

**SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**SENATOR CONNIE M. LEYVA, CHAIR**  
**2019-20 SESSION**

**Committee Policy On: BILLS RELATING TO CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS AND MODEL CURRICULA**

**Policy:** Measures which propose to require, or require consideration of, modifications to state curriculum frameworks, or that propose the development of new model curricula, must comply with requirements set forth in this policy.

The Committee strongly discourages the introduction of measures which require, or require consideration of, modifications to state curriculum through changes to the curriculum frameworks or which require the development of new model curricula.

The Committee encourages Members to engage in the existing administrative processes for modifying state curricula. Members may wish, for example, to provide written comments or public testimony to the Instructional Quality Commission, the State Board of Education, or the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Members may also wish to engage in the Legislature's oversight or appointment processes for this purpose.

If, after exhausting all administrative processes, a Member wishes to introduce such a measure, the measure must meet all of the following requirements:

- 1) Measures should be in the form of a resolution.
- 2) Measures should be introduced only after a Member has tried, unsuccessfully, to use administrative routes to address the issue. Committee staff can share a model letter to the Instructional Quality Commission. Evidence of efforts to engage in the existing process, such as through a letter to the Instructional Quality Commission, must be described on, and attached to, the Committee background sheet.
- 3) Measures, including resolutions, should request consideration only of content not already included in the existing or draft curriculum standards frameworks, or other model curricula.

**Rationale:**

The Legislature has vested the Instructional Quality Commission and the State Board of Education with the authority to develop and adopt state curriculum and instructional materials. The Instructional Quality Commission develops curriculum frameworks by convening expert panels, developing drafts, and holding public hearings to solicit input. Changes are frequently made in response to public comment. The frameworks are then

adopted by the State Board of Education in a public meeting. The State Board of Education also adopts, in a public process, instructional materials aligned to those frameworks. School district governing boards and charter schools then adopt instructional materials aligned to these standards and frameworks. This process occurs on a regular schedule which gives schools a predictable timetable to plan and budget for changes to the curriculum. Local adoption of new curricula involves significant local cost and investment in professional development.

These existing processes involve practitioners and experts who have in-depth understanding of curriculum and instruction, including the full scope and sequence of the curriculum in each subject and at each grade level, constraints on instructional time and resources, and the relationship of curriculum to state assessments and other measures of student progress. This Committee does not have the capacity or mandate to conduct this kind of review.

Legislation requiring the curriculum frameworks to contain specific content overrides this careful and deliberate process. Because legislation forces the inclusion of content without the benefit of thorough review and benefit of context, it can also inadvertently displace other important content in the curriculum.

Model curricula were first developed in the 1990's in order to provide educators the means to teach about a topic in an in depth manner, on a voluntary basis. At that time, there were few resources available for this purpose on the Internet. Until 2016, only two model curricula were required to be developed. According to the California Department of Education, those curricula are rarely accessed. This may be due to the fact that there is now a vast array of curriculum resources available on the Internet, much of it available at no cost.

The Instructional Quality Commission is vested with duties, as noted above, that require the careful allocation of limited time and resources. Recent legislation has required the development of numerous model curricula The Commission will be developing these model curricula through 2023. Any new proposals for additional model curricula are unlikely to be adopted until 2025, a timeframe which coincides with the next regular revision of several curriculum frameworks. The Committee encourages Members to engage the Commission's administrative process to ensure that the subject matter of concern is included in the revised frameworks.

It is therefore the policy of the Committee to discourage the introduction of legislation which requires, or requires consideration of, modifications to state curriculum frameworks, or that requires the development of new model curricula, and instead encourage Members to engage in existing administrative processes as delineated above.

*Adopted by the Senate Education Committee on March 20, 2019.*