

From: Robert Levi
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 11:08 AM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] CA Ethnic Studies MC -Public Comment Agenda Item #2

Commission,

My name is Robert J. Levi, II. I am a retired AP/CP US History teacher from Upland High School. I am also the past Chair of California Teacher Association's American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus. I am writing regarding Agenda item #2, History-Social Science Subject Matter, the recently released draft of the CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

As a high school educator of 40 years and a Desert Cahuilla Indian (Torres Martinez Reservation), I was extremely disappointed in the curriculum developed for the Native American Studies. The curriculum fails to provide the Native voices, experience, and perspective needed to provide a rich and encompassed teaching/learning experience.

I vehemently implore that you include and/or exclude the following guidelines:

1. Remove the words "Indigenous Studies" from the title and replace using "Native American Studies/American Indian Studies". By adding "Indigenous Studies" the focus of topics would not remain focused on the California Indians and/or Indians within the United States.
2. Revise or replace "Mascots" sample lesson. The reading of this lesson does not give full historical understanding of this topic. Nor does it attempt to mention California Racial Mascots Act, AB-30 of 2017.
3. Move the "Decolonizing Your Diet" back to the Chicana/o Latina/o Studies and replace it with an effective one in the Native American Studies segment. This lesson does not give equal understanding of Native foods and their relationship to the environment.
4. Remove the UC approved high school Native American Studies course as they are not culturally relevant in content, rigor and pedagogy.
5. Add the over 109 California tribes' languages, regions, and significant figures as basic information to demonstrate that Natives are alive in the present and make significant contributions to our society.
6. This curriculum should not be approved as is, the approval must require California Indian tribal and teacher (K - 12) consultation and field testing!

I strongly support my fellow Ethnic Studies colleagues in addressing the need to have an accurate voice from the California/Native American community reflected in the CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Robert J. Levi, II
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indian Tribal Member
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Past CTA American Indian/Alaska Native, Chair