

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)
	Nancy Facher, LCSW, MPH	On page 234, teachers are directed to highlight Direct Action for Palestine – which is political advocacy. Public schools should not be advocating for a singular political position but rather should encourage a range of values and prepare students to think critically. This particular example equates Israel’s efforts to defense against violence with US policies that are illegal (preventing those who have a right to seek asylum from seeking asylum.)
General		It seems important to teach present day White Nationalism, and the persecution of Jews, the Holocaust, and current day anti-Semitism.
Glossary		Please remove BDS - while the tool of boycott is important, BDS specifically supports the end of the country of Israel and implies it does not have the right to exist. While there are arguments that we as US citizens can advocate for stopping the use of taxpayer money in certain fashion, support of BDS in a curriculum is to support the end of a democratic state. Why not talk about the Nestle boycott or the Grape boycott? Again, this singularly emphasizes the elimination of Israel.
		The war in 1948 is complicated and there are multiple perspectives. It is legitimate to question any one perspective and it is imperative that we teach critical thinking. This presentation, p. 242, frames the narrative as a right/wrong, binary perspective.

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		In calling out Israel specifically, the Israel is singled out from other Human Rights violators, including the United States. China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, the list goes on and on. This is not an inquiry based approach
general		I believe wholeheartedly in Ethnic Studies and am proud of California's leadership. That said, using Ethnic Studies as a way to advance a non-universalist agenda is reprehensible. Public schools are the heart and soul of democracy. Codifying an anti-Israel perspective, rather than elevating a complex issue, does not build the foundation of a two-state solution. We should be advocating for conflict studies. We should be reaching for understanding and deepening our listening skills. Instead, this curriculum, by adopting a BDS perspective, implies that Israel should not exist. Whether or not you believe this to be true, we should not be elevating this perspective.

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		<p>I strongly believe that tax payer money should support Ethnic Studies. I believe this to be all the more important today, with growing White Nationalism to the point of terrorism. I am deeply troubled by the institutional racism in our country. I am also completely opposed to current policies endorsed by the country of Israel, in the same way that I am opposed to the policies of Saudi Arabia, North Korea, China, and our own country, the United States. However, I do not endorse a curriculum that implies that any of these countries should not exist, or that we should teach our children incomplete histories.</p> <p>Especially in the above context, I am deeply concerned about the model curriculum put forward. In selecting to discuss Israel and Palestine in the way presented here, we are not elevating the possibility of a pro-democratic, 2 state solution. Rather, we are imposing a political perspective, and one that states that a democratic country has no right to exist. This is a dangerous and highly problematic approach. Our public schools should talk about what we as citizens can do when there are policies we don't agree with. We can teach about policy development and advocacy, and the right to vote, etc. If we want to focus on oppression and racism, let's use the US as an example, rather than presented a one-sided perspective which neglects key details AND ignores other nations.</p> <p>I find that this process is motivated, not by building empathy and raising awareness, but rather by a purpose to single out Israel. I am opposed to Israel's current policies, but I am also opposed to any racism, and all occupations in the world. Why call out alone?</p> <p>Finally, teaching about anti-Semitism is important! Look at the Pittsburg Massacre and say it isn't so.</p>
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