



INTERNATIONAL KOREAN EDUCATORS NETWORK www.ikeneducate.org

16156 High Tor Drive Hacienda Heights CA 91745 info@ikeneducate.org 909-973-0449

Dear California Department of Education,

I am a teacher at Cedarlane elementary school in Los Angeles County. I have been teaching for twenty-five years in Los Angeles Unified School District and Hacienda La Puente Unified School District. As a classroom teacher, I have taught my children about George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Caesar Chavez, Martin Luther King Jr, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Ruby Bridges....etc. We, students and teachers, celebrate Black History Month in February and National Hispanic Heritage Month in September 15 to October 15.

California governor Newsom has recently signed Assembly Bill (AB) 1460 making ethnic studies course a requirement to graduate from California State University (CSU) system and AB 331 that requires inclusion of an ethnic studies course as a high school graduations requirement is in the last stage of approval.

Ethnic Studies is meant to educate students about the full range of experiences, perspectives, contributions, and knowledge of People of Color that has been left out of the school curriculum with a central focus on anti-racism. Research continues to show that Ethnic Studies in K-12 increases academic achievement, improves cross-racial understanding, engages students more deeply in their school careers, and lowers drop-out rate.

While it's exciting to see the ESMC is moving forward and our students will have the opportunity to learn about our diverse community, I'm deeply concerned that Korean American studies have been excluded. Information related to Korea and Koreans who have struggled and worked together to shape California and the U.S. are not included. Only Koreatown and K-pop are included as one of the additional sample topics. 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.

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 and marginalization of Asian Americans. Since 1992 Korean American community has made a lot of effort to collaborate with other ethnic groups. Korean Americans including Dr. Sammy Lee and Col. Young Oak Kim also helped form 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 to lead a combat battalion on the field during the Korean War. He was also a World War II hero. His humanitarian efforts also molded the landscape of Los Angeles through the founding of several nonprofits and organizations that help the youth, battered women, and minorities regardless ethnic groups.

Finally, as a twenty-five year experienced classroom teacher, I strongly recommend the lesson "**Korean American Experience : Interethnic Relations**" should be included in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) to be approved by the IQC so that it should be taught to all of the K-12 students in California.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Sung Kim

Teacher, Cedarlane Academy, HLPUSD

President, International Korean Educators Network