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September 30, 2020

Instructional Quality Commission
c/o California Department of Education
Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division
1430 N Street, Suite 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Instructional Quality Commission Members:

On behalf of the California Asian Pacific Islander (API) Legislative Caucus, we thank you for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) draft. We appreciate the efforts of Superintendent Tony Thurmond and the California Department of Education to incorporate stakeholder input in the most recent revision. This model curriculum is essential for school districts as they consider implementing ethnic studies courses to cultivate student learning and growth.

As the two course outlines about Pacific Islanders and Arab Americans were restored, we also support the restoration of the sample lessons on Cambodian Americans and Asian American and Pacific Islander communities which were all previously included in the initial draft released in 2019. We understand that additional dialogue and research is needed to ensure these lessons meet prescribed standards and we appreciate the continued engagement of stakeholders by Superintendent Thurmond and the California Department of Education.

Additionally, with more than thirty ethnicities within the Asian American and Pacific Islander identity, we respectfully request that the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) consider inclusion of more API communities to better reflect our diversity. The current draft includes sample lessons on Chinese railroad workers, Filipino farmworkers and Hmong Americans. We request that the IQC consider adding sample lessons that includes Indian Americans, Japanese Americans, Korean Americans, Sikh Americans, Vietnamese Americans and other API subgroups. California is home to the largest API population in the nation and the next revision of the ESMC must represent this.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to having ongoing discussions with Superintendent Thurmond, IQC and the State Board of Education as the process moves forward. For questions, please contact Cat Nou, API Legislative Caucus Chief Consultant, at (916) 319-3686.

Sincerely,

DAVID CHIU
Assemblymember, 17th A.D.
Chair, Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus