

From: Wenyuan Wu

Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 7:30 AM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment Regarding Third Draft of ESMC from Californians for Equal Rights

Wenyuan Wu, Ph.D., M.A.
Executive Director
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[address redacted]
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January 21, 2021

Re: Opposition to the Current Version of Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum on Account of Its Politicized and Divisive Nature

[via email]

California Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division
State Board of Education
ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov

Dear California Department of Education and State Board of Education,

My name is Wenyuan Wu and I represent Californians for Equal Rights, a non-profit and non-political organization dedicated to promoting and raising public awareness on the principles of equality and merit. I am writing to express our grave concern about the third and final draft of Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). We are particularly alarmed by the guiding principles and ideological framework inherent in the current version of ESMC as rooted in critical ethnic studies and urge that you remove such a divisive foundation from the ESMC.

The current ESMC is rooted in a divisive ideological framework centered on critical pedagogy. Instead of encouraging mutual respect or historical nuances, it stokes racial divisions and animosity by subjugating our society to a binary race-based lens. This key component introduces and proselytizes radical political worldviews to California's students. It's divisive, discriminatory and detrimental for our children's development.

As a glaring example of its fundamental problems, the current ESMC doesn't represent an inclusive or constructive picture of the Asian-American history. Americans of Asian descent have long contributed to our nation's history and success. From the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, to the Japanese-American internment during the World War II, to xenophobic attacks against Korean Americans in the early 1990s, to systematic anti-Asian discrimination in selective educational access presently, Americans of Asian descent endured historical marginalization and unfair treatment. But we, as an integral part of the American society, are not defined by the past or our collective grievances. Instead, we must celebrate our diversity in unity, our rich history in a broader context of our dynamic nation, and constructively recognize the important achievements of many extraordinary Americans of Asian descent, as part and parcel of what means to be American.

As such, we believe ethnic studies in our great state should reflect a holistic understanding of our proud cultural heritages and promote multicultural understanding. Only by building bridges can we meaningfully address racism, bigotry and misunderstanding. Ethnic studies should be a positive, constructive and value-added experience for our students, not a collective process of indoctrination.

Regards,

Wenyuan Wu, Ph.D., M.A.

Executive Director

Californians for Equal Rights (CFER)

Safeguard Equal Rights with Public Education, Policy Advocacy and Civic Engagement