

From: Carol Kwang Park

Sent: Monday, September 28, 2020 1:04 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment & Petition w/ More than 5,000 Signatures for the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear California Department of Education,

My name is Carol Park and I'm an Ethnic Studies graduate student in the PhD program at the University of California Riverside. I'm reaching out to you today because I want to add my voice and the voices of the 5,518 individuals who signed a petition for the inclusion of Korean Americans in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. I've also attached PDFs of the comments and signatures of the people who signed the petition. Below is also a link and the text of the petition.

Personally, I believe including Korean Americans in the model curriculum is important because the community's long history includes crucial ethnic studies topics like race relations, ethnic identity, the formation of ethnic enclaves, and more. Such topics are essential in understanding interethnic relations and what it means to be a minority in the United States. The Korean American experience provides a complete framework of the subject of ethnic studies. (Please see the petition text below for further information on the Korean American experience). Once again, I implore the California Department of Education to please consider including Korean Americans in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

Link: <https://www.change.org/IncludeKoreanAmericanStudiesinCAETSTCurriculumPetition>

Petition:

Dear California Department of Education,

The inclusion of Ethnic Studies in our education system is a great step forward. However, the exclusion of Korean American studies from California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum is deeply concerning. This is a petition to include Korean American studies in the Asian American studies portion of the curriculum. The goal is to include the Korean American experience or studies in the major sample topics that were listed in the Item 2.A, Attachment 9 Document where sample lessons are listed in the model curriculum.

The Korean American community has long helped shape the American landscape through its community activities, its contributions, and more. 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 against and marginalization of Asian Americans. Korean Americans including Dr. Sammy Lee and Col. Young Oak Kim also helped shape this country through their actions, valor, and character. Dr. Lee won Olympic gold for America in 1948 and 1952 and was the first Asian American man to do so. Col. Kim was a U.S. Army officer who became the first Asian American man to lead a combat battalion on the field during the Korean War. He was also a World War II hero. His humanitarian efforts also shaped the landscape of Los Angeles through the founding of several nonprofits and organizations that help the youth, battered women, and minorities.

Korean American history and identity should be taught as part of the curriculum because this community played a major role in California and the country. Korean Americans founded the Willows Korean Aviation School/Corps in Willows, CA in 1920. The Korean Air Force views the school as its origin.

To understand the Korean American community, its history and ethnic identity is to also understand the framework of our country and how this great nation is made up of minorities and their histories.

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.”

To leave out Korean Americans from California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum is yet another marginalization and discriminatory action.

Thank you,

Carol K. Park
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