

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.

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
General	Dr. Janis Lightman, O.D., 32 year resident of California; both my husband and two sons were born and educated in California, all receiving unbiased social studies and history education in the public schools.	<p>The proposed Ethnic Studies curriculum should be rejected and reconstructed to eliminate bias against the State of Israel, include a full section on both global and American anti-Semitism, and discuss the historical experience of the Jews in the United States with particular emphasis on the Jews of California. In this regard, there should be discussion on Jews who came to the United States after surviving the Holocaust.</p> <p>While I recognize the complexity in developing an Ethnic Studies curriculum to meet the needs of this state, the current proposal presents such a one-sided view of the Israel-Palestine conflict which does not meet objective academic standards, it will place our students at a competitive disadvantage when they enter college on both a content and analytical basis. Our students must learn to think critically and be presented with honest information from all sides. This curriculum fails to achieve that.</p> <p>California is home to a large Israeli-émigré community, particularly in Los Angeles and the Bay Area. This curriculum not only shortchanges their national historical narrative, it could effectively result in classroom discrimination against them and others who feel spiritually or emotionally connected to Israel.</p> <p>Further, failure to discuss the American Jewish experience, particularly the history of American anti-Semitism, shortchanges our students' understanding of Jewish history in this country. Today's rise in anti-Semitic attacks in the United States demonstrates the need for greater education which this proposal does not provide.</p>
Glossary and Bibliography	Dr. Janis Lightman, O.D.	<p>Page 2 of this document provides a definition of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel which is both inaccurate and misleading. The founder of the BDS movement has clearly expressed the movement's intent is to eliminate the existence of Israel from the map. BDS activists around the world freely discuss this as do other proponents of BDS.</p> <p>The proposed language inappropriately softens the image of BDS without stating its true purpose.</p>

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Chapter 2	Dr. Janis Lightman, O.D.	Pages 234, 237, 242, 256, and 264-269 all reference the Arab experience without providing context or balance in the narrative. Discussions of “liberating Palestine” must also be taught through the historical lens of killing Jews and replacing Israel. Similarly, the narrative fails to mention the many opportunities that Arab nations and Palestinian leaders to peacefully resolve their conflict but rejected this as an option. Please see the next comment as well regarding these pages.
Chapter 2	Dr. Janis Lightman, O.D.	<p>I echo the California Jewish Caucus in their letter on the proposed curriculum, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_LNvdDqJa0A-ougc9deePJ-XyB7JurNz/view and am particularly concerned about how it targets Jews and singles out Israel for condemnation. This is extremely troubling as it will undoubtedly fuel the flames of anti-Semitism while biasing our students’ opinions as they develop into adulthood.</p> <p>The mandate for an Ethnic Studies curriculum was approved by the Legislature to serve a noble purpose. Please ensure that the treatment of Israel in the curriculum as well as the global and American Jewish experiences are provided with the same level of care and sensitivity as that of other ethnic groups. This will take serious editing and a new draft which I look forward to reviewing in its next round of public comment.</p>