

From: Vladimir Kaplan

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 12:35 AM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: [email redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fundamental revisions of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum are needed

Dear Members of the Instructional Quality Commission:

We are grandparents of two high school students, in San Mateo. We'd love them to learn about their classmates' origin, families' struggles in the new land, their ways of becoming Americans. This knowledge of ethnic diversity would have enriched our grandkids life and laid ground for mutual respect and cooperation in their adulthood.

Unfortunately, the Ethnic Study Model Curriculum (ESMC) falls short of these expectations. The second ESMC draft is an improvement in comparison with the first draft. Specifically, the former does not include the overtly anti-Semitic tones of the latter. Still, both drafts are based on a unequivocal pro-revolutionary approach, where education is considered as "a tool for transformation, social change, and liberation". As emigrants from the former Soviet Union, we cannot accept this indoctrination copied from the pro-Marxist country of our birth.

American (and Californian) history is a path "of overcoming adversity and achievements.", in commentator Dan Walter's words ("California still struggling to get ethnic studies right", San Jose Mercury News, August 9.) Limiting ethnic studies to the procrustean template of a forever and everywhere oppression does not do any good either to the students , or to the teachers. A fact-based balanced ethnic studies should not be about us VS them, but rather "we the people."

We urge you to make significant further revisions to the ESMC, in order to reflect the entire experience of the ethnic minorities, from bitterness of newcomers to the opportunity and growth in their new home, here in California..

Tamara and Vladimir Kaplan

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