From: Stacy Kono

Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 5:13 PM **To:** Ethnic Studies < Ethnic Studies @cde.ca.gov>

Cc: [email redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Keep Japanese American history in the CA Curriculum

Dear Superintendent Tony Thurmond,

It has come to my attention that the California Department of Education is considering excluding content about Asian and Pacific Islander history for the state Ethnic Studies Model curriculum (ESMC).

I am third generation Japanese American Californian, and currently live in Berkeley, CA. I attended Twin Creeks Elementary, Los Cerros Junior High and San Ramon Valley High School - all public schools in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District. I did not learn about Japanese American or Asian American history until college and after, which left me without an understanding of the experience of diverse communities including my own family's history.

This "late" learning for me meant that I grew up without understanding of my parents' and grandparents' traumatic experiences during WWII of incarceration. It meant that I did not understand how the racism they experienced was connected to a longer history of anti-Asian immigration policies. It meant I did not see my connection to other communities of color until much later in my life and understand the importance of combatting racism.

Particularly, in this moment when our country is reckoning with our long history of white supremacy (including having national leadership that is supported by white nationalists), our state MUST NOT leave out the experiences of people of color from our text books. We risk reversing the progress made by so many communities to lifting up the stories and experiences of our growing people of color majority - whose histories all are so important to our state and to our country.

I understand today is the deadline for you to receive input from the community so I urge you to include content in the ESMC about Asian and Pacific Islander history, including Japanese American history.

Thank you for your consideration, Stacy Kono