

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1879

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to naming the curriculum used to inform students about tribal history, culture, and government after John McCoy (Iulilaš).

**Brief Description:** Naming the curriculum used to inform students about tribal history, culture, and government after John McCoy (Iulilaš).

**Sponsors:** Representatives Lekanoff, Santos, Ryu, Tharinger, Ortiz-Self, Ramel, Cortes, Morgan, Reed, Ormsby, Timmons, Callan, Peterson, Chopp, Donaghy, Gregerson, Doglio, Fosse, Orwall, Bergquist, Stonier, Mena, Wylie, Reeves, Riccelli, Pollet, Shavers and Davis.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 1/16/24 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Names the curriculum used to teach public school students about tribal history, culture, and government as the John McCoy (Iulilaš) Since Time Immemorial curriculum.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Shavers, Vice Chair; Rude, Ranking Minority Member; McEntire, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Couture, Eslick, Harris, McClintock, Nance, Ortiz-Self, Pollet, Steele, Stonier and Timmons.

**Staff:** Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

## **Background:**

### Social Studies Curricula—Tribal History and Culture.

School districts must incorporate curricula about the history, culture, and government of the nearest federally recognized Indian tribe or tribes into their social studies curricula. The requirement is activated when a school district reviews or adopts social studies curricula. In meeting the requirement, school districts must use a curriculum developed by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) called *Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State* (STI curriculum). The STI curriculum has been endorsed for use by the 29 federally recognized tribes in Washington and districts may modify the curriculum to incorporate elements that have a regionally specific focus.

As school districts conduct regularly scheduled reviews and revisions of their social studies and history curricula, they must collaborate with any federally recognized Indian tribe within their district, and with neighboring Indian tribes, for the purpose of incorporating expanded and improved curricular materials about Indian tribes, and creating programs of classroom and community cultural exchanges.

School districts must also collaborate with the OSPI on curricular areas regarding tribal government and history that are statewide in nature, such as the concept of tribal sovereignty and the history of federal policy towards federally recognized Indian tribes.

### John McCoy.

In 2005 Rep. John McCoy, whose traditional name in Lushootseed is *lulilaš*, sponsored House Bill 1495. The adopted legislation (Chapter 205, Laws of 2005, enacted as Substitute House Bill 1495) began the process of incorporating information about tribal history, culture, and government into social studies courses in which Washington or United States history is taught, and established the statutory foundation for the use of the STI curriculum in public schools.

Mr. McCoy, who passed away June 6, 2023, represented the thirty-eighth Legislative District from 2003-2013 in the House of Representatives, and from 2013-2020 in the Washington Senate.

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## **Summary of Bill:**

The curriculum used to teach public school students about tribal history, culture, and government is designated as the John McCoy (*lulilaš*) *Since Time Immemorial* curriculum.

Specifies that the bill shall be known and cited as the John McCoy (*lulilaš*) Memorial Tribal History, Culture, and Government Act.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This is the first time the Legislature will incorporate Lushootseed into law, and it is through John McCoy's traditional name. This is a historic moment for Washington and an honor to the McCoy family. With one word, Senator McCoy brings us together as one Washington.

Mr. McCoy's traditional name, luliláš, is shared by family members through generations. Traditional names have a unique and special importance for families. Mr. McCoy would never have asked for this honor, but to have it bestowed on him is very much appreciated. He was always very interested in education and teaching people about Indian affairs and tribal law.

Education is very important to the Nisqually Tribe, and the importance of language is recognized, as is the significance of language keepers. Much work remains, but Senator McCoy inspired tribal leaders and change. The Nisqually Tribe's flag is flown over schools in Lacey, Washington because of Mr. McCoy.

Senator McCoy worked to bring the STI curriculum to fruition. He earned the right to have the curriculum named after him because of his work, but also because of how he treated and respected others.

This bill is fully supported and is an honor to the family. Mr. McCoy was a teacher who brought Coast Salish culture to the capitol and did the same thing for students through the STI curriculum. He improved the lives of many people, and his family and friends are grateful for his service, advocacy, resilience, and dedication.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Debra Lekanoff, prime sponsor; Willard Bill Jr., Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Teri Gobin, Tulalip Tribes of Washington; Jeannie McCoy; Bradley Althoff; Willie Frank; and Lieutenant Governor Denny Heck.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.