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**For Immediate Release**

February 6, 2002

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NEWS RELEASE**State Board of Education Adopts Cesar Chavez Curriculum**
Chavez curriculum will be Internet-based program available to all schools

SACRAMENTO -- The State Board of Education today adopted a Model Curriculum on the Life and Work of Cesar Chavez, the late civil rights leader who led the historic labor movement to gain social justice for California's agricultural workers.

The curriculum is an Internet-based program that appears on the California Department of Education (CDE) website, and is available to all teachers and schools.

"I speak for the entire State Board when I say we are privileged and honored to take action that ensures California's school children will learn about the life, values, sacrifices and contributions that Cesar Chavez made to his community, his state and his country," State Board President Reed Hastings said before the Board unanimously approved adoption of the curriculum.

"Cesar Chavez was a teacher to us all by his example in taking up the human and civil rights struggle for California's farm workers. In that great struggle, we saw his great dignity, courage and humanity. In his life, there are lessons for us all," Hastings added.

Fernando F. Chavez, the eldest son of Cesar Chavez and a San Jose attorney, and students representing Cesar Chavez Intermediate School in the Sacramento City Unified School District, were present for the adoption.

"We're happy that in the years ahead, public school children in California will learn how my father showed that even the poorest and most powerless people in our society can overcome grievous wrongs through personal sacrifice and non-violent, democratic means," Fernando Chavez told the Board.

The CDE's Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division developed the model curriculum with assistance from the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation.

The curriculum was developed under the provisions of Senate Bill 984, legislation that established March 31 as Cesar Chavez Day in California. SB 984 was authored by State Sen. Richard Polanco, D-Los Angeles, and signed into law by Governor Gray Davis on August 18, 2000.

A provision of the legislation mandated that the State Board of Education adopt a model curriculum guide to be available for use by public schools for exercises related to Cesar Chavez Day and which commemorate the history of the farm labor movement in California and the nation, and the role that Cesar Chavez played.

Key components of the curriculum include a biography of Chavez; Chavez's speeches and writings; primary sources on the life, work and philosophy of Chavez; and oral histories by participants in historical events related to the causes espoused by Chavez, who founded the United Farm Workers labor union.

The curriculum is organized by grade spans, as follows: K-3; 4-6; 7-9; and 10-12. Within each grade span, there is a biography of Chavez and grade-level specific lesson plans. All lesson plans are based on the state-adopted History-Social Science Curriculum Framework and academic content standards.

The multiple lesson plans at each grade allow for teachers to select the appropriate materials for their classroom and ensure the incorporation of the teaching of the life and work of Chavez in the normal course of the school year. In addition, the curriculum includes service-learning lessons that specifically support the Cesar Chavez Day state holiday by providing guidance and suggested activities.

The curriculum website also will contain a database of primary sources including personal letters, pictures, and historical documents (this portion of the website is still under construction, but is expected to be complete in time for the 2002 observance of Cesar Chavez Day).

The model curriculum can be viewed on the Internet at www.cde.ca.gov/cesarchavez/
The Background Sheet follows.

Background Sheet

Model Curriculum on the Life and Work of Cesar Chavez

Legislation

Senate Bill 984 established an official state holiday to honor the life and work of Cesar Chavez and was signed into law by Governor Gray Davis on August 18, 2000.

Under the legislation, the "State Board of Education shall ensure that the state curriculum and framework, where appropriate, include instruction on Cesar Chavez and the history of the farm labor movement in the United States, and that the state criteria for selecting textbooks include information to guide the selection of textbooks that contain sections that highlight the life and contributions of Cesar Chavez and the history of the farm labor movement in the United States." The inclusion of Cesar Chavez in the state History-Social Science curriculum framework will ensure his appearance in state adopted materials at the next major adoption in 2005.

SB 984 requires that "The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall develop or revise, as needed, a model curriculum on the life and work of Cesar Chavez and submit the model curriculum to the State Board of Education for adoption." The curriculum presented to the State Board by the Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division of the California Department of Education fulfills the Department's obligation.

Format

Under SB 984, "the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall distribute the model curriculum to each school." The Department has developed the curriculum as an internet-based program that appears on the CDE Web site. Distribution is free to all interested in the life and work of Cesar Chavez.

Content of Model Curriculum

The model curriculum for Cesar Chavez is organized by grade spans, K-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Within each grade span, there is a biography of Cesar Chavez and grade-level specific lesson plans. All lesson plans had to be based on the history-social science curriculum framework and standards. The multiple lesson plans at each grade allow for teachers to select the appropriate materials for their classroom and ensure the incorporation of the teaching of the life and work of Cesar Chavez in the normal course of the school year. In addition, the curriculum includes service learning lessons that specifically support the holiday by providing guidance and suggested activities. Lastly, the curriculum website will contain a database of primary sources including personal letters, pictures, and historical documents. This part of the website is still under construction but will be ready in time for the upcoming holiday. The resource aspect of the website will allow for teachers and students to search and access materials for research purposes. Many of the primary sources will be available for the first time and others come from archival sources. The model curriculum is available through the CDE Web site at: www.cde.ca.gov/cesarchavez/

