



## Educators for Excellence in Ethnic Studies

September 30, 2020

Dear Members of the Instructional Quality Commission, State Board of Education President Linda Darling-Hammond, State Superintendent Tony Thurmond, and Governor Gavin Newsom,

As educators, we support ethnic studies courses that confront racism, develop civic responsibility, and help to develop the 21st century skills that our students need to succeed in school, work, and life.

However, the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) exacerbates polarization, inculcates a militant anti-capitalist agenda, and opens the door to antisemitism and other hatred. Its guiding values -- with which the sample lessons are aligned -- include "critique empire building," "connect...to resistance movements," and challenge "imperial/colonialist beliefs" including "patriarchy, cisheteropatriarchy, capitalism, ableism, anthropocentrism." Best practices in pedagogy dictate that lessons should be aligned with outcomes, not values. When those Guiding Values and Principles are unbalanced and politically dogmatic, these lessons become indoctrination.

California educators simply cannot follow this ESMC and expect to accomplish the History-Social Science Framework's goal for ethnic studies, which is to encourage students "to think critically about the world around them [so they] develop a more complex understanding of the human experience [and] respect for cultural diversity and see the advantages of inclusion."

Changes **must be made** in order for us to have a pedagogically-sound curriculum that we are proud - not ashamed - to teach to our students. Please see the attached "Educators' Detailed Analysis and Revision Requests" for specific information, including chapter, page and line numbers, clarifying the numerous pedagogical issues with the ESMC.

We urge you to remove the political agenda from the ESMC and its lessons by:

1. Removing the inflammatory "Guiding Values and Principles," which promote radical ideological aims such as "transformative (post-imperial) resistance," and can be used to justify bringing hate and political dogma into the classroom.
2. Aligning all lessons only to the impartial Outcomes, and identifying those Outcomes as "Guiding Principles and Outcomes."
3. Providing course outlines that are balanced and unbiased, and that develop 21st century critical thinking skills.
4. Ensuring that the model and sample lessons are developmentally and social-emotionally appropriate for K-12 students.
5. Providing clear guidance about the role of educators in student civic engagement projects.
6. Removing terms that have multiple, conflicting definitions so there is no misinterpretation of their meaning.

Thank you for your attention to these crucial problems in the ESMC.

Sincerely,

Lori Meyers and Joy Shmueli  
Educators for Excellence in Ethnic Studies  
[joyandlori@gmail.com](mailto:joyandlori@gmail.com)