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OP ED PIECE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 21, 2019

Fact Checker: Teaching about LGBTQ in Our Schools

We understand there have been questions in the community about what is and isn't being taught in our schools and classrooms about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) topics. The following information is intended to help our community members, students and families understand the facts about this.

The California Department of Education (CDE) provides the grade level standards and guidance, based on various laws, for what is taught in our public schools. This guidance is found in the form of published Frameworks for each subject area. The History–Social Science (HSS) Framework for California Public Schools, K–12 (January 2018), and the FAIR Education Act provide guidance and legal requirements related to instruction about LGBTQ topics.

The Fair, Accurate, Inclusive, and Respectful Education Act, also known as the FAIR Education Act (Senate Bill 48) is a California law which took effect on January 1, 2012. This law compels the inclusion of the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people into educational textbooks and the social studies curricula in California public schools by amending California Education Code Section 51500. It also revises the previous designation of Black Americans, American Indians, Mexicans, Asians, and Pacific Island people into a list considered Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

The FAIR Education Act should not be confused with the California Healthy Youth Act discussed in my guest commentary on September 20, 2019.

Specifically, law requires that public schools:

- Adopt and only use textbooks and curriculum that accurately portray the cultural and racial diversity of our society.
- Deliver instruction that accurately represents the contributions made throughout history by all peoples and groups including those listed above.
- Prevent and disallow discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation.

Understanding these laws and our duty to responsibly comply with them, we are committed to respecting all peoples and groups. We are also committed to making sure all learning

experiences with our students are respectful and age appropriate. Professional development, collaboration time, and cultural proficiency training with our teachers, leaders and staff are key parts of this work, and we are committed to providing this as well. This is work in progress.

If parents/guardians have questions, they may contact their child's teacher or principal. If members of the community who are not parents/guardian have questions, they may contact me at (209) 257-5353 or Mr. Sean Snider, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, at (209) 257-5334. As always, we thank you for your support!

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Amy L. Slavensky, Ph.D., Superintendent of Schools
Amador County Unified School District

For more information, you may go to these sources of information:

HSS Framework

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/hs/cf/>

HSS Framework Executive Summary

https://www.scoe.net/castandards/Documents/summary_history_framework.pdf

FAIR Education Act FAQ

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/senatebill48faq.asp>

California HSS Project at UC Davis: How to Implement the FAIR Act

<https://chssp.ucdavis.edu/blog/FAIR>