

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 Public Input Template	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable) 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Page 2 of 3
General	Roger J. Kaplan, private citizen	<p>Fully support the idea and spirit of this project and curriculum, but it is flatly unacceptable that the Jewish American experience (and lengthy history of anti-Semitism in America) is so awkwardly and plainly excluded from its scope—which, in so doing, signals the students being taught this curriculum that Jews are of the privileged/oppressor class, not the oppressed. This, in itself, is fundamentally an anti-Semitic mindset.</p> <p>The harm is compounded by dragging in the non-sequitor (for purposes of studying the experiences of various ethnic groups in America) of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While—if handled differently—this may have been an incidental topic to give some context to the Arab/Muslim migrations to America, unfortunately this proposed curriculum instead incorporates uncritically terminology and topics which are highly charged and biased—for instance, using the term “the Nakba” to refer to the founding of the state of Israel (lines 4992 and 5159), giving only the <i>breathtakingly skewed</i> definition of the term as “Arabic for “Catastrophe,” the term used to describe the dispossession and dispersal of many Palestinian Arabs from the new state of Israel in the 1948 Palestine War.” How is a student supposed to come away from this lesson without the simplistic belief that the Israeli Jews were the “black hat” bad guys driving out the poor, oppressed, guiltless Arabs, when the reality of the times and interactions were much more complex and nuanced?</p> <p>On top of that, placing the demonstrably anti-Semitic “Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement for Palestine” (lines 684 and 4957) on the same footing as “Black Lives Matter,” the “Occupy Movement”, the LGBTQ movement, and several other broad social justice efforts without giving any sort of sense of nuance or completeness of context is deeply hurtful to American Jews and is simply outrageous.</p> <p>I wish that were a complete catalog of the problems here. But it is not. This document is profoundly infected with strongly slanted rhetoric that unnecessarily</p>

Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Page 3 of 3

		and unfairly demonizes Israel (and, by extension all Jews) while at the same time ignoring the American Jewish experience entirely. This is how hate and bigotry thrives... And that should be the OPPOSITE of the point of this curriculum!
--	--	--

California Department of Education, June 2019