

January 14, 2021

Sent via email: [iqc@cde.ca.gov](mailto:iqc@cde.ca.gov)

From: [Shereen@hinduamerican.org](mailto:Shereen@hinduamerican.org)

Re: ESMC - Agenda Item

Dear Members of Instructional Quality Commission:

My name is Shereen Bhalla, PhD and I am the Director of Education at the Hindu American Foundation. The Hindu American Foundation (HAF) is an advocacy organization established in 2003 and focuses on educating the public about Hindus and Hinduism and supporting policies and practices that ensure the well-being of all people and the planet. The Hindu American community, estimated at 3.2 million, represents diverse ethnic backgrounds, including but not limited to individuals of Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Malaysian, Indonesian, Afghani, Nepali, Bhutanese, Sri Lankan, Fijian, Caribbean, African, and European descent. The majority of Hindus, however, are of Indian ethnic origin and are primarily an immigrant community.

For the past year and a half, HAF has been devoted to the advocacy of an Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) which gives high school students an opportunity to learn the role of ethnicity, race and religion in the life of all its citizens, including those previously ignored. We were pleased to see a more inclusive approach in the third draft of the curriculum, and urge that the State Board of Education (SBE) **retain these essential modifications, while including those listed below as they reflect some of the many contributions made by Hindu Californian Americans.**

We have thoroughly reviewed every draft of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) proposed for the 2021-2022 academic year. While we understand and appreciate that not all ethnic groups will be represented, we do ask that the Commission please examine spaces where inclusion of the Hindu American population can happen. We continue to support the removal of ESMC content that is unbalanced and inaccurate, pushes religious and sectarian doctrine, supports division, demonization, and discrimination, and promotes illegal, violent, and subversive people, organizations, and action. This would ensure that the curriculum is consistent with accepted standards of professional responsibility and the law.

With Respect,

Shereen Bhalla, PhD

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
[Enter the Chapter Number here, or just "General" for a comment that applies to the entire document.]	[Enter Your Name]  [Enter the agency, organization, or business that you represent, if applicable.]	[Include the page and line number(s) here–Write your comment here]
Appendix A	Shereen Bhalla, PhD  Hindu American Foundation	Pg. 150 - thank you for including "Examining the Impact of Mahatma Gandhi on Social Change Movements" (links to <a href="https://www.hinduamerican.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/HAFN_19_05_0-GandhiLessonPlan_r4.pdf">https://www.hinduamerican.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/HAFN_19_05_0-GandhiLessonPlan_r4.pdf</a> ). We also recommend adding <a href="#">The Dharma of Cesar Chavez</a> explains how Chavez's personal and professional life were shaped by his spirituality and community.
Appendix B	Shereen Bhalla, PhD  Hindu American Foundation	Pg. 13 - please include Hindu American Foundations K-12 classroom resources in this list: <a href="https://www.hinduamerican.org/teaching-resources">https://www.hinduamerican.org/teaching-resources</a> These resources can assist educators in facilitating conversations about race, racism, and bigotry. The resources can be used to foster critical conversations and community within an ethnic studies classroom.
Appendix B	Shereen Bhalla, PhD  Hindu American Foundation	Pg. 16 - please include the following under California Museums and Historic Sites as they provide many educational resources on their webpage and at their respective centers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Center for Dharma Studies</a> at UC Berkeley</li> <li>• <a href="#">Dharma Civilization Foundation</a> at UC Irvine</li> <li>• <a href="#">Vedanta Society of Northern California</a> in San Francisco, CA</li> </ul>

Chapter 3	Shereen Bhalla, PhD  Hindu American Foundation	<p>Pg. 36 - please include the following topics to explore when researching South Asian migration in California:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Swami Vivekananda and his impact on Berkeley, California</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Luce-Celler Act of 1946</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Hart-Celler Act in 1965</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">California Alien Land Law of 1913</a></li> </ul>
Chapter 4	Shereen Bhalla, PhD  Hindu American Foundation	<p>Pg. 4 - please include <a href="#">Classroom Subjected: Bullying of Hindu students in the United States</a> as this a ethnographic study of the South Asian American experience:<a href="https://www.hinduamerican.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/HAFN_16_008-BullyingReport_final_RGB_r2.pdf">https://www.hinduamerican.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/HAFN_16_008-BullyingReport_final_RGB_r2.pdf</a></p>