



JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL
of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, Sonoma, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contact: Alissa Kaplan Michaels, West End Strategy Team, amichaels@westendstrategy.com, 917.363.5037

**JCRC Encouraged by Inclusion of Jewish Americans
In Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum**

SAN FRANCISCO, Nov. 6 – A major California Jewish group was encouraged today by indications that the American Jewish experience would appear in the forthcoming draft of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum for the state’s public high schools.

At a Friday press conference, Tony Thurmond, California Superintendent of Public Instruction, said the curriculum would remain faithful to the four foundational groups, yet expand its appendix to focus on other marginalized groups, including Jewish Americans.

“While the latest comments from Tony Thurmond indicate a shift toward inclusion, we hope to see full transparency from the California Department of Education,” said Tyler Gregory, executive director of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Community Relations Council, the central public affairs arm for the organized Jewish community.

Throughout this process, the JCRC has held that if the curriculum includes narratives beyond the four foundational ethnic studies groups – African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans and Latinx Americans – Jewish narratives should also appear.

The JCRC will continue to advocate for any outstanding objectives both immediately and during testimony during the upcoming November meeting of the IQC. “We seek a model curriculum that is rigorous, appropriate and reflective of California’s diverse population,” Gregory said.

The JCRC has also supported the inclusion of a meaningful definition of antisemitism in the curriculum as well as guardrails to prevent a reappearance of derogatory language about Jews, Israelis and Israel.

“Without these elements, any educational plan will fail to realize its critical goal: advancing justice in the classroom for marginalized communities in the state of California,” Gregory said.

In recent comments to the California State Assembly, Gov. Gavin Newsom stated that he would direct his administration to “ensure that the draft Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum achieves balance, fairness and is inclusive of all communities.”

The Instructional Quality Commission, an advisory body to the California Department of Education, will release updated materials by the end of the day, prior to its Nov. 18-19 meeting that will advance a final draft of the curriculum.

The meeting later this month will be followed by a public commentary period. The educational plan, created by Assembly Bill 2016, has an adoption deadline of March 2021.

About the JCRC

The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, Sonoma, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties is the central public affairs arm of the organized Jewish community and represents more than 60 synagogues and Jewish organizations on critical issues affecting the Bay Area Jewish community.

###