

SUMMARY

AB 1703 will encourage school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools to form California Indian education task forces with California Tribes local to their region, or historically located in their region.

BACKGROUND

California students receive instruction on California State history in both 4th grade and in high school. Native American educational advocates have long expressed concerns that the history taught during these instructional periods is inaccurate or misleading, focusing attention away from the history and contributions of the people native to the State of California.

Concerns of this kind are regularly expressed about “mission projects” completed by the students during the 3rd and/or 4th grade. The mission era of Spanish occupation was perhaps the most devastating and sensitive period in the history of California’s native peoples and the lasting impact of that epoch is lost by the current curriculum.

PROBLEM

California lacks high quality curriculum materials that highlight the history, culture, and government of local tribes. Although California students are instructed in Native American history, grave concerns remain about how this instruction is developed and offered. The existing framework focuses on some major lessons such as the mission diorama, which is still taught at the teacher’s discretion. However, this ignores and overlooks the experiences of California Indians before, during and after the mission era and Spanish occupation.

SOLUTION

This bill would establish the California Indian Education Act and encourage school districts, county offices of education, and charter schools to form California Indian Education Task Forces with California tribes local to their regions or tribes historically located in the region. The bill would encourage task force participants to discuss issues of mutual concern and to undertake certain work. The bill would require California Indian Education Task Forces to submit, within one year of formation and annually thereafter, a report of findings to the State Department of Education.

Additionally, The bill would require the department to submit, within one year of receiving task force reports and annually thereafter, a report to certain education committees of both houses of the Legislature regarding the narrowing of the achievement gap and the adoption of curriculum.

SUPPORT

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians-Sponsors
Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians-Sponsors
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Barona Band of Mission Indians
California Nations Indian Gaming Association
California Tribal Business Alliance
Pala Band of Mission Indian,
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians
Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians
Wilton Rancheria
Yurok Tribe

STAFF CONTACT

Michael Chen
Office of Assemblymember James Ramos
michael.chen@asm.ca.gov
(916).319.2040