

# Mirman School

## Weaving APISA History Into K–8 Curriculum

Los Angeles, CA | Independent School | K–8

**K–8**

Grade Levels Served

**4th Grade**

Initial Implementation

**3+**

Curriculum Areas Integrated

### OVERVIEW

Mirman School, an independent school for highly gifted learners in Los Angeles, partnered with TeachAAPI to weave Asian American and Pacific Islander history into its existing curriculum. Led by Monica Sone, Fourth Grade Teacher and Lower School DEI Coordinator, the school adopted TeachAAPI's turnkey lessons and resources to fill specific gaps and give students a more complete understanding of American history. TeachAAPI met Mirman where it was, providing flexible, classroom-ready materials that fit naturally into the school's established units and teaching approach.

### THE CHALLENGE

Before partnering with TeachAAPI, Mirman's coverage of APISA topics was limited. Filipino American History Month was marked by a single read-aloud book. The school lacked vetted, curriculum-aligned resources that teachers could use without building lessons from scratch. As an independent school with a small number of students who identify as Filipino, the gap in representation was especially significant for those students.

Beyond content gaps, the school faced questions about consistency across grade levels: how to ensure APISA topics were introduced at developmentally appropriate stages and not duplicated or overlooked as students progressed from K through 8.

### THE SOLUTION: CURRICULUM PARTNER, NOT ADD-ON

TeachAAPI's approach centers on two commitments: giving students engaging, identity-affirming learning experiences and giving educators turnkey resources that reduce prep time and build confidence. At Mirman, this played out through integration, not addition. Rather than layering new content on top of existing units, Monica and her team identified natural tie-ins within the curriculum they were already teaching.

During the school's U.S. Geography unit, the team paired each region studied with a corresponding TeachAAPI "Got History?" lesson, using them as "openers" to introduce APISA connections before diving into regional content. The Manilamen lesson, originally designed for older students, was adapted for fourth graders during Filipino American History Month. A Lunar New Year graphic brochure helped the school move beyond a single-culture framing by showing how the holiday is celebrated across the Asian Pacific Islander and South Asian diaspora.

Monica also pulled TeachAAPI resources for student-driven projects. When a fourth grader chose to write an informative piece on Lunar New Year, the vetted materials served as a credible, classroom-ready research source.

*"You've just made things so easy for educators and I know that's always been part of your mission to make things easy for educators. It really shows and shines."*

— Stephanie Leung, Mirman School

Each lesson came with worksheets, presentation-ready slides, scripts, and supplemental resources. The materials required little to no prep, could be tailored by grade level, and fit a high-ceiling approach for

Mirman's gifted learners. Deep Dive resources sustained student interest beyond individual lessons, and curated book deliveries reinforced curiosity and belonging in the classroom.

## IMPACT

### Student Belonging and Identity

The Manilamen lesson had a direct effect on students who identify as Filipino. For some, it was the first time they saw their history reflected in the curriculum. That visibility sparked conversations about belonging and representation, with students connecting their own family histories to the broader American story. Classmates recognized shared themes of migration, labor, and contribution across their own communities.

*"For some students, it was the first time they saw themselves reflected in the curriculum, which fostered a sense of belonging and validation."*

— Monica Sone, Fourth Grade Teacher / Lower School DEI Coordinator, Mirman School

### Engagement and Understanding

Student engagement increased when lessons included photographs, videos, and interviews. These primary-source materials made historical events feel concrete and human. Students consistently showed excitement when new TeachAAPI books arrived, reinforcing the connection between the curriculum and their own curiosity.

### Teacher Confidence and Readiness

TeachAAPI's pre-vetted resources removed the burden of researching, developing, and validating APISA content from scratch. Teachers could approach these topics with confidence and adapt content to different learning levels. Because the materials are designed to be picked up and used, Monica was able to socialize the program across grade-level teams and model how to integrate it without adding to teachers' workloads.

*"TeachAAPI has made teaching APISA-related topics feel much more accessible and manageable. Knowing that the resources have already been thoughtfully vetted means I don't need to reinvent the wheel."*

— Monica Sone

### Broader Curriculum Conversations

TeachAAPI's resources prompted school-wide discussions about curriculum consistency, accountability, and equity. The availability of high-quality, shelf-ready APISA materials raised productive questions about how similar support could be developed for other identity groups, a sign that the program is catalyzing systemic thinking about inclusive education.

## LOOKING AHEAD

Mirman is expanding TeachAAPI integration across grade levels with attention to vertical and horizontal alignment. Next steps include cross-grade collaboration to ensure topics build on each other, such as coordinating how Queen Lili'uokalani is introduced in first grade and extended in fourth grade. The team is also exploring how to move from optional to expected use of the resources, with accountability structures for implementation. Monica continues to participate in TeachAAPI's educator community events, connecting with fellow APISA educators to strengthen curriculum design and community-building at Mirman.

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### Interested in bringing TeachAAPI to your school or organization?

Visit [teachaapi.org](https://teachaapi.org) or contact the TeachAAPI team to learn more.