

From: Cynthia Chang

Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 10:32 PM

To: SBE <SBE@cde.ca.gov>; Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>; Superintendent <Superintendent@cde.ca.gov>; [emails redacted]; IQC <IQC@cde.ca.gov>

Cc: [emails redacted]

Subject: API School Board Members Association Strongly Opposes July Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Draft

Dear State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, President Linda Darling-Hammond and members of the State Board of Education, Senator Ben Allen, Assemblymember Shirley Weber and members and staff of the Instruction Quality Commission at the California Department of Education,

Below please see the Press Release from the Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association:

Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association Press Release

The Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association (APISBMA) strongly opposes the July 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) Draft because it unnecessarily excludes communities of color that were present in previous drafts.

Specifically, the draft no longer includes course outlines and lesson plans on Cambodian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Arab Americans, and Asian Americans (as a pan-ethnic group). In addition, Resistance Against Mass Incarceration: The Attica Uprising lesson was removed from African American Studies and the Context of Oppression and Struggle and Indian Land: Purpose, Politics, and Practice of Land Acknowledgment lessons were removed from Native American Studies. All of these items were included in the prior June 2019 ESMC Draft.

APISBMA acknowledges that the June 2019 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Draft needed revision; however, no groups and course outlines that were a part of the original draft should have been removed during the revision process. During this era of xenophobia, violence, and hatred, it is not the time for the exclusion of any communities of color already presented in the draft. In fact, this period underlines why we need Ethnic Studies across our state and nation. One of the strengths of Ethnic Studies is that while it is necessarily centered on people of color, it is designed to uplift all students and to benefit everyone with the knowledge of what race is, what racism is, and how both race and racism structure American life.

APISBMA advocates that removed groups and course outlines be returned to the ESMC draft, revisions be made to further inclusion, and most importantly, a model curriculum be approved by March 2021 so that the work of incorporating ethnic studies into K-12 curriculum can proceed statewide. By introducing Ethnic Studies content as early as elementary school, students will be able to develop their skills about race over time, just as students develop their math and language skills over time. Future generations of Americans will have the race skills necessary to have positive interracial interactions and friendships, engage in difficult race related conversations, and work collaboratively to dismantle systemic racism.

APISBMA maintains that the “Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies” unit is categorically insufficient to assist teachers in building content on educating students about the full spectrum of the API community. The absence of sample course outlines and lesson plans in the July 2020 ESMC draft on Cambodian Americans, Arab Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Asian Americans (as a pan-ethnic group) is exclusionary. It will be to California’s detriment to lose the richness and diversity of API experiences if the current Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum draft is approved.

About the Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association (APISBMA):

In the state of California, there are over 750,000 Asian American, Filipino, and Pacific Islander students who attend K-12 public schools, which represents 12% of all students. The needs of API students are diverse and quite often overlooked. For nearly thirty years, APISBMA has advocated for an educational curriculum which more adequately represents the contributions and viewpoints of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and has developed coalitions with other educational, ethnic, and community organizations to promote equitable and quality education for all children. www.apisbma.org

Submitted by

Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association

President, Cynthia Chang, President of Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District

VP-Northern CA, Amy Koo, Vice President of ESD Belmont-Redwood Shores School District

5
CSBA Delegate, Region
VP-Southern CA, Andrea
Yamasaki, Trustee of Orange Unified School District
Secretary, Shelley Ryan, Vice President of San Marino Unified School District
Treasurer, Naomi Nakano-Matsumoto, Trustee of Fremont Union High School
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Board Member, Tony Ubalde, Trustee of Vallejo City Unified School District
CSBA Director, Region 3
Board Member, Darrel Woo, Trustee of Sacramento City Unified School
District
CSBA Director, Region 6
Board Member, Gino Kwok, Trustee of Hacienda La Puente Unified School
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CSBA Director at Large, Asian Pacific Islander
Board Member, Bob Gin, Trustee of Alhambra Unified School District