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January 19, 2021

State Board of Education

c/o California Department of Education

Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division

1430 N Street, Suite 3207

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear State Board of Education:

The Asian Pacific Islander (API) Caucus is a diversity caucus organized within the League of California Cities. The Caucus supports and advances local API elected officials and advocates for the well-being of the diverse API community throughout the state.

The League of California Cities Asian Pacific Islander (API) Caucus supports the Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association (APISBMA) request for revisions to the final draft of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) to be presented to the State Board of Education (SBE) in March 2021.

The desired revisions which are focused on usability, accessibility, and equity are as follows:

1. The "Asian Americans and the Model Minority Myth" Lesson, Sample Lesson #31 in Appendix A, should be listed as the first sample lesson in the AAPI unit and be rewritten to remove stereotypes and to incorporate reflection based on analyzing data.
2. Language should be added to Chapter 3: Instructional Guidance for K-12 Education to frame "Asian Americans and the Model Minority Myth" as a foundational lesson to the AAPI Unit and as an indispensable component of any Ethnic Studies course.
3. In the AAPI Unit, the pan-Asian lesson plans should be listed first, followed by one lesson plan per ethnic group in alphabetical order, and concluding with an additional resources section for groups with more than one lesson plan. Groups with more than one lesson plan should provide input on which lesson plan is foundational for their group.
4. Appendix A should be reclassified as "Chapter 4" in the ESMC and "Chapter 4: Bibliography" should be reclassified as "Chapter 5: Bibliography" Appendices A and B (formerly Appendices B and C). The lesson plans must be highlighted as core content for educators to build Ethnic Studies courses, not as supporting content in an Appendix.

We believe that the new revisions will create a more robust learning plan for students as well as giving equal space to the diverse spectrum of ethnicities in the category of Asian American and Pacific Islanders.

The “model minority” myth was created to pit Asian Americans against other underrepresented groups. Though this stereotype was created over five decades ago, it continues to destructively impact Asian Americans to this day. Moreover, this harmful fallacy that all Asian Americans are successful is often the reason why Asian Americans are overlooked and underserved in the public, private, and social sectors. It also renders Asian Americans invisible in American history and ignores the systemic discrimination and barriers that they face in the United States.

“Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies” is an indispensable asset to the teaching of Ethnic Studies. We join local, statewide, and national organizations in support of the final approval of the ESMC; with these edits to the AAPI Unit and to the ESMC in general. We believe California students will soon experience a curriculum that better represents the diversity of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annie Lam". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Annie Lam, M.P.A.  
Executive Director  
League of CA Cities API Caucus