

From: Lavender Whitaker
Sent: Monday, June 1, 2020 9:47 AM
To: [emails redacted]
Cc: [email redacted]; Sanchez, Mark; Parvin Ahmadi; Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Resolution

Dear Fellow School Board Members,

We are Lavender Whitaker, Mark Sanchez, and Patricia Murray, respectively, the School Board Presidents of the Boards of Education in Castro Valley Unified, San Francisco Unified, and South San Francisco Unified. In April and May our trustees unanimously adopted a resolution affirming support of AB2016 California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Draft. We are reaching out to request that you do the same. In the name of diversity, many of our students of color, similar to yours, are part of these marginalized groups, and it is time for there to be a curriculum that addresses this equity issue, while also benefiting white students. In this way all students can learn about and gain a better understanding of each other.

Since the late 1960s, when Ethnic Studies was first created and became an interdisciplinary program on UC campuses as well as at the California State University level, it has served not only as an academic field but also as a powerful force for student performance and graduation rates. We recognize and applaud the current efforts with the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), which ensures a curriculum that provides fair representation for students of color and those facing increasing discrimination in the current global climate, and which has been developed by leading Ethnic Studies educators in our state and world.

AB2016 California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Draft is an important step in the right direction and is in alignment with the core values of celebrating diversity, commitment to inclusion, and ensuring equity. We believe that the ESMC is also in alignment with the mission of Jefferson Union High School District.

We all know that the challenges for our students today are ever increasing. As policy makers, we need to take the lead and address their needs and provide opportunities and access in a variety of ways. We believe that communities of color have been working towards this Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum draft for 50+ years and that it is important to support the work of the leading Ethnic Studies educators in the state today. This is an important step forward for all our students, which is why we support the ESMC draft and hope tonight you will vote to support it as well.

Sincerely,

Lavender Whitaker, Board President
Castro Valley Unified School District

Mark Sanchez, Board President
San Francisco Unified School District

Pat Murray, Board President

South San Francisco Unified School District