

From: Sally Nalven
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 11:09 AM
To: Ethnic Studies
Cc: [email redacted]
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I appreciate some improvement in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), but I am still concerned by the imposition of the offensive, one-sided political ideology that still remains in this flawed draft of California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

Here are some of my major concerns:

1. The treatment of Jewish people as monolithic and comparing Jews with the Irish. Jews come from many backgrounds and areas: Latin America, Europe, Asia, Middle-East, and Africa. To paint all Jews as white is false and misleading. I am not sure what the intention was, but certainly with antisemitism as the longest hatred in the world, bringing communities together needs to discuss Jews as a discriminated group. Anti-Semitic groups on the left and right do not usually target the Irish, but they often do target the Jews.
2. Advocates a narrow political philosophy—often very biased and partisan. Instead of bringing communities together, it seems to place blame, guilt, anger and doesn't address any progress and changes made. Yes, there is much work to be done, but children should be given some of the positive outcomes of many of the struggles too.
3. Remove all divisive content related to [critical race theory](#), which states that “racial inequality emerges from the ... differences that white people create between ‘races’ to maintain elite white interests...” This only inflames communities and doesn't bring people and children together. It is indoctrination to a false belief.

I am a Californian teacher, parent and immigrant. I am concerned how this current, flawed ethnic studies curriculum will continue to divide people and children. Instead of unbiased teaching in a curriculum, this curriculum has an agenda and narrative that is filled with hate and divisiveness. I am concerned that children will not be given the facts about freedom, liberty and justice—and how America continues to find ways to make this happen for all peoples. Although America is not perfect, it still offers many opportunities and that must be acknowledged too.

I urge you to make significant revisions of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum 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,
Sally Nalven