

From: Cherie Lewis
Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2020 1:41 PM
To: EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov
Cc: Cherie Lewis
Subject: Comment - Proposed California Ethnic Studies Curriculum - Extremely Flawed Sections on Asian-American & Middle Eastern Communities

Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Cherie Lewis, and I have worked for years as an educator. I support the concept of an ethnic studies curriculum, but I oppose this draft of an ethnic studies curriculum. This draft curriculum is very flawed in the section on Asian Americans. Here, the curriculum errs by grouping together millions of people who differ by race, ethnicity, culture, history, and values. For example, Californians who are of the religions of Hinduism & Judaism, and Californians who are of Israeli, Japanese, Chinese, & Arab descent are all grouped together under the category of "Asian Americans." This categorization completely ignores the uniqueness of each group and its history & culture. I am especially concerned, because the rich multitude of cultures of the peoples of the Middle East have been either overlooked or handled in a way that promotes a political agenda, rather than an educational agenda. The goal of the California Department of Education should be to educate the students, not to promote a political agenda or to call for activism regarding a foreign affairs situation in the Middle East. Children have a limited amount of time to learn, and it is a betrayal of trust for the Department of Education to give its stamp of approval to a model curriculum that goes far beyond the scope of the state's educational mandate regarding ethnic studies.

Cherie S. Lewis, Ph.D.