

From: Karen Frey

Sent: Wednesday, December 23, 2020 7:16 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] California's "Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum"

To whom it may concern,

I have just finished reading an editorial in the Whittier Daily News newspaper about the proposed new Ethnic Studies Curriculum for California's students. I speak from the position of having taught elementary school for 37 years in California before retiring in June 2018.

I feel it is VERY important to give a BALANCED approach to any kind of history curriculum, be it city, state, national, or international. While it is true that California has not always treated every ethnic group with fairness throughout the years of its statehood and even before that, it is also true that many people, including those of various races, have worked hard to improve conditions for all people in California. As the article by Murray Bessette said, "...so many who flee from ethnic and ideological persecution by communist dictatorships still choose California and America." We have a lot to offer. A properly balanced curriculum of ethnic studies should show the good as well as the not-so-good of the subject matter.

If all that children hear about their state and country is negative, that is what they will grow up believing. Let's recognize the mistakes some have made in treating certain racial groups unfairly, by all means. But, let's ALSO show what a beacon of light California has been to many people, and how they strive to make a happy new life here after emigrating from a place where they were terribly persecuted. California must be doing something right to make so many folks want to come settle in this state.

A good ethnic studies curriculum will recognize that fact and showcase those individuals who have brought about positive change like Cesar Chavez and Martin Luther King. Let's also focus on the advances made by women in California. I'm sure there have been key women who, if not Californians themselves, have made progress in fighting battles for women's rights in all states. Ruth Bader Ginsberg comes to mind.

Anyway, the point is--don't bad-mouth California's history by talking about only the negative things that have happened to its diverse population. Balance that by bringing out the many positive changes that have been made by California's men and women, of all racial backgrounds.

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