

Date of Hearing: April 25, 2018

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Patrick O'Donnell, Chair
AB 2002 (Arambula) – As Amended April 16, 2018

SUBJECT: School curriculum: model curriculum: Hmong history and cultural studies

SUMMARY: Requires the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) to develop a model curriculum on Hmong history and cultural studies. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the IQC to develop, and the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt, modify, or revise, a model curriculum in Hmong history and cultural studies in Hmong studies.
- 2) Requires the model curriculum to be developed with participation from representatives of Hmong advocacy, community, social and cultural organizations, faculty of Hmong studies programs at universities and colleges with Hmong studies programs, and local educational agencies (LEAs).
- 3) Requires that a majority the individuals with whom the IQC consults be kindergarten to grade 12 teachers who have relevant experiences or education backgrounds in the study and teaching of Hmong studies.
- 4) Requires the curriculum to identify the ways in which it aligns with, and is supportive of, the common core state standards and of the goals of the curriculum framework in history-social science adopted by the SBE in 2016.
- 5) Requires the model curriculum to include examples of courses offered by LEAs that have been approved as meeting the A-G admissions requirements of the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU), including, to the extent possible, course outlines for those courses.
- 6) Requires the model curriculum to address the following topics:
 - a) the history of the Hmong people who lived in Laos, Thailand Vietnam, and China
 - b) the history of the Hmong migration to the United States and California as well as other parts of the world
 - c) cultural beliefs, practices, and traditions of the Hmong people including Hmong New Year celebration, marriages, newborns, and funerals.
 - d) contributions to California and the United States
 - e) the contributions and sacrifices of the Lao-Hmong and other Southeast Asians who served in the “Secret Army” in Laos, which was funded by the United States Central Intelligence Agency.

- 7) Requires the IQC to hold a minimum of two public hearings, pursuant to open meetings law, in order for the public to provide input on the model curriculum.
- 8) Requires the IQC to provide a minimum of 45 days for public comment before submitting the model curriculum to the SBE.
- 9) Requires that, on or before December 31, 2019, the IQC to submit the model curriculum to the SBE for adoption, and the SBE to adopt, modify, or revise the model curriculum on or before March 31, 2020.
- 10) Requires the SBE, if it modifies the model curriculum, to explain, in writing, the reasons for the modifications to the Governor and the appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the Legislature.
- 11) Requires that, if the SBE modifies the model curriculum, the SBE to, in a meeting conducted pursuant to open meetings law, provide written reasons for its revisions. States that the SBE shall not adopt the model curriculum at the same meeting at which it provides its written reasons, but, instead, shall adopt these revisions at a subsequent meeting conducted no later than July 31, 2021.
- 12) States that if the state SBE rejects the model curriculum, the SBE must transmit to the Superintendent, the Governor, and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature a specific written explanation of the reasons for the rejection of the model curriculum.
- 13) Requires that, following the adoption of the model curriculum, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to post the curriculum on its website for use on a voluntary basis by educators.
- 14) Encourages, beginning in the school year following the adoption of the model curriculum, LEAs and charter schools to use the curriculum to provide instruction to kindergarten through grade 12.
- 15) Encourages, beginning in the school year following the adoption of the model curriculum, each school district or charter school maintaining any of grades 9 to 12, that does not otherwise offer a standards-based Hmong studies curriculum is encouraged to offer to all otherwise qualified pupils a course of study in Hmong studies based on the model curriculum.
- 16) States the intent of the Legislature that LEAs submit course outlines for Hmong studies for approval as A-G courses which meet the admissions requirements of the UC and CSU.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Encourages that instruction be provided on the Vietnam war, including the “Secret War” in Laos and the role of Southeast Asians in that war, and encourages that this instruction include, but not be limited to, a component drawn from personal testimony, especially in the form of oral or video history of Southeast Asians who were involved in the Vietnam war and those men and women who contributed to the war effort on the homefront.

- 2) Requires that the oral histories used as a part of the instruction regarding the role of Southeast Asians in the Vietnam war and the “Secret War” in Laos exemplify the personal sacrifice and courage of the wide range of ordinary citizens who were called upon to participate and provide intelligence for the United States.
- 3) Requires that the oral histories contain the views and comments of their subjects regarding the reasons for their participation in the war.
- 4) Requires that the oral histories solicit comments from their subjects regarding the aftermath of the war and the immigration of Southeast Asians to the United States.
- 5) Requires the IQC to develop, and the SBE to adopt, modify, or revise, a model curriculum in ethnic studies, and requires that the model curriculum be written as a guide to allow school districts to adapt their courses to reflect the student demographics in their communities, and include examples of courses offered by LEAs that have been approved as meeting A-G admissions requirements including, to the extent possible, course outlines for those courses. (EC 51226.7)
- 6) Requires that, by December 31, 2019, the IQC to submit the model curriculum to the SBE for adoption, and the SBE to adopt the model curriculum by March 31, 2020.
- 7) Requires a school district or charter school that elects to offer a course of study in ethnic studies to offer the course as an elective in the social sciences or English language arts and to make the course available in at least one year during a student’s enrollment in grades 9 to 12.
- 8) Requires the development of a model curriculum in Native American studies, and requires school districts which elect to offer one course in Native American studies to make the course available in at least one year during a student’s enrollment in grades 9-12.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

Need for the bill. The author’s office states, “Few people know and appreciate the history of the Hmong people and the role they played in assisting the U.S. during the Vietnam War, the difficulties they faced after the war, and the challenges they continue to face today. According to the 2010 census, there are roughly 260,000 Hmong people in the U.S. with the densest populations in California, Wisconsin and Minnesota. California has the largest Hmong population in the United States with approximately 100,000 residents. Fresno is home to approximately 32,000 Hmong. California’s Central Valley is home to 47,000 Hmong.

The Hmong people have a story of courage and suffering that should be incorporated into our curriculum and taught to students. Most students do not know anything about Hmong history or culture and model curriculum would help students appreciate Hmong history and culture especially in regions with large Hmong populations. The Hmong people have made significant sacrifices and are a rich part of our community and state.”

Curriculum, standards, frameworks, and model curricula. California’s public school curriculum is based on content standards in various subjects, including English-Language Arts,

Mathematics, Science, History-Social Science, Physical Education, English Language Development, Career Technical Education, Health Education, World Languages, and Visual and Performing Arts. These standards are developed by the IQC through a public process, and are adopted by the SBE.

These standards form the basis of California's curriculum frameworks. The frameworks guide the implementation of these standards, and are used to establish criteria for the evaluation of instructional materials for state adoption for grades kindergarten through grade eight. They also guide district selection of instructional materials for grades nine through twelve.

In addition to developing standards in the above subject areas, the SPI is sometimes directed by law to develop model curricula on different topics, such as those on the life of Cesar Chavez, human rights and genocide, and ethnic studies.

New History-Social Science Curriculum Framework includes content on Hmong role in the Secret War in Laos. The state's new history-social science curriculum framework, adopted in 2016, includes content related to the Hmong role in the Secret War in Laos. The Grade 11 section states: "escalation of the Vietnam War and secret bombings of Laos and Cambodia proved to be the culmination of Cold War strategies and ultimately caused Americans to question the underlying assumptions of the Cold War era and protest against American policies abroad." The framework also suggests that students read Sucheng Chan's Hmong Means Free, among other books which provide perspectives on the Vietnam War era.

Model curriculum in ethnic studies designed to adapt to address any ethnic group. Current law requires the IQC to develop and submit the model curriculum in ethnic studies to the SBE by December 31, 2019, and the SBE to adopt the curriculum by March 31, 2020.

The CDE held a public input webinar in January of this year, and will be bringing a project timeline, advisory committee application, and guidelines to the IQC in May, and then to the SBE for approval in July. CDE reports that advisory committee members will be recruited from late summer and fall, and that the advisory committee will begin meeting in February of next year.

This Committee and the Senate Education Committee have adopted policies regarding measures which propose to make changes to the state's curriculum for the public schools. This policy strongly encourages Legislators wishing to influence the content of the K-12 curriculum to participate in the administrative process of curriculum development. This process is extensive, public, and provides many opportunities for input from members.

The timing of this measure coincides with the development of the state's first model curriculum in ethnic studies – a curriculum which was specifically designed to be adaptable to all ethnic groups and reflective of local demographics. ***The Committee may wish to consider*** whether participating in that process would be a more effective way of influencing the state curriculum than this measure. ***The Committee may also wish to consider*** whether it is appropriate to approve a model curriculum measure for specific ethnic groups when there likely well over 65 different ethnic groups in the state, and when the Committee had previously approved a measure which is was designed to be adaptable to all ethnic groups.

Enrollment and course offerings in ethnic studies is increasing, but many social science ethnic studies courses are not A-G approved. This measure states the intent of the Legislature

that LEAs submit course outlines for ethnic studies for approval as A-G courses meeting UC and CSU admissions requirements. In order for courses to receive approval, course outlines must be submitted to, and approved by, the UC.

Enrollment in ethnic studies courses has been growing in recent years, but a significant number are not approved as A-G courses, particularly those offered as social science courses.

In recognition of this problem, the statute authorizing the development of the model curriculum requires that it include examples of courses A-G approved courses, including course outlines for those courses, to the extent feasible.

CDE data on course enrollment and offerings in ethnic studies indicates the following:

- In 2016-17, 17,354 students were enrolled in ethnic studies courses (social science and English language arts combined), up from 8,678 in 2014-15.
- The total above includes 4,662 students enrolled in ethnic studies courses in English language arts, in 210 courses in 82 schools in ethnic studies.
- In 2016-17, 943 ethnic studies courses (social science and English language arts combined) were taught in 555 schools, compared with 696 courses in 177 schools in 2014-15.
- In 2016-17, for ethnic studies courses in social science, 395 of the 777 courses (51%) were approved as meeting A-G admissions requirements.
- In 2016-17, English language arts ethnic studies courses were more likely to be approved, with 166 of 210 (80%) courses approved as meeting A-G admissions requirements.

Ethnic studies course outlined in History-Social Science framework. The History-Social Science Framework adopted by the SBE in 2017 describes high school elective courses in ethnic studies as follows:

Ethnic studies is an interdisciplinary field of study that encompasses many subject areas including history, literature, economics, sociology, and political science, among others. In this course, students focus on an in-depth comparative study of the history, politics, culture, contributions, challenges, and current status of ethnic groups in the United States. It is also important for students to learn the national origins of ethnic groups and their transnational linkages. In Ethnic Studies, students examine the process of racial and ethnic formation of ethnic minorities in a variety of contexts: political, legal, social, historical, economic, and cultural. The course concentrates, to a great extent, on the experiences of various ethnic minorities in the United States and the ways in which their experiences were impacted by the issues of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and the interaction among different ethnic groups. Students will also address how individuals within specific ethnic groups think and feel about themselves and their group as it can be represented by literature, memoirs, art, and music. To understand ethnic identity in their local communities, students can volunteer with local community organizations and centers that serve specific ethnic populations.

Prior legislation. SB 895 (Nguyen) of this Session would require the IQC to develop, and the SBE to adopt, modify, or revise, a model curriculum relative to the Vietnamese American refugee experience.

AB 2772 (Medina) of this Session would require all students to complete a year-long social studies course in ethnic studies to graduate from high school, commencing in the 2023-24 school year.

AB 738 (Limon), Chapter 614, Statutes of 2017, requires the development of a model curriculum in Native American studies, and requires school districts which elect to offer one course in Native American studies to make the course available in at least one year during a student's enrollment in grades 9-12.

HR 29 (Weber) of this Session resolves that the state will establish an ethnic studies graduation requirement for all high school pupils.

AB 2016 (Alejo) Chapter 327, Statutes of 2016 requires the development of a model curriculum in ethnic studies, and requires school districts which elect to offer one course in ethnic studies to make the course available in at least one year during a student's enrollment in grades 9-12.

AB 101 (Alejo) of this Session, which was approved by this Committee on a 6-1 vote, would have required the SPI to oversee the development of a model curriculum in ethnic studies, and would have established an advisory committee on ethnic studies to make recommendations on the development of the curriculum. AB 101 was vetoed by the Governor.

AB 1750 (Alejo) of the 2013-14 Session would have required the IQC to identify a model curriculum on ethnic studies at the high school level. That bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 2001 (Diaz) of the 2001-02 Session would have required the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission (now the IQC) to identify model programs, standards, and curricula for ethnic studies at the high school level. This bill was vetoed by the Governor, who stated that existing law, teacher training, and curriculum already addressed this topic.

AB 78 (Reyes), Chapter 44, Statutes of 2003 encourages instruction in the area of social sciences, as required pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 51220, which may include instruction on the Vietnam war including the "Secret War" in Laos and the role of Southeast Asians in that war.

AB 2064 (Arambula), 2008 would have required the SBE and the Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission to ensure that the history-social science framework adopted in the course of the next submission cycle after January 1, 2009, includes the Vietnam War, including the "Secret War" in Laos, the role of Southeast Asians in that war, and the refugee/immigrant/new American experiences. This bill was vetoed by the Governor, who stated:

While I respect the author's intent to recognize the role that Southeast Asians played in the Vietnam War, I have consistently vetoed legislation that has attempted to mandate specific details or events into areas of instruction. The State Board of Education adopted content

standards are developed by a diverse group of experts and are intentionally broad in order to allow coverage of various events, developments, and issues. I continue to believe that the State should establish rigorous academic standards and frameworks, but refrain from being overly prescriptive in specific school curriculum.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Asian Business Institute & Resource Center
California School Boards Association
Fresno Center
Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, Jim Yovino
Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries
General Vang Pao Foundation
Hmong Student Association at Berkeley
Hmong Student Union at the University of California, Davis
Lao Veterans of America, Inc.
Merced County Supervisor, District 2, Lee Lor
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
Southeast Asian American Professionals Association
Youth Leadership Institute

Opposition

None on file

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