

## **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](mailto:ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov). You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at [kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov](mailto:kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov) with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

<b>Chapter of Model Curriculum</b>	<b>Your Name and Affiliation</b>	<b>Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)</b>
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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
GLOSSARY	Elliott Benjamin California Resident and Concerned Parent	<p><i>GLOSSARY</i></p> <p><i>I have concerns with the following content:</i></p> <p><i>The glossary for the curriculum includes a definition of 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".</i></p> <p><i>It then parrots more BDS talking points while offering no critical perspectives about this campaign of hate, which seeks to end Israel's existence.</i></p> <p><i>This definition is not only entirely one-sided but its inclusion elevates a fringe perspective against Israel into the mainstream and entirely politicizes the national origin of a major California community of Israeli-American immigrants. No other nation or national origin is subject to the same treatment in the model curriculum. Most disturbingly, the model curriculum's definition of BDS in its current form is akin to defining the Ku Klux Klan as a social movement that promotes free speech and free expression while ignoring the organization's racist underpinnings.</i></p>

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CHAPTER 2	Elliott Benjamin  California Resident and Concerned Parent	<p><i>PAGES 234, 237, 242, 256, and 264-269 OF CHAPTER 2: SAMPLE COURSE MODELS</i></p> <p><i>The sample lesson plans for the curriculum: Encourage teachers to highlight BDS and a pro-BDS group called Direct Action for Palestine, but no voices critical of their perspectives (p. 234).</i></p> <p><i>Promote 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 (p. 234).</i></p> <p><i>Use unclear language that implies "Israel-Palestine" as a whole is an Arab country (p. 237).</i></p> <p><i>Frame the Palestinian narrative of the 1948 War as fact, with no alternative perspectives (p. 242).</i></p> <p><i>Encourage teachers to use a poem featuring harsh criticism of Israel, but no content offering a positive perspective about Israel or criticism of Palestinian leaders (p. 256, 264-269).</i></p> <p><i>The Introduction of the proposed curriculum states that, "The 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, mentioning Jews only in passing. With antisemitism rising and ignorance about the Jewish people still a major problem in our society, the exclusion of Jews from this curriculum is deeply disappointing.</i></p> <p><i>We respectfully request that the proposed ethnic studies curriculum take California's diverse communities and perspectives into account through a revision of the current model. Drawing from your own glossary, the "master narrative" advanced in the current model curriculum only serves to marginalize and disenfranchise California's immigrant population from Israel and this is not acceptable.</i></p>

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
GENERAL	Elliott Benjamin California Resident and Concerned Parent	I urge the State to add lessons 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

California Department of Education, June 2019