

Curriculum not set for gay history in California schools

By Diana Lamber, McClatchy Newspapers

SACRAMENTO – A controversial California law approved last July amid heated debate isn't likely to affect California classrooms any time soon.

The Fair Education Act adds lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans, as well as people with disabilities, to existing state law that requires that the contributions of women and minorities be taught in California social science classes. It also prohibits materials that reflect adversely on people because of race, gender or other characteristics.

The law officially took effect Jan. 1. But the California Department of Education hasn't laid out a companion curriculum, and state officials say they are leaving it up to school districts to determine how to comply.

While some local districts are working to design new curriculum, many others are simply waiting for the state's next adoption of new history and social science textbooks, scheduled for 2015. School officials say they have received little direction and have few resources – financial and otherwise – to do much else.

“Right now we don't have any funding to do the curriculum we need,” said Christopher Hoffman, superintendent of the El Dorado Union High School District. “We aren't going to add anything.”

Hoffman said the district will wait for the next round of textbooks or direction from the state.

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