

**From:** Christine Noma

**Sent:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 11:47 AM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Cc:** APISBMA

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Japanese American History - Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear California Department of Education Instructional Quality Commission,

I am a Board Member of the Asian American Bar Association Law Foundation and law partner at Wendel Rosen, a law firm in Oakland. I'm also a parent of two sons who attended public schools in Burlingame (San Mateo County) and graduated from the UCs. I also grew up in the 1960s and 1970s, attended public schools in Marin County and San Francisco, and graduated from Cal and UC Hastings School of Law. My entire family is a product of the California public education system. I am also a second generation Japanese American with my mother having immigrated to the US after WW2, but my father's family first came to the US as grape farmers in the early 1900s. As such, I know first hand the importance of learning about the Japanese American history and experience.

**In the 1960s, as a young 10 year old, I hid my face in shame when my teacher showed the class a movie about the bombing of Pearl Harbor. My classmates glared at me with hatred and disgust, blaming me for the Japanese attack.** There was no mention of the incarceration of Japanese Americans families or citizens. Nothing about the wrongful conviction of Fred Korematsu, then a 19 year old from San Leandro. Nothing of the contribution of the Japanese American farmers to California agriculture in the Central Valley since the 1900s. **Just "I HATE JAPS"**. Until I was 12 years old, I grew up with racist bullying - **JAP, CHINK, SLANT EYE**. This out of ignorance and the FAILURE of the public school system to teach the value and importance of the Asian American experience in the US. It wasn't until I was a senior in high school that a Japanese American teacher who was teaching CALIFORNIA HISTORY and decided to include the Asian American experience in her curriculum that my classmates learned about the internment of Japanese American's in WW2.

Along with the Chinese and Filipino immigrants, Japanese immigrants laid the foundation for the Asian American experience in California. Our history must be taught in K-12. While many of the UCs require that students take an ethnic studies class, the classes do not cover the full spectrum of the Asian Americans in the US. More importantly, it is not enough to rely upon colleges to teach what every student in California must know about the diversity of our State.

I support the Asian Pacific Islander School Board Members Association (APISBMA) position that at a minimum, additional lesson plans for Japanese Americans, Korean Americans, Vietnamese Americans, and Asian Indian Americans must be included. These ethnic groups represent some of the largest Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) ethnic groups according to 2010 Census data. 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,

Christine Noma, Attorney and Parent