

## 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](mailto:ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov). You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at [kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov](mailto:kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov) with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
General	Galen M. Peterson  President, American Remnant Mission  Adjunct Professor of Intercultural Studies, Western Seminary, San Jose and Portland  Certified community dispute mediator	My comments are a reflection of extensive educational training and personal experience over several decades. I earned both a master's degree and a doctorate in intercultural studies and have taught that subject on the graduate school level for the past nineteen years. I have traveled to the Middle East on multiple occasions and lived there as well. I count as friends both Arabs and Jews and I have engaged in talks on matters of reconciliation between people who live in Israel and Palestine. Moreover, I have presented formal papers at conferences on the subject of promoting reconciliation between these people groups. And most specifically, I have had personal conversations with proponents of boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel who were original signatories of the campaign. So, I am able to speak with a considerable amount of understanding regarding the above issues.

## Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Page 2 of 4

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General	<p>Galen M. Peterson</p> <p>President, American Remnant Mission</p> <p>Adjunct Professor of Intercultural Studies, Western Seminary, San Jose and Portland</p> <p>Certified community dispute mediator</p>	<p>My basic concern about the curriculum is that it fails to meet its objective in one major way. In the “Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Guidelines,” under section 2, General Guidelines, the final bullet point states, “[The Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum shall:] Promote critical thinking and rigorous analysis of history, systems of oppression, and the status quo in an effort to generate discussions on futurity, and imagine new possibilities.” The curriculum falls short of that standard in the following ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The omission of Jewish Americans from the selected groups in the curriculum leaves out an opportunity for students to learn about the history of Jews living in America who have often faced discrimination and persecution because of their ethnicity and cultural heritage. It is also a phenomenon of the present day as Jewish groups are frequently singled out for acts of violence and racist comments. Jews continue to be the victims of Anti-Semitism, which is a system of oppression being promoted by various hate groups. The omission of this notable history of oppression diminishes and impedes genuine critical thinking, and can only be rectified by including a component of Jewish American Studies along with the existing groups in the curriculum.</li></ol>

Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Page 3 of 4

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2	<p>Galen M. Peterson</p> <p>President, American Remnant Mission</p> <p>Adjunct Professor of Intercultural Studies, Western Seminary, San Jose and Portland</p> <p>Certified community dispute mediator</p>	<p>2. On page 234, line 4957, there is an inclusion for “Call to Boycott, Divest, and Sanction Israel.” Generally speaking, this is a subject that lacks critical thinking on a major scale. Because of the way that the curriculum is presently set up, with its one-sided perspective, it most assuredly will not promote a “rigorous analysis of history.” In the way of illustration, the commonly stated purpose for BDS by its advocates is “civil resistance to Israeli occupation” (see the website of the BDS National Committee, the driving force behind the movement). But the head of the movement has gone on record in stating that if the occupation of the West Bank would end, BDS would continue because the goal of the major groups affiliated with BDS have all defined the end of the occupation as being the elimination of Israel and the establishment of a Palestinian state “from the river (Jordan) to the sea (Mediterranean).” It seems reasonable to conclude that BDS will be presented to the students in such a way that it will omit that essential fact and will remain couched in an appealing, yet incomplete light. Unless a different narrative from an opposing perspective is added to the existing curriculum, it will overwhelmingly fail to meet the standard of “rigorous analysis of history.” Alternatively, the topic of BDS and any backdoor inclusions regarding that topic should be removed from the curriculum.</p>

**Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum**

Page 4 of 4

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2	Galen M. Peterson  President, American Remnant Mission  Adjunct Professor of Intercultural Studies, Western Seminary, San Jose and Portland  Certified community dispute mediator	3. On pages 233-234, a list of topics is given. None of them, as stated, offer much optimism of being able to “generate discussions on futurity, and imagine new possibilities,” as your guidelines mandate. I am personally aware of many groups who are actively pursuing reconciliation between Arabs and Jews here in America and elsewhere. Unless these types of realities are presented to California students, they will be left with the false impression that there is only hatred between Arabs and Jews. The result will be the perpetuation of the notion that true peace can never be established between the groups. That is why an inclusion of Jewish studies is so important, especially if there can be a bridge between the two components (Arabs and Jews) in which positive models of reconciliation can be presented. In so doing, that will greatly enhance the hope for futurity rather than futility.
General	Galen M. Peterson  President, American Remnant Mission  Adjunct Professor of Intercultural Studies, Western Seminary, San Jose and Portland  Certified community dispute mediator	I am certain that the framers of this curriculum have sought to create an environment of deeper understanding in the education of our students. But left in its present form, that objective is incomplete, because it leaves out a significant aspect of ethnic studies (Jewish Americans) and allows a narrative (BDS) that is susceptible to deception and misunderstanding. I strongly urge that the above revisions be made to the present draft so that our students will receive a truly accurate and excellent education.