

From: Prabhleen Kaur
Sent: Friday, March 27, 2020 2:31 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: Sikh inclusion in CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Advisory Committee,

I am writing today to request the meaningful inclusion of Sikhism in the California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum for entry into the public record. My name is Prabhleen Kaur and I live in Fremont, California. I am a sophomore at Washington High School in Fremont Unified School District.

I have personal experience regarding education about Sikhism in K-12 public school classrooms. There is definitely a lack of teaching about Sikhism as it has not even been mentioned in any history classes I've taken ever since elementary school. This year in high school, our class did a genocide project and one of the topics was the 1984 Anti-Sikh Massacre. However, many students choose this topic to study used inaccurate information on the web as they had not been educated about Sikhism in the classroom. They also had a difficult time finding resources to use for their research because our library did not have any available.

I am extremely disappointed that the Sikh community, which has been an integral part of California's history and economy since the early 1900s, is not represented in a meaningful way in the initial Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum draft.

There are approximately 250,000 Sikhs in California. A report by the Sikh Coalition found that turbaned Sikhs are bullied at a rate double the national average. I wish to reiterate that the inclusion of Sikhism, the world's fifth largest religion, in the model curriculum in a meaningful way, is an essential step in overcoming ignorance and in reducing bullying and harassment.

Specifically, I request:

1. A detailed lesson plan about the Sikh American community to be inserted into the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.
2. More specific examples throughout the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum that focus on the myriad of *positive* Sikh contributions made over 125 years in California, to balance the current language's focus on the hateful backlash against Sikhs in the context of post-9/11 Islamophobia.

The Sikh Coalition and the Jakara Movement will be in communication with you soon, specifying the details of these requests. I ask that the recommendations made in their forthcoming letter be incorporated into the final Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum on my behalf.

Yours sincerely,
Prabhleen Kaur