



Instructional Quality Commission
c/o California Department of Education
Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division
1430 N Street, Suite 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814
Via electronic service to ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov

September 30, 2020

Re: Comments to represent the Sikh community on the revised draft Second Field Review

Dear California Department of Education and Instructional Quality Commission Members:

We write to you regarding the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum currently under your consideration. We strongly recommend that the California Department of Education (CDE) and the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) include the Sikh community's invaluable contributions and rich history within California and beyond, within an Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum framework.

Punjabi Sikhs are an integral part of the Asian American story of California and should be included in that particular heading of the four foundational disciplines. With a history in the state stretching over 110 years with the foundation of the Stockton Gurdwara, the Sikh story involves anti-racist and anti-colonialist movements, expanding inclusion in the body politic, overcoming Anti-Asian exclusion, creating new forms of familial bonds and relations, and contributing to the building of a new California dream.

It is our understanding that over the last year, more than a thousand California Sikhs and 52 California gurdwaras (Sikh houses of worship) have expressed to the CDE and IQC why it is critical that the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum specifically addresses the contributions of the Sikh American community. Such inclusion will not only combat bullying, discrimination, hate crime, and profiling against the Sikh community, but will also celebrate their positive contributions to the history of California. The most recent draft shared for public comment removes specificity and therefore we deem it critical, at the very least, to include a lesson plan about the Sikh community.

We believe the model curriculum should include the Sikh community and its rich, century-old history and contributions to California in agriculture, health care, and transportation. Given the magnitude and concentration of the Sikh population in California, with Punjabi being the 3rd most spoken language in the Central Valley, there are many students who stand to benefit from a more diverse ethnic studies guideline.

We hope that the CDE and IQC will consider the Sikh community's recommendations and recognize that a strong Ethnic Studies framework that advances anti-racist education by increasing awareness and understanding of marginalized communities is critical to California's well-being.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jo'.

Dr. Joaquin Arambula
Assemblymember
31st District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sabrina Cervantes'.

Sabrina Cervantes
Assemblymember
60th District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rudy Salas'.

Rudy Salas
Assemblymember
32nd District