



CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

TOM TORLAKSON

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

March 16, 2015

Dear County and District Superintendents, Charter School Administrators, and High School Principals:

\$1,000 ESSAY CONTEST TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

In conjunction with Assembly Members Katcho Achadjian, Adrin Nazarian, and Scott Wilk, I encourage California high school students to participate in an essay contest to increase awareness of the Armenian Genocide.

California, 43 other states, and more than 20 governments worldwide recognize the Armenian Genocide, which was perpetrated by the Ottoman Turkish regime a century ago. Turkey's government, however, has threatened to retaliate against nations that recognize the Genocide.

Students are invited to write a letter addressed to President Obama discussing actions the United States should take regarding the Armenian Genocide and persuading the Republic of Turkey from denying historical fact. Copies of submissions will be transmitted to the White House and posted online.

In addition to scholarship awards (\$1,000 for first place, \$500 for second, and \$300 for third), winners will take part in the Legislature's centennial commemoration at the State Capitol on April 20, 2015, and will receive special recognition from the Assembly Members. Winning entries will also be displayed at an exhibit dedicated to Armenians at the California State Museum in Sacramento.

DEADLINE: April 6, 2015.

Format: 500 words, double-spaced, 12-point font.

Submission Address: 1915essay@gmail.com.

Critical Information: Student's name, age, high school, grade, teacher's name and subject area, city, phone number, and e-mail address at the top of the essay.

Web site: <http://asmdc.org/members/a46/news-room/press-releases>

I encourage you to spread the word about this competition. Accurate teaching of the Armenian Genocide in California classrooms is a critical part of our students' breadth of knowledge.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Torlakson".

Tom Torlakson

TT:ko
2015-01848