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VIA US MAIL

Ms. Soomin Chao
Chair, Instructional Quality Commission
California Department of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

Re: Comment Letter Re Proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Chairwoman Chao:

I am writing to share my concerns over the current version of the state's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). I hope that the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) will make substantial revisions to the curriculum to ensure it meets the goals of the ESMC's authorizing statute AB 2016 (Chapter 327 of the Statutes of 2016) to "prepare pupils to be global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures."

I am shocked by the proposed ESMC's manifest indifference, and even hostility, to the American Jewish experience and community. The curriculum erases American Jewish history by failing to include Jews in a meaningful way, and it neglects any discussion of anti-Semitism. Further, it incorporates harmful anti-Jewish stereotypes in its completely inappropriate and biased criticism of Israel in a curriculum intended to focus on American ethnic groups.

Jewish identity encompasses not just a connection to a faith tradition; it is also an ethnic and cultural identification. Jews are a distinct and diverse American ethnic group deserving fair and respectful inclusion in any Ethnic Studies curriculum. The ESMC as it is currently drafted, however, fails to impart these basic lessons. For example, the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Glossary and Bibliography, ("ESMC") contains no mention of anti-Semitism, but on page 2, lines 30-40, it includes the anti-Israel "Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement. The ESMC Chapter 2, at page 242, lines 5157-61, describes the founding of Israel in a politically biased manner. On pages 268-69, lines 5802-03 it uses the anti-Semitic trope of Jewish control of the media to baselessly accuse Israel of colonizing land.

Making sure that California's students learn about and appreciate the diversity of our state

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and country is an admirable goal. However, as it currently stands, the ESMC fails to achieve this end.

I strongly urge the IQC to revise the ESMC to rectify its manifest indifference, and even hostility, to the American Jewish experience and community as noted herein.

Very truly yours,

Law Offices of Richard F. Moss

Richard F. Moss

cc: Hon. Robert M. Hertzberg (via email only)
Hon. Henry Stern (via email only)