

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

As a former California teacher and parent, I am very concerned, surprised and dismayed by the proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. Teaching an ethnic studies class can be of enormous value, but this one is flawed in some very sad ways. Thus I ask you to make major revisions or a significant rewrite of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, consistent with the recommendations from the California Legislative Jewish Caucus letter, Stand With Us, Jimena, Amcha and others. I also urge you to include in these revisions recommendation and guidance to study and learn the best part of ethnic studies, which include the positive and remarkable contributions in history, language, arts, literature, music, culture and more of California's diverse ethnicities.

I agree with the Per California Legislative Jewish Caucus letter : which states: "We support diversity and inclusion, but oppose a curriculum that "erases American Jewish experience, fails to discuss antisemitism, reinforces negative stereotypes about Jews, singles out Israel for criticism, and would institutionalize the teaching of anti-Semitic stereotypes in our public schools."

- Despite the significant contributions of Jews to California's history, politics, culture, and government – and the Jewish community's longstanding struggle against hatred and discrimination – the ESMC erases the Jewish experience in America. The exclusion is offensive and inconsistent with the purpose of ethnic studies to promote inclusion and tolerance.

And along those lines there is no mention of the significant contributions of other ethnic diversities. These seem to have been ignored.

I also am opposed to focusing solely or mainly on victimhood, but would expect inclusion of the very positive aspects of the many contributions of each ethnicity.

Further, the ESMC omits any mention of antisemitism though there are three times as many hate crimes in America against Jews as against Muslims. The most recent FBI statistics record 938 anti-Semitic incidents and 273 Islamophobic incidents. Hate crimes against Jews rose by 37% according to 2018 FBI statistics, accounting for over half of religious-based hate crimes in the United States. Though a great deal of curriculum is devoted to Islamophobia, there is absolutely none devoted to anti-Semitism.

This is indefensible in light of rising antisemitism in America and especially on college campuses.

Thus, again, I urge you to make major revisions or a significant rewrite of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum to address these concerns.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Irene Blumenkranz. Palo Alto, CA