



Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

August 13, 2019

State Board of Education
1430 N Street, Room 5111
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear State Board President Darling-Hammond, Vice President Straus, and Member Ortiz-Licon,

On behalf of the Armenian National Committee of America-Western Region, the largest grassroots advocacy organization working on behalf of the vast Armenian-American community in the Western United States, its 21 local chapters dispersed throughout California, and its Education Committee which leads the effort on including Armenian Genocide education in public schools, we would like to thank you for your strong leadership on the Ethnic Studies model curriculum.

California is home to generations of Armenian-Americans who comprise the largest Armenian community anywhere outside Armenia. Representing our constituents, we express our sincere gratitude for listening to our concerns and taking steps to ask for a redesign of the Ethnic Studies model curriculum. The reference in your public statement to Governor Newsom's vision and the importance of being inclusive while ensuring the value of diversity is respected was much appreciated.

Many of the educators in our community have expressed disappointment that their stories were missing from a mandated course of study. In response to concerns raised in our community, we have partnered with Jewish, Greek, Hindu and Korean organizations to ensure that the stories of all these diverse ethnic groups are appropriately taught, as each group has contributed greatly to the diverse fabric of our society.

As you are certainly aware, the California history and social studies framework makes specific reference to the importance of teaching students specifically about the Jewish Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide. It is our hope and expectation that the new Ethnic Studies curriculum will build upon this framework.

Please know that we have a wealth of resources, materials, and talent that can help with preparing a unit in this course of study that would give voice to the immigrant families and their children who have long waited to have their stories told. Please feel free to call upon us. We stand ready to assist you as needed.

We look forward to contributing, supporting, and celebrating the outcome of an Ethnic Studies program in California's public schools that truly represents the diversity of our State.



Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

Sincerely,

Nora Hovsepian, Esq.

Chair

Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

cc: Governor Gavin Newsom

Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis

Superintendent Tony Thurmond

Senators

Assembly Members