



Home / Newsroom / Editorials & Letters / Letters

**California Department of Education  
Official Letter**

November 7, 2018

Dear County and District Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

## **November is Sikh American Awareness Month**

I am writing to inform you that November is California Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month. Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR) 122 recognizes the important contributions made by Sikh Americans to the history of California. I encourage local educational agencies to observe California Sikh American Awareness and Appreciation Month by conducting appropriate exercises to promote awareness of the contributions of Sikh Americans.

The Sikh population in California includes large communities in the agricultural towns of the Central Valley. Members of the Sikh community have testified to the State Board of Education that Sikhs have been targets of hate crimes and that young Sikhs have been subjected to bullying because of the different styles of clothing that they wear, with Sikh boys suffering at twice the national bullying rate than other boys.

To learn more about the obstacles and challenges that Sikhs face as well as their contributions to California's history, please see the following:

- "Bullying Prevention Task Force Report" by the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Justice, and White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). This report draws on feedback from Sikh and other AAPI students and raises awareness about bullying issues that can benefit all students in addition to those from the Sikh and broader AAPI communities. You may view the report at: [https://sites.ed.gov/aapi/files/2015/02/AAPI-Bullying-Prevention-Task-Force-Report-2014-2016\\_R051516C\\_1.pdf](https://sites.ed.gov/aapi/files/2015/02/AAPI-Bullying-Prevention-Task-Force-Report-2014-2016_R051516C_1.pdf)
- "Cultural Safari-Know Your Sikh Neighbors" video by the Kaur Foundation which helps close the cultural awareness gap that exists between educators, administrators, and peers of Sikh American students. It covers five main areas of Sikh culture and heritage: origins, history, physical attributes, festivals, and holidays. You can view the video at <http://www.kaurfoundation.org/educator-resources.html>

ACR 122 "recognizes and acknowledges the significant contributions that Californians of Sikh heritage have made to the state, and would seek to afford all Californians the opportunity to understand, recognize, and appreciate the rich history and shared principles of Sikh Americans." To view the full text of the resolution, please visit the California Legislative Publications web page at [http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201720180ACR122](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180ACR122)

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Jason Spencer, Principal Advisor to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, by phone at 916-319-0800 or by e-mail at [jaspencer@cde.ca.gov](mailto:jaspencer@cde.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

Tom Torlakson

TT:df

2018-07627

Last Reviewed: Wednesday, November 28, 2018

---