

From: Karen Roter Davis  
Sent: Sunday, August 11, 2019 8:32 PM  
To: Ethnic Studies  
Cc:; Tony Thurmond  
Subject: Re: California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education:

I am upset and deeply disappointed by the proposed, highly flawed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. I support the idea of teaching an ethnic studies class, but urge you to make major revisions or a significant rewrite of the ESMC, consistent with the recommendations from the California Legislative Jewish Caucus letter, Stand With Us, Jimena, Amcha, and others.

As a Jewish American whose children have already experienced incidents of anti-Semitism in their California public schools, it is deeply concerning to me that this proposed curriculum, among other things: (1) does not include references to Jewish ethnicity, (2) neither acknowledges the existence of nor defines anti-Semitism, and (3) over-emphasizes the Israeli Palestinian conflict and frames both the conflict and BDS entirely from the vantage of BDS proponents, failing to adhere to curriculum guidelines that require content to be taught in a manner that is “balanced”, “inclusive”, and reflective of “different perspectives.”

This dangerous combination only risks flaming further anti-Semitism and hate crimes, which have risen by more than 37% according to 2018 FBI statistics. To put a finer point on it, this curriculum scares me, with good reason.

California has been at the forefront of entrepreneurship, technology advances, and forward-thinking policy. To retain this vital leadership position in the United States -- and in the world -- our California students need to learn to evaluate thoughtfully the diversity of all the facts and opinions presented to them. While I support ethic and diversity curricula in theory, the ESMC as it is constructed now is dogma barely cloaked under a attempted veil of diversity; this is insulting and harmful to everyone and undermines the very goals we all seek to achieve of critical thinking, mutual understanding, and respect.

I urge you to make major revisions or a significant rewrite of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum to address these concerns.

Sincerely,  
Karen R. Davis