



**National Korean  
Studies Seminar**  
Since 2004 at Korean Cultural Center Los Angeles

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Dear California Department of Education,

As an experienced elementary school teacher, I have a dream to teach the family stories of all ethnic groups in America to my students. For twenty-five years, I have taught my children about many American heroes and American history. We, students and teachers, celebrate Black History Month in February and National Hispanic Heritage Month in September 15 to October 15. However, it is difficult to find out some famous figures from minority ethnic groups in the current curriculum in California.

Our governor Newsom has signed Assembly Bill (AB) 1460 making ethnic studies course a requirement to graduate from California State University (CSU) system and AB 331 that requires inclusion of an ethnic studies courses as a high school graduation requirement is in the last stage of approval. Ethnic Studies is meant to educate students about the full range of experiences, perspectives, contributions, and knowledge of People of Color that has been left out of the school curriculum with a central focus on anti-racism.

While it's exciting to see the ESMC is moving forward and our students will have the opportunity to learn about our diverse community, I'm deeply concerned that Korean American studies have been excluded. Information related to Korea and Koreans who have struggled and worked together to shape California and the U.S. are not included.

Two million of Korean Americans have immigrated into America since 1903 to seek for the "American Dream". Korean Americans have contributed to California and American society in many ways as other ethnic groups have done so. For example, we can't discuss the 1992 Los Angeles Civil Unrest without including Korean Americans and the ethnic conflicts that arose during that period and how this contributed to the violence and marginalization of Asian Americans. Susan Ahn Cuddy is one of the Korean American figures that demonstrates why Korean American studies should be included in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. She broke gender and ethnic boundaries and became the first female United States Navy gunnery officer during World War II. She was a lieutenant and helped train pilots to shoot enemies during World War II.

Also, California recognizes Korean Americans through two resolutions. Hangul Day was passed on October 19, 2019 and recognizes Korean Americans as "an integral part of mainstream American society and have made important contributions as Californians in the fields of finance, technology, law, medicine, education, sports, media, the arts, the military, and government, as well as in other areas." California also recognized Korean American Day on January 13, 2020 by passing Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 142 citing that "with diligence, fortitude, and an enduring belief in the American dream, Korean immigrants have helped to turn emergent areas within the State of California into thriving and respectable communities, while raising their children to be productive Korean Americans."

From the few examples listed above, it's clear that the Korean American community's presence, impact, and history are significant and an important part of ethnic studies education. To not include the Korean American community in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum would be to ignore a major part of California's and America's heart and soul.

Thus, I absolutely believe that the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum should include Korean American Experience: Interethnic Relations in its Asian American studies section. To leave out Korean Americans is yet again another marginalization and discriminatory action.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sung Kim", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sung Kim

Teacher, Cedarlane Academy, HLPUSD

President, National Korean Studies