

From: Carol Emerich
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2019 1:18 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education:

As a retired teacher who dealt frequently with issues of prejudice and bigotry in my very diverse classrooms over the years, I am extremely dismayed by the proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. I strongly support the idea of teaching an ethnic studies curriculum and have always tried to include some understanding of different ethnicities and cultures in my own classroom instruction. I also addressed bigotry and stereotypes as they arose in classroom situations as well as in literature and history.

As a Jewish woman, I am deeply concerned by the rise of antisemitism in our culture, and the lack of understanding that a) it is a problem and b) what the problem is. As a child, I was the recipient of antisemitic bullying for about two years from a group of boys who has misinformation about Jews. It made me depressed and frightened to even go to school. I am well aware of the results that this kind of bigotry and language can have on children.

I support inclusion and diversity, but I oppose a curriculum that doesn't include Jewish experience, fails to discuss antisemitism while examining racial and cultural prejudices, and would perpetuate negative antisemitic stereotypes. Despite the significant contributions of Jews to California's history, politics, culture, and government and our community's longstanding struggle against hatred and discrimination, the ESMC erases the Jewish experience in America. The exclusion is offensive and inconsistent with the purpose of ethnic studies to promote inclusion and acceptance. **I would ask that you make some major revisions to the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum as it presently exists, consistent with the recommendations from the California Legislative Jewish Caucus letter, Stand With Us, Jimena, Amcha, and others.**

Yes, we need to examine all areas of bigotry, including racism, white supremacy (which, by the way, is also strongly anti-Jewish, as they do not consider Jews to be "white"), sexism, classism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia. But why exclude antisemitism when Jews have been the target of many of the same groups that target Muslims, African Americans, and others? The Jews have a long history of oppression and subjugation, including experiences right here in California and across the United States, so their experiences should be included and viewed as being as valid as those of any other oppressed group. Please consider this when reviewing your curriculum.

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

Respectfully,
Carol A. Emerich

