

From: Julie Brenner
Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 11:34 AM
To: Ethnic Studies
Cc: [emails redacted]
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Department of Education:
I am the third generation of my family to have been born & raised in San Mateo County. Almost all of my family attended California public schools from kindergarten through college; my grandmother even went to San Mateo public schools. I have always been proud to say that we are products of the California public school system. While I applaud some improvement in California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), I am very concerned that it does not reflect the shared values of California residents, nor the values included in AB2016. Significant additional changes are still needed in the ESMC. The guiding principles and resulting lessons should open students' minds, model that diverse viewpoints should be respected, and not force a specific political ideology. All students should feel safe at school; in particular, we must not politically indoctrinate our students with anti-Israel and antisemitic teachings – neither in the curriculum nor in the web links or highlighted advocacy groups. ESMC's few references to Jews are misleading and offensive. Group advocacy of and links to anti-Israel pro-BDS sites with falsehoods about imaginary genocide must be removed (such as the Movement for Black Lives and its BDS links). A definition of antisemitism should be included, addressing stereotyping and double standards against Jews and Jewish institutions from all parts of the political spectrum. All Middle Eastern communities should be represented equally. Adding Elements of Balanced Curriculum from the Los Angeles Unified School District's Ethnic Studies Curriculum will provide solid ground rules for course development. Especially at this time, ESMC should strive to be inclusive and bring everyone together rather than teaching divisiveness. I implore you to make the needed changes to ESMC. Respectfully,
Julie Brenner