

From: M. Smith

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 6:05 PM

To: Ethnic Studies; CFIRD;

Subject: CA Ethnic studies curriculum, revised draft

To: IQC Committee for Ethnic Studies curriculum:

Ms. Johnson, Ms. Phillips, Mr. Thompson, Ms. Montano, Mr. Cardona, Ms. Arzate, Samia Shoman, Mr. Leeper, Ms. Fa, Ms. Riechel, Mr. Black, Ms. Moreno, Ms. Lee, Mr. Pacheco, Ms. Tintiangco-Cubales, Mr. Gonzalez, R. Tolteka Cuauhtin, Ms. Xiong-Lor

cc: Honorable Tony Thurmond, Superintendent, CDE

Linda Darling Hammond, Chair, State Board of Education

From: Marianne Smith, Writer and editor

Oakland, CA

I am a California resident and voter, and I have worked in public education. I am familiar with the curriculum frameworks process, and I know how very hard it is to write these documents. Thanks for volunteering to take on the challenge of creating a model Ethnic Studies curriculum.

Please consider the following comments when you convene to discuss curriculum revisions:

1) Inclusion

When the original concept of an Ethnic Studies course was created at SF State in the 1960's, there were so many blanks in higher education studies, and it was critical to address the need to include the neglected history and cultural heritage of underserved, marginalized groups in

California. I remember, because I was living in California at the time, and was very happy that something was being done about this terrible problem.

Today, we have a slightly different landscape, and I emphasize the word "slightly," because there is still an urgent need to address racism in our country and its catastrophic effects. The most prominent feature of the climate today is that, in addition to racist acts against African Americans, Native Americans and Latinos, there is a divisive and violent climate affecting Muslim Americans, Jewish Americans, and Asian Americans and others who represent "the other" in communities across the U.S.

2) Awareness of history

It was a surprise to find that the draft curriculum does not discuss antisemitism in the U S, and the historical basis for antisemitism, which dates back to the 11th century in Western Europe and did not end after World War II, when the Allies defeated the Nazis.

Only a year ago, in 2018, in Poway, CA, a man entered a synagogue with a rifle and murdered Lori Gilbert Kaye, who was trying to protect the rabbi of the congregation. In October 2019, 11 Jewish people were murdered in Pittsburgh, PA, considered the worst act of anti-Semitic violence in American history. The attackers were motivated by an ideology which has persisted for centuries and remains potent today.

Please rethink your draft to allow students to learn about all Americans who are persecuted and who have lost their lives because of their identity and their religion.

Thank you again for your contribution to broadening the education of our students in California.

