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September 10, 2019

Instructional Quality Commission
California Dept. of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: California Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Esteemed colleagues:

On behalf of the Italian American Museum of Los Angeles, we submit this letter as a formal request to include Italian Americans in the state's ethnic studies curriculum.

Italian Americans are one of the largest ethnic groups in California and the United States, with a history in the region that predates California's statehood. From agriculture to finance, the entertainment industry to medicine, Italian Americans have contributed to every aspect of the state's development and have shaped it into the place it is today.

Despite this extensive and distinct history, the Italian American experience has largely been ignored in the California content standards and in most textbooks. For instance, although the Italian Americans of California were hit particularly hard by World War II-era violations of civil liberties—thousands were arrested, forced to leave their homes, had their property seized, and hundreds were interned—this tragic chapter of our history is seldom acknowledged.

By including the Italian American experience, we present a richer, more accurate account of our nation's history. The Italian American Museum of Los Angeles, which possesses nearly two decades of experience in education and creating curriculum, would be happy to assist however possible in telling the Italian American story.

We look forward to collaborating to achieve this goal.

Kindest regards,

Marianna Gatto