

The California Department of Education received more than 1200 submissions that contained the text below. Other identical comments may have been posted separately.

From: [email redacted] on behalf of Lia Rensin
Sent: Thursday, December 24, 2020 2:44 PM
To: Ethnic Studies; [emails redacted]; Tony Thurmond
Cc: [emails redacted]
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Remove Critical Race Theory from the ESMC

Dear Members of the CA State Board of Education:

I am a parent who is deeply concerned about the latest draft Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), which continues to be based on critical race theory.

Critical race theory divides students by race into oppressor and oppressed groups, creating a discriminatory, hostile, and disempowering classroom environment for students. Critical race theory states that racism is pervasive and permanent and rejects principles of objectivity, neutrality, and equal opportunity.

Critical race theory conflicts with your obligation as State Board of Education members not to adopt instructional materials "that contain any matter reflecting adversely upon persons on the basis of race." (CA Education Code Section 51501) It also conflicts with our obligation, as California teachers, to "impress upon the minds of the pupils ...the promotion of harmonious relations" and not promote "discriminatory bias on the basis of race" in our classrooms. (CA Education Code Sections 233.5(a) and 51500)

I ask that you vote to remove critical race theory from the ESMC by:

1. Deleting the ESMC's directive for educators to learn critical race theory as a key framework and pedagogy for teaching ethnic studies.
2. Removing the ESMC's second definition of race which calls it "a (neo)colonial... 'master category' (that) break(s) down as people of color (POC) and white people."
3. Deleting all ESMC references to "whiteness," "racial hierarchy," and "racial privilege" as well as race-specific qualifiers preceding the words "supremacy" and "privilege."
4. Removing from the ESMC resources and UC-approved course outlines that present critical race theory as the only approach to understanding race relations.

By rejecting critical race theory at your upcoming meeting in March, you will help ensure that the ESMC accomplishes the California legislature's goal -- "preparing pupils to be global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures." (AB 2016)

Sincerely,

Lia Rensin

Lia Rensin