legal mandate passed by the state of New Jersey, would have been to simply insert and include African American history sporadically throughout the book, offering insight into black history and culture only as asides. This is more prescriptive to Multi-culturalism or Ethnic studies. For example, a book may discuss the American Revolution in great detail from the perspective of the colonist, the land holders, even the British crown- and then include a paragraph or two about what African Americans or women thought about the conflict, but no discussion of the Rhode Island Regiments, or the Ethiopian Regiments, or the British book of Negroes Loyalist or the African American Patriots like Peter Salem or Seymour Burr. This "add minorities and women and stir" model gives the impression that the real story of an event in the past centers on whites, men, and political, military, or economic leaders; yet it does nothing to touch the

reality of marginalization, it still relegates minorities and women to the sidelines. By separating out the experiences of women and African Americans, such a view of history sidelines those experiences and sends the message that the actions and views of those groups are peripheral, not central, to the American past.

These three models are broad descriptives to approaches for integration of African American history into the U.S. narrative and still unfortunately appear in a good many textbooks and classroom teachings. Because the Amistad Commission was authorized a state level entity, as a state-wide implementation and truthfully and implantation of a doctrine and ethos for the teaching of history, the work of the Commission was an understanding that to short change the operationalization by using any of the aforementioned models would not create the seismic shift that the utilization of Afrocentricity would allow. As the law mandates, infusion plans for African American history into the curriculum could not just be contributive or additive, for that would mean the Eurocentric, or Multicultural, or Ethnic Studies perspectives were the theoretical framework, the homogeny, the paradigm of choice.

The aforementioned methods, share some common complications in delivery and indoctrination. First, including African Americans in any of these three ways never fundamentally shifts the assumptions about what is important in American history. What is "really important" to cover remains the same in each case — the actions, ideas, and history steeped in Eurocentricity and its misrepresentation of universalism and objectivity while postulating hierarchy and supremacy — and the African American experience is presented only when it is absolutely unavoidable (a discussion of the Civil Rights Movement), or when an individual African American did something that uplifted them to be represented by exceptionalism that pierces the historical glass ceiling and mandates their inclusion (George Washington Carver), or when the authors of a textbook feel that

they need to "say something" about black history for political reasons to diversify the story (the "add and stir" approach).

By separating out the African American experience from the broader narrative of American history, these approaches can serve to marginalize that experience and make it seem less important than other stories that receive more consistent attention. And all of these approaches provide the impression that there were two worlds in much of American history — one white, one black — when, in reality, the lives of whites and blacks, though sometimes in conflict and often unbalanced in terms of power, were deeply intertwined and interconnected - African American history is American history.

The Amistad Commission Executive leadership and curriculum committee approached the teaching of American history, inclusive of the African American narrative via the ideologies of Afrocentricity - a powerful modality of deconstructing Eurocentric universalism and supremacy, invoking the active agency of the people versus individualism, centering the narrative in harmony with the social/political and philosophical framework of the Diasporan culture. The shifted foci was broader than any additive approach to the existing historical narrative previously taught, but a methodology alteration away from the dominant culture and the powerful white male individuals that are at the center of many historical studies and toward the perspective of African Americans to "refocus the lens" of history completely.

For example, a consultation of various texts that deal with Reconstruction as a topic for discussion, usually started their discussion with the devastation caused by the war, the political challenges posed by the war's end, or the "problem" of what to do with newly freed African Americans. Historically, these topics would call for lively classroom discussion and rich history lessons and curricula. However, under the auspices of the operationalization of the Amistad law that

the Commission has orchestrated as its organizing principles for application of the law, this perspective will not suffice. Afrocentricity dictates that the perspective of reconstructing/ or constructing lives in freedom with all its legal shifts, leadership, institutional and community building must be located with the African American voice and vantage point as central. While many books standardly used to education this era eventually reached a discussion of the joys of African American freedom, few started with the perspective of the previously enslaved people who were most dramatically affected by the war – and omit peoples like Titus Campbell who characterize and epitomize agency. Without such narratives, the greater ideals of Reconstruction era are not grasped fully, as not just a political period, but one that encompasses the freedoms of a people; students seldom seemed to deeply embrace what self-determination meant and what challenges freed African Americans faced in the weeks, months, and years that followed the Confederate surrender.

An exemplar of how the ideals of Afrocentricity as methodology transcends the prominent chronicling of previous recitation of the era, a current best practices lesson plan from the Amistad curricula committee uncovered with analyzing American Missionary Association Papers. The documentation described a parade in January 1865 of more than 500 newly freed African American children, marching down the streets of Savannah, Ga., on the heels of General Sherman's departure. An African American Missionary Association official observed that the gathering of "Freedmen's sons and daughters that proud city had never seen before! Many of the people rushed to the doors and windows of their houses wondering what these things could mean. *This* they were told, is the *onward march of freedom*" (Richards 1866). The children were headed for a former slave market that had been converted into a school by missionary teachers from the North. As one observer noted, "these halls in which the poor slave mother has often *groaned* in the *anguish* of *her soul* as she has seen her darling babes one after another torn from her embrace and sold from her sight — are now resounding with the merry shouts of happy school children and the promise of education" (Richards 1866).

The lesson dictates that once this scene is depicted to the students, using passages from the original documents, they are instructed to imagine themselves as the parents of some of those children and to write down the thoughts, hopes, and fears that they might have had in a 5–10 minute free-writing exercise. The goal of the lesson is locality within the experience and the narrative, and the desired outcome is a change in the students' interest level and enthusiasm for the African American experience and the greater ideology of freedom and the education. Feedback from the lesson elucidates that student's writing expressed exhilaration at freedom, fears that white Americans would find a way to re-enslave African Americans, deep desires for educational and economic opportunity, and bittersweet satisfaction that the old slave market was now being used to educate the newly freed children instead of condemning them to a life of servitude. Instead of serving as an aside to the social/political foci of Reconstruction, the perspectives of a community of African American parents and children were entry point of the lived experiences of Reconstruction from that point forward - which serves as a backdrop for the social/political/legal shifts of the era that effectuated the people.

Discussion with educators that have utilized this lesson. They conveyed that subsequent lessons on Reconstruction such as Titus Campbell and the Port Royal experiment, the rise of African American statesman, the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, the battles between Congress and the president, the perspective of white Southerners, the rise of the Klan, and the ultimate end of the Reconstruction experiment with the election of 1876 do not help them. Students kept coming back to their entry point, the lesson about those schoolchildren and their parents. After being located within the African American experience, a lesson on the election of 1876 was seen as a much larger political event than rote to memorization, by the Amistad curriculum committee using the theoretical ideals of Afrocentricity in lesson development while discussing Reconstruction to one of active agency and location within the African American community, the lessons on the election of 1876 became an outrage. Teachers reported that students used terms like "sell-out," "criminal," and "unfair" to

describe the federal withdrawal from the South and the rise of Jim Crow. They wondered aloud what happened to the schools set up by the American Missionary Association, African American institutions/churches, and the Freedmen's Bureau. Teachers reported that students expressed anger that so few politicians considered the impact of their decisions on African American communities. Having being centered in the narrative in the beginning, students now saw all of Reconstruction through the eyes of families struggling to retain what they could of their freedom. Their understanding of not only the African American perspective but of *all* of Reconstruction was much richer for it.

Of course, the Commission did not postulate that every discussion in every classroom starts solely with the perspective of African Americans; that model becomes no more useful than the old textbooks that begin every topic from the perspective of powerful white men. However, there is a necessity of deconstructing Eurocentricity and its mythology of universal experience, supremacy and power hierarchy, and tokenism in its retelling of history. The use of Afrocentricity in initiating this mandate "shifting the lens" on particular topics throughout the history curriculum — especially when applied to historical discussions that have not been traditional deemed black history, the notion that African American and their narratives are American history, often ignored but always present in the events in this nation—offer New Jersey students new ways of seeing the past. This is significant the Amistad mandate did not create a separate African American course, but effectuated the totality of the U.S. history content area for the state throughout the entirety of K-12 Social Studies classrooms. In addition in the holistic nature of the Afrocentric idea, the deconstruction and demarginalization of the previous approach to the teaching of the content area is now replaced by full infusion where there is cognizance of everyone else and their agency when the lens is refocused, i.e. women, immigrants, or children.

The Commission decided that even in units that do not begin with an African American perspective, one can include that perspective over time by seeking out diverse examples of key themes and ideas. Students learn wonderfully well from examples of everyday individuals in oral history narratives, personal accounts, photographs, and other "real life" sources. The examples that instructors provide to illustrate key themes and ideas in American history will provide the groundwork for students' understanding of what constitutes "real" history. By utilizing Afrocentricity, the Amistad Commission Executive leadership and curriculum committee recognized that they not only expanded the course content choices, the active agency of the varied players in the narrative, centered voice and perspective, but most importantly, the choice of methodology also shifts the manner of the presentation of history to students, which in itself has subconscious indoctrination. For example, in an Executive Summary of the Executive Director to the Curriculum committee, Executive Director Wilson espoused how teachers in districts has expressed that students textbook design did influence historical hierarchy and importance in subsequent discussion of eras (Wilson 2007). An exemplar - in the Newark school district the textbooks used example after example of Depression-era poverty among whites to demonstrate the depths of the economic crisis, and then has a subheading titled "Minorities and the New Deal" at the end of the chapter (an exemplar of the "add and stir" approach), Wilson recounted that teachers were concerned that subtle organizing of the text and the subsequent lessons that closely aligned had students come to understand the white experience as the "normal" Depression-era experience and the black experience as peripheral to the subject and therefore far less important. Wilson suggested as an exemplar, a possible Simply by introducing examples of African American life earlier in the lesson, *alongside the core of the subject matter* instead of in a separate marginal section, teachers can change the way students view the examples and expand their opinions of how varied groups experienced the Depression, diffusing the notion that white experience suffered and survived in silo. When you use some examples from within the African

American community to *teach* the key ideas that you want to convey in American history, the history of those African Americans become central part to the curriculum and not simply window-dressing at the end of the chapter and the periphery of students historical remembrances (Wilson 2007).

To find these examples, teachers frequently have to go beyond traditional sources of information and refocus something as simplistic as their lesson plan development, to shift their thinking about the structure of their daily lessons with students to foster and hone into their theoretical frameworks when crafting narratives. In 2006, Amistad's Executive leadership and Social Studies coordinator for the state- decided that in response to the results of the self-reporting survey, that the simplest common denominator statewide for teachers, would to begin with a shift in their classroom and curriculum planning, one class period at a time. Thereby, they concentrated their efforts in deconstructed the tradition lesson plans the state's teachers were utilizing, and a reconstructed lesson planning rubric exemplar for utilization by mandate that encouraged not tokenism or African American additives, but a full infusion of demarginalization, perspective and agency.

Primary focus of the Amistad Executive staff in the fiscal years 2006 -2008 was concentrated curriculum development under the edict of the mandate, and the dissemination of the new mandated rubric for lesson plan development and the subsequent curriculum materials developed with a small cadre of teachers to prototype the rubric, to every school in the state will ensure that every teacher has access to our lesson plans, primary source documents and the Amistad mandate by September 2008.

Using tenets and theoretical ideologies from Afrocentricity, which had already been identified as a guiding directive for implementation and curriculum development efforts by the Curriculum committee, within those formative plans between 2006-2008, the Executive leadership of the

Commission formulated a course of action that would overhaul the Social Studies curriculum and statewide standards that were being utilized throughout the state in all 596 school districts.

According to the auspices of the legislation, foci would not be on the development of a separate African American Studies course for New Jersey's school districts but one with full infusion of African American culture and history and that was culturally grounded and removed marginalized victimization from the US History statewide curriculum, so to eliminate the furtherance of any racial micro-aggressions, and promoted cultural competencies and proficiencies among students and teachers. The next curriculum step towards that work—after the self-reporting survey, introduction of ancillary legislation to support the laws extension, and the distribution of read aloud and guided reading titles for primary grades—was twofold: 1) the creation of an Amistad lesson plan template, and 2) the Executive Leadership's participation with the Assistant Commissioner of Teaching and Learning to rewrite the state's curriculum standards and content strands to guarantee that they were in compliance with the law. This latter act alone institutionalized the legal mandate. Every district in the state must follow to the letter of the law the scaffolded directives that the state content standards spell out, inclusive of what content they stipulate must be included. State wide testing and benchmark assessments are formulated according to the state content standards in each academic area.

The Executive leadership of the Commission was a member of the NJ Department of Education's Division of Equity and Diversity, is a member of the Equity Council, who looked closely at state benchmarks for Amistad compliance, and worked intrinsically on the Social Studies Task force. The Amistad Commission became instrumental in the revisions of the 2004 and 2009 Social Studies standards that were released by the New Jersey Department of Education for adoption and adherence throughout the state. Amistad's Executive Director serves as a member of the Social Studies Task Force and was responsible with guaranteeing that the curriculum mapping and requisite

content outlines identified in the K-12 progress indicators for each grade for Social Studies was seamlessly infused with African American historical content.

The New Jersey Amistad lesson plan template, which was created in partnership with the Executive Leadership of the Commission and the Social Studies Director for the New Jersey Department of Education, was designed for our Curriculum Writers and utilized during our Annual Curriculum Consortium. Because of the structure of the curriculum template teachers were forced to preconceptual their infusion of African American content in every class period, the lesson plan authors had to think concretely about the following:

1. New Jersey Standard that they will follow when writing the lesson.
2. Era of History covered (which aligned with the standards) as well as an area that requires a written overview of the major points of the historical period.
3. African American history component for infusion which is contextualized within the era of history covered by the lesson and must be blended for the holistic presentation to the student as mandated via the Amistad legislation.
4. An infusion plan which gives specific direction to the teacher.
5. Teaching strategies.
6. Assessment tools.
7. Resources for teachers and students.

Overarchingly, this lesson plan formula seems to create a rubric that limits the author's ability to extract African American content from the historical discussion, thereby restricting the writer's ability to create a separate African American studies course. Specifically, the utilization of this lessons plan template continued to deconceptualize and extend the rewriting of American history to infuse African American influence, history, accomplishments, and history. The ultimate goal of the Executive leadership, by deconstructed the pedagogy of classroom teaching to fit the mandate, one lesson at time, one teacher at a time, was a cadre of lessons that would lay the ground work for a curriculum that in its finished product would be a curriculum that is the merging of two products: an African American studies curriculum and the previously utilized and monochromatic U.S. history curriculum (*See Appendix F*).

With the creation of the lesson plan template a corps of lessons was created that could be disseminated throughout the state and could provide resources for curriculum prototyping. The proposed plan would commence in the 2007-2008 school term in varied of school districts across the state. The prototyping methodology was to Utilize a cross sampling of schools throughout New Jersey, which represent varied demographics of students and teachers we began curriculum prototyping exercises in April of 2008 immediately following state testing, within the classrooms throughout the state. Teachers who participated were asked to answer questions regarding their content knowledge of African American history, their familiarity with the lesson subject matter, their comfort with the delivery of the lesson, and any identifiable hindrances or advantages to their delivery of the lessons. Teachers were provided with five lessons which constitute a unit of study that fits within their instruction timeline (thereby guaranteeing that the students will be provided seamless instruction with no gaps in curriculum coverage the week we will be substituting the lessons). These lessons were submitted to department chairs and principals so that all involved are aware of what lesson will be delivered within the classroom. The classroom educators were asked to teach the lesson verbatim, in their own style but without any major deviation for the lessons. Amistad curriculum evaluators spent one week in observation of lesson plan delivery, effectiveness, usability and functionality. Teachers also had a self-reporting assessment of their students, the delivery of content, the integration of content knowledge into their current curriculum and their suggestions for revisions to the Amistad lesson plan template. Amistad evaluators were able to assess student participation, content knowledge acquisition, lessons effectiveness and lesson flow. The integration of this content was asked to be infused within the next assessment activity and/or assignments that the Teachers will be given the students (*See Appendix L*).

The requisite for the district who participated was the allowance of flexibility to have autonomy over the test classroom for one week. Making sure that all Curriculum chairs, department

chairs and Administrators are aware of everything that will be taught within the classroom. The Executive leadership of the Commission and team of evaluators met with the teachers and the administrators so that each of was comfortable with expectations, classroom presentation, and evaluative outcomes. There was no right or wrong way to deliver the lesson; we simply asked that the Educator follow the lesson plan format as closely as possible so we might be able to look closely at the effectiveness of the lesson with their students with pre- and post-delivery questionnaire for both teachers and students. Qualitative analysis data was informally collected by the evaluator. This evaluation did not go towards nor against teacher's performance evaluation; it was used as a method for the Amistad Commission to be able to assess the functionality of the sample curriculum. Proposed School Districts for testing were:

1. East Orange
2. Orange
3. Trenton/Ewing
4. Cherry Hill
5. Asbury Park
6. Oaklyn
7. Cumberland/Vineland
8. Pemberton
9. Evesham/Mt. Laurel

Another aspect of implementation which fully illuminated as the crux of the infusion plan, and the organizational point for where the Afrocentric paradigm and its tenets needed to be foci to guarantee the Nommo of the spirit of the legislation, with the operationalization of the statewide mandate; was in the development of an on-line teacher's textbook that could be housed on the Department of Education server, and virtually distributed to every teacher and district throughout the state. The Executive leadership of the Commission wanted to hold fast to the integrity of the guiding pedagogy and paradigm that had been decidedly assessed as the best theoretical framework for infusion of American history curriculum. With Afrocentricity, thereby, they made a specific decision

that they would not outsource the directive to an outside corporation to design the narrative of the work, but would find a company to bring their *Nommo* for operationalization of the law to fruition in an on-line curriculum. In 2008, after prototyping was completed, a call for proposal was sent out via Department for Treasury statewide Request for Proposals (RPF).

The exigence for the calling for proposals for the creation of an on-line textbook for teachers that could developed under the directive of the Amistad Commission to guarantee that their philosophical framework (Afrocentric tenets in praxis) was undergird and institutionalized. The paucity and foci of materials present in the textbooks as we fully discussed earlier in this study. The law was addressing the infusion plans for the law, and the selection of its centralizing paradigm, but underlying, it also was called to address to fully see this law come to fruition holistically, the *lack* of good African American history in those most traditional textbooks. Fortunately, the internet is becoming a treasure chest for such research which only extends the offering available for teachers - but in specific transmission of the law throughout the state, the Amistad Commission created the *Amistad Digital Curriculum Resource for Teachers- an Inclusive Journey through American History*, as a result of the awarding of the RFP in 2008.

The on-line textbook's motivation was to fill in the gaps of knowledge absent from the traditional US history textbooks and classroom resources but found in African American history textbooks. Many libraries are placing first-hand accounts on the internet that allow teachers and students to digest the complexities of the American story and the power of voice and agency to transform the history; such as the recounting of enslavement from the point of view of those enslaved and not the narration of plantation owners, or perhaps the exploration of democracy ideals during World War I through the letters of segregated African American G.I.s on the frontlines in Germany.

The scarcity of source material on African American history that most K-12 institutions purchase or utilize to support the American narrative outside of the US history textbooks or specifically for a designated African American course (and, indeed, on the history of a variety of groups, from the poor to women to immigrants) can provide, in and of itself, a useful learning experience for students. A conversation about why it might be hard to find out about the lives of freedmen in the years following Reconstruction could allow for creative problem solving and interesting historical thinking. It might also lead to a broader understanding of how history is "decided" and the "canon" of literature in the classroom is selected, through the choices, inclusions, and omissions of archivists, librarians, census-takers, photographers, newspaper editors, interviewers, and so on. Ultimately, whatever sources created from the imperfect information available to most students, can enrich students' understanding of the past by refocusing the historical lens in creative and inclusive ways.

The Commission curriculum committee decided that by teaching history lessons through the perspective of African American voice or some other seldom-heard voice, we can radically change the nature of American history. It becomes, in this model, not just a story about the wealthy, powerful, and dominant, but a story to which all Americans can relate. It becomes a story in which every child in the class can recognize someone "like me." And it becomes a story that is truly inclusive, allowing many groups to be at center stage instead of watching from the wings as the Lincolns, Carnegies, and Eisenhower's bask in the spotlight. And, most importantly, it becomes a story that more truly reflects the realities of the American past — a past in which the vast majority of Americans have not been wealthy, have not been individually acclaimed, and have wielded comparatively little power on the national and world stage. These goals help not only African American students but all of us to understand American history in a much richer and more accurate way (Wilson 2009).

A paradox that the Amistad Commission did identify when constructing the curriculum was supported by Robert Harris Jr. in his 1998 scholarly article published by the American Historical Association entitled “Dilemmas in Teaching African American History”, which was the duality often found in the teaching of history that often delineates African American history from American history and often blocks the understanding of the realities of the American past. Historically, it is only in the African American history timeline in silo, do you see African American as active agents, with voice and perspective- when that narrative gets transplanted and intertwined into American history courses without a deconstruction of the theoretical framework of Eurocentricity which demarginalized how and where African American history is added.

Harris assessed that the central paradox of the African American experience in America is that it has been a separate entity, yet inseparable from the fabric of American life. He feels that a major predicament in teaching African American history in silo, is this absurdity of the separation of the historic narration being "set apart from" while at the same time "intrinsically a part of" the United States history (Harris 1998). Harris's assertion, that in almost 90 percent of the historical timeline discussed in American classrooms, African Americans, despite having lived in the United States or the North American colonies from 1619, have often been relegated to "a nation within a nation".

Although there are daily points of intersection, Harris claims when depicted in history, African Americans have generally been born, educated, baptized, socialized, and buried at some distance removed from the dominant society and this distance, i.e. this segregation/or separation, and has informed the community and culture studies that characterize much of the writing and teaching of African American history.

Harris accounts that over the past four decades—longer if you count such works as Carter G. Woodson's *History of the Negro Church* (1921); Alrutheus A. Taylor's *The Negro in Tennessee, 1865–1880* (1941); Lorenzo J. Greene's *The Negro in Colonial New England* (1942); and John Hope

Franklin's *The Free Negro in North Carolina, 1790-1860* (1943)—research in African American history has focused markedly on their community and the chronicling of a distinctive African American culture. The necessity for such works is to build a repository of scholarly work that negate the misnomer that arose out of Eurocentric supremacy that African Diasporan peoples had no history to be recounted.

There should never have been debate about the existence of a viable African American culture that is not mutually exclusive of its American-ness, but this has not always been the case. The African American imprint despite being held at bay is deeply imbedded within American culture. In 1945 Langston Hughes makes this reality a declarative poetic statement, “I, too sing America”. W.E.B. Du Bois poignantly put forth the question in his masterpiece *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), "Would America have been America without her Negro people?"

The irony is that the work of the Amistad Commission should not be groundbreaking, because it is the actuality the most holistic method for the teaching of history that defies the paradox and marries the two narratives for students with a perspective that negates all the assumptions of universalism of Eurocentricity. The dilemma which the Commission rectified was the selection of an appropriate medium in the teaching of the holistic narrative; in other words, which lens to use at what times, for understanding the African American past. As we have recounted previously in this study, for too long, we examined African Americans through the lens of the dominant society and in the process imposed interpretations on their thoughts and activities that muted black voices and misconstrued their actions. The work of the Amistad Commission is to refocus the lens inclusive of African Americans while eradicating the whole notion that there is a dominant society that should define the history. We understand a lot more about Diasporan people, their travails and triumphs, it now need to be the context from which we define America for New Jersey students- not as outliers on the fringes with a counter history.

That is part of the Commission's challenge that they overcame when they formulate curriculum plans; the teaching of American history inclusive of the African American narrative; where the focus should be for maximum illumination and understanding. The African American community does have a distinctive culture, but it does not overshadow the ancillary dynamics of class, gender, and sexuality. The intersections with the larger society, are not intersections, but overlaying complements that in actuality make African American history excellent exemplars of the true nature of American citizenry in the larger society. It is what creates the narrative championed in New Jersey, and highlights the powerful effect that African Americans and their presence have had on America and that America has had on them.

The Executive leadership of the Commission sought solutions for the textbook dilemma in the state that was created by the absence of US history books that supported the Amistad mandate for US history. In 2008, the Amistad Commission sought proposals for the construction an interactive web- based curriculum that would focus on the contributions of African Americans from Jamestown to the present day holistically integrated into a K-12 Social Studies course as specified in the Core Curriculum Content Standards put forth by the New Jersey Department of Education. The site would also include several units dealing with historical events in Africa, prior to Africans arriving in British North America. The web-based curriculum would consist of no less than twelve units of study, broken down by time periods as specified in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Social Studies, also known as New Jersey Student Learning Standards; and would include lesson plans, PowerPoints, biographies, primary source documents and classroom activities for students. Later phases would include videos, interactive maps, interactive timelines, audios, and music. All of these elements would be laid out in a consistent, user-friendly format. The Amistad Commission provided unit framing essays for each unit, course pacing for k-12, lesson plan templates, sample lessons plans, rubrics for replication, , and complete oversight.

The company selected for this web-based curriculum would assemble the relevant documents, edit the lessons and activities produced by the Amistad Commission curriculum committee, and under the directive and focus of the Commission produce the videos using top professors from around the country as well as historical re-enactors.

The activities and resources would be used in Social Studies classes K-12 as well as interdisciplinary courses and can easily be infused into elementary, middle school and high school American History courses, Language Arts courses, Art courses, Music courses, etc. This comprehensive password-protected web resource would be available to every teacher in New Jersey, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week absolutely free of charge and will be the property of the Amistad Commission.

This project would be an extremely large undertaking and could require breaking the complete production into multiple phases over approximately 12 months or longer. However it was imperative that the baseline lesson plans as well as web links, primary and secondary sources, rubrics, course pacing, assessment for varied grades and course overview and had to be ready for distribution by September 2008. The website address that was created from the 2008 RFP is: www.njamistadcurriculum.org

The following explains the list of requisites for the Amistad web-based curriculum:

- **Web Links**

We would like this site to provide web links so that our teachers can conduct their own research while creating activities, lessons and projects. Teachers no longer have to spend countless hours surfing the web. Students can use this section to safely research pre-approved sites.

- **Methods**

This section will provide teachers with examples of teaching methods they can use in their classrooms. They will see PowerPoints and PDF files that will explain the teaching methods that they can use to bring substantive content into the classroom.

- **Primary sources**

Teachers will receive primary sources that they can use in class. They will also be able to use the primary source documents, letters, journal entries, speeches, obituaries in student assignments and projects.

- **Rubrics**

Teachers will be able to access rubrics to grade collaboration, timelines, research papers, presentations, web quests, multimedia, podcasting, *inter alia*.

- **Video section for Downloading and instructional time**

- **Storytellers, character interpreters, documentaries, noted scholars**

- **Activities — various classroom activities that should be included in addition to the development and editorial of lesson plans for the classroom.**

- a) Map Activities
- b) Guided Readings: Elementary, Middle and High School
- c) Dialogues/Plays
- d) Literature Connections
- e) Web Quests

- **Assessment — Classroom Assessments based on the unit's content**

- a) Elementary, Middle and High School Assessments
- b) Interactive Quizzes for practice/review
- c) Document-Based Question Sheets

- **Galleries — Paintings and photographs of famous African Americans, Events in History and Political Cartoons for teachers to use as visuals in the classroom or as part of their own PowerPoints.**

- a) Portraits
- b) Events
- c) Political Cartoons (when appropriate)

- **Elders (Notables)**

- **Lessons**

- a) Elementary Lessons
- b) Middle School Lessons
- c) High School Lessons

- **PowerPoints**

- a) Content PowerPoints
- b) Challenge Game
- c) Vocabulary Game

- **Interactive Timeline**

The Interactive Timeline would consist of several articles with graphics or videos that would be accompanied by discussion questions.

Selection criteria for proposals that were set by the Amistad Commission to guarantee that their decision to utilize Afrocentricity as a guiding paradigm for the on-line textbook's development, was the following; staff demographics with specific utilization of scholars in the fields of African American history and culture as well, Education and U.S. History. Demonstrated ability to create amass primary and secondary lesson plans as specified by the Amistad lesson plan template. Demonstrated ability to produce rubrics, professional development materials for Educators, and an applicable knowledge of New Jersey's Core Curriculum content standards for Social Studies K-12 (*See Appendix H*). The Amistad web-based curriculum was to be web-linked with connections highlighted to the NJDOE website throughout the 2009 standards strands page for Social Studies thereby endorsing and encouraging its usage by Teachers in each respective district in the state as an exemplary curriculum resource in fulfillment of the new curricular requirement set forth by both the mandate and the new Content standard adoptions by the NJ State Board that oversees the NJ Department of Education. The American Institute for History Education (AIHE) in Swedesboro, New Jersey, was awarded the contract from the Amistad Commission. When assessing the criteria and the requisites for the curriculum, including professional expertise in African American history, AIHE was the clear winner. The Executive leadership of the Commission and the Curriculum Committee worked intricately with AIHE to create the Amistad web based online curriculum resource for teachers, New Jersey first on line teachers textbook to fulfill a legal mandate and with content area specific materials.

Once the on-line textbook was created, it was released with statewide fanfare with support with both the Department of Education and Department of State. Announcements went out to each district as to the law and to the resources that were now available to support it. The Commission of

Education sent a directive to each district in support of the enforcement of the law, and a press release from the Secretary of State announced the web-based curriculum. (See Appendix I, J, K)

Once the curriculum was released and announced, a public relations campaign to bring knowledge to the forefront regarding the law, to extol the work and enforce the mandate, required that The Amistad Commission began making presentations throughout the country in regards to our implementation plans, curriculum resource materials, signature teaching strategies, and training modules. Presentation every year at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Convention in Washington, D.C. for the leadership of the USDOE and African American legislators across the nation, to push for national implementation of the law by the US Department of Education as well as help further the Amistad momentum with other states so that this work would not be limited to state lines when African Diasporan history as integral to the United States story is a national narrative. The Commission has begun a series of lectures and presentations at the United Nations in New York to bring attention to the global implications to the strength of this law worldwide for the teaching on African Diasporan peoples.

In addition, The Amistad Commission identified other programmatic thrust for the Commission to assist with the implementation across the state. In an effort to guarantee that Educators across the state were involved in giving exemplars for classroom implementation, the Executive staff decided that a the identification of a community of classroom practitioners and scholars should lend their voice to the curriculum, in the spirit of collective development community engagement. This was not to be a top-down agency initiative imposed upon districts without the influence of teachers- that would go against the nature of the modality of Afrocentricity.

In the collective ideology and spiritual emphasis of Afrocentricity, as well as to force districts to move away from this work's alignment to the month of February only (Black History Month); an Exemplary Practice Award was created for Amistad Master Teachers across the state. The Exemplary

Practice Award was distributed to educators and their districts to ensure that New Jersey Educators, were supported to effectively teach the revised Social Studies core curriculum content standards via the Amistad curriculum, and to provide funding and programmatic assistance to teachers.

Up to 10 Exemplary Practice Award recipients were selected each year beginning in 2007 to receive the \$5000 grant to enhance their programmatic initiatives in the classroom. The New Jersey Amistad Commission identified and cataloged exemplary practices in schools across the state that incorporate and infuse African American history into the school's curriculum and lesson delivery. The purpose of this program was to recognize and celebrate the excellence achieved by New Jersey's public schools and to make these exemplary practices available and replicable by highlighting and describing designated exemplary practices to other educators throughout the state. Exemplary practices were defined by those exemplary and/or innovative strategies that (1) fully infuse African-American history into the school's curriculum; (2) promote high student achievement; (3) address specific educational needs of students and the *Core Curriculum Content Standards*; (4) yield documented results meeting set objectives, and (5) can be replicated. Any New Jersey teacher, group of teachers, or school was eligible to participate. The award was open to any schools serving students in pre-kindergarten to grade 12 in the state. The practice must have been in place for a minimum of one year prior to submission. Only one application per applicant may be submitted. Commercially developed practices would not be considered. And the real strength of this award that forced its manifestation outside the mental limitations of teachers that this was an African American history legislation in-silo or that this should be "Black History Month" lessons and curriculum, the practices submitted must be implemented outside of February - around black history month will not be considered. To undergird that ideology, even the Department of Education staff that observed the practices in district used a rubric that stipulated this philosophy (*See Appendix L*).

The Amistad Commission became the national role model for other states implementing their own Amistad Commission, these activities led to the passage of the identical law authored by African American legislators in both Illinois and New York states, and have done presentations to the New York Amistad Commission as well as the Illinois Amistad Commission, both headed by the Secretary of State in their respective states. The work of the Commission was truly coming into its *Nommo*, the landscape of New Jersey education was being transformed with public policy enforcement and a liberation narrative that centralized African American agency in the American tapestry (*See Appendix M, N*).

In addition, as legislated, the Commission was responsible for the coordination of events on a regular basis, throughout the state which provide the appropriate memorialization of events concerning the African Diaspora contribution and their descendants in America, especially in relation to educational initiatives and curriculum development. Past titles have included: “American Reconstruction Reconsidered”, “Race - A Justification for Segregation” and “the Amistad Web-based Curriculum- An Inclusive Journey through American History”. The yearly conference is always open to the public. Educators receive professional development credit through the Amistad Commission for their attendance.

It was already noted that educators should understand the legislative requirements of the law, practicing teachers should be required to attend workshops that address the complexity of an infusion model that expands the historic narrative within New Jersey classrooms.

As we have already firmly established, the goal of the Amistad Commission was to operationalize the Amistad law, where curriculum and lesson plan rubrics for classroom instruction should align with the framework of Afrocentricity; the decentralization of the Eurocentric historic narrative, and a historic narrative in New Jersey classroom that establishes shared power, agency, and voice among all participants. It should not a prescribed additive of African American token histories

within a Eurocentric landscape. We would expand the library of information sources utilized, to go beyond print and texts, thereby increasing the data that students are exposed to in an effort to decentralize the historic narrative. With administrative support, oversight, and enforcement, Educators should learn how to manifest the mandated edict in every history lesson and New Jersey classroom.

Assemblyman William Payne knew the difficulty in putting the Amistad law into action. Subsequent legislation was introduced by Assemblyman Payne and Assemblywoman Grace Spencer that was aimed at strengthening New Jersey's Amistad statute: requiring all new teachers get African American history training, expanding African American studies to be a secondary major/coursework choice for Education majors interested in teaching History in New Jersey. (*See Appendix E, Assemblywoman Grace Spencer bill*) as well as legislation that standardized textbook purchasing to hone in on textbook compliance with the mandate; and finally a petition to the Department of Education to guarantee that students pass a Social Studies exam before graduating.

The practitioner of the Amistad law on a daily basis K-12 are educators, thereby knowledge acquisition for teachers of African American history, as well as professional development opportunities was imperative. To support this notion, the Amistad Commission Executive leadership created the Amistad Summer Curriculum Consortium for Teacher. Then professional development is also a fundamental component for curriculum implementation success. In addition, pre-service teachers within the state's universities and colleges that will be tasked in upcoming years to implement Social Studies instruction must also become aware of the law and its requirements and be exposed to the supporting resources so colleges of Education and postsecondary African American studies departments across the state should be included and vested in the adoption of training modules and curriculum reconstruction, hence why the inclusion by law of the Secretary of Higher Education and President's Council had seats ex-officio on the Commission board – to guarantee that all of New

Jersey's Colleges of Education were also aware and compliant with guaranteeing that the law's implementation strategies.

With full administrative support, practicing teachers should be required to attend workshops that address the complexity of race, help them examine their own perceptions, become more aware of the legislative requirements, and learn how to understand the needs of their students. The Amistad executive staff as policymakers and implementers, should provide administrators and teachers with concrete and virtual resources as well as mandated workshops.

The Amistad Bill was very much needed in New Jersey public classrooms, and across the nation. It provides teachers with the format to bring the perspectives of the people of the African Diaspora into the classroom and challenges students to wrestle with the notion of race and the history of race relations in American history; as well as to better understand the unifying themes of voice, agency, oppression, liberation, survival, and cultural strength; or an effort to dispel myths and empower the students - the Amistad legislation as an enumeration of an Afrocentric paradigm, is the tool necessary to expose our students to American history as seen through the eyes of all involved.

The potential effectiveness of legislative curricular reform is contingent upon the professional development available for teachers to consider the background of their students, understand what knowledge or misconceptions they bring to the classrooms, and recognize their exposure to other cultures and their histories. Such information will better inform how a mandated curriculum, like the Amistad Law, should be implemented with the intent of exposing the students to multiple perspectives and inviting them to actively find solutions to the deep-rooted problems in America. It allows teachers to bring various approaches together to better teach the various perspectives within the American narrative. There is a need for this type of curricular reform in all American classrooms.

Fullan (2001) and Little (1993) noted that professional development oftentimes fails to support teachers' visions, needs, and requirements. In a qualitative study conducted by Güven (2004) many of the teachers in his study expressed a belief that professional development programs are designed to initiate change in teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions. However, the study showed that teachers' experiences and memories have a greater influence on their perceptions of education. Professional development is, therefore, an important resource for the success of this type of legislative change; however, it has become a complex journey centered on an understanding of teacher commitment, knowledge, responsibility, experiences, and learning communities. Influenced by a study of the National Board of Professional Teacher Standards (NBPTS), Fullan referred to these five areas as the standards necessary for effective teacher professional development.

Professional Standards for Teaching and Learning – Accountability in the Classroom

The first domain addressed by the NBPTS was “Teachers are committed to students and their learning” (NBPTS, 1993). According to Fullan’s (2001) report, the NBPTS proclaimed that National Board-certified teachers “adjust their practice based on observations and knowledge of their students’ interests, abilities, skills, knowledge, family circumstances, and peer relations” (Fullan, 2001, p. 255). More and more states have allowed this standard to influence how they prepare and train teachers to implement mandated curriculum. Because of this standard, states have been encouraged to alter their professional development approach to help teachers learn how to discover the interests, knowledge, and backgrounds of their students.

The second domain addressed by the NBPTS was “Teachers know the subject they teach and how to teach those subjects to students” (NBPTS, 1993). The NBPTS explained that the National Board-certified teachers “command specialized knowledge of how to convey and reveal subject matter to students” (Fullan, 2001, p. 256). These teachers have striven to acknowledge the students’

assumptions, biases, and knowledge to better assess how to present the material and create real-life connections. Other states have captured this emphasis and restructured their professional development to master ways to teach the knowledge with careful consideration of their audience, the students.

The third domain addressed by the NBPTS was “Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring students learning” (NBPTS, 1993). Fullan (2001) used the work of the NBPTS to note that National Board-certified teachers “command a range of instructional techniques, know when each is appropriate, and can implement them as needed” (Fullan, 2001, p. 256). The first step is to have the knowledge ready and available to students. However, to consider the range of instructional techniques relies on how the knowledge is positioned in a way that is appropriate for the students and connected to their needs. This study will consider how each teacher positions the knowledge that he or she brings to the lessons and if the levels of their students are factored in as a consideration.

The fourth domain addressed by the NBPTS was “Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience” (NBPTS, 1993). Based on Fullan’s (2001) research, the NBPTS concluded that the National Board-certified teachers:

critically examine their practice, seek the advice of others, and draw on educational research and scholarship to expand their repertoire, deepen their knowledge, sharpen their judgment and adapt their teaching to new findings, ideas and theories (Fullan, 2001).

According to this study, teachers should be able to analyze how they teach, how they can improve, and what materials will enhance their lessons. Many states have adopted this standard.

The final domain addressed by the NBPTS was “Teachers are members of learning communities” (NBPTS, 1993). The National Board-certified teachers, according to Fullan (2001) and the NBPTS, “find ways to work collaboratively and creatively with parents, engaging them productively in the work of the school” (Fullan, 2001, p. 257). Epstein (2009) explained a curricular approach of teachers utilizing community-based organizations, neighborhood- or community-oriented

museums, and community members and events (p. 127). The community should become part of the school culture, thus connecting teachers and students with parents, community leaders, and community programs. As advised by Fullan and Epstein, professional development programs must provide an opportunity for teachers to deal with these experiences and understand how it has developed their teacher identity to better understand his or her role as not only a teacher but also as a human agent of change.

The Amistad mandate required the necessity for extensive professional development opportunities for teachers, in partnership with the presentation of the new web-based curriculum. Over the last several years, the Amistad Commission has offered continuous professional development opportunities and trainings for Teachers in their respective districts as well as conferences, civic, community, and public events. The Amistad Commission found it necessary to extend its offerings of face to face professional development training opportunities for Educators throughout the state. These programs operate in tandem with the statewide curriculum and were preserved as an integral component of our program offerings. The Amistad Curriculum Trainings throughout all 21 counties as well as in numerous strategic districts within the state were absolutely necessary for professional development tutorial for teachers that will provide a much-needed solution to help teachers, administrators, department chairs, and Superintendents to fulfill this new curricular requirement. In concert with the premiere of the web-based curriculum the Amistad Commission offered twenty-one (21) county wide Amistad Curriculum Trainings, and additional trainings for individual districts that require individual attention during the last six school years. The Commission also systematically hold professional development sessions throughout each county as needed. Because this legislation required statewide implementation, which necessitated a strategic training and awareness campaign, these training sessions served to train educators on the usage of the curriculum web-site, extend Educator's comfort with the content knowledge, provide teachers with

the latest in teaching methodologies via hands on sessions, and promoted awareness and utilization of the web-based teachers resource in all the districts. The Amistad Commission was tasked with covering the entire state of New Jersey. With the release of the curriculum and revisions to the standards, face to face training were necessary to guarantee compliance and the transmission of the theoretical framework that organized the work. The Amistad Commission has limited staff and has devised an implementation plan that will allow professional development opportunities to take place within each and every county within the course of school year. Bringing training opportunities to the respective districts was laid out as the best course of action because of the restrictions on Teachers attending training out of district/or county as set forth by the 2009 State Board of Education and the home rule scheduling authority of each county superintendents and district superintendents, which has professional development dates non-centralized and respective to each district. The limitations on district budgets for trainings required localized training opportunities for teacher's ability to participate. Without these district trainings we would not have been able to reach the more than 200,000 New Jersey K-12 Educators as set forth by our commission, these trainings were time sensitive, the revised Social Studies standards which was the work of the Commission, web-linked and presented as an exemplar statewide, was earmarked for full adoption in Sept. 2012.

Molefi Asante and Ana Mazama were also leaders in the New Jersey training efforts in the last 5 years that commenced in support of the law's implantations and monitoring. In Union County, throughout school cycles, the scholars were invited by the County Superintendent to organize a series of trainings for several Union county districts. The invitation was welcomed, as it undergirded the notion that knowledge of the tenets of Afrocentricity and the grounded of the United States narrative in the active agency of African Americans, as integral for Amistad implementation. The County recognized that a highly qualified, competent, skilled, and dedicated workforce is essential to the success of the District and students. Union County contracted by Asante and Mazama as testament

to their commitment to ensuring all students succeed academically and reach their full potential in life. In doing so, it committed to providing opportunities for and ensuring all students meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and achieve life-long success. The Districts were committed to raising the standards and student performance and providing sustained professional development for staff to support the Amistad law therefore they operationalized that key teachers would attend the New Jersey Amistad Commission Workshops at Rahway Public Schools. Participants are required to turnkey information obtained with designated persons in accordance to District requirements (Plainfield Board of Education).

Finally, the culmination of all professional development activities set forth by the Commission's Executive Leadership was the creation and orchestration of the Amistad Summer Curriculum Consortium for Educators. It was the desire of the Curriculum Committee to develop extensive Elementary/ Secondary and Higher Education partnerships that would serve to underscore professional development efforts and provide both a forum and a brain trust for educational conferences. Institutional professional development offerings for the Amistad Commission centered around the continuation and expansion of the week long residential Summer Curriculum Institute for Educators. We are aware that majority of history and social science instructors, as well as K-8 teachers, had never taken related courses and were not trained or sufficiently knowledgeable to teach African American history. The Amistad Summer Institutes align with curriculum development activities for Educators and offered Educators the opportunity to receive professional development and/or graduate credit hours to enhance their knowledge and ability in teaching African American history. Educators are provided with primary and secondary materials, lesson plans, curriculum development methodology and pedagogy, as well as instructional notes. It is still a unique resource for K- 12 Educators throughout the state, where they can further develop primary/secondary/higher education partnerships with Universities and colleges History department professor grounded in the

discourse, the organizing frameworks and in the history of African Diasporan people. The Amistad Commission has been offering two (2) summer opportunities for educators for the last ten (10) summers since 2006 at either Kean University Montclair University and in Southern New Jersey at either Stockton University or Rowan University. Amistad Commission Summer Institute was designed for all elementary and secondary Social Studies teachers and supervisors to learn additional methodological techniques to infuse African-American history into the Social Studies curriculum. The Amistad Summer Institute is a residential program which gives Educators access to prominent historians and scholars. In addition, the Institute seeks to enhance teachers' curricular approaches while taking advantage of the resources offered at the respective host university. Montclair State University, home of the Center for Pedagogy for Educators, has been the site for more than 7 years. Professional Development credit were earned as well as the opportunity to design and study current curriculum development strategies in the teaching of American history at the Center for Pedagogy. During the week, up to 150 educators per location have the opportunity to work in collaboration to craft lesson plans for their respective classroom and districts; study texts, topics, and ideas central to elementary and secondary Social Studies education; and have access to the University's library collections. Further, the Institute aims to prepare participants to return to their classrooms with a deeper knowledge of current scholarship in American History with an understanding of the significant contributions of African-Americans. Any New Jersey public/private or parochial school elementary or secondary educators or administrator is eligible to participate. Selected candidates must attend the full session to be given professional development credits.

The New Jersey Amistad Bill manifestation tactics for implementations set just discussed and set forth, provided teachers with the format and a strategies with multiple streams of manifestation opportunities enforced via public policy, all grounded in a central framework that bring the perspectives of the people of the African Diaspora into the classroom and challenges students to better

understand the unifying themes of voice, agency, oppression, liberation, survival, and cultural strength; to dispel myths and empower the students - the Amistad legislation as an enumeration of an Afrocentric paradigm, is the tool necessary to expose our students to American history diversified, culturally congruent and centered, but it did not come without its challenges.

The election of Governor Chris Christie in 2009 led to the creation of the Office of Lieutenant Governor to run the New Jersey Department of State. The incoming administration was Republican, a new regime and a shift in the political party control in Trenton that had not happened since the mid 1990's. New Jersey is historically a Democratic leaning state. The entirety of the Amistad law, its implementation, and its curriculum development activities and oversight to that point had been under three African American Secretaries of State and consecutive democratic administrations. The incoming Lieutenant Governor was Republican had a different ideology about the agencies that should be housed under the umbrella of the Department of State with its perceived authority and locality in the statehouse complex with direct access to legislators.

According to April 2010 Amistad Commission archival meeting transcripts, four months after Governor Christie's inauguration, the Executive Director and her staff told they would be released from service, with the justification that Amistad Commission's computer based curriculum resource that they had created for New Jersey teachers would self-sustain the Commission work and there was no need for staff any longer (Amistad 2010). This action was not in silo, the New Jersey Israel Commission and its staff would be moved to the Department of Commerce, and the Office of Faith Based Initiatives as well as the Martin Luther King Commission Executive Directors was also told they would be released from their service at the Department of State.

Assemblyman William Payne had been insightful of changing political sentiments while drafting the Amistad legislation in 2002, as well as by garnering bipartisan political support and

mandating that legislators from both political parties in both the Assembly and Senate serve on the Board of the Commissioners. The Amistad Commission's Executive staff met with the Deputy Attorney General assigned to the Commission as its legal counsel, by-laws were reviewed, with the Board of Commissioners. The dismissal of the Executive Staff would halt the work of the Commission which was mandated by law thereby placing every school district within New Jersey in jeopardy of noncompliance to the law if there was no office to support and implement the law. Per the legislation, The Board of Commissioners could be not be dissolved except by virtue of legislation, and the Commission had hired their Executive Director and has its own budget approved and appropriated by the state legislature that was "housed" at the Department of State, but not under the authority of the Department of State (see Appendix A).

The Executive Director of the Amistad Commission was rescued from extinction in April of 2010, by the immediate intervention and protest from the Board of Amistad Commissioners, including the bipartisan legislators on the Commission, New Jersey Senator Tom Kean, the Republican Senate Minority Leader, who was an Amistad Commissioner. Immediate intervention was mounted by the NJNAACP and the New Jersey Black Caucus legislators, who reminded the Lieutenant Governor that this mandate was undergirded by New Jersey law and required oversight from within the Commission, which is the only governing body that could dismiss or hire staff. The purpose of that caveat was to protect the staff from all political retribution or policy influence from other state agencies and departments (Amistad 2010).

On April 9th 2010, The Amistad Commission and its Executive Director was moved to be housed at the Department of Education albeit without its funding which was retained by the Department of State (Wilson 2010). The move to the Department of Education complex undergirded its positioning as the content area experts for the area of Social Studies; with all public, private, charter, and parochial school districts will conversely strengthened the validity of the scholarship with New Jersey districts,

the Commission was now optically positioned for New Jersey districts, as not just an educational mandate, but an agency in the governing department for New Jersey schools.

The fate of the New Jersey Martin Luther King Commission Executive Director was not so favorable. Without the similarity of legal language in their mandate to justify the preservation of their staff, the Executive Directors was dismissed and has not been replaced to date, which stifled the day to day operations, they still a governing board, but no staff and no budget appropriations.

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS

This study sought to understand how the utilization of Afrocentricity in its operationalization of the Amistad legislation sought to be a public policy remediation purposed to combat the dominant European perspective of the American history curriculum via the modality of an Afrocentric paradigm in its application and operationalization.

This study strives to:

- 1) Highlight the tenets and paradigms of the Afrocentric theory for understanding;
- 2) Deconstruct Eurocentric perspectives in Americas classrooms and textbooks;
- 3) Enumerate a sample historiography of the quest for African American histories inclusion within America's classroom;
- 4) Discusses the necessity of public policy utilization as a change agent in educational reform, and, finally
- 5) Postulates that Amistad Bill in theory and praxis within public schools is an exemplar of legislated applied public policy that utilizes the pedagogical framework of Afrocentricity, as a foundational ideology in order to shift the discourse within the Social Studies framework and curriculum restructuring in but not of a state government agency, with direct legislative powers of oversight.

As previously stated, Fullan states that implementation is the center of the action (Fullan 2001). This study was one of the few studies which examined how legislated educational policy change came about that mandated a paradigm shift that deconstructs the Eurocentric pedagogy of exclusion and infuses strategically and permanently cultural and historical realities into the state's

K-12 classroom. Gloria Steinem, encapsulates this notion when she states that the first problem for all men and women is not to learn, but to unlearn. This dissertation specifically describes how the vision and pedagogical framework of the New Jersey Amistad Commission can impact the reality of implementation in New Jersey public schools.

Overall, this study was framed by this analysis by considering the role of these three cultural pedagogies of Multiculturalism, Ethnic Studies, and Afrocentricity within the implementation and structuring of the Amistad Bill. And the implementation of the Amistad legislation moved beyond the limitation of the history of the people of the African Diaspora as it specifically pertains to slavery and the history of the oppressed in the world.

In its manifestation, the Amistad Commission believed that African American history, along with the history of all people of color, could not fit into the current structure of the American history curriculum. The entire history curriculum must be transformed to tell a new story. In this new telling, the black perspective would be included within the historical narrative starting in Kindergarten, since most students were exposed to the European historical narrative that early. With a full understanding that educators would require training and professional development to combat conscious and subconscious micro aggressions and stereotypes in the classroom. Educators would also have to understand African American voice and agency, and to become acclimated with the African American perspective within the historical narrative, so that the teaching and learning that springs forth, is transcendent and not purely additive or contributive on a Eurocentric narrative.

In order to properly implement the New Jersey Amistad legislation within a diverse setting, an educator would need to be trained to be grounded and dedicated in a liberation narrative of inclusion and active agency within the curriculum of Social Studies throughout New Jersey. In order to demonstrate this, the scholar activist who were called upon to commence this work understood the necessity to: 1) develop a familiarity with the basic historical facts of each culture involved all with

active agency in the history of this country, 2) understand the separate narratives of African diaspora history and culture to better understand the larger themes and to locate their philosophical frameworks that liberate their realities, 3) identify the subjugation of others, 4) encourage students to connect with the curriculum, and 5) use nontraditional materials and methods to teach the curriculum.

The legislation prompts teachers to not be locked into the use of only the textbook. As this study reviewed, African and African American history generally exists at a minimum within most U.S. history curricula and textbooks, it is standardly covered in content-specific African American history textbooks, and many students across the country simply had not been exposed to the perspectives of Africans and African Americans. Hence the development of the Amistad web-based curriculum resource for classroom use to solve the void of resources available to K-12 teachers throughout the state. Students need to be exposed daily to the history of how Africans and African Americans influenced and contributed to the American narrative perspectives in America in a way that expands the story. For example: standard historic narratives illuminate Quakers as dominantly operating as conductors on the Underground Railroad. By shifting to an Afrocentric paradigm of location and agency, the same narrative is transformed; we are able to see through the use of mediums outside the textbooks - such as primary sources, speeches and historic records- that enslaved and free African American ministers, churches and communities primarily assisted enslaved Africans to freedom, and harbored by any means necessary the freedoms of those in their charge - William Still, the Philadelphia Vigilance Society, and the gun battle that ensued at Christiana, Delaware is a perfect example. It is important to provide lesson plans and materials that allow the students the chance to identify, empathize, and connect to history and allow for the revelation of full truths within the historical narratives. Students need to connect to history to truly empathize with the narrative of others, especially Africans and African Americans.

This study seeks to highlight how the Executive staff, as policy implementers, took the Amistad legislation beyond its strict interpretation and into the reality of policy interpretation and enactment, via model curriculum and content standard development with benchmarks for inclusion and professional trainings and workshops for educators. So, teachers are not left to figure evidences of implementation all on their own. It is a prescriptive approach that shifted the efforts of the Commission to an Afrocentric vantage point, which shapes the direction of the end results of this applied policy decision.

From the position of that respective vantage point came all the implementation decisions and curriculum development for the Commission. Teachers were given access to books, first-person narratives, historical artifacts, and hard-copy curriculum materials that will help them to implement the Amistad Bill effectively. Policymakers assisted with the legal prescribed inclusion of materials in support of the legislation being maintained at regional libraries and Centers for Pedagogy, where teachers are able to gain more information and materials to enhance their lessons. Pre-service Social Studies / History teachers were required to take certain African American coursework before entering the classroom. Professional development opportunities were developed, offered, or sanctioned from other agencies and community partners that would equip teachers with the deficit of knowledge that would preclude them from fully operationalize the law.

In addition to the concrete access of the canon of available materials, the Executive staff developed the online access to materials created specifically for the mandate in New Jersey. The Amistad Commission created on line curriculum resource entitled *New Jersey Amistad Commission Web-Based Curriculum – An Inclusive Journey Through American History* (<http://www.njamistadcurriculum.org/>). Teachers are able to use this website as an interactive textbook for teaching and learning and gain “a more detailed understanding of the American people and their shared history” (Amistad, 2009). As stated on the Amistad website:

The Amistad interactive textbook accomplishes this mission by guiding students and teachers on ‘an inclusive journey through American history’ while infusing the vast contributions and experiences of African Americans along the way. In doing so, Amistad delivers a broader awareness of African American history, and it provides the key to truly understanding the American experience (Amistad, 2009).

The website charts the K-12 Social Studies curriculum for the state of New Jersey and includes the history, influences, and contributions of African American people. With direct connections to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Social Studies, the Amistad web-based curriculum provides teachers with the traditional manifestations of African American Nommo - historical overviews, biographies, primary source documents, poems. Theatrical performances, quotes, libraries, literature connections, interactive maps, timelines, suggested lesson plans and activities, and PowerPoint presentations. In the creation of these curriculum materials the tenets of the Afrocentric method were evoked and utilized with the goal that the end product would be reflective of a cultural shift.

The nature of this work came with many political challenges, as well as roadblocks. The legislation allowed the curriculum work of the Amistad Commission to be without influence or interruption and self-directed, hence the Curriculum committee ability to direct the usage of Afrocentricity as the modality for the laws operation and curriculum material development. However with implementations and office functioning, governmental bureaucracy created challenges. This mandate was the first of its kind in the state, the first of its kind in the nation - it dictates that an entire content area is not only rewritten but also provides oversight as to the content, a jurisdiction in New Jersey that had until the Amistad law had been left to each individual school district. The Department of Education has primarily been responsible until the passage of the Amistad law in 2002, with the functionality of only setting the state content standards and learning acquisition benchmarks for districts, not the content inclusions. State and national testing of students dictated the content that should/would be included within each districts individual curriculum mapping. Assemblyman Payne

had drafted legislation that had far reaching implications for enforcement and to guarantee that the law would not be ignored in New Jersey school districts.

The Amistad law effected the curriculum mapping of each and every New Jersey school district by dictating the inclusion and infusion of African American content. No other state mandate on content inclusions had ever gone that far, including the Holocaust Commission, and none have come behind the Amistad legislation. Payne had studied the other legal mandates coming out of the Department of Education. He analyzed the law and recognized their flaw, that they were recommendations not enforceable mandates for district. The resulting in mandated directives and suggestions of overarching ideologies to be taught in classrooms while exposing the students to the Holocaust (i.e. tolerance, respect, understanding) but were not enforceable, nor required by law the inclusion in every school district's curriculum mapping. The Holocaust Commissions popularity and notoriety when it passed in the early 1990's manifested by community engagement, political pressure and popularity among the Jewish population across the state. The Jewish population often galvanized to have the Holocaust Commission mandate adopted throughout the state by local school boards, which guaranteed it would be taught in the classrooms.

In looking at that model, Assemblymen's Payne's recognized that limitation, and extended his legal mandate to supersede Holocaust's limitations. Payne's mandate included specific content, and the language of the law had provided a cocoon that allowed for the direction and methodology of the content development to be from within the Commission without interruption of intervention from other agencies, including the Department of Education. The mandate then went so far as to guarantee that the content would have to be adopted, by giving the Commission authority over other departments for assistance with implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It was new territory for districts and for the Department of Education.

In 2011, the Amistad web-based curriculum took an additional step to solidify its legal standing with districts. The web-based curriculum resource for teachers and its curriculum mapping was presented and adopted by the New Jersey State Board of Education as a statewide compliance model for school districts, as well as a resource that could be utilized as evidence that districts were in compliance of the law. Following the adoption the Department of Education began including questions regarding compliance in their district reviews with statewide monitors, the results of those monitoring visits to districts effectuate their budgets and educational standings.

There are still limitations that have been identified that have hindered full implementation in every district across the state which could be questions for further research and analysis. Full implementation has been slow because it requires that all 619 school districts in the state of New Jersey change their curriculum mapping for Social Studies, not just in one grade but in every grade K-12, in compliance of the state Amistad law. The Department of Education sends monitors into districts annually that include requisites for Amistad law implementation and questions regarding the usage and/or adoption of the model curriculum to be answered by Superintendent and Curriculum Directors while doing in-district evaluations and monitoring. However, the answers provided back to the state monitors are often self-reported by school district leadership. Like the limitations of the Amistad Commission's 2005-2006 self-reporting survey, a drilling down to the classroom level in every district K-12 often reveals a completely different reality of implementation. The limitation of the number of the Amistad staff (to date the office has 5 employees including the Executive Director) makes the Commission reliant of the data collected by Department of Education monitors to determine compliance. Because that data is self-reporting in many instances, it is not reflective of actual pragmatic daily compliance across the state.

Further research to this study could be in implementation strategies for compliance, as well as an analysis of the roadblocks and politics of implementation of this law at the local district level. An

additional implementation strategy for the Amistad Commission that has been explored to date, comes from the exemplar of the Holocaust Commission. It is my premise that a further strategy to guarantee compliance, would be to pursue each New Jersey local school board to adopt the Amistad mandate as school district policy. Although it might seem redundant, it brings the mandate to the local level and would guarantee that every district would shift their curriculum mapping to include the infusion of African American history as a district policy, public, parochial or private.

It is my premise taking all of this into account, that the Amistad Commission work, will not be completed until teachers in every district are aware of the law, have been trained in implementation strategies as set forth by the Commission, are aware and utilizing the resources available to them by the Commission and by numerous scholars in the field of African American history, and have adopted realigned curriculum maps that include the mandate K-12. All New Jersey schools also must have the proper resources to support the mandate in their buildings for students and education staff. Because the Amistad Commission is state law, this must happen across all 21 counties, despite the state realities of residential segregation that is reflective New Jersey's schools; it is not segued for adoption in school districts where minority students are prevalent. It is a statewide mandate, regardless of the race or nationality of teachers or students in the classroom (Amistad 2014)

In conclusion, it is my assertion that, an enumeration and review of the Amistad legislation—its impetus, its implementation, and its curriculum work, its professional development creation and facilitation, and overarchingly as an educational public policy reform and restructuring—is fully understood and elucidated most clearly as a manifestation of the Afrocentric paradigm in public policy execution, visa-vie scholar-activists who also embraced the ideology and theoretical framework of Afrocentricity. The definition that is most appropriate to define Afrocentricity and its operationalization in the Amistad law and policy mandate for K-12 Social Studies education is to conceive of Africana Studies as an instrument whereby knowledge, consciousness and liberation of

the global Africana community leads naturally to the transformation and de-marginalizations of the African identity. This is done via 'policy adoptions and mandates that liberate the totality of the African diaspora community and the world in the field of K-12 public education. Afrocentricity serves as a pathway for new methodologies and new technologies relevant to the proper study of people of African descent - socially, politically and intellectually (Asante).

In this instance, Afrocentricity in praxis within the creation, and implementation of educational policy in New Jersey, has manifested into the passage of a state law that has the potential to be the vehicle for the societal transformation and political application throughout primary and secondary public education across the nation.

Tenets central to the Afrocentric hegemony that are evidenced in the Amistad Commission law and implementation include: 1) The implementation of community based programs for the revitalization of the Africana community; 2) the facilitation and development of education programs and curriculum for all-grade levels, and 3) the providing of conceptual frameworks to illuminate the causes and effects of Africana people's struggle for liberation in the global community. (A critical component of Afrocentricity is the call to order for community responsibility and empowerment of the Black community; African American Studies must fulfill its original mission to liberate African American people and commit itself to the communities' needs).

The discipline of African American Studies must give African Diasporan scholars and practitioners a venue through which we can properly analyze the dynamics surrounding African Diasporan history and its link to their everyday experiences; which is in totality the exigency for the Amistad law. Marquita Pellerin in her 2009 article, "*A Blueprint for Africana Studies*", says:

The Afrocentric paradigm...provides us with the capacity to ask and answer thought provoking questions based on the phenomenon which people of African descent experience. In order to achieve this goal, the discipline is inclusive of the historical, empirical, and analytical subject matter of African descended people;...the usage of this applicable theoretical framework

includes the study of all people of African descent as well as subjects relevant to these people (i.e. history, art, literature, mathematics, philosophy, etc.); while at the same time allowing for the intersectionality of the subject areas to emerge for a more inclusive study of the entire world (Pellerin 2009).

Maulana Karenga states that the discipline is by definition a self-conscious, organized system of research and communication in a defined area of inquiry and knowledge (Nelson 1997). Subsequently, the content of the discipline of Africana Studies is understood as the conscious Afrocentric investigation of Africana phenomena, where the interrogation of issues affecting people of African descent are explored/examined using an African centered framework, which allows studies and policies to develop from an inclusive perspective that also encompasses the exploration of current issues affecting people of African descent and offering solutions to those problems.

The Amistad law and its translation into education curriculum reform within the state of New Jersey creates an academic environment which nourishes the intellectual growth of both teachers and students. It will furnish them with the proper knowledge and skills to critically assess the study of people of African descent because they have seen them reflected accurately in their classrooms, their instructional materials, and their classroom discussions.

In his 1988 book *Afrocentricity*, Asante defines African American Studies as the analysis and dissemination of knowledge about African people, the creation of Afrocentric methodologies, and the instituting of consciousness “toward oppression” and “toward victory” throughout the Africana community (Asante 1988). Thereby, it is my premise that liberation is indicative of the move away from the objectification of African Diasporan people in our textbooks, our nations K-12 curriculums and in our classrooms. Liberation happens when we move away from curriculum revisions that are by nature tokenism - the contribution or additive approach to curriculum reform.

Asante further assesses that the mission of Afrocentricity is the liberation of both the mind and the community. While the mind receives its freedom through intellectual work, the community is

liberated through a conscious effort to decolonize the minds and to tackle the everyday realities of the Diasporan community, thereby transmitting knowledge into practical social/cultural application (Asante 1988).

In the exemplar of the Amistad law, educational public policy changes when Afrocentricity is applied as its modality for implementation. In this connection, it is my assertion that in theory and praxis the Amistad law and its implementation, show the manifestation of the Afrocentric tenet to the commitment to addressing the consciousness, realities, and urgencies of the life situations of African Americans (Norment, pg. 839) within the New Jersey curriculum and classroom. Moreover, the Amistad laws use of Afrocentricity as its modality, is an example of the Afrocentric mandate for community responsibility and empowerment. The Amistad law provides a public educational policy that teaches Black liberation within the annals of New Jersey classrooms, bringing the reality of African Diasporan centeredness into the policy decisions and daily curriculum instruction in New Jersey schools.

The Amistad law is essentially, agency as vantage point and as action. Within the parameters of the Amistad legislation, that quest for African diaspora people's location, agency, and representations, has served as the linchpin that has shifted the discourse of educational reforms and inclusions in every applicable New Jersey classroom – and should extend across the nation. One of the greatest gifts we can give to American students is our history, our collective history, a history of our transcendence and resilience.

This country has been and continues to be shaped by the African American narrative; every period in our collective history has been touched by it. Our stories are intricately interwoven and infused. In our poetry and prose this truth has been spoken. As David Walker wrote:

The greatest riches in all America have arisen from our blood and tears will they drive us from our property and homes, which we have earned with our blood? America is our country too.... We have enriched its soil with our blood and tears.
David Walker's Appeal, 1829

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: THE NEW JERSEY AMISTAD LAW (A1301)

CHAPTER 75

AN ACT establishing the Amistad Commission and supplementing chapter 16A of Title52 of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

C.52:16A-86 Findings, declarations relative to Amistad Commission.

1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

a. During the period beginning late in the 15th century through the 19th century, millions of persons of African origin were enslaved and brought to the Western Hemisphere, including the United States of America; anywhere from between

20 to 50 percent of enslaved Africans died during their journey to the Western Hemisphere; the enslavement of Africans and their descendants was part of a concerted effort of physical and psychological terrorism that deprived groups of

people of African descent the opportunity to preserve many of their social, religious, political and other customs; the vestiges of slavery in this country continued with the legalization of second class citizenship status for African Americans through Jim Crow laws, segregation and other similar practices; the legacy of slavery has pervaded the fabric of our society; and in spite of these events there are endless examples of the triumphs of African Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this country;

b. All people should know of and remember the human carnage and dehumanizing atrocities committed during the period of the African slave trade and slavery in America and of the vestiges of slavery in this country; and it is in fact vital to educate our citizens on these events, the legacy of slavery, the sad history of racism in this country, and on the principles of human rights and dignity in a civilized society;

It is the policy of the State of New Jersey that the history of the African slave trade, slavery in America, the depth of their impact in our society, and the

triumphs of African Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this country is the proper concern of all people, particularly students enrolled in the schools of the State of New Jersey; and

d. It is therefore desirable to create a State-level commission, which as an organized body, on a continuous basis, will survey, design, encourage, and promote the implementation of education and awareness programs in New

Jersey concerned with the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges

of slavery in this country, and the contributions of African Americans in building our country; to develop workshops, institutes, seminars, and other teacher training activities designed to educate teachers on this subject matter; and which will be responsible for the coordination of events on a regular basis, throughout the State, that provide appropriate memorialization of the events concerning the enslavement of Africans and their descendants in America as well as their struggle for freedom and liberty.

C.52:16A-87 Amistad Commission established.

2. The Amistad Commission, so named in honor of the group of enslaved Africans

a. led by Joseph Cinque who, while being transported in 1839 on a vessel named the Amistad, gained their freedom after overthrowing the crew and eventually having their case successfully argued before the United States Supreme Court, is created and established in the Executive Branch of the State Government. For the purposes of complying with the provisions of Article V, Section

IV, paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution, the commission is allocated within the Department of State.

The commission shall consist of 19 members, including the Secretary of State or a designee, the Commissioner of Education or a designee and the chair of the executive board of the Presidents' Council or a designee, serving ex officio, and 16 public members.

Public members shall be appointed as follows: four public members, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the President of the Senate; four public members, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly; and eight public members, no more than four of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the Governor. The public members shall be residents of this State, chosen with due regard to broad geographic representation and ethnic diversity, who have an interest in the history of the African slave trade and slavery in America and the contributions of African Americans to our society.

b. Each public member of the commission shall serve for a term of three years, except that of the initial members so appointed: one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and two members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of one year; one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and three members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of two years; and two members

appointed by the President of the Senate, two members appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, and three members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of three years. Public members shall be eligible for reappointment. They shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified, and the term of the successor of any incumbent shall be calculated from the expiration of the term of that incumbent. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment but for the unexpired term only.

c. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement for all necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

d. The Secretary of State, or a designee, shall serve as the chair and the Commissioner of Education, or a designee, shall serve as the vice-chair of the commission. The presence of a majority of the authorized membership of the commission shall be required for the conduct of official business.

e. The New Jersey Historical Commission shall serve as staff for the Amistad Commission. The New Jersey Historical Commission may, subject to the

availability of appropriations, hire additional staff and consultants to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Amistad Commission.

f. The Department of Education shall:

(1) assist the Amistad Commission in marketing and distributing to educators, administrators and school districts in the State educational information and

other materials on the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country and the contributions of African Americans to our society;

(2) **conduct at least one teacher workshop annually on the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country and the contributions of African Americans to our society;**

(3) assist the Amistad Commission in monitoring the inclusion of such materials

and curricula in the State's educational system; and

(4) consult with the Amistad Commission to determine ways it may survey, catalog, and extend slave trade and American slavery education presently being

incorporated into the Core Curriculum Content Standards and taught in the State's educational system.

C.52:16A-88 Responsibilities, duties of Amistad Commission.

3. The Amistad Commission shall have the following responsibilities and duties:

a. **to provide, based upon the collective interest of the members and the knowledge and experience of its staff and consultants, assistance and advice to public and nonpublic schools within the State with respect to the**

implementation of education, awareness programs, textbooks, and educational materials concerned with the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country and the contributions of African Americans to our society;

b. to survey and catalog the extent and breadth of education concerning the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country and the contributions of African Americans to our society presently being incorporated into the curricula and textbooks and taught in the school systems of the State; to inventory those African slave trade, American slavery, or relevant African American history memorials, exhibits and resources which should be incorporated into courses of study at educational institutions and schools throughout the State; and to assist the Department of State, the Department of Education and other State and educational agencies in the development and implementation of African slave trade, American slavery and African American history education programs;

c. to act as a liaison with textbook publishers, public and nonpublic schools,

public and private nonprofit resource organizations, and members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives and the New Jersey Senate and General Assembly in order to facilitate the inclusion of the history of African slavery and of African Americans in this country in the curricula of public and nonpublic schools;

d. **to compile a roster of individual volunteers who are willing to share their knowledge and experience in classrooms, seminars and workshops with students and teachers on the subject of the African slave trade, American slavery and the impact of slavery on our society today, and the contributions of African Americans to our country;**

e. **to coordinate events memorializing the African slave trade, American slavery and the history of African Americans in this country that reflect the contributions of African Americans in overcoming the burdens of slavery and its vestiges, and to seek volunteers who are willing and able to participate in commemorative events that will enhance student awareness of the significance of the African slave trade, American slavery, its historical impact, and the struggle for freedom;**

f. to prepare reports for the Governor and the Legislature regarding its findings and recommendations on facilitating the inclusion of the African slave trade,

American slavery studies, African American history and special programs in the educational system of the State;

g. to develop, in consultation with the Department of Education, curriculum guidelines for the teaching of information on the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country, and the contributions of

African Americans to our country. Every board of education shall incorporate the information in an appropriate place in the curriculum of elementary and secondary school students; and

h. to solicit, receive, and accept appropriations, gifts and donations.

C.52:16A-89 Assistance to Amistad Commission.

4. The commission is authorized to call upon any department, office, division or

a. agency of the State, or of any county, municipality or school district of the

State, to supply such data, program reports and other information, personnel and assistance as it deems necessary to discharge its responsibilities under this act.

b. These departments, offices, divisions and agencies shall, to the extent possible and not inconsistent with any other law of this State, cooperate with the

commission and shall furnish it with such information, personnel and assistance as may be necessary or helpful to accomplish the purposes of this act.

5. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved August 28, 2002.

<http://www.nj.gov/state/divisions/amistad/law/>

APPENDIX B- INTRODUCTORY NOTE FOR SELF-REPORTING SURVEY

2005 AMISTAD ARCHIVES

Introductory Note

The tables in this report are based on a more complete analysis which includes data for each variable for all New Jersey, and for each grade from Kindergarten to Eight by county and by District Factor Grouping (DFG).

Variables used in the report are defined as follows:

United States/African-American History – The survey Introduction advised respondents that “New Jersey State Law requires the teaching of two years of United States History including African-American history in New Jersey Public Schools

(N.J.S.A. 18A:35-1,2). In addition, the Amistad Law (N.J.S.A. C52:16A-86) requires that the teaching of the African and American slave experience be ‘incorporated into the school curriculum at appropriate places in the curriculum.’ The New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (N.J.A.C. 6A:8) specify African-American topics in history as an important part of United States History. The purpose of this survey is to determine compliance with these requirements in New Jersey public school districts.”

Scheduling Options – Time factor for delivery of classes in US/African American history. The options are:

Full year (F) – Classes delivered throughout the year.

Half Year (H) – Classes delivered for half of the school year.

Quarter Year (Q) – Classes delivered for a quarter of the year.

Other (O) – classes in other format.

Sessions – number of times per week the topic is taught.

Minutes – length in minutes of teaching sessions.

All Schools - These are the data for all New Jersey schools in aggregate.

County – Variables are analyzed as well by each New Jersey County.

District Factor Grouping (DFG) - This is a factor-analytic measure which is used by the New Jersey Department of Education to classify school districts on a set of socio-economic measures based on the most recent United States Census data.

APPENDIX C: NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/DEPARTMENT OF STATE 2005 AMISTAD COMPLIANCE SURVEY

Introduction: New Jersey State Law requires the teaching of two years of United States History including African-American History in NJ public schools. (18A:35-1, 2). In addition, the Amistad Law (C52:16A-86) requires that the teaching of the African and American slave experience be “incorporated into the school curriculum at appropriate places in the curriculum.” The New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards (N.J.A.C. 6A:8) specify African-American topics in history as an important part of US history. The purpose of this survey is to determine compliance with these requirements in New Jersey public school districts.

I. Elementary Schedule: Elementary American History Program (Schools that include grade levels K-4, K-6 or K-8): For each grade, report the number of sessions per week of instruction in US/African- American history and culture. Indicate length of sessions; and scheduling format code (see below). If the number of sessions varies from week to week, then list the average number of sessions.

Scheduling Format Codes: **F**= classes throughout the year; **H**= classes for half of the year; **Q**= classes for a quarter of the year; **O**= classes for another configuration; **N**= Not offered

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Scheduling format code (see codes above)									
Sessions per week (frequency, e.g., 3, 4, 5 sessions)									
Average Length of sessions (number of minutes)									

II. Secondary Schedule: Secondary American History Program (Schools with grades 7-12, 8-12, or 9- 12.) Using the scheduling format above, indicate F, H, Q, or N and also whether the course is R (required of all students) or E (an elective). **Enter offering code in the last column marked Offr. Code.**

Offerings codes: R – Required of all students in grade or E – Offered to all students as an elective

	9	10	11	11 AP	12	12 AP	Offr. Code
<i>Please list schools below</i>							

I. III. Available Supplementary Course Instruction

A. History instruction at other institutions: Does your district grant course credit to students who take American history (with African-American history infused) courses at colleges or universities, private schools, or schools in other public school districts? Report "No" if your school and/or district does not currently have a specific policy allowing such granting of credit.	Colleges or Univ.	Non-Public institutions	Other Districts
	Yes	Yes	Yes
	No	No	No
B. Distance Learning: Does your history staff regularly and systemically utilize distance learning as a tool for instruction and/or allow students to take entire American/African-American history courses via distance learning?	Yes	No	

IV. Extracurricular Activities in US/African-American History: Report below the number of students participating in the listed extracurricular activities. For programs that have fluctuating participation, report the average for a typical week during the year. Report world language activities not listed here under "Other." Count each student only once in each activity. For example, report a student in two honor societies only once.

Activity	# of students	Activity	# of students	Activity
History Club				
International Club				
Diversity Group				
Future History Teachers				
Other Activities				

V. Topics of Course. Indicate below with a checkmark (√) which topics are covered in your US/African- American History program at both elementary and secondary levels. The specific topics here are references to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (N.J.A.C. 6A:8). Key to references: 12A6 is an indicator for the end of grade 12, strand A, cumulative progress indicator 6.

Topic	Elementary	Secondary
Standards 8C7, 12D3: African Slave Trade		
Standards 8C8, 8D6: Africans in America		

Standards 8F8:	Expansion of Slavery		
Standards 12I8:	Harlem Renaissance		
Standards 12I10:	Creation of the NAACP		
Standards 12K6:	Civil Rights Movement		

VI. Resources: Please circle the appropriate responses below regarding resources your school devotes to the infusion of African-American history into Social Studies /American History Instruction.

1. Does your district offer specific clubs or groups to students who wish to study African-American History and Culture? Yes or No (If no, would you be interested in establishing a club? Yes / No)

2. Does your district have highly qualified history staff with specific training in African-American History?
Yes or No (If no, would you be interested in receiving training or professional development? Yes / No)

Survey prepared by: Name _____ Title _____
(please print) (please print)

Phone: _____ E-mail address: _____

District Name: _____ County: _____

Please return to: Amistad Compliance Survey
c/o The Amistad Commission
P.O. Box 458
Trenton, NJ 08625-0458

Appendix D: The Amistad Commission's Literacy Components for Primary Grades



THE AMISTAD COMMISSION

AMISTAD LITERACY BOOK LIST FOR PK-5

The Amistad Movement is a coined term describing the recent establishment of Amistad Commissions in several states across the country. While the African-American population in the United States approaches 25%, African and African-American characters, cultures, and history are minimally represented in the texts and trade books in classrooms across America. In order to address the educational needs of *all* children of *all* ethnicities in learning about diversity through the African-American experience, several states have legislated an Amistad Commission. Each Commission has its own vision and mandate, but the message remains the same: if we intend to fully educate all children of all ethnicities, we must include the history, folktales, cultural beliefs, and experiences of the African-American population in this educational process.

Of course, many schools in the United States study African-American history during the month of February. Ironically, this is the shortest month of the year, and also the month that many teachers are preparing for standardized testing. So, while we may attempt to teach African-American topics in isolation, we also choose to do so in only one short month that is already packed with test prep, Valentine's Day, and Presidents' Day. Therefore, clearly less than 5% of the school year is dedicated to learning about 20% to 25% of the population. In reality, Black History Month is a Band-Aid approach to handling a real need for diversifying our educational tools used on a daily basis.

So, how do we address this dire need for change in our schools? First of all, each teacher in each classroom across the country needs to look at the data in the classroom. How many African-American scientists are included in the science curriculum across the school year, not just during February? How many books in each classroom library depict some part of African culture, the African Diaspora, or the African-American experience? What percentage are these books of the full classroom library? Is the percentage less than 25%? What percentage of the Social Studies curriculum addresses African and/or African-American culture and experiences? Are these lessons concentrated primarily during the month of February, or are they infused throughout the school year?

This type of data can really feel uncomfortable at first, but the data needs to be gathered, analyzed, and discussed by educators. This data can be a catalyst for discussion and understanding in classrooms and faculty rooms, and can lead to a celebration of the wealth of contributions that African-Americans have made to our nation's society and development. Doesn't it seem more educationally sound to examine the situation and make rational decisions for corrective measures rather than simply ignore the situation and do a disservice to all our children?

Below you will find several links to assist you in adding a richer, more developed presentation. The books link will suggest titles to read aloud to children in grades kindergarten through four, the Lessons link will provide a few sample lesson plans of books from the book lists, and the Internet link will provide links to

other websites that can assist you in doing background research or that you can make available to students in the classroom.

Of course, the African-American population is not the only population that has been ignored in our classrooms. Indeed, Hispanic-American, Native American, Middle Eastern-American, and Asian-American cultures have been marginally acknowledged in the trade books and stories read to children. Indeed, only those of European-American ancestry receive continuous and consistent recognition of their heritage in many of our classrooms. This situation must be changed if we are to truly move forward in our efforts to unite our society. We can be certain that the Amistad Movement will be followed by other movements to include more ethnicities in our daily educational plans.

As more and more Amistad Commissions are launched across the country, mandated inclusion of a more well-rounded representation of the African-American population will be required throughout the curriculum. Let's stop teaching mere tolerance, and start truly embracing the rich, amazing diversity those threads together the fabric we call America.

Reflections on *Read Aloud* Titles Used in America

What do you remember about family, siblings, and teachers reading to you when you were young? Which books were your favorites? We all have favorite books from our childhood, and we often most remember books that depict characters with which we can identify. I used to love Nancy Drew books as a child. My son was crazy about *The Bernstein Bears* books.

When I was in school, *Fun with Dick and Jane* was the reading text used in classrooms across the United States. These stories depicted a middle-class white family with a dog. The mother stayed home and the father went to work each day. The children were dutiful and listened to Mother and Father. When we look at these books now, we laugh because of their stereotypical nature and single dimensions. People read these books today out of a sense of nostalgia, not out of a sense of a true reflection of American life. We have grown beyond these depictions.

Yet have our children's books really changed that much? Think about the books being read in classrooms across America. Beyond the books like *The Bernstein Bears* that depict animals acting as people, more than 90% of the books depict middle-class white characters. And this lack of true integration seems to be systemic. Look at the data. Why, even the "Battle of the Books" titles, which are sanctioned by the International Reading Association and chosen by librarians, woefully under-represent children of ethnicities other than white. In fact, titles for Battle of the Books generally have a representation of **less than 10% for all other ethnicities other than white.**

Studies show that children learn self-worth and esteem through the books they read as children. Studies also show that children learn about the world around them through these same stories. If we continue to expose our children to books that only depict white faces, we are doing a vast disservice to **all** of our children. African-American children do not see characters of their same ethnicity and therefore come to believe that their ethnicity is less valuable, and this belief can also be instilled into Hispanic, Asian, and Native American children as well. Furthermore, as white children interact with other ethnicities, they may understand, accept, and appreciate less of the rich diversity of America's fabric because of the shortfall of depictions of all ethnicities in the books they read. Therefore, children of all ethnicities suffer from this underrepresentation.

Is this underrepresentation necessary? Are there simply too few books to properly represent the students present in our classroom? The answer is, "No." Plenty of books, great books, have been written that depict characters of all ethnicities.

As this site discusses learning about the African-American culture, stories, diaspora, and experience, the links below offer read aloud titles that depict African-American titles for grades kindergarten through five. You are encouraged to do further research on amazing children's books that depict other ethnicities.

Research shows that children need to have access to books that reflect their own ethnicities to develop healthy self-esteem, and children also need to have access to books with characters of other ethnicities in order to develop a respect for society's rich diversity. The titles below are excellent examples of books that reflect African and African-American characters in positive, authentic ways. Enjoy enhancing your home and classroom libraries with these titles.



First Grade Titles

Author	Title	Pub. Date
Aardema, Verna	<i>Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears</i>	1992
Aardema, Verna	<i>Koi and the Kola Nuts: A Tale From Liberia</i>	2002
Aardema, Verna	<i>Rabbit Makes a Monkey of Lion: A Swahili Tale</i>	1993
Adler, David A.	<i>A Picture Book of Jackie Robinson</i>	1997
Adler, David A.	<i>A Picture Book of Frederick Douglass</i>	1995
Bang, Molly Garrett	<i>Wiley and the Hairy Man</i>	2001
Burleigh, Robert	<i>Langston's Train Ride</i>	2004
Caines, Jeanette Franklin	<i>Just Us Women</i>	1982
Cosby, Bill	<i>The Meanest Thing to Say</i>	1997
Cosby, Bill	<i>My Big Lie</i>	1999
Cosby, Bill	<i>The Worst Day of My Life</i>	1999
Diakite, Baba Wague	<i>The Hunterman and the Crocodile</i>	1997
Dillon, Leo and Diane	<i>Rap A Tap Tap: Here's Bojangles - Think of That</i>	2002
DuBurke, Randy	<i>The Moon Ring</i>	2002
Feelings, Muriel L.	<i>Zamani Goes to Market</i>	1992
Feelings, Tom and Eloise Greenfield	<i>Daydreamers</i>	1993
Flournoy, Valerie	<i>The Patchwork Quilt</i>	1985
Greenfield, Eloise	<i>She Come Bringing Me Tht Little Baby Girl</i>	1993
Grifalconi, Ann	<i>Village of Round an Square Houses</i>	1986
Grimes, Nikki	<i>Meet Danitra Brown</i>	1997
Havill, Juanita	<i>Jamaica's Find</i>	1987
Havill, Juanita	<i>Jamaica and Brianna</i>	1996
Hoffman, Mary	<i>Amazing Grace</i>	1991
Hru, Dakari	<i>Joshua's Masai Mask</i>	1996

First Grade Titles

Author	Title	Pub. Date
Kamma, Anne	<i>If You Lived When There Was Slavery in America</i>	2004
Keats, Ezra Jack	<i>Apt. 3</i>	1999
Kimmel, Eric A.	<i>Anansi and the Talking Melon</i>	1995
Kimmel, Eric A.	<i>Anansi and the Magic Stick</i>	2002
King, Martin Luther	<i>I Have a Dream</i>	2007
Krull, Kathleen	<i>Wilma Unlimited: How Wilma Rudolph Became the World's Fastest Woman</i>	2000
	<i>Nobody Owns the Sky: The Story of Brave Bessie Coleman</i>	
Lindbergh, Reeve	<i>Zomo the Rabbit: A Trickster Tale from West Africa</i>	1996
McDermott, Gerald		1998
McKissack, Patricia	<i>The Honest to Goodness Truth</i>	2002
McKissack, Patricia	<i>Goin' Someplace Special</i>	2001
Miller, William	<i>Zora Hurston and the Chinaberry Tree</i>	1995
Morrison, Toni	<i>Remember: The Journey to School Integration</i>	2004
Nolen, Jerdine	<i>Thunder Rose</i>	2003
Polacco, Patricia	<i>Chicken Sunday</i>	1998
	<i>Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.</i>	
Rappaport, Doreen		2001
Ringgold, Faith	<i>Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky</i>	1995
Robinson, Sandra Chisholm	<i>The Rainstick: A Fable</i>	1994
San Souci, Robert D.	<i>Sootface: An Ojibwar Cinderella Story</i>	1997
Schroeder, Alan	<i>Minty: A Story of Young Harriet Tubman</i>	2000
Schroeder, Alan	<i>Ragtime Tumpie</i>	1993
	<i>Abiyoyo: Based on a South African Lullaby and Folk Story</i>	
Seeger, Pete		1994
Smith, Will	<i>Just the Two of Us</i>	2005
Steptoe, Javaka	<i>In Daddy's Arms, I Am Tall</i>	2001
Stolz, Mary	<i>Storm in the Night</i>	1990
Tarpley, Natasha	<i>Joe-Joe's First Fight</i>	2003
Taylor, Jacqui	<i>African ABC</i>	2005
Taylor-Butler, Christine and Devard, Nancy	<i>A Mom Like No Other</i>	2004
Teague, Mark	<i>The Secret Shortcut</i>	1999
Thomas, Joyce Carol	<i>Brown Honey and Broomwheat Tea</i>	1996
Williams, Vera B.	<i>Three Days on a River in a Red Canoe</i>	1984
Williams, Vera B.	<i>A Chair for My Mother</i>	1984

Williams, Vera B.	<i>Something Special for Me</i> ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘	1986
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Second Grade Titles

Author	Title	Pub. Date
Aardema, Verna	<i>Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain</i>	1992
Aardema, Verna	<i>Anansi Does the Impossible!: An Ashanti Tale</i>	2000
Adler, David	<i>A Picture Book of Rosa Parks</i>	1995
Adoff, Arnold	<i>Black is Brown is Tan</i>	2004
Adoff, Arnold	<i>Malcolm X</i>	2000
Barnes, Derrick D.	<i>Stop, Drop and Chill</i>	2004
Black, Sonia W.	<i>Jumping the Broom</i>	2004
Boyd, Dee	<i>Only the Stars</i>	2004
Cameron, Ann	<i>Gloria Rising</i>	2004
Coles, Robert	<i>The Story of Ruby Bridges</i>	1992
Cunnane, Kelly	<i>For You Are a Kenyan Child</i>	2006
DeGross, Monalisa and Hanna, Cheryl	<i>Donavan's Word Jar</i> <i>What Are You Figuring Now?: A Story About Benjamin Banneker</i>	1998
Ferris, Jeri	<i>Shop Talk</i>	1990
Ford, Juwanda	<i>Spin a Soft Black Song</i>	2004
Giovanni, Nikki	<i>Africa Dream</i>	1987
Greenfield, Eloise	<i>Night on a Neighborhood Street</i>	1992
Greenfield, Eloise	<i>Danitra Brown Leaves Town</i>	1996
Grimes, Nikki and Cooper, Floyd	<i>Jamaica Tag-Along</i>	2005
Havill, Juanita	<i>Starring Grace</i>	1989
Hoffman, Mary	<i>A Band of Angels</i>	2001
Hopkinson, Deborah	<i>What Do You Know? Snow!</i>	2002
Hudson, Cheryl Willis	<i>The Leaving Morning</i>	2004
Johnson, Angela	<i>Anansi Goes Fishing</i>	1995
Kimmel, Eric A.	<i>Africa Brothers and Sisters</i>	1993
Kroll, Virginia L.	<i>Let's Talk About Race</i>	1993
Lester, Julius	<i>Tales of Uncle Remus: The Adventures of Brer Rabbit</i>	2005
Lester, Julius	<i>If You Lived at the Time of Martin Luther King</i>	2006
Levine, Ellen		1994

Second Grade Titles

Author	Title	Pub. Date
Marzollo, Jean	<i>Happy Birthday Martin Luther King</i>	2005
McDermott, Gerald	<i>Anansi the Spider</i>	1987
McDonough, Yona Zeldis	<i>Who Was Louis Armstrong?</i> <i>Wanted Dead or Alive: The Story of Harriet</i>	2004
McGovern, Ann	<i>Tubman</i>	1991
McKissack, Patricia C.	<i>Mirandy and Brother Wind</i>	1997
Medearis, Angela Shelf	<i>Singing for Dr. King</i>	2004
Mendez, Phil	<i>Black Snowman</i>	2005
Mitchell, Margaree King	<i>Uncle Jed's Barbershop</i> <i>The Drinking Gourd: A Story of the</i>	1998
Monjo, F. N.	<i>Underground Railroad</i>	1993
Nelson, Vaundra Micheaux	<i>Almost to Freedom</i>	2003
Nolen, Jerdine	<i>In My Momma's Kitchen</i>	2001
Nolen, Jerdine	<i>Hewitt Anderson's Great Big Lie</i>	2005
Orgill, Roxanne	<i>If I Only Had a Horn: Young Louis Armstrong</i>	2002
Pinkney, Andrea Davis	<i>Alvin Alley, Vol. 1</i>	1995
Raschka, Chris	<i>Charlie Parker Played Be Bop</i>	2004
Ringgold, Faith	<i>Cassie's Word Quilt</i>	2004
Ringgold, Faith	<i>Tar Beach</i>	1996
San Soucie, Robert D.	<i>Cendrillon: A Caribbean Cinderella</i>	2002
Shore, Diane, et al	<i>This is the Dream</i>	2005
Step toe, John	<i>Creativity</i>	2003
Step toe, John	<i>Stevie</i>	
Stroud, Bettye	<i>The Patchwork Path: A Quilt Map to Freedom</i>	2007
Udry, Janice May	<i>What Mary Jo Shared</i>	
Unobagha, Uzo	<i>Off to the Sweet Shores of Africa</i>	2005
Williams, Vera B.	<i>A Chair for My Mother</i>	1984
Winter, Jeanette	<i>Follow the Drinking Gourd</i>	1992
Woodson, Jacqueline	<i>Coming On Home Soon</i>	2004
Young, Richard Dockrey	<i>African-American Folktales for Young Readers</i>	

Third Grade Titles

Author	Title	Pub. Date
Aardema, Verna	<i>Who's in Rabbit's House? A Masai Tale`</i>	1992
Adler, David A.	<i>A Picture Book of Thurgood Marshall</i>	1999
Arkhurst, Joyce Cooper	<i>Adventures of Spider, The West African Folktales</i>	1992
Bausum, Ann	<i>Freedom Riders: John Lewis and Jim Zerg on the Front Lines...</i>	2005
Cameron, Ann	<i>Julian, Dream Doctor</i>	1993
Cameron, Ann	<i>Julian's Glorious Summer</i>	1987
Christie, R. Gregory	<i>Only Passing Through: THE Story of Sojourner Truth</i>	2002
Clifton, Lucille	<i>Everett Anderson's Goodbye</i>	1988
Collier, Bryan	<i>Uptown</i>	2003
Curtis, Gavin	<i>The Bat Boy and His Violin</i>	2001
Dillion, Leo and Diane	<i>Rap a Tap Tap: Here's Bojangles - Think of That!</i>	2002
Farris, Christine King	<i>My Brother Martin</i>	2005
Ford, Juwanda G.	<i>Sunday Best</i>	
Garland, Sherry	<i>The Buffalo Soldier</i>	2006
Giovanni, Nikki	<i>Rosa</i>	2005
Greenfield, Eloise	<i>Sister</i>	2005
Greenfield, Eloise	<i>Talk About a Family</i>	1992
Hooks, Gwendolyn	<i>Three's A Crowd</i>	
Hopkinson, Deborah	<i>From Slave to Soldier: Based on a True Civil War Story</i>	2007
Hopkinson, Deborah	<i>Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt</i>	1995
Hudson, Wade	<i>The Two Tyrones</i>	
Isadora, Rachel	<i>Ben's Trumpet</i>	1991
Johnson, Angela	<i>A Sweet Smell of Roses</i>	2005
Keats, Ezra Jack	<i>The Snowy Day</i>	
Kroll, Virginia L.	<i>Faraway Drums</i>	1998

Third Grade Titles

Author	Title	Pub. Date
Lasky, Kathryn	<i>A Voice of Her Own: The Story of Phillis Wheatley</i>	2005
Latifah, Queen	<i>Queen of the Scene</i>	2006
Lester, Julius	<i>John Henry</i>	1999
Levine, Ellen	<i>Henry's Freedom Box</i>	2007
Levine, Ellen	<i>If You Travelled on the Underground Railroad</i>	
Mathis, Sharon Bell	<i>The Hundred Penny Box</i>	2006
McKissack, Patricia C.	<i>Porch Lies: Tales of Slicksters, Tricksters, and Other Wiley Characters</i>	2006
McKissack, Patricia C.	<i>Amistad: The Story of a Slave Ship</i>	2005
McKissack, Patricia C. and McKissack, Frederick	<i>Days of Jubilee: The End of Slavery in the United States</i>	2003
Miller, William	<i>Frederick Douglass: The Last Day of Slavery</i>	1996
Musgrove, Margaret	<i>The Spider Weaver</i>	
Nelson, Vaunda Micheaux and Nelson, Drew	<i>Juneteenth</i>	2006
Perdomo, Willie	<i>Visiting Langston</i>	2005
Pinkney, Andrea Davis	<i>Duke Ellington, The Piano Prince</i>	2007
Pinkney, Andrea Davis	<i>Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Virtuoso</i>	2002
Pinkney, Andrea Davis	<i>Dear Benjamin Banneker</i>	1998
Pinkney, Andrea Jean	<i>Back Home</i>	1999
Polacco, Patricia	<i>Mr. Lincoln's Way</i>	2001
Ringgold, Faith	<i>My Dream of Martin Luther King</i>	1998
Rochelle, Belinda	<i>When Jo Louis Won the Title</i>	1996
San Souci, Robert D.	<i>The Talking Eggs</i>	
Sanders, Nancy I.	<i>D is For Drinking Gourd</i>	2007
Somervill, Barbara A.	<i>Amistad Mutiny: Fighting for Freedom</i>	2005
Step toe, John	<i>Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters</i>	1987
Tarpley, Natasha	<i>Joe-Joe's First Flight</i>	2003
Thomas, Joyce Carol	<i>I Have Heard of a Land</i>	2000
Wahl, Jan	<i>Candy Shop</i>	2005
Walter, Mildred Pitts	<i>Justin and the Best Bisquits in the World</i>	1990
Weatherford, Carole Boston	<i>Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom</i>	2006
Wiles, Deborah	<i>Freedom Summer</i>	2005

Grades 4 and 5 Grade Titles

Author	Title	Pub. Date
Hughes, Langston; Roessel, David, and Rampersad, Arnold, eds.	<i>Poetry for Young People: Langston Hughes</i>	2006
Hunter, Bobbi Dooley	<i>The Legend of the African Baobab Tree</i>	1995
Keats, Ezra Jack	<i>The Snowy Day</i>	
Lester, Julius	<i>Day of Tears: A Novel in Dialogue</i>	2005
Lyons, Mary E.	<i>Letters From a Slave Girl: The Story of Harriet Jacobs</i>	2007
McKissack, Patricia C.	<i>Amistad: The Story of a Slave Ship</i>	2005
McKissack, Patricia C.	<i>Scraps of Time: Abby Takes a Stand</i>	2006
McKissack, Patricia C.	<i>Royal Diagires: Nzingha</i>	2000
McKissack, Patricia C.	<i>Hard Labor: The First African-Americans</i>	2004
McKissack, Patricia C.	<i>Loved Best</i>	
McKissack, Patricia C., et al	<i>Black Diamond: The Story of the Negor Baseball Leagues</i>	1998
Medina, Tony	<i>Love to Langston</i>	2006
Miller, William and Christie, Gregory	<i>Richard Wright and the Library Card</i>	
Myers, Walter Dean	<i>The Harlem Hellfighters</i>	2005
Myers, Walter Dean	<i>The Journal of Buddy Owens</i>	
Nelson, Marilyn	<i>Carver: A Life in Poems</i>	1997
Parks, Rosa and Haskins, Jim	<i>Rosa Parks: My Story</i>	1999
Pinkney, Andrea Davis	<i>Ella Fitzgerald: The Tale of a Vocal Virtuoso</i>	
Rappaport, Doreen	<i>Freedom River</i>	2000
Ringgold, Faith	<i>If a Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks</i>	2002
Robinet, Harriette Gillem	<i>Forty Acres and Maybe a Mule</i>	2000
Robinet, Harriette Gillem	<i>Twelve Travelers, Twenty Horses</i>	2005

Grades 4 and 5 Grade Titles

Author	Title	Pub. Date
Schmidt, Gary D.	<i>Little Bright and the Buckminster Boy</i>	2006
Schroeder, Alan	<i>Satchmo's Blues</i>	1999
Schroeder, Alan	<i>Booker T. Washington</i>	2005
Taylor, Mildred D.	<i>The Friendship</i> <i>The Real McCoy: The Life of an African-American Inventor</i>	1998
Towle, Wendy	<i>American Inventor</i>	1995
Turner, G. T.	<i>Take a Walk in Their Shoes</i>	
Walter, Mildred Pitts	<i>Suitcase</i>	2006
Williams, Sherley	<i>Working Cotton</i>	1997
Woodson, Jacqueline	<i>The Other Side</i>	2001

XXXXXXXXXX



Read Aloud to Students?

By Cathy Wishart, Literacy Coach and Amistad Fellow

Studies have demonstrated that reading aloud to students helps all students, not just struggling students, develop specific skills and strategies in reading, such as:

- Involving students in reading for enjoyment
- Demonstrating reading for a purpose
- Providing an adult demonstration of phrased, fluent reading
- Developing a sense of story
- Developing knowledge of written language syntax
- Developing a knowledge of how texts are structured
- Increasing vocabulary
- Expanding linguistic repertoire
- Supporting intertextual ties
- Creating a community of readers through shared enjoyment and shared knowledge
- Making complex ideas available to students
- Promoting oral language development
- Establishing known texts to use as a basis for writing and other activities

Furthermore, studies show that *read alouds* should not stop at grade 3 or 4. *Read alouds* have great instructional value throughout high school and even into college, especially for struggling readers. Some suggested steps in an effective read aloud include the following techniques:

- **Prepare, prepare, prepare!**

Do not expect to do a good read aloud if you haven't planned, and certainly if you haven't pre-read the text. This preparation also includes making certain to pick a text you like.

If you do not like the text, your body language or voice will give this away. Make sure the text interests and connects with you before you read the text aloud to students.

- **Meaning Statement**

Make a main idea statement that will give the students an idea of what the story is about. Give the statement before or while the students see the cover of the book.

- **Vocabulary**

Choose only two or three words to introduce prior to reading the book. The introduction of too many words will have little to no effect on increasing vocabulary development.

- **Big Ideas**

Talk about any big ideas the text might cover, such as slavery, or women's rights, etc.

- **Preview the book**

If the book has pictures, take a picture walk through part or all of the text. If the book is a chapter book, read the titles of some of the chapters. Ask students for predictions when doing these activities.

- **Content/Vocabulary Questions**

Ask students to recall the meaning of a vocabulary word when it is presented in the story.

Ask yourself specific questions out loud that guide your own comprehension.

For example, "I wonder what it would feel like if..." or, "I can't imagine how I would feel if that happened to me,"

or

"I remember when we read... that something similar happened."

Acting out your own thinking demonstrates to the students that readers interact with text to gain meaning. When you get to a place that proves or disproves a prediction, encourage students to self-check predictions and explain why they were correct or incorrect.

- **Unusual Language Structures**

If the text uses unusual language structure, such as the word choices indicate the book was written long ago, or every sentence begins with a prepositional phrase, or the poem has a cadence that helps direct word choice, talk about it and point this out.

- **Respond to Student Questions**

You may not be able to respond to all the questions students ask, but do respond to some of them.

Take breaks at logical points in the text to answer or discuss questions, Make sure that you don't always answer the questions from the same students – share the wealth of receiving attention from you.

- **Making Connections**

Think aloud about what text-to-self, text-to-text, and/or text-to-world connections you have made reading this book.

- **Take Notes**

The more often you read a specific book, the more difficult it will be to recall your first reactions to the text.

Take notes about these reactions for future readings – these first reactions hold the kernels for demonstrating reading skills and strategies you use to students.

In *Supporting Struggling Readers and Writers*, authors Dorothy Strickland, Kathy Ganske, and Joanne Monroe point out:

Because struggling readers' experiences with text have so often translated into work rather than fun, a primary objective of the read-aloud should be to engage these students, as well as the rest of the class, in a reading experience that is rewarding because it is meaningful and enjoyable. To make sure students can devote their full attention to the reading and lose themselves in the story, it is a good idea to ask them to set aside competing desk activities, or have them gather on the floor. Then, supplied with a good book, awareness that reading too fast is not a good model and willingness to risk feeling silly by taking on the voices of characters in the story, teachers are ready to model fluent reading. In addition to showing that reading is expressive, the modeling will demonstrate that good readers read in phrases, not word by word, and that the phrase reading, pauses, and change in voice inflection that signal various types of punctuation facilitate the meaning-making process.... Fluent reading should be modeled every day, but it does not have to be done with a lengthy chapter book. Poems and picture books work equally well when time is short. Book talks can also be used to model fluent reading (123).

If you want to have a positive impact on student reading, comprehension, and vocabulary development, prepare for a read aloud and read. Immerse both yourself and your students in the story, and share your thoughts, share yourself with the students. As Jim Trelease points out, "The more you read, the better you get at it. And the better you get at it, the more you read."

Resources

Benchmark Education Company. "Read About Best Practices in Understanding Read-alouds."

http://www.benchmarkeducation.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=4016

Block, Cathy Collins & Susan E. Israel. "The ABCs of Performing Highly Effective Think-Alouds." *The Reading Teacher*. 01 Oct. 2004.

Strickland, Dorothy, Kathy Ganske, & Joanne Monroe. *Supporting Struggling Readers and Writers: Strategies for Classroom Intervention 3 – 6*. International Reading Assoc. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Pub., 2002.

Trelease, Jim. *The Read Aloud Handbook*. NY: Penguin Books, 2003.

ASSEMBLY, No. 697
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
213th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2008 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman L. GRACE SPENCER

Assemblyman William D. Payne

District 29 (Essex and Union)

District 31 (Essex and Union)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Connors and Conaway

SYNOPSIS

Requires State Board of Education to authorize African-American studies endorsement to the instructional certificate.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel

AN ACT concerning teacher certification and supplementing chapter 26 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. a. The State Board of Education shall authorize an African-American studies endorsement to the instructional certificate. The endorsement shall authorize the holder to teach African-American studies education in all public schools.

b. A teacher who is employed in a school district teaching African-American studies prior to the effective date of this act or who has passed a test of subject matter knowledge as may be designated by the State board shall, upon application to the State Board of Examiners, be issued an African-American studies endorsement.

c. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit a teacher who holds an endorsement to the instructional certificate that authorizes the holder to teach United States history or Social Studies from teaching African American history

2. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Amistad Commission, shall promulgate rules pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), necessary to effectuate the provisions of this act, including the development of the requirements for the African-American studies endorsement.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires the State Board of Education to authorize an African-American studies endorsement to the instructional certificate. The endorsement will authorize the holder to teach African-American studies education in all public schools.

The bill provides that a teacher who was employed in a school district teaching African-American studies prior to the bill's effective date or who has passed a test of subject matter knowledge as may be designated by the State board will, upon application to the State Board of Examiners, be issued an African-American studies endorsement.

This bill provides that the regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education to implement the bill's provisions, including the development of requirements for the African-American studies endorsement, will be promulgated in consultation with the Amistad Commission; and clarifies that the bill will not be construed to prohibit a teacher who is authorized to teach United States history or Social Studies from teaching African American history.

APPENDIX F

THE NEW JERSEY AMISTAD COMMISSION CURRICULUM AMISTAD UNIT/LESSON PLAN

The Amistad Commission Mission -To infuse/integrate African American history and culture, largely absent from most of the textbooks used in NJ Schools, into the analysis of the nation’s story so that there is a holistic narrative reflecting the experiences and contributions of all people to making of American society. New Jersey Social Studies United States History lessons are based the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standard and the Common Core Standards

Grade(s) _____ Course _____

Stage 1—Lesson Content Infusion – Desired Results
Established Goals(s): Context/ overarching background of the lesson
Essential Questions
African-American history content
Infusion/Integration Plan: Directions to the teacher
Stage 2—Teaching Strategy
Scope & Sequence- the sequence of units and skills used to create a solid foundation for learning the material over a period of time (e.g. introductory, intermediate, mastery)
Number of Lessons/Units
Time
Describe learning activities in sequence
KEY q
Stage 3. Assessment of learning – Aligned to specific learning objectives
Key Questions How do you know when they "got it"? When don't they get it even though it might seem as if they do? What is evidence of understanding? How can we promote understanding more by design than by good fortune (and native ability)? How do we move beyond designing mere interesting activities or workbook "coverage"?- Source: Grant Wiggins & Jay McTighe, <i>Understanding by Design Handbook</i> .
Formative Assessment-ongoing checking for immediate feedback and understanding from student
Summative assessment to measure student achievement and learning
Resources teachers can use for this lesson/ Suggested Readings
njamistadcurriculum.com/

APPENDIX G: LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REGARDING CURRICULUM MATERIALS



State of New Jersey

Department of State

Amistad Commission

PO Box 458
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0458
(609) 984-6428

JON S. CORZINE
Governor

NINA MITCHELL WELLS
Secretary of State

Greetings,

It is my pleasure to send to you information regarding the objectives, progress and goals of the New Jersey Amistad Commission. As you are well aware, the New Jersey Amistad Commission has been diligently striving to fulfill the directives of the Amistad legislation sponsored by Assemblyman William D. Payne. This state level Commission surveys, designs, and promotes the implementation of public educational awareness programs in New Jersey concerned with the African slave trade, slavery in America, and the vestiges of slavery in our country and contributions of African- Americans in building our country.

The mandate requires that all New Jersey schools incorporate African- American history into their Social Studies curriculum. This legislation also created the Amistad Commission, a 23 member body charged with ensuring that African American's history, contribution and experiences are adequately taught in the state's classroom within the auspices of a holistic presentation.

Primary focus of the Amistad staff for the remainder of fiscal year 2007 -2008 is the continued development of the Amistad curriculum, disseminating our curriculum materials to every school in the state will ensure that every teacher has access to our lesson plans, primary source documents and the Amistad mandate by September 2008.

Within this curriculum the Commission has formulated a course of action that has revised and rewritten the Social Studies curriculum that is utilized throughout the state in all 596 school districts. According to the auspices of the legislation, we will not design a separate African American Studies course for New Jersey's school districts.

Enclosed I am sending to your Commission:

1. Our Commission's mission statement
2. New Jersey's Amistad Commission's legislation

3. The New Jersey Department of Education Social Studies Standards
4. A 2007-2008 Statement of our Goals and Progress
5. The New Jersey Amistad lesson plan template
6. Sample Lessons from the Amistad Curriculum
7. Assemblyman Payne's Information Packer

For clarification during your review, the New Jersey Amistad lesson plan template, which was created in partnership with myself and the Social Studies Director for the New Jersey Department of Education, was designed for our Curriculum Writers and utilized during our Annual Curriculum Consortium. Because of the structure of the curriculum template we have forced our lesson plan authors to think concretely about:

1. New Jersey Standard that they will follow when writing the lesson.
2. Era of History covered (which aligned with the standards) as well as an area that requires a written overview of the major points of the historical period.
3. African American history component for infusion which is contextualized within the era of history covered by the lesson and must be blended for the holistic presentation to the student as mandated via the Amistad legislation.
4. An infusion plan which gives specific direction to the teacher.
5. Teaching strategies.
6. Assessment tools.
7. Resources for teachers and students.

Overarchingly, this lesson plan formula seems to create a rubric that limits the author's ability to extract African American content from the historical discussion, thereby restricting the writer's ability to create a separate African American studies course. Specifically, the utilization of these lessons will continue to reconceptualize and extend the rewriting of American history to include African American influence, history, accomplishments, and history. Our finished product should be a curriculum that is the merging of two products: an African American studies curriculum and the previously utilized and monochromatic U.S. history curriculum. The lessons I am providing our draft, a sampling of the direction our Commission is heading; we are not finished yet, but do tell us that we are on our way to a full Amistad Curriculum roll out in September 2008.

These lessons are categorized via by submitter, grade level, and era of history and African American topic for infusion. There is a quick reference guide attached as well so you might be able to quickly reference a complete list of which lessons are in this sampling.

In the Service of our Children,

Stephanie James Wilson, MA

Executive Director

New Jersey Amistad Commission

APPENDIX H -CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR WEB-BASED RESOURCE



New Jersey Department of State

Amistad Commission

Submitted by: Stephanie James Wilson, Executive Director

Call for Proposals for New Jersey Amistad Commission Web-Based Curriculum

The Amistad Commission is seeking proposals for the construction an interactive web based curriculum that would focus on the contributions of African Americans from Jamestown to the present day holistically integrated into a K-12 Social Studies course as specified in the Core Curriculum Content Standards put forth by the New Jersey Department of Education. The site should also include several units dealing with historical events in Africa, prior to Africans arriving in British North America. The web based curriculum would consist of no less than twelve units of study, broken down by time periods as specified in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Social Studies ; and would include lesson plans, PowerPoints, Biographies, Primary Source Documents and Classroom Activities for students. Later phases will include Videos, Interactive Maps, Interactive Timelines, Audios, and Music. All of these elements would be laid out in a consistent, user-friendly format. The Amistad Commission will provide course pacing for k-12, lesson plan templates, sample lessons plans, rubrics for replication, , and complete oversight. The company selected for this web-based curriculum would assemble the relevant documents, write the lessons and activities and produce the videos using top professors from around the country as well as historical re-enactors.

The activities and resources should be used in Social Studies classes K-12 as well as interdisciplinary courses and can easily be infused into elementary, middle school and high school American History courses, Language Arts courses, Art courses, Music courses, etc.

This comprehensive password-protected web resource would be available to every teacher in New Jersey, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week absolutely free of charge and will be the property of the Amistad Commission.

This project would be an extremely large undertaking and could require breaking the complete production into multiple phases over approximately 12 months or longer. However it is imperative that the baseline lesson plans as well as web links, primary and secondary sources, rubrics, course pacing, assessment for varied grades and course overview must be ready for distribution by September 2008.

The following explains the list of requisites for the Amistad web-based curriculum:

- [Web Links](#)

We would like this site to provide web links so that our teachers can conduct their own research while creating activities, lessons and projects. Teachers no longer have to spend countless hours surfing the web. Students can use this section to safely research pre-approved sites.

- **Methods**

This section will provide teachers with examples of teaching methods they can use in their classrooms. They will see PowerPoints and PDF files that will explain the teaching methods that they can use to bring substantive content into the classroom.

- **Primary sources**

Teachers will receive primary sources that they can use in class. They will also be able to use the primary source documents, letters, journal entries, speeches, obituaries in student assignments and projects.

- **Rubrics**

Teachers will be able to access rubrics to grade collaboration, timelines, research papers, presentations, web quests, multimedia, podcasting, *inter alia*.

- **Video section for Downloading and instructional time**

Storytellers, character interpreters, documentaries, noted scholars

- **Activities — Various classroom activities that should be included in addition to the development and editorial of lesson plans for the classroom.**

a) Map Activities

b) Guided Readings: Elementary, Middle and High School

c) Dialogues/Plays

d) Literature Connections

e) Web Quests

- **Assessment — Classroom Assessments based on the unit's content**

a. Elementary, Middle and High School Assessments

b. Interactive Quizzes for practice/review

c. Document-Based Question Sheets

- **Galleries — Paintings and photographs of famous African Americans, Events in History and Political Cartoons for teachers to use as visuals in the classroom or as part of their own PowerPoints.**

a. Portraits

b. Events

c. Political Cartoons (when appropriate)

- **Elders (Notables)**

- **Lessons**

a. Elementary Lessons

b. Middle School Lessons

c. High School Lessons

- **PowerPoints**

- a. Content PowerPoints
- b. Challenge Game
- c. Vocabulary Game

- **Interactive Timeline**

The Interactive Timeline would consist of several articles with graphics or videos that would be accompanied by discussion questions.

Selection criteria for proposals - Staff demographics with specific utilization of scholars in the fields of African American history and culture as well, Education and U.S. History. Demonstrated ability to create a mass primary and secondary lesson plans as specified by the Amistad lesson plan template. Demonstrated ability to produce rubrics, professional development materials for Educators, and an applicable knowledge of New Jersey's Core Curriculum content standards for Social Studies K-12.

APPENDIX I – MEDIA ADVISORY FOR CURRICULUM DEBUT



Office of the Secretary of State

Department of State
125 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625

JON S. CORZINE
GOVERNOR

NINA MITCHELL WELLS
SECRETARY OF STATE

Media Advisory

Contact: Press Office

June 2, 2009

609-777-0830

New Jersey Amistad Commission to Debut Nation's First Web-Based Social Studies Curriculum Inclusive of African-American Historical Content

- WHO:** Secretary of State Nina Mitchell Wells, Esq. and the New Jersey Department of State Amistad Commission.
- WHAT:** Amistad Commission Curriculum Debut Announcement
- WHEN:** Friday, June 5, 2009 at 11 a.m.
- WHERE:** New Jersey State Museum
205 West State Street, Trenton, NJ
- DETAILS:** Debut of the prototype for the Amistad Social Studies web-based curriculum to the state press and education community. This is the first undertaking of its kind in the country.
- SPEAKERS:** **Secretary of State Nina Mitchell Wells, Esq.**
William D. Payne: Amistad Commissioner and author of legislation

Dr. Lillie Johnson Edwards: Amistad Commissioner and Co-Chair of Curriculum Committee will chronicle the mission and curriculum focus on a full infusion of African content into Social Studies K-12.

Kevin Brady: President of American Institute for History Education will introduce the web site and discuss its components.

James Harris: Amistad Commissioner and NJ NAACP President

Stephanie James Wilson: Amistad Commission Executive Director

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APPENDIX J – LETTER FROM COMMISSIONER DAVY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PO Box500

TRENTON, NJ08625-0500

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LUCILLE E.
DAVY

Acting
Commissioner

January 30, 2006

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons

FROM: Lucille E. Davy, Acting Commissioner

SUBJECT: NEW JERSEY AMISTAD COMMISSION
As Acting Education Commissioner, I serve as vice-chair of the New Jersey

Amistad Commission. Assemblyman William Payne, author of the legislation establishing the Commission, and other Commission members, want to be sure that chief school administrators and charter school lead persons understand the importance of ensuring that African-American history is made an integral part of the Social Studies curriculum in this state. With that in mind, I thought it would be helpful to provide some guidance to you. I want to thank the Amistad Commission for the tremendous work it has done, not only in ensuring that African-American history is infused into the curriculum and teaching materials in schools, but also in organizing professional development events so that teachers are given the training and assistance to truly bring this material to life in the classroom.

There has been much progress made during the past few decades when many of us attended New Jersey's public schools. Today, we recognize the importance of teaching Social Studies and history from a culturally diverse perspective. Today, we know that children must develop a full understanding of the historical events that shape our world and that continues to impact our lives daily. This broader perspective on history and Social Studies is important because we live in a state that is culturally diverse, and children need to understand how their ancestors were involved in major historical events, so that children will know that they played an important role in the development of our nation. This knowledge will also enhance their self-esteem. This sense of involvement is critical if we expect these children to become full and active citizens of this country.

A Social Studies curriculum that includes the study of diverse cultural and racial groups is also important because we live in a globally connected world. It is imperative that students develop an understanding of the history and culture of others in order to interact in our multicultural society. We would be doing our students a disservice if

we fail to convey to them an appreciation of, and respect for, the richness of the many cultures and people that inhabit our nation and the world.

Although African-Americans have had a tremendous impact on this country, too often their contributions have been distorted or omitted. The Social Studies Core Curriculum Content Standards now address those shortcomings. There is information available on the New Jersey Department of Education website (www.state.nj.us/education), regarding the state's Core Curriculum Content Standards. In addition, you can also access the full text of remarks given at the Amistad professional development conference on October 18, 2005.

The New Jersey Social Studies standards are designed to enable all students to understand their world and to develop an appreciation for the heritage of America. New Jersey law requires that each board of education adopt a two-year course of study at the high school level in the history of the United States, including the history of New Jersey and African-American history. These courses must address the social, economic, and cultural development of our country and our state. In addition, students must know, understand, and appreciate the values and principles of American democracy and their rights, responsibilities and roles as citizens of the nation and the world. The standards aim to prepare all New Jersey students to be informed, active, and responsible citizens, with a strong sense of the past and a passion for the future.

The Social Studies standards enable students to examine the balance of individual rights and public needs, to explore the spectrum of political views, and to analyze the role of the United States in a global society. Students must be able to reflect on the past, examine the present, and envision the future. We believe that in order for students to achieve, they must be taught by teachers with deep content knowledge, who have an appreciation for multiple perspectives, and who possess unending enthusiasm for the discipline. Social Studies teachers must address the content in a culturally responsive manner, creating a community of learners who respect individual differences.

African-American history has been integrated throughout the six Social Studies standards. For example, in Standard 6.1, Social Studies Skills, students learn how to use critical thinking skills to analyze past events and connect them to the present. In Standard 6.2, Civics, students explore the characteristics of government and the United States Constitution and further examine legal cases such as Plessy v. Ferguson or the New Jersey School Law of 1881, which required integration in the state's public schools. In world history, students analyze the ways that slavery and other forms of coerced labor or social bondage were practiced. In Standard 6.4, United States and New Jersey History, students learn about the many contributions of African-Americans, examine the role of African-Americans during the Civil War, and compare and contrast the social, cultural, and technological changes post World War I that led to the resurgence of nativism and racial violence. These are but a few of the specific citations found in the 2004 Social Studies standards that specifically address African-American history.

The need for contemporary educators to understand the evolving nature of the discipline and to keep abreast of new ideas is inherent in the vision of the revised Social Studies standards. New Jersey's Professional Standards for Educators, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2003, provide a clear vision of the knowledge, performance, and dispositions that teachers and school leaders need to support the achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards. Aligned with the Core Curriculum Content Standards, the Page 3

New Jersey Professional Standards for Educators illustrate the wide range of knowledge and abilities educators must possess to provide high-quality instruction to all students.

In order for this to happen for all students, educators must be dedicated to a continuous plan of professional development that begins with their pre-service activities, continues with their induction into the profession, and extends through the life of their professional career in education through ongoing and sustained professional development endeavors. Effective educators are life-long learners. Professional development must be an ongoing process of refining skills, inquiring into practice, and developing new methods to support learning. During the coming months, you will receive information regarding professional development opportunities, summer institutes, and model curriculum guides for various grade levels.

I know that we can count on your continued support as we work together to ensure that all of New Jersey's children master our Core Curriculum Content Standards. If you have any questions, please contact Acting Assistant Commissioner Jay Doolan of the Division of Educational Programs and Assessment, at 609-292-1083 or Stephanie James Wilson, Executive Director, Amistad Commission, at 609-984-6428.

LED:JD:LLM:es/doolan.amistadltr2.doc

c: The Honorable Nina Mitchell wells

The Honorable William Payne

Stephanie Wilson

Isaac Bryant

Penelope Lattimer

Jay Doolan

Linda L. Morse

Rochelle Hendricks

John Dougherty

Regional Assistant Commissioners

County Superintendents

LEE Group

Garden State Coalition of Schools

APPENDIX K – LETTER FROM COMMISSIONER HESPE

February 12, 2016

To: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons

From: David Hespe, New Jersey Commissioner of Education

SUBJECT: New Jersey Amistad Legislation
New Jersey Social Studies Standards

As the New Jersey Commissioner of Education, I serve as vice-chair of the New Jersey Amistad Commission. Assemblyman William Payne, author of the legislation establishing the Commission, all Commissioners, and I want to ensure that children in New Jersey’s K-12 classrooms achieve the learning goals legally mandated in 2002 by the NJ state legislature in the “Amistad Bill,” A1301 (http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2002/Bills/PL02/75_.HTM). We require your support and oversight of the Amistad curriculum’s full implementation into your district’s Social Studies classes.

Although African-Americans have always been central to the events of American history, too often their contributions have been distorted or omitted. While Black History Month and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday programs, activities and lessons celebrate these seminal calendar events, they clearly do not satisfy the expectation and legal mandate that an inclusive curriculum, infused with the multiple, overlapping and complex national narratives and global history of African-Americans, be taught throughout the academic year.

In its role as your partner in fulfilling the legal requirements of the Amistad Bill which are linked to the Social Studies Standards (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss>) and PARCC assessments, the Commission provides classroom teachers and their supervisors easily accessible resources and professional development to ensure effective teaching of New Jersey’s inclusive Social Studies curriculum which infuses the central role of African-Americans into the local, state, national and global narratives of the human story. The Commission hosts a website (<http://www.njamistadcurriculum.net>) that provides all teachers access to inclusive K-12 Social Studies teaching materials and, throughout the academic year and during the summer, Commission staff offer professional development workshops facilitated by scholars and experienced teachers. Still, we rely upon your administrative expertise and leadership to ensure educational excellence in the implementation of the Amistad curricular mandates and the Social Studies Standards.

Excellence in Social Studies teaching and learning is especially critical as the 21st century affirms what educators have known for several decades: civic engagement and literacy as well as global cultural competence equips and empowers our students to engage the world successfully. Our students should have a deep knowledge of the past and present complexities within our national story and how our nation has been and continues to be inextricably connected to the

entire world. The Amistad curriculum and the Social Studies Standards to which it is linked require that students learn about the world and about themselves through inclusive course content, for example, the co-existence of slavery and freedom in colonial Jamestown, Plymouth Rock and Princeton. The complexity of these stories deepens the critical thinking that shapes our students' personal identities as local and global citizens and it prepares our students to be intellectually and personally engaged in the world.

Regardless of the diversity within any specific New Jersey school district, an inclusive curriculum is legally mandated. This broad, inclusive approach to teaching and learning history and Social Studies is especially important for all children because we live in a state that is culturally diverse, and where students need to understand the roles all people played in shaping major historical events. Successful implementation of the Amistad curriculum enhances children's self-esteem and, in doing so, fosters their awareness that they too can play an important role in the development of our nation and the world. Furthermore, the infusion of African-Americans into the curriculum is critical if we expect children to become full and active citizens of this country. We will be doing our students, our state, and our nation a disservice if we fail to convey to children core knowledge about, an appreciation of, and respect for the richness of the many cultures and people that inhabit our nation and the world.

We believe that in order for students to achieve, they must be taught by teachers with deep content knowledge, who have an appreciation for multiple perspectives, and who possess unending enthusiasm for the discipline. Social Studies teachers must address the content in a culturally responsive manner, creating a community of learners who respect individual differences. The Amistad Commission, its staff, website, scholars and experienced teachers provide the means to achieve these goals.

We are proud that New Jersey has set the highest standard in the nation for creating an inclusive K-12 Social Studies curriculum mandated in law. Our transformative Amistad goals have caught the attention of other states as the model to be followed. I know that we can count on your continued support as we work together to ensure that we meet our own expectation that all of New Jersey's children master our Core Curriculum Content Standards in ways that are inclusive of the African-American story. I will continue to address these issues regularly in order to affirm the importance of meeting the highest levels of implementation which are expected and legally required. The Commission and my office will also continue periodic assessment of implementation so that we can determine which districts, schools and teachers most need our assistance for professional development and which may serve as the models for the rest of the state. My office will also establish new guidelines for teacher licensure and Master Teacher qualifications so that new teachers and Master Teachers are prepared to infuse African-Americans into the entire history and Social Studies curriculum. We will continue to offer professional development workshops for teachers and strongly recommend that administrators and supervisors attend in order to offer the most effective leadership in infusing the Amistad curriculum into history and Social Studies classes.

If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie James Wilson, Executive Director of Amistad Commission.

cc: Members of The New Jersey Amistad Commission
Stephanie James Wilson, Executive Director, The NJ Amistad Commission
Regional Assistant Commissioners
County Superintendents
LEE Group

Garden State Coalition of Schools

NJEA

NJ NAACP

NJCHE

**ANNUAL AMISTAD
EXEMPLARY
PRACTICES**



SITE VISIT PROTOCOL

**“AMISTAD...
A JOURNEY THROUGH AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY”**

EXEMPLARY PRACTICES

Site Visit Team Members: _____ Name of
School: _____

_____ Date of Visit: _____

Site Visit Interview:

First. Introductions

Second. Please have the developer(s) describe the practice and its' objectives.

Third. Complete the following protocol with the school.

Does the developer provide confirmation that the practice proposed for recognition has been implemented for at least 1 school year or has been through 1 program rotation/sequence?

Yes What year? _____ No If no, school is
disqualified

Does the developer provide 1 program year of evidence to support the achievement of the practice's objectives? Are assessment measures included?

Insufficient

Exemplary Sufficient

Does the developer provide evidence of alignment between the practice and the *Core Curriculum Content Standards*? Are specific standards referenced?

Insufficient

Exemplary Sufficient

Does the developer provide evidence that the delivery of the practice incorporates African-American History within the defined standards?

Insufficient

Exemplary Sufficient

Does the developer provide evidence that the practice supports the educational needs of students?

Insufficient

Exemplary Sufficient

Does the developer provide evidence that the practice promotes student diversity?

Insufficient Exemplary Sufficient

Is the developer able to verify that strategies, adaptations, and/or curriculum modifications were implemented to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities in this practice?

Insufficient Exemplary Sufficient

Does the developer provide specific strategies for ways in which the practice may be replicated in another school and/or district?

Insufficient Exemplary Sufficient

Does the developer provide examples of student work related to the exemplary practice?

Insufficient

Exemplary Sufficient

Does the developer provide evidence of the incorporation of African-American History in subjects other than Social Studies ? **(OPTIONAL)**

Insufficient

Exemplary Sufficient

Is this practice student centered? (i.e. practices that incorporate the ideas, feedback and participation of students) **(OPTIONAL)**

Insufficient

Exemplary Sufficient

Is there evidence that the practice has collaborative efforts with families/business/community other school districts and/or higher education? **(OPTIONAL)**

Insufficient

Exemplary Sufficient

Is the school able to correlate this practice with a more culturally sensitive student population? (OPTIONAL)
Exemplary Sufficient Insufficient

Definitions of Ratings to Be Used In Evaluating Exemplary Practices

Exemplary	Exceeds requirements and is praiseworthy.
Sufficient	Generally well done and sometimes may exceed requirement.
Insufficient	Fails to adequately meet requirements and improvement is needed.

Observations:

A demonstration of the exemplary practice.

Exemplary Sufficient Insufficient

N/A

Observable evidence of the school's inclusion of students with disabilities in the exemplary practice.

Exemplary Sufficient Insufficient

N/A

Documentation Review:

Lesson plans, curriculum maps, articles, letters of support and etc.

Insufficient

Exemplary

Sufficient

Observations:

Additional evidence of the school's commitment to furthering the Amistad mandate.

Insufficient

Exemplary

Sufficient

School Tour/Classroom visitations.

Insufficient N/A

Exemplary

Sufficient

Site Visit Summary:

PLEASE REMIND THE SCHOOL THAT THIS SITE VISIT IN NO WAY ASSURES RECEIPT OF AN AWARD. SCHOOLS WILL BE CONTACTED NO LATER THAN May 18, 2007 REGARDING THEIR AWARD STATUS.

Strongly Recommend as an Amistad Fellow (3)

Recommend as an Amistad Fellow (2)

Recommend w/Reservations as an Amistad Fellow (1)

Do Not Recommend as an Amistad Fellow

(0)

Signatures of Team Member(s):

Date: _____

APPENDIX M – NEW YORK AMISTAD LAW

New York Arts and Cultural Affairs Law, Article 57B (57.51-57.54)
The Amistad Commission

§ 57.51. Legislative findings.

The legislature finds and declares that:

1. During the period beginning late in the fifteenth century through the nineteenth century, millions of persons of African origin were enslaved and brought to the Western Hemisphere, including the United States of America; anywhere from between twenty to fifty percent of enslaved Africans died during their journey to the Western Hemisphere; the enslavement of Africans and their descendants was part of a concerted effort of physical and psychological terrorism that deprived groups of people of African descent the opportunity to preserve many of their social, religious, political and other customs; the vestiges of slavery in this country continued with the legalization of second class citizenship status for African-Americans through Jim Crow laws, segregation and other similar practices; the legacy of slavery has pervaded the fabric of our society; and in spite of these events there are endless examples of the triumphs of African-Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this country.
2. All people should know of and remember the human carnage and dehumanizing atrocities committed during the period of the African slave trade and slavery in America and of the vestiges of slavery in this country; and it is in fact vital to educate our citizens on these events, the legacy of slavery, the sad history of racism in this country, and on the principles of human rights and dignity in a civilized society.
3. It is the policy of the state of New York that the history of the African slave trade, slavery in America, the depth of their impact in our society, and the triumphs of African-Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this country is the proper concern of all people, particularly students enrolled in the schools of the state of New York.
4. It is therefore desirable to create a state-level commission, which shall research and survey the extent to which the African slave trade and slavery in America is included in the curricula of New York state schools, and make recommendations to the legislature and executive regarding the implementation of education and awareness programs in New York concerned with the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country, and the contributions of African-Americans in building our country. Such recommendations may include, but not be limited to, the development of workshops, institutes, seminars, and other teacher training activities designed to educate teachers on this subject matter; the coordination of events on a regular basis, throughout the state, that provide appropriate memorialization of the events concerning the enslavement of Africans and their descendants in America as well as their struggle for freedom and liberty; and suggestions for revisions to the curricula and textbooks used to educate the students of New York state to reflect a more adequate inclusion of issues identified by the commission.

§ 57.52. Amistad commission; established.

1. The Amistad commission (commission), so named in honor of the group of enslaved Africans led by Joseph Cinque who, while being transported in eighteen hundred thirty-nine on a vessel named the Amistad, gained their freedom after overthrowing the crew and eventually having their case successfully argued before the United States Supreme Court, is hereby created and established. The commission shall consist of nineteen members, including the secretary of state or his or her designee, the commissioner of education or his or her designee, and the chancellor of the state university of New York or his or her designee, serving ex officio, and sixteen public members. Public members shall be appointed as follows: four public members, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the temporary president of the senate; four public members, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the speaker of the assembly; and eight public members, no more than four of whom shall be of the same political party, shall be appointed by the governor. The public members shall be residents of the state, chosen with due regard to broad geographic representation and ethnic diversity, who have an interest in the history of the African slave trade and slavery in America and the contributions of African-Americans to our society.
2. Each public member of the commission shall serve for a term of three years, except that of the initial members so appointed: one member appointed by the temporary president of the senate, one member appointed by the speaker of the assembly, and two members appointed by the governor shall serve for terms of one year; one member appointed by the temporary president of the senate, one member appointed by the speaker of the assembly, and three members appointed by the governor shall serve for terms of two years; and two members appointed by the temporary president of the senate, two members appointed by the speaker of the assembly, and three members appointed by the governor shall serve for terms of three years. Public members shall be eligible for reappointment. They shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified, and the term of the successor of any incumbent shall be calculated from the

expiration of the term of that incumbent. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment but for the unexpired term only.

3. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement for all necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

4. The secretary of state, or his or her designee, shall serve as the chair and the commissioner of education, or his or her designee, shall serve as the vice-chair of the commission. The presence of a majority of the authorized membership of the commission shall be required for the conduct of official business.

5. The department of education shall provide technical assistance and data to the commission as may be necessary for the commission to carry out its responsibilities pursuant to this article.

§ 57.53. The Amistad commission; duties and responsibilities.

The Amistad commission shall have the following responsibilities and duties:

1. to survey and catalog the extent and breadth of education concerning the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country and the contributions of African-Americans to our society presently being incorporated into the curricula and textbooks and taught in the school systems of the state; and, to inventory those African slave trade, American slavery, or relevant African-American history memorials, exhibits and resources which should be incorporated into courses of study at educational institutions and schools throughout the state.

2. to compile a roster of individual volunteers who are willing to share their knowledge and experience in classrooms, seminars and workshops with students and teachers on the subject of the African slave trade, American slavery and the impact of slavery on our society today, and the contributions of African-Americans to our country; and

3. to prepare reports for the governor and the legislature regarding its findings and recommendations on facilitating the inclusion of the African slave trade, American slavery studies, African-American history and special programs in the educational system of the state.

§ 57.54. Authorization.

1. The Amistad commission is authorized to call upon any department, office, division or agency of the state, or of any county, municipality or school district of the state, to supply such data, program reports and other information, as it deems necessary to discharge its responsibilities under this article.

2. These departments, offices, divisions and agencies shall, to the extent possible and not inconsistent with any other law of this state, cooperate with the commission and shall furnish it with such information and assistance as may be necessary or helpful to accomplish the purposes of this article.

APPENDIX N – ILLINOIS AMISTAD LAW

Public Act 094-0285	
HB0383 Enrolled	LRB094 06620 RSP 36713 b
AN ACT establishing the Amistad Commission.	
Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:	
Section 5. The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Act is amended by adding Section 22 as follows:	
(20 ILCS 3405/22 new)	
Sec. 22. Amistad Commission.	
(a) Purpose. The General Assembly finds and declares that all people should know of and remember the human carnage and dehumanizing atrocities committed during the period of the African slave trade and slavery in America and of the vestiges of slavery in this country; and it is in fact vital to educate our citizens on these events, the legacy of slavery, the sad history of racism in this country, and the principles of human rights and dignity in a civilized society.	
It is the policy of the State of Illinois that the history of the African slave trade, slavery in America, the depth of their impact in our society, and the triumphs of African-Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this country is the proper concern of all people, particularly students enrolled in the schools of the State of Illinois.	
It is therefore desirable to create a Commission that, as an organized body and on a continuous basis, will survey, design, encourage, and promote the implementation of education and awareness programs in Illinois that are concerned with the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country, and the contributions of African-Americans in building our country; to develop workshops, institutes, seminars, and other teacher training activities designed to educate teachers on this subject matter; and that will be responsible for the coordination of events on a regular basis, throughout the State, that provide appropriate memorialization of the events concerning the enslavement of Africans and their descendants in America and their struggle for freedom, liberty, and equality.	
(b) Amistad Commission. The Amistad Commission is created within the Agency. The Commission is named to honor the group of enslaved Africans transported in 1839 on a vessel named the Amistad who overthrew their captors and created an international incident that was eventually argued before the Supreme Court and that shed a growing light on the evils of the slave trade and galvanized a growing abolitionist movement towards demanding the end of slavery in the United States.	

<p>(c) Membership. The Commission shall consist of 15 members, including 3 ex officio members: the State Superintendent of Education or his or her designee, the Director of Commerce and Economic Opportunity or his or her designee, and the Director of Historic Sites and Preservation or his or her designee; and 12 public members. Public members shall be appointed as follows:</p> <p>(i) 2 members appointed by the President of the Senate and one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;</p> <p>(ii) 2 members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one member appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives; and</p> <p>(iii) 6 members, no more than 4 of whom shall be of the same political party, appointed by the Governor.</p> <p>The public members shall be residents of this State, chosen with due regard to broad geographic representation and ethnic diversity, who have served actively in organizations that educate the public on the history of the African slave trade, the contributions of African-Americans to our society, and civil rights issues.</p> <p>Each public member of the Commission shall serve for a term of 3 years, except that of the initial members so appointed: one member appointed by the President of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and 2 members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of one year; the member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate, one member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and 2 members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of 2 years; and one member appointed by the President of the Senate, the member appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, and 2 members appointed by the Governor shall serve for terms of 3 years. Public members shall be eligible for reappointment. They shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified, and the term of the successor of any incumbent shall be calculated from the expiration of the term of that incumbent. A vacancy occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment, but for the unexpired term only.</p> <p>(d) Election of chairperson; meetings. At its first meeting and annually thereafter, the Commission shall elect from among its members a chairperson and other officers it considers necessary or appropriate. After its first meeting, the Commission shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently at the call of the chairperson or if requested by 9 or more members.</p> <p>(e) Quorum. A majority of the members of the Commission constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of the Commission. A majority of the members present and serving is required for official action of the Commission.</p>
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(f) Public meeting. All business that the Commission is authorized to perform shall be conducted at a public meeting of the Commission, held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.
(g) Freedom of Information. A writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by the Commission in the performance of an official function is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.
(h) Compensation. The members of the Commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be entitled to reimbursement for all necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties as members of the Commission from funds appropriated for that purpose. Reimbursement for travel, meals, and lodging shall be in accordance with the rules of the Governor's Travel Control Board.
(i) Duties. The Commission shall have the following responsibilities and duties:
(1) To provide, based upon the collective interest of the members and the knowledge and experience of the members, assistance and advice to schools within the State with respect to the implementation of education, awareness programs, textbooks, and educational materials concerned with the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country, and the contributions of African-Americans to our society.
(2) To survey and catalog the extent and breadth of education concerning the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country, and the contributions of African-Americans to our society presently being incorporated into the curricula and textbooks and taught in the school systems of the State; to inventory those African slave trade, American slavery, or relevant African-American history memorials, exhibits, and resources that should be incorporated into courses of study at educational institutions, schools, and various other locations throughout the State; and to assist the State Board of Education and other State and educational agencies in the development and implementation of African slave trade, American slavery, and African-American history education programs.
(3) To act as a liaison with textbook publishers, schools, public, private, and nonprofit resource organizations, and members of the United States Senate and House of Representatives and the Illinois Senate and House of Representatives in order to facilitate the inclusion of the history of African slavery and of African-Americans in this country in the curricula of public and nonpublic schools.
(4) To compile a roster of individual volunteers who are willing to share their knowledge and experience in classrooms, seminars, and workshops with students and teachers on the subject of the African slave trade,

American slavery, the impact of slavery on our society today, and the contributions of African-Americans to our country.

(5) To coordinate events memorializing the African slave trade, American slavery, and the history of African-Americans in this country that reflect the contributions of African-Americans in overcoming the burdens of slavery and its vestiges, and to seek volunteers who are willing and able to participate in commemorative events that will enhance student awareness of the significance of the African slave trade, American slavery, its historical impact, and the struggle for freedom.

(6) To prepare reports for the Governor and the General Assembly regarding its findings and recommendations on facilitating the inclusion of the African slave trade, American slavery studies, African-American history, and special programs in the educational system of the State.

(7) To develop, in consultation with the State Board of Education, curriculum guidelines that will be made available to every school board for the teaching of information on the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country, and the contributions of African-Americans to our country.

(8) To solicit, receive, and accept appropriations, gifts, and donations for Commission operations and programs authorized under this Section.

(j) Commission requests for assistance. The Commission is authorized to call upon any department, office, division, or agency of the State, or of any county, municipality, or school district of the State, to supply such data, program reports, and other information, appropriate school personnel, and assistance as it deems necessary to discharge its responsibilities under this Act. These departments, offices, divisions, and agencies shall, to the extent possible and not inconsistent with any other law of this State, cooperate with the Commission and shall furnish it with such information, appropriate school personnel, and assistance as may be necessary or helpful to accomplish the purposes of this Act.

(k) State Board of Education assistance. The State Board of Education shall:

(1) Assist the Amistad Commission in marketing and distributing to educators, administrators, and school districts in the State educational information and other materials on the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country, and the contributions of African-Americans to our society.

(2) Conduct at least one teacher workshop annually on the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country, and the contributions of African-Americans to our society.

(3) Assist the Amistad Commission in monitoring the

inclusion of slavery materials and curricula in the State's educational system.
(4) Consult with the Amistad Commission to determine ways it may survey, catalog, and extend slave trade and American slavery education presently being taught in the State's educational system.
The State Board of Education may, subject to the availability of appropriations, hire additional staff and consultants to carry out the duties and responsibilities provided within this subsection (k).
(1) Report. The Commission shall report its activities and findings, as required under subsection (i), to the Governor and General Assembly on or before June 30, 2006, and biannually thereafter.
Section 10. The School Code is amended by changing Section 27-20.4 as follows:
(105 ILCS 5/27-20.4) (from Ch. 122, par. 27-20.4)
Sec. 27-20.4. Black History Study. Every public elementary school and high school shall include in its curriculum a unit of instruction studying the events of Black History, including the history of the African slave trade, slavery in America, and the vestiges of slavery in this country. These events shall include not only the contributions made by individual African-Americans in government and in the arts, humanities and sciences to the economic, cultural and political development of the United States and Africa, but also the socio-economic struggle which African-Americans experienced collectively in striving to achieve fair and equal treatment under the laws of this nation. The studying of this material shall constitute an affirmation by students of their commitment to respect the dignity of all races and peoples and to forever eschew every form of discrimination in their lives and careers.
The State Superintendent of Education may prepare and make available to all school boards instructional materials, including those established by the Amistad Commission, which may be used as guidelines for development of a unit of instruction under this Section; provided, however, that each school board shall itself determine the minimum amount of instruction time which shall qualify as a unit of instruction satisfying the requirements of this Section.
(Source: P.A. 86-1256.)
Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.

Effective Date: 7/21/2005

APPENDIX O – BOARD OF COMMISSIONER LIST

THE NEW JERSEY AMISTAD COMMISSION BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LIST

Commission Members	County	Municipality	Appointer	Party Affiliation	LD	No.
Commissioner of Education <i>ex officio</i>			Governor			1
Secretary of State <i>ex officio</i>			Governor			2
Executive Director <i>ex officio</i>			Gov & Commission			3
Chair of Executive Board of the President's Council <i>ex officio</i>			PL2002, c.75			4
Senator Thomas H. Kean, Jr. (nonvoting)	Union	Westfield	Senate President	Republican	21	5
Senator Linda Greenstein (nonvoting)	Middlesex	Plainsboro	Senate President	Democrat	14	6
Assemblyman Scott T. Rumana (nonvoting)			Assembly Speaker	Republican		7
Assemblywoman Cleopatra G. Tucker (nonvoting)			Assembly Speaker	Democrat	28	8
Oadline Truitt	Essex	Newark	Senate President	SenatePublic		9
Kathy V. Sumpter	Essex	Newark	Senate President	SenatePublic	29	10
Julane W. Miller-Ambrister, EdD	Union	Plainfield	Senate President	SenatePublic	22	11
Julia A. Miller, EdD	Essex	Montclair	Senate President	SenatePublic		12
Herb Tate, Esq	Essex	unknown	Assembly Speaker	AssemblyPublic		13
Gabriella E. Morris	Somerset	Basking Ridge	Assembly Speaker	AssemblyPublic		14
Sandra Y. Lewis, PhD	Essex		Assembly Speaker	AssemblyPublic		15
Rachel Pereira, EdD, Esq	Middlesex	KendallPark	Assembly Speaker	AssemblyPublic	14	16
Honorable William D. Payne	Essex	Newark	Governor	GovPublic	29	17
Patricia A. Atkins	Burlington	Marlton	Governor	GovPublic	6	18
Lillie Johnson Edwards, Ph.D.	Essex	Montclair	Governor	GovPublic	34	19
Patricia Ann Crumlin Kempton, EdD	Mercer	Ewing	Governor	GovPublic	15	20
James E. Harris	Essex	Montclair	Governor	GovPublic	34	21
Colin A. Palmer, Ph.D.	Mercer	Princeton	Governor	GovPublic	15	22

Miriam E. Martin	Atlantic	Mays Landing	Governor	GovPublic	2	23
Frankie Hutton, PhD	Monmouth	Atlantic Highlands	Governor	GovPublic		24

APPENDIX P

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AND
THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

This Intergovernmental Agreement (“**Agreement**”) made by and between the New Jersey Department of State (“**DOS**”) and the New Jersey Department of Education (“**DOE**”) will confirm the mutual understanding and intention of the parties hereto as to the following:

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Amistad Commission was established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:16A-87 to coordinate educational and other programs on slavery and African-American history; and

WHEREAS, the Amistad Commission is located within the New Jersey Department of State; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of State is charged with preserving and promoting the State’s art, history, and culture; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:16A-87, the New Jersey Department of Education is required to provide assistance to the Amistad Commission;

WHEREAS, although the New Jersey Department of State is central to preserving and promoting of the State’s history and culture, the New Jersey Department of Education is appropriately suited to assist the New Jersey Department of State and the Amistad Commission in carrying out its responsibilities including developing curricula, disseminating information, and providing workshops beneficial to the preservation and promotion of the Amistad Commission’s mission; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Education has experts in developing curricula and disseminating information to school districts throughout New Jersey which would further advance the Amistad Commission’s mission; and

WHEREAS, the Amistad Commission can more effectively and efficiently carry out its duties and responsibilities with the assistance of the New Jersey Department of Education;

NOW, THEREFORE, DOS and DOE do hereby agree to the following:

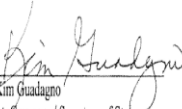
1. The recitals set forth above are incorporated within the terms of this Agreement.
2. DOE shall assign an appropriate amount of personnel from its staff (the “Assigned Staff”) to perform the services described below on behalf of the Amistad Commission.
3. DOS and DOE will continue their cooperation on the Amistad Commission as provided in N.J.S.A. 52:16A-87.

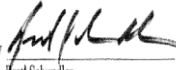
4. DOE will continue to assist the Amistad Commission in carrying out its responsibilities and will make available to the Amistad Commission the experts in DOE.
5. There are no third party beneficiaries of this Agreement.
6. This Agreement may be amended, modified, and supplemented at any time by mutual consent in writing signed by DOS and DOE.
7. This Agreement shall be effective as of the date last executed by the parties and shall remain in effect unless terminated by one or both parties, in writing, upon forty-five (45) days prior notice. This Agreement shall cease upon the effective date of any Reorganization Plan concerning the Amistad Commission.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the DOS and DOE have executed this agreement on the dates set forth below:

State of New Jersey
Department of State

State of New Jersey
Department of Education

By 
Kim Guadagno
Lt. Governor / Secretary of State

By 
Greg Schundler
Commissioner

Dated _____

Dated _____

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
**A PLAN FOR THE TRANSFER OF THE AMISTAD COMMISSION AND ITS
FUNCTIONS, POWERS, AND DUTIES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on June 29, 2011, Governor Chris Christie hereby issues this Reorganization Plan, No. 004-2011 (the "Plan"), to transfer the Amistad Commission (hereinafter referred to as the "Commission") from the Department of State to the Department of Education (the "Department"), thereby promoting efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of its important mission and responsibilities. This Plan furthers the ongoing efforts of the Administration to streamline and make more effective the operations of the Executive Branch in the interests of efficiency and economy, and to organize, group, and coordinate the agencies and functions of the Executive Branch according to major purposes so as to promote the better execution of the laws.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this Plan is to improve efficiency and quality in the performance of the responsibilities of the Amistad Commission by relocating it within the Department of Education. The Commission was established pursuant to P.L. 2002, c. 75, as amended (C.52:16A-86 et seq.), in order to, inter alia, coordinate educational and other programs to promote awareness of the dehumanizing atrocities associated with the African slave trade, the legacy of slavery, and the positive contributions of African-Americans in building our country. More specifically, the Commission is charged with assisting educators in implementing the policy of the State of New Jersey that the history of the African slave trade and slavery in America, the depth of their impact on our society, and the triumphs of African-Americans and their significant contributions to the development of this country are the proper

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concern of all people, and particularly students enrolled in the schools of the State of New Jersey.

Currently, the Commission is allocated within the Department of State, which is responsible for a variety of important functions including preserving and promoting the State's arts, history, and culture, as well as overseeing elections and promoting economic development and business-related assistance. In recognition of the Commission's significant educational mission, the Department of Education is currently required, pursuant to sections 2 and 3 of P.L. 2002, c. 75 (C.52:16A-86 et seq.), to provide appropriate assistance to the Commission. Such assistance includes, but is not limited to, developing educational curricula, disseminating information to educators, administrators, and school districts, and conducting teacher workshops beneficial to the promotion of the mission of the Commission.

In order to improve efficiency and quality in the performance of the responsibilities of the Commission, this Plan provides for the transfer of the Commission to the Department of Education. The Department of Education employs experts in curriculum development and, by virtue of its significant educational oversight responsibilities, is uniquely positioned to work with educators and disseminate information to school districts and teachers throughout the State. Moreover, pursuant to an Agreement between the Department of State and the Department of Education executed last year, the Department of Education has been successfully assisting in the performance of many of the responsibilities undertaken in the past solely by the Department of State. Accordingly, this Plan transfers the Amistad Commission, along with all of its functions, powers,

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duties, and personnel, from the Department of State to the Department of Education. The Department of State and the Department of Education will continue their cooperation with respect to the Commission as contemplated by sections 2 and 3 of P.L. 2002, c. 75 (C.52:16A-86 et seq.).

NOW, THEREFORE, in accordance with the provisions of the "Executive Reorganization Act of 1969," P.L. 1969, c. 203 (C.52:14C-1 et seq.), I find, with respect to the transfer, consolidation, and reorganization provided for in this Plan, that they are necessary in order to accomplish the purposes set forth in Section 2 of that Act and will do the following:

1. Promote the better execution of the laws, the more effective management of the Executive branch and of its agencies and functions, and the expeditious administration of the public business;
2. Promote economy consistent with the efficient operation of the Executive;
3. Increase the efficiency of the operations of the Executive;
4. Group, co-ordinate, and consolidate functions of the Executive according to major purposes; and
5. Eliminate overlapping and duplication of effort.

PROVISIONS OF THE REORGANIZATION PLAN

THEREFORE, I hereby order the following reorganization:

1. The Amistad Commission created pursuant to P.L. 2002, c. 75, as amended (C.52:16A-86 et seq.) is transferred from the Department of State to the Department of Education.
2. The terms of offices of all existing members of the Commission shall not be affected. All of the powers, functions, and duties exercised by the Commission are continued; provided,

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however, that notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (d) of section 2 of P.L. 2002, c. 75 (C.52:16A-87(d)) to the contrary, the Commissioner of Education shall serve as chair of the Commission and the Secretary of State shall serve as vice-chair of the Commission. Consistent with section 2 of P.L. 2002, c. 75 (C.52:16A-87), the New Jersey Historical Commission shall continue to advise and provide recommendations to the Amistad Commission, as appropriate.

3. All files, books, papers, records, equipment, other property held by the Commission, including, without limitation, funds and other resources, and personnel are transferred to the Department of Education, pursuant to the "State Agency Transfer Act," P.L. 1971, c.375 (C.52:14D-1 et seq.), and any funds are to be deposited in such accounts as may be required by law.

4. Whenever, in any law, rule, regulation, contract, order, document, judicial or administrative proceeding, or otherwise, reference to the Amistad Commission allocated within the Department of State is made, the same shall mean the Amistad Commission allocated within the Department of Education, except where the context clearly requires otherwise.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. I find that each aspect of this reorganization is necessary to accomplish the purposes set forth in section 2 of P.L. 1969, c.203. Specifically, this reorganization will promote economy to the fullest extent consistent with the efficient operation of the Executive Branch according to major purposes. It will group, coordinate, and consolidate functions in a more consistent and practical manner and eliminate overlapping and duplication of functions.

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2. Any section or part of this Plan that conflicts with Federal law or regulations shall be considered null and void unless and until addressed and corrected through an interagency agreement, Federal waiver, or other means.

3. All acts and parts of acts and reorganization plans or parts of reorganization plans inconsistent with the provisions of this Plan are superseded to the extent of such inconsistencies.

4. If any provision of this Plan, or the application thereof to any person, or circumstance, or the exercise of any power or authority thereunder, is held invalid or contrary to the law, such holding shall not affect other provisions or applications of the Plan, or affect other exercises or power or authority under such provisions not contrary to law. To this end, the provisions of this Plan are declared to be severable.

5. This Plan is intended to protect and promote public health, safety, and welfare, and shall be liberally construed to attain the objectives and effect the purposes thereof.

6. All transfers directed by this Plan shall be effected pursuant to the "State Agency Transfer Act," P.L. 1971, c.375 (C.52:14D-1 et seq.).

7. A copy of this Reorganization Plan was filed on June 29, 2011 with the Secretary of State and with the Office of Administrative Law for publication in the New Jersey Register. This Plan shall become effective at the end of a period of 60 calendar days after the date of filing, unless disapproved by each House of the Legislature by the passage of a concurrent resolution stating in substance that the Legislature does not favor this Reorganization Plan, or at a date later than the end of such 60-calendar day period after the date of filing, should

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the Governor establish such a later date of the Plan, or any part thereof, by Executive Order.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that this Plan, if not disapproved, has the force and effect of law and will be printed and published in the annual edition of the Public Laws and in the New Jersey Register under the heading of "Reorganization Plans."

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