

**From:** Jacqueline Kim

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 15, 2020 5:43 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comments on the Revised Draft ESMC (Second Field Review)

Dear California Department of Education (CDE),

We are residents of California and are submitting our comments for your consideration for the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). Please consider the following three recommendations:

1. **Include Korean-American studies and/or modules in the ESMC**, specifically in Appendix B (Sample Lessons and Topics) and Appendix C (Lesson Resources), so that valuable lessons from Korean-Americans' lives and work experiences during the past century are shared with all students in California as reflecting successful, model immigrants
2. **Ensure both the accuracy and the volume of Korean-American-related material in the ESMC are representative and fair** by soliciting and consulting appropriate leading Korean-American educators currently active in California's higher education system
3. **Obtain concurrence from current, leading Korean-American educators and appropriate Korean-American community leaders** in vetting the relevant materials before deploying ESMC to classrooms.

Korean Americans are an integral part of California and American history. The first organized Korean Americans settled in Riverside, California in 1905, and the State of California currently has the largest segment of the Korean-American population, which is 31% of approximately 2 million Korean Americans in the U.S.

Korean Americans may not be the largest minority in California but they provide significant economic and political contributions to the State of California via income, property, and commerce tax revenues, consumer purchasing power and entrepreneurship, and active participation in the state's legislative process.

According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, 28% of Korean-American men and 20% of Korean-American women own their own businesses—the highest rate of entrepreneurship in the country. Even though these data are from 1995, we can easily extrapolate the significance of Korean Americans' impact on California's economy in 2020 and into the future.

It is alarming that egregiously inaccurate information about Korean Americans and Asian Americans in general is currently being taught in higher education institutions in California. For example, in a Social Sciences class at a college in Los Angeles, the recent success of Asian-American women's effort to close the wage gap with men has been incorrectly attributed to the

pre-existing wealth of Asian immigrants instead of more accurate reasons, such as the relentless focus on higher education, higher expectations for Asian-American children, and close family relationships.

Inaccurate information taught in classes is harmful to Korean Americans. It discourages them from striving to be productive and contributing members of California and the U.S. and marginalizes a key economic force behind California's success. Further, it hinders harmonious coexistence alongside other ethnic groups in California, unfairly jeopardizes future opportunities, and dismisses their history of hardship, even though Korean-Americans have experienced a similar immigration history of unfavorable work conditions, racism, and language discrimination as experienced by other immigrants of differing racial and cultural backgrounds.

Your effort to carefully select and thoroughly vet the most accurate and appropriate educational material for all students in California can prevent unfair treatment of Korean Americans and may prevent any potential fallout resulting from unintended discrimination in the future.

Sincerely,

eSigned by:

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*Bernard Hill*, Huntington Beach, CA