

From: Staci and Alan Kessel
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 9:42 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] By electronic delivery only

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Members of the Instructional Quality Commission California Department of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901
RE: Revised Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum,

I am part of the Irvine Unified School District family. I also have a daughter who is a sophomore in the IUSD public school system. I am writing to express concerns regarding the new ESMC.

While we appreciate the revised version of this curriculum, I still believe new ESMC could be further improved. For example, we recommend the curriculum include a definition of antisemitism. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition and contemporary examples are well-regarded. As respected experts, ADL refers to it explicitly in our guide Antisemitism Uncovered (https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__antisemitism.adl.org__&d=DwlFaQ&c=SlStQSL0VMIUJoLS-Q8giiFIA-AKdP7tpJHyQh8DeXk&r=2OaA-Txl6K6ZRmr4TOdWGVysPQu38AWfs6kE1RPAYl8&m=KX93nyFhf-VCm5y7lxqx1uVgAjF9zZ_SWLGAPlkCaxY&s=NqQMse44gnTaNDrCVpfCmY5jXbLIAd9M5TaScmwXAw&e=) and more broadly in our resources and lesson plans on

https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.state.gov__defining-2Danti-2Dsemitism&d=DwlFaQ&c=SlStQSL0VMIUJoLS-Q8giiFIA-AKdP7tpJHyQh8DeXk&r=2OaA-Txl6K6ZRmr4TOdWGVysPQu38AWfs6kE1RPAYl8&m=KX93nyFhf-VCm5y7lxqx1uVgAjF9zZ_SWLGAPlkCaxY&s=cR1u3tyP_hSmdr9ZgOYD6wKh9fi2zUHkprhNK1Rc35k&e= .

Moreover, we suggest that the ESMC recognize that the American Jewish community includes people of color and that many Jewish Americans trace their family roots to the Middle East and North Africa. For example, we draw your attention to a suggested lesson plan entitled "Irish and Jewish Americans: Redefining White and American."² The title and description give the impression that American Jews are uniformly of European descent and as such have all attained "white identity" and "racial privilege," to quote the lesson plan. It is an ironic conclusion as white supremacists explicitly reject the "whiteness" of any Jew. Indeed, their hate-filled worldview sees Jews as a critical player in the destruction of the "white race." Failing to acknowledge the ethnic diversity of the Jewish community will mislead students about the complexity of contemporary Jewish identity and the hatred targeting Jews.

As a parent, I am very concerned about the political undertones this curriculum could adapt into its program. There is no place for political bias in highschool education.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my concerns regarding this important issue for our children's academic curriculum.

Sincerely,
Staci Kessel-askessel