



San Jose Nikkei Resisters
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Instructional Quality Commission
California Department of Education
Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division
430 N Street, Suite 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814

September 30, 2020

Dear California Department of Education Instructional Quality Commission,

San Jose Nikkei Resisters is a multi-generational Japanese American grassroots organization. We are appalled at the exclusion of Japanese Americans from the California Model Ethnic Studies Curriculum. For well over 100 years (a century!), Japanese Americans have contributed importantly to California economy, politics, education, and civic and social life. In addition, our history is one that clearly represents the complexities of political and social freedom for people of color in the United States, especially in a time of war. As a multi-generational organization, our members include those who were incarcerated in Japanese American camps during WWII, some of us fought for redress and reparations in the 1980s, and many of us are descendants of those incarcerated. A California Ethnic Studies curriculum that teaches students using a set of lesson plans that excludes Japanese Americans is an inaccurate one that cannot begin to reflect the purpose of Ethnic Studies – to educate students on our past so that they are equipped to build a better future.

We support the Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association (APISBMA) position that the following revisions be made to the third draft of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) to be presented to the IQC in November 2020:

1. Restore lesson plans on Cambodian Americans and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (as a pan-ethnic group) that were present in the July 2019 draft, specifically curricula on:
 - o Myths and Realities Surrounding the Asian Pacific Islander American Community
 - o Cambodian Americans – Deportation Breaking Families Apart
2. At minimum, include additional lesson plans for Japanese Americans, Korean Americans, Vietnamese Americans, and Asian Indian Americans. These ethnic groups represent some

of the largest Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) ethnic groups according to 2010 Census data.

In addition, we support modifying the Pacific Islander Ethnic Studies lesson plan so that it is reflective of what the community wants. Each of the lessons should be authored or approved by the group that is represented in the curriculum should that be a desire.

The “Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies” unit must offer the foundational overview of the AAPI pan-ethnic identity, include the full spectrum of the AAPI community, and align with the expansive CDE vision imagined in Chapter 3. **I urge you to protect and improve the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum and reach out to AAPI community stakeholders to review lesson content for authenticity and prior to submission to the IQC in November.**

Sincerely,

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