

**From:** Barbara Gereboff  
**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2020 5:47 PM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies  
**Cc:** [email redacted]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I, Dr. Barbara Gereboff, commend some improvement in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), but I am deeply concerned by the imposition of the offensive, one-sided political ideology that still remains in the proposed draft of California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

I am a Californian, a longtime retired Head of School, currently working for a national foundation. Over the years, I have taught pre-service teachers how to teach history and I place a premium on teachers helping students explore multiple perspectives on any issue. In particular, I taught Jewish day school teachers in a University setting how to explore and underscore the often unrepresentative Arab perspective of the history of Israel. Additionally, I am an active member of Friendships for Peace which brings together students from countries torn about by religious strife. In this effort, I've worked with and hosted Muslim, Christian and Jewish youngsters from Cyprus and from Israel, and I belong to an Arab Jewish Sisterhood group. As an educator, as a parent and as a grandparent (of children in California schools), I care deeply about critical thinking, deep understanding and engagement with all people. I care about this matter and I live this. I want an ethnic studies curriculum to succeed.

Here are my major concerns:

1. Teaching students "to link" to organizations that do not present multiple dimensions or perspectives of all parties only fuels hate instead of developing deep understanding.
2. The depiction of Jews from Arab lands dismisses the particular experience that such Jews faced in those countries. Their experience is not the same as all people from Arab lands as they are depicted. Their experience is erased in this portion of the curriculum.
3. Overall, the curriculum can easily sow anger and hatred (especially when based on a text entitled Education at War.) The guiding principles for this curriculum must be on providing prospective and opportunities for understanding. If BDS is presented (not promoted) as a change agent, than its presentation must be problematized to show the different dimensions of it and how it operates as a cover for anti-semitism.

I urge you to make significant further revisions to the ESMC to address these concerns. Please revise the Guiding Values and Principles of the ESMC to use more precise and inclusive terminology, to align with the ESMC Guidelines, to build bridges of intergroup understanding, and to ensure critical thinking. Then adjust the lessons and sample topics accordingly to match the revised principles.

Thank you,

Dr. Barbara Gereboff, Foster City, CA