

**From:** Winty Singh  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2020 10:47 AM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies  
**Subject:** Sikh inclusion in CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Advisory Committee,

I am writing today to request the meaningful inclusion of Sikhism in the California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum for entry into the public record.

My name is Winty Singh and I have been a resident of California since 2003. I live in Elk Grove, CA and work in healthcare administration.

Please insert a few sentences speaking about your personal experiences regarding education about Sikhism in K-12 public school classrooms. Have you encountered a lack of teaching about Sikhism, inaccurate teaching about Sikhism, or incidents of bias / bullying due to your identity at school?

As a resident of Elk Grove, I was surprised to find the lack of education around Sikhs and California Sikh history in our schools. After the murders of two Sikh grandfathers in 2011 in my city, I began doing presentations for school teachers, administrators and students about California Sikh history. Quite often, most of what I was presenting was new content that students were not learning about in their normal curriculum. I found this surprising given that California is home to the largest population of Sikhs in the country, and that Sikhs in this state have a rich history and contribution in California. I wonder why community volunteers are required to educate our students about their state.

I am extremely disappointed that the Sikh community, which has been an integral part of California's history and economy since the early 1900s, is not represented in a meaningful way in the initial Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum draft.

There are approximately 250,000 Sikhs in California. A report by the Sikh Coalition found that turbaned Sikhs are bullied at a rate double the national average. I wish to reiterate that the inclusion of Sikhism, the world's fifth largest religion, in the model curriculum in a meaningful way, is an essential step in overcoming ignorance and in reducing bullying and harassment.

Specifically, I request:

- A detailed lesson plan about the Sikh American community to be inserted into the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.
- More specific examples throughout the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum that focus on the myriad of positive Sikh contributions made over 125 years in California, to balance the current language's focus on the hateful backlash against Sikhs in the context of post-9/11 Islamophobia.

The Sikh Coalition and the Jakara Movement will be in communication with you soon, specifying the details of these requests. I ask that the recommendations made in their forthcoming letter be incorporated into the final Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum on my behalf.

Yours sincerely,

Winty Singh