

From: Victoria

Sent: Tuesday, August 18, 2020 12:31 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies::Curriculum Input:: Another way forward.

Hello,

I hope this finds you well. My name is Victoria. I'm a California resident, mother, and educator and I wanted to give feedback on the Ethnic Studies Curriculum Framework.

We can all agree that our students should be taught the beauty of other cultures, the diversity of language, the sacredness with which others hold their religion, and the richness and depth of the human experience. Humanity is vast and complex and young people who understand and appreciate this enter the world as better global citizens.

I've read some criticism of the Ethnic Studies Curriculum Framework as different groups jockey to be included. It's true that **if we focus on the content we'll never be able to satisfy each of the 1000s of ethnic/religious/cultural groups that exist in the world**. We'd have to pick winners and losers at best, and at worst we'd subject students to a glossing over of many ethnic groups reducing them all to stereotypes.

I'm writing to propose another way: an Independent Study of Ethnic Studies Framework. In this model, each individual student (with teacher support) would choose an ethnicity to study in-depth and be charged with a culminating presentation/project to share with their peers on the chosen ethnicity. A student interested in Manga might choose to Japanese Culture; A student who loves soccer might choose to study an ethnic minority in the country of her favorite team; A student whose church is funding a well in Somalia might choose to study an ethnic group there. The possibilities are endless and motivated by interest, passion, and freedom.

Students immerse themselves in a chosen path using technology and community resources to grow their understanding of the history, culture, customs, language, religions, etc of a single group. They then share this with their peers. Instead of learning an inch deep and a mile wide, they deep dive and purposefully in a multi-faceted, individualize project-based approach. The research supports this as the best model for learning. Students will build the skills to understand others, appreciate those different from themselves, and not view people at surface level. By learning about one, they learn HOW TO STUDY. They learn how to respect. They learn how the richness of one group exists in all groups.

I hope California will consider the Independent Study model as a potential guide for the Ethnic Studies Curriculum Framework. It will be impossible to cover every ethnic group in a content-based model and attempting to would rob students of the skills on how to take ownership of their learning & how to study and view humanity.

Please let me know if there are any followup questions on how a model like this would potentially work.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kindly,
Victoria Haddad
[phone redacted]