

From: Latha Govindaraju
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 10:10 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) Third Review

Dear California Department of Education and State Board of Education,

As a person of color, I am writing to express concern about the Critical Ethnic Studies' (ES) polarizing foundation which still corrupts the ESMC - a curriculum that, rather than dividing, should build bridges among students and ethnic groups. I ask that you remove the Critical ES foundation from the Guiding Values and Principles AND the resulting lessons.

In the name of Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement this past year, I saw cities burnt, riots, and innocent people lost their lives across the USA instead of peacefully supporting the same people for whom this movement was supposed to help. All it showed me that this support did not help rather it further caused division and chaos. So please reconsider some of the studies that you are planning.

This includes:

1. Removing the indoctrinating Critical Ethnic Studies ideology from the Guiding Values and Principles.
2. Replacing the narrow Critical ES language and leading questions that assume a foregone conclusion, with broader constructive language that invites inquiry and analysis from multiple perspectives.
3. Removing content that promotes violence or victimhood, or demeans any ethnic group.
4. Replacing the narrow ideological lens that romanticizes any one-sided political, economic, militant, or separatist movement, with a balanced evaluation including both positive and negative sides of the movement or "ism."
5. Replacing the unvetted list of UC-approved courses in Appendix C with courses such as those of the Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD), which are not based on a Critical ES approach.

I add my voice to the requests from the Alliance for Constructive Ethnic Studies. We all want a constructive Ethnic Studies curriculum, which represents both contributions and struggles of ethnic groups and confronts racism, while building mutual understanding among all students and fostering balanced analysis.

Thank you for your work to date on improving the ESMC and for your thoughtful consideration of the above crucial revisions.

Respectfully,
Latha Govindaraju