



## **Raza Studies: The Public Option for Educational Revolution**

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# Raza Studies: The Public Option for Educational Revolution

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The well-known and controversial Mexican American studies (MAS) program in Arizona's Tucson Unified School District set out to create an equitable and excellent educational experience for Latino students. *Raza Studies: The Public Option for Educational Revolution* offers the first comprehensive account of this progressive—indeed revolutionary—program by those who created it, implemented it, and have struggled to protect it.

Inspired by Paulo Freire's vision for critical pedagogy and Chicano activists of the 1960s, the designers of the program believed their program would encourage academic achievement and engagement by Mexican American students. With chapters by leading scholars, this volume explains how the program used "critically compassionate intellectualism" to help students become "transformative intellectuals" who successfully worked to improve their level of academic achievement, as well as create social change in their schools and communities.

Despite its popularity and success inverting the achievement gap, in 2010 Arizona state legislators introduced and passed legislation with the intent of banning MAS or any similar curriculum in public schools. *Raza Studies* is a passionate defense of the program in the face of heated local and national attention. It recounts how one program dared to venture to a world of possibility, hope, and struggle, and offers compelling evidence of success for social justice education programs.

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