

Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum May 2019 Draft

(Download and use to provide specific recommendations)

Include the chapter of the model curriculum, the page number, and line number(s) to ensure that the California Department of Education and Instructional Quality Commission can reference the content of the document when reviewing your comments. Please email this document as a Word document to ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov. You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
[Enter the Chapter Number here, or just “General” for a comment that applies to the entire document.]	Bernice Welles No organizational affiliation General Pages 234, 268 cited	[Include the page and line number(s) here–Write your comment here] One of my first reactions to hearing of this model curriculum is that our children in California’s public schools are in dire need of as much curriculum time as possible to master the basics. I wish that it were not the case that 25% of California’s student population lacks basic reading skills and that 44% entering state colleges require remediation. Sadly, it seems that African American students and Hispanic students fare the worst. How will ethnic studies curricula counter this situation? What our students need is a solid grounding in the 3Rs , critical thinking and education that prepares them to be independent, productive adults.

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General Comments		<p>Beyond this it seems that such a curriculum runs the risk of being a tool for those with a political agenda. We have innumerable ethnic groups in California and this curriculum will undoubtedly alienate one group or another. For example, LA is the home to one of the largest Armenian populations outside of Armenia and yet there is no mention of Armenians.</p> <p>As the daughter of Holocaust survivors, I learned first-hand of the discrimination and violence against Jews prior to WWII as well as of the senseless slaughter of both sides of my family. I am very shocked to learn that the curriculum has no information devoted to the Holocaust or to Jewish Americans, particularly when Jews are the object of hate crimes at a proportion greater than any other ethnic group in the US. A simple word search in the document entitled Sample Course Models reveals the following word counts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Jewish – 0/ Jew 4- with 2 of these citations related to negative stereotypes of Muslims; 1 as part of a list of various groups- Anti-semitism – 1- also part of a list- Islamophobia – 60 <p>At a time when anti-semitism is on the rise, in particular on university campuses that promote BDS and anti-zionism, it is most disturbing to read the phrase “Call to Boycott, Divest, and Sanction Israel” on page 234. It is also shocking to read the phrase “Israeli Colony” on page 268.</p> <p>We are in California, so why is there such an emphasis of the Israeli Palestinian conflict? If there is such concern about Islamophobia, why not discuss, for example, the Uighur Muslims who are in concentration camps in China, the abusive treatment of Palestinians in Lebanon, the imprisonment of Muslim women in Iran for refusing to wear a hijab?</p>
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		<p>The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) in the Model Curriculum is framed entirely from the vantage point of proponents of BDS and fails to adhere to curriculum guidelines that require content to be taught in a manner that is "balanced", "inclusive", and reflective of "different perspectives." One has to wonder if there was any input from experts with a pro-Zionist, pro-Israel point of view.</p> <p>I go back to my original contention. It is better to focus on learning skills that prepare students for success in our society. The Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum as it now stands has clearly been hijacked by a political agenda and will only lead to divisiveness and strife.</p>