

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)
<i>Write "General" if your comment isn't about one specific chapter.</i>	Teresa Bruce, concerned citizen	
General		Overall, this curriculum uses Communist ideology and phrases to promote a Marxist idea of "intersectionality" and the "oppression of the workers by capitalism/class/classism and colonialism/imperialism. " Additional Marxist terminology: "Some examples of systems of power are: "white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy". As seen in examples below, this curriculum includes anti-semitic ideas and terminology.

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Glossary		Page 2, lines 29-40 – This section features a definition which clearly promotes the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement against Israel. It claims the purpose of BDS is to “establish freedom for Palestinians living under apartheid conditions.” It then parrots more one-sided BDS talking points, offering no critical perspectives about this campaign of hate, including that its true purpose, as stated by its co-founder and leading activists, is to end the existence of Israel, the only Jewish state.
Chapter 1		Page 13, line 296 and following - This section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is based on the work of Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, which promotes Marxist ideology and communism. I strongly object to the teaching of Communism and Marxist ideology in our schools.
Chapter 1		Page 18, Line 445 - This section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “For example, if students decide they want to advocate for voting rights for undocumented immigrant residents at the school district or city elections, they can develop arguments in favor of such a city ordinance and then plan a meeting with their city council person or school board member.” This teaches children that is acceptable to break immigration law and undermine the Constitution of the United States. The goal of educators is to teach the future generation to obey the Laws of the United States. That includes immigration law.
Chapter 1		Page 20, Line 496 - This section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This teaches the religion of Islam. Unless the curriculum also teaches the religion of Christianity and Judaism, this should be removed.

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Chapter 1		<p>Page 24, Line 585 - This section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divides the students into groups rather than bring them together. • Rather than divide the students into various factions, it would be much more productive to teach American history and culture. This would ensure that they learn the “grand American narrative”.
Chapter 2		<p>Page 2, Line 27 - This section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is extremely negative, emphasizing oppression and division. • Rather than teach the negative and divisive concepts of “the interlocking systems of oppression and privilege that impact all people of color”, rather teach the American Dream that people of every color have the same opportunity for advancement and success as guaranteed in the Constitution. Show examples of successful Americans of every race, and tell the stories of how they succeeded. Then when they learn how to succeed, they will know the truth – that America has “dismantle(d) white supremacy and institutional racism”.
Chapter 2		<p>Page 5, Line 118 - This section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blames racism and discrimination on laws that have been corrected and changed for many years. It doesn't address individual liberty and personal choices for many of the problems of the inner city. • This section also does not address the truth that the policies of the Progressive Democrat rule in Primarily African-American cities cause institutionalized poverty, disadvantages, and success in life. Reparations

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Chapter 2		<p>Page 234, lines 4956-4958 – This section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages teachers to highlight BDS and a pro-BDS group called Direct Action for Palestine but no voices critical of their perspectives (p. 234). Promotes a false equivalence between Israel's efforts to stop terrorists from entering communities to murder innocent people, and U.S. policies on the border with Mexico.
Chapter 2		<p>Page 237, lines 5024-5032 – This section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use unclear language that implies “Israel-Palestine” as a whole is an Arab country.
Chapter 2		<p>Page 242, lines 5157-5161 – This section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frames the Palestinian narrative of the 1948 War as fact, with no alternative perspectives.
Chapter 2		<p>Page 256, lines 5477-5494, pages 264-270, lines 5692-5830 – These sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage teachers to use an anti-Israel poem which insinuates Jews control the media and use it to manipulate the public - a common, and quintessential, antisemitic slur.

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
General		<p>The Introduction of the proposed curriculum states that “[t]he implementation of Ethnic Studies presents an opportunity for teachers to...enable students to develop a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusion, and aids in the eradication of bigotry, hate, and racism.” Despite this stated goal, the curriculum does not feature a single lesson about the Jewish community or antisemitism, mentioning Jews only in passing. With antisemitism rising and ignorance about the Jewish people still a significant problem in our society, the exclusion of Jews and antisemitism from this curriculum is deeply disappointing and educationally deficient.</p>

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General		<p>The biased sections and omissions listed above run counter to the stated purpose of the curriculum, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section 1(a): The State of California is committed to providing excellent educational opportunities to all its pupils;• Section 1(f): The state’s educational standards should be guided by core values of equity, inclusiveness, and universally high expectations; and• Section 1(g): The state is committed to its efforts to provide all pupils with excellent educational opportunities, without regard to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, income, sexual orientation, or disability. <p>Additionally, California Education Code § 233.5(a) provides:</p> <p>"Each teacher shall endeavor to impress upon the minds of the pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice, patriotism, and a true comprehension of the rights, duties, and dignity of American citizenship, and <i>the meaning of equality and human dignity, including the promotion of harmonious relations</i>, kindness toward domestic pets and the humane treatment of living creatures, to teach them to avoid idleness, profanity, and falsehood, and to instruct them in manners and morals and the principles of a free government." (Emphasis added).</p> <p>The rise of antisemitism within our culture, which has been accompanied by an increasing general threat to freedom, human dignity and harmonious relations, is evidenced by the recent attacks of Jews in synagogues in Pittsburgh and Poway, as well as against other American citizens in El Paso and Dayton. The curriculum’s failure to address antisemitism as a form or bigotry thus falls short of the above directive.</p> <p>Furthermore, the California Education Code’s Prohibition of Discrimination states, in relevant part, that “[n]o person shall be subjected to discrimination</p>
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		<p>on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion... in any program or activity conducted by an educational institution that receives, or benefits from, state financial assistance, or enrolls pupils who receive state student financial aid.”</p> <p>Similarly, the California Education Code’s Prohibition Instruction includes a provision on Prejudice that states, in relevant part, that “[a] teacher shall not give instruction and a school district shall not sponsor any activity that promotes a discriminatory bias on the basis of race or ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, nationality, or sexual orientation...” This provision, like the Prohibition of Discrimination mentioned above, illustrates the problems inherent in the proposed curriculum, and are not an exhaustive list of the provisions of the California Education Code with which the proposed curriculum appears to be in conflict.</p> <p>The model curriculum not only fails to address antisemitism as a form of bigotry but actually includes thinly veiled antisemitic rhetoric and promotes the discriminatory BDS movement. Additionally, the model curriculum simultaneously fails to provide balance with regard to Israel or any education at all about Jews. Therefore, it effectively discriminates against Jewish and Israeli students in violation of the education code. Additionally, by marginalizing Jewish and Israeli students, the model curriculum violates the three above-referenced declarations of the California state legislature in enacting the legislation.</p> <p>We note the critical LA Times’ review of the curriculum, and hope that the values of inclusion prevail over hatred, division, and misinformation. In closing, we strongly urge you to review and revise the curriculum to remove bias and to educate students about American Jews as an ethnic group, including those who fled the Holocaust, oppression in the Middle East, and discrimination in the former Soviet Union.</p>
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		<p>Furthermore, we call on you to create safeguards that will prevent similar bias and omissions in this and other California state curriculums going forward.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue.</p>
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California Department of Education, June 2019