

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>[Enter the Chapter Number here, or just "General" for a comment that applies to the entire document.]</i>	<i>[Enter Your Name] [Enter the agency, organization, or business that you represent, if applicable.]</i>	<i>[Include the page and line number(s) here–Write your comment here]</i>

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General	R. Litvin	<p>I am writing today to share my voice about the pending ethnic studies curriculum that may be made mandatory under AB 331. As I read the curriculum and related materials, including comments from State politicians and the public, I am dismayed at the direction California is going in the attempts to find an inclusive and diverse curriculum. It has begun to feel like California is ignoring the history lessons of pre-war Germany.</p> <p>I am a daughter of a Kurdish Jew who was smuggled out of Iraq at a time the persecution of Mizrahi (Middle Eastern) Jews was escalating in Iraq. I do not consider myself a “white” Jew. My mother’s story is not much different than that of unaccompanied minors from El Salvador. Handed over to strangers to endure months of hardship and dangers to end up in a refugee camp in a new country they want to call home.</p> <p>We came to the United States when I was eleven and eventually settled in semi-rural Pennsylvania where I endured a constant stream of anti-Semitism during my high school years.</p> <p>When I first came to California, I found it to be an amazing place, full of diversity, the celebration of the diverse world cultures, religions, ethnicities and races all in one place. It was in California that I found my place. I spent 21 years as a social worker and now work for a local government office of cultural competency. I feel afraid of the direction my beloved State is going.</p> <p>I echo the California Legislative Jewish Caucus which stated that the new curriculum would “institutionalize the teaching of anti-Semitic stereotypes in our public schools.” The State Attorney General’s Office has stated number of hate crimes against Jews in California increased more than against any other group in 2018, yet California government moves forward with this hateful curriculum. Reading the curriculum, I cannot imagine subjecting my biracial Jewish child to a classroom setting where such bias, hate, and Nazi like tropes are shared with our youth. We are a bilingual, multi-racial, multi-cultural household yet we are somehow marginalized, and worse demonized by our own State government through the language in the curriculum.</p> <p>Legitimate ethnic studies that are inclusive, diverse, offer multiple viewpoints and lift people, this is what we should be providing our young people – not divisiveness, anti-Semitism, and hate. I implore you to do what you can to make sure this curriculum does not become law. Teaching bigotry and hate is a slippery slope towards evil we have seen before.</p>

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California Department of Education, June 2019