

Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum May 2019 Draft

(Download and use to provide specific recommendations)

Include the chapter of the model curriculum, the page number, and line number(s) to ensure that the California Department of Education and Instructional Quality Commission can reference the content of the document when reviewing your comments. Please email this document as a Word document to ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov. You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Glossary	Charles P. Lefkowitz Resident of CA Retired Engineer Retired Teacher Very concerned citizen	Glossary – includes a definition of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement against Israel. It claims the purpose of BDS is to “establish freedom for Palestinians living under apartheid conditions.” It then parrots more BDS talking points while offering no critical perspectives about this campaign of hate, which seeks to end Israel’s existence.
Sample Lesson Plans		Page 234 – Encourage teachers to highlight BDS and a pro-BDS group called Direct Action for Palestine, but no voices critical of their perspectives.
Sample Lesson Plans		Page 234 – Promotes a false equivalence between Israel’s efforts to stop terrorists from entering communities to murder innocent people, and U.S. policies on the border with Mexico.
Sample Lesson Plans		Page 237 – Uses unclear language that implies “Israel-Palestine” as a whole is an Arab country.
Sample Lesson Plans		Page 242 – Frames the Palestinian narrative of the 1948 War as fact, with no alternative perspectives.
Sample Lesson Plans		Page 256, 264-269 – Encourages teachers to use a poem featuring harsh criticism of Israel, but no content offering a positive perspective about Israel or criticism of Palestinian leaders.

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Introduction		Introduction – States that “The implementation of Ethnic Studies presents an opportunity for teachers to...enable students to develop a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusion, and aids in the eradication of bigotry, hate, and racism.” Despite this stated goal, the curriculum does not feature a single lesson about the Jewish community, mentioning Jews only in passing. With antisemitism rising and ignorance about the Jewish people still a major problem in our society, the exclusion of Jews from this curriculum is deeply disappointing.
General		I am deeply disturbed by the this model curriculum currently being reviewed by The State of California, which openly promotes hateful boycotts against Israel and omits antisemitism as a form of bigotry. I am appalled that an educational effort meant (I would hope) to teach students about diversity includes no lessons about Jews as a sizeable ethnic minority and frequent target of racism. As a parent and a California resident, I would hope to see the State of California teaching inclusion and tolerance, rather than BDS, which promotes hate and division.

California Department of Education, June 2019