

From: Elliot Lepler

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 2:53 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: [emails redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns about the draft CA's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC)

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I am happy to find some improvement in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), but I am still very distressed by the imposition of the offensive, one-sided political ideology that still remains in this updated draft of California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

Here are my major concerns:

- The BLM lesson in the African American section lists the following as THE resource:

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2017/bringing-black-lives-matter-into-the-classroom-part-ii>

In it, Palestine equated with South Africa and Stonewall. This is the same article that describes non-violent civil rights leaders as "passive" and "docile" and condemns considering them to be "heroes."

- Appendix A lists a course with the following lesson plan: "Students will write a paper detailing certain events in American history that have led to Jewish and Irish Americans gaining racial privilege. They will be asked to think critically about why and who is allowing this evolution in white identity." Among the many issues with this assignment is that it, in itself, can be considered anti-Semitic.

The ESMC ignores that Jews come in all colors. The majority of Israelis are people who were forced to leave other Middle Eastern and North African countries due to their antisemitism. Painting all of us as "white" is racist.

This curriculum denies the national liberation movement of the Jewish people legitimacy that it bestows on other liberation movements. Israel is subjected to hateful calls for its destruction. Daily threats of extermination are published and these are ignored by the curriculum.

I am a retired California pediatrician. I understand the intolerance that can be imposed upon students when they study biased materials. I feel this curriculum is a violation of my progressive values.

I strongly request you to make significant further revisions to the ESMC to address these concerns.

Please revise the Guiding Values and Principles of the ESMC to use more precise and inclusive terminology, to align with the ESMC Guidelines, to build bridges of intergroup understanding, and to ensure critical thinking. Then adjust the lessons and sample topics accordingly to match the revised principles.

Thank you,
Elliot Lepler, MD
Mountain View CA