

Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum May 2019 Draft

Please email this document as a Word document to ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov. You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at 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	Abra Siegel, Taxpayer	<p>This entire curriculum is anti-semitic at it's core and is very troubling. The frightening and not so subtle anti-semitic narrative that is being taught in Universities across the Country is now being proposed for our public schools in California. I would like to believe the California Department of Ed is keenly aware of the rise in hate crimes against jews on College campuses across America is directly related to lack of historic education and context of Jewish history. The intentional erasing of Jewish history under the pre-text of "education" is frightening. BDS is an organization that is not "grass roots", it is backed by Governments in the middle east, with the stated intent to eliminate the jewish state. This is not an organization that is concerned or focused on policy as it relates to Israel. In addition, this curriculum has pre-established its perspective on Israel. It has identified political leaders (as reference) that are promoting anti-Semitic agenda's, misrepresenting and manipulating historical facts, while appealing to the identity politics at play in our Country. Furthermore, the example of writing a Poem that criticizes Israel in itself has determined that Israel is at fault for the circumstances of the Palestinian people. Truly there is not one element of this proposed curriculum that is okay. Finally, the blaring absence of Jewish History is painful. Please know how painful and frightening this is to many of us in the Jewish Community. I have a daughter at UC Berkeley who recently, during her freshman year directly experienced the hostility and anti-Semitism on campus. She also experienced how a political charged curriculum taught by a "Professor" in the Middle East Studies Department can</p>

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		<p>directly fule the misinformation and hate being experienced by many Jewish students on campus. I also have a child in high school and am very aware of the identity politics at play. Most people only know what they have been told. The desire to educate themselves beyond the most outspoken voices or what is shared on social media is troubling. This curriculum reinforces this very issue. I truly fear for my children's safety and the future of the Jewish Community if this curriculum is adopted and taught as defined in the proposal</p> <p>A curriculum that institutionalizes the teaching of anti-Semitic stereotypes in our public schools, erases the American Jewish experience, fails to discuss anti-Semitism, reinforces negative stereotypes about Jews and singles out Israel for criticism is dangerous. This inclusion is prejudicial and biased against one country, Israel, and one minority religious group, Jews. It is one sided and as explained below even dangerous and does not provide a thoughtful education, context or represent history or historical facts.</p> <p>For example, Page 2 of 22 of the glossary of the proposal, Glossary bibliography esmc falsely characterizes the BDS Movement as a freedom from Apartheid by the state of Israel. This is not only one sided and false, it takes a political side in a very complex problem and is NOT fair or balanced, and will create hate and possible violence against Jewish students and families.</p>
Specific Pages		<p>Specifically, Pages 234, 237, 242, 256, and 264-269 of the sample lesson plans, Sample Course Models Esmc, is also prejudicial against Israel and by direct inference the rights of the Jewish people to their own self determination.</p>

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		<p>This document encourages teachers to highlight BDS and a pro-BDS group called Direct Action for Palestine, but no voices critical of their perspectives (p. 234).</p> <p>Promotes a false equivalence between Israel's efforts to stop terrorists from entering communities to murder innocent people, and U.S. policies on the border with Mexico (p. 234).</p> <p>Use unclear language that implies "Israel-Palestine" as a whole is an Arab country (p. 237).</p> <p>Frames the Palestinian narrative of the 1948 War as fact, with no alternative perspectives (p. 242)., again heavily biased against the Jewish State. In fact, this is inaccurate historically, one sided, and heavily biased</p> <p>Encourages teachers to use a poem featuring harsh criticism of Israel, but no content offering a positive perspective about Israel or criticism of Palestinian leaders (p. 256, 264-269).</p>
Introduction		<p>The Introduction of the proposed curriculum states that, "The implementation of Ethnic Studies presents an opportunity for teachers to... enable students to develop a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusion, and aids in the eradication of bigotry, hate, and racism."</p> <p>Despite this stated goal, the curriculum does not feature a single lesson about the Jewish community (history), mentioning Jews only in passing. In addition, it presents the whole of the middle east and the situation in Israel and Palestine as a fault of the Jewish state. With antisemitism rising and ignorance about the Jewish people still a major problem in our society, the exclusion of Jews from this curriculum, and the demonization of the Jewish state, is deeply concerning. If allowed in the curriculum in this way it will, and as many Jewish leaders predict, make life dangerous for Jews in California.</p>

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