

Hello, my name is Hugh Kibera and I am here today to address why I feel black history should be a class next year. To start off, it is not a matter of black history being separate from the rest of America, but rather appreciating it because it is also American history. The history of our country. The contributions made by black people deserve to be acknowledged every day, not just in the month of February. Some may see the class as only beneficial to students of color, but that is far from the truth. For example, Elbert Frank Cox (1895-1969) was the first black man to earn a Ph.D in math in the U.S and the entire world. As you may see, this is something that could resonate with a math teacher/professor, not just black students. This history is as important as acknowledging Neil Armstrong, the first human to step on the moon who we are all proud of and globally celebrate.

While we do introduce black figures in classes such as world history like Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks, that is just the tip of the iceberg. There is more black history than the civil rights movement. If we dive deeper into the harsh reality of the living conditions during slavery that was experienced by African Americans among other people, in building America, such as railroads, we are likely to be more appreciative of them and show more compassion. There is such a beautiful, rich and vibrant culture deeply embedded in the black community and all this class would do is shed so much more light on how we've come up the past hundreds of years. Ladies and gentlemen, this isn't a matter of forcing political views onto your children, indoctrinating how your children feel or insinuating that racism is a social construct and putting this class as an option is furthering that agenda. This is a matter of wanting to research/look at textbooks/read and resonating with that on a deeper level. This is a matter of wanting to know black history. My history. And American history as a whole.

And may I reiterate, this class is an option. It is not required, anyone who chooses to take the class is taking it voluntarily. Thank you so much for letting me speak today, and have a wonderful evening.