

From: Harold Lips

Sent: Sunday, August 9, 2020 1:13 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) Improved But Still Need Changes

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

As a California resident I appreciate the improvements in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), but I am still concerned by the proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

Here are my major concerns:

I am pleased that you cover other forms of bigotry such as anti-Semitism and Islamophobia but am concerned with the words "white dominated culture impacts racism". Unfortunately, all cultures can be shown to demonstrate bigotry to groups that are perceived to be different from them.

References to Middle Eastern communities should not favor one group over another. People from the Middle East are quite diverse and include Jews, Christian and Muslims among others. One group should not be favored over the other.

I want to emphasize that all sides of any issues should be covered. All members of any ethnic group do not think alike. Students need to be exposed to "multiple viewpoints and often competing sources" of information to ensure that "diverse viewpoints are respected". I am pleased that this is to be included in the guidelines.

I would like the ESMC to cover what ethnic experiences have been in California and in the United States. Positions on international issues should not be promoted such as anti-Israel and pro-BDS. No position should be taken.

I am pleased that explicitly antisemitic slurs have been removed but worried that they may still be in some of the footnotes and references.

Again, I am pleased that the ethnic studies model curriculum is being changed to make it more inclusive but am concerned that it does not do enough to address anti-Semitism, which is on the rise.

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,

Harold Lips