

From: christopher kox
Sent: Friday, August 9, 2019 9:07 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: Proposed Curriculum in Ethnic Studies

Curricular Authors:

I am sharing below a letter I recently sent to Assemblymember Chiu, who represents my district in the California Senate.

Essentially, I wrote requesting Legislative oversight of the proposed curriculum not least because the very guidelines themselves, which apparently are not up for scrutiny, were biased and self-serving.

I have now read a pair of opinions in the LA Times which claim the curriculum is specifically Anti-Semitic. I have not a doubt that this opinion is a valid assessment, given the guidelines and the portions of the proposed curriculum viewed.

What disturbs me most, aside from outright propagandizing, is that the long term outcome of this will be to promote differentiation and erode the common school, and the common ground on which it is based.

Christopher Kox

_____ begins letter to David Chiu _____

Assemblymember David Chiu
State Capitol

August 5, 2017

Dear Assemblymember Chiu,

I live in your district. My children attended Gordon Lau Elementary School, and currently attend Marina Middle School and Lowell High School. I am retired from faculty and administration at the City College of San Francisco. I was not on the Social Sciences faculty, my field instead was Library Science, sub-specialized in the history and social studies of information.

AB 2016, on an Ethnic Studies Curriculum, signed by Governor Brown and filed in September of 2016, is seemingly useful, but could benefit from Legislative oversight because the translation from legislation to curriculum leaves much to be desired. Although the various sections of proposed curriculum are up for public comment, the stated principles on which such curriculum is to be constructed and evaluated, are not.

Ethnic Studies, in general, is contentious in academia, because it is focused on practice, not theory, and thus makes little room for rational question or objection. Its practitioners are not “experts” in the root sense of the term (i.e. non-stakeholders) but are quite the reverse. Ethnic Studies is very much invested in true-belief and is intent on impressing those beliefs on others. Of course, they would counter that social studies as taught in schools to date has been nothing but that, which would not be incorrect, except that the social sciences sanction challenges to their own prejudices, something Ethnic Studies as practiced is not prepared to do.

A good share of the problem is that some principles such as depending on “confirmed” research are loaded; those demanding language that is inclusive, supportive and favoring the ethnic studies movement -- especially the Third World Liberation Front -- are self-serving; and those seeking a “critical” analysis of history and systems of oppression are philosophically biased (Marxist).

As a result, the curricular proposals from beginning to end revel in convoluted thinking, neologism and didactic compulsion. I discovered something interesting, however, on the road to child indoctrination. Children can easily see and smell brainwash. I had to work very hard to bring my younger son back to balance when his response to school-marm strictures was Prager University, and worse.

So, can there please be some legislative oversight so that what began with good intentions does not degenerate into a public sanction for propaganda? The alternate is self-defeating in that it will drive more children out of public schools, and thus further erode the common school and common ground on which public schooling rests.

Thank you, sincerely,

Christopher Kox