

From: Iris Ruiz

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2019 7:42 PM

To: Ethnic Studies ; Kenneth McDonald

Subject: Public Comment on Model ES Curriculum

Hello,

My name is Dr. Iris Ruiz, I am a professor of Ethnic Studies and Composition and Rhetoric. I'd like to provide a bit of feedback on the model curriculum found here: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/esmcpubcomment.asp>, specifically on Chapters 1 and 2. As an educator in higher education, I realize that there may be some dissatisfaction with the current curriculum, and it is expected, as this is a new addition to what we currently understand as a "colonial" based curriculum that has failed students of color historically since 1968 and even before then. It is unfortunate that there is so much push back against such a necessary addition to our increasingly diversified schools: ones that still have a long way to go before they can truly claim to provide a openly inclusive and equal education, one that Martin Luther King Jr. desired but did not achieve to the extent that he dreamed of.

It is true that after looking at Chapter 1 and 2 of the model curriculum that it is a controversial curriculum: one that deals heavily in political and social truths for people of color within the United States. However, the state of CA is mandated to create a model Ethnic Studies curriculum, one that delves into the complexity of the history of Ethnic Studies and the histories and experiences of the many populations of the United States. Why is the mandated curriculum being challenged so harshly, one must ask? Does it touch that frail nerve of those not truly committed to equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion, more over, to a more just and equitable society?

My comments are that these sample assignments and rationale for Ethnic Studies are an accurate depiction of what has been missing for too long from mainstream curricula in K-12 institutions. They are what is needed to demonstrate California's leadership on matters of national importance as a model for the national educational consciousness: the future of our country--a country that claims to confront oppression, discrimination, and racism head on. I am happy to comment more specifically on particular part of the curriculum, but for chapter 2, for example, I see the lessons on police brutality and capitalism. These are critical social justice issues common to Ethnic Studies curricula. These are not overtly "radical" lessons, they are what should be imparted to the masses so that they might better problem solvers to current social ills. I'll be happy to elaborate if needed. For now please see my statement on the importance of Ethnic Studies endorsed by the National Council of Teachers of English and the College Conference on Composition and Communication. <http://www2.ncte.org/statement/ethnic-studies-k12-curr/>

Thank you for your time,

Dr. Iris Ruiz

Iris D. Ruiz, PhD

