

**From:** Maddie Carmel  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 9, 2020 7:36 PM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies  
**Cc:** [email redacted]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESMC2

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I appreciate some of the improvements that were made in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, but as a retired teacher and the grandparent of ten grandchildren in the California school system, I am terribly concerned about some major flaws that still exist in this second draft.

The ESMC guiding values and principles need revising because they are the basis of each unit and lesson plan and are quite problematic. Here are just a few of my major concerns.

1. They do not reflect the values laid out in AB 2016 including “the objective of preparing pupils to be global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures.” When a guiding principle states “critique empire-building on history and its relationship to white supremacy, racism and other forms of power and oppression, there is a problem with the guiding principles if the objective is to build bridges of intergroup understanding. Perhaps The “Elements of Balanced Curriculum” from the Los Angeles Unified School’s Ethnic Studies Curriculum can be added to the ESMC to provide solid ground rules for course development. The Los Angeles Curriculum stresses the importance of students being exposed to multiple perspectives, to think critically and form their own opinions on issues.

2. Advocate a narrow political philosophy, as opposed to the CA History Social Science Framework.

This draft continues to adopt a divisive us vs. them tone opposed to the inclusiveness mandated by the CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Guidelines.

Although much of the blatantly offensive antisemitic rhetoric was removed, one just need to carefully read through the footnotes, links, and bibliography to find that antisemitism is still present.

Take for instance the reference of “Maira and Shihade 2006’ which calls Israel a settler-colonial” state, terminology which erases over 3,000 years of Jewish history, identity and rights in the historic home of the Jewish people. It falsely accuses Israel of “annexation of the West Bank and Gaza” in 1967. It did not annex these territories after the 1967 war. It calls for “Grappling with ways to connect anti-Zionism in the context of Middle East politics to anti-racist and ant-imperialist movements in the United States.” In other words, it advocates for connection and ideology opposed to Israel’s existence with subjects covered in the ESMC. Additionally, it attacks the ADL, and organization that CDE has committed to partnering with on an antisemitism curriculum.

I strongly urge you to make significant revisions of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum 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 to match the revised principles. Our children deserve a curriculum where they are taught to think for themselves and not spoon fed someone else’s Marxist ideology.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Madelyn Carmel