

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. 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/ #1	Melvin Ely Self	<p>1. The proposed ethnic studies curriculum appears to be designed to proselytize and inculcate more than to inform and open minds. It talks about critical thinking but would only serve to mold student thinking to one acceptable mindset - which is GROUPTHINK....the practice of thinking or making decisions as a group in a way that <u>discourages creativity or individual responsibility</u>.</p> <p>Groupthink occurs when the <u>desire for harmony or conformity</u> in the group results in an irrational or dysfunctional decision-making outcome. Part of the problem is that "tolerant" has changed its meaning. It used to mean "I may disagree with you completely, but I will treat you with respect." Today, tolerant means – "you must approve of everything I do." There's a difference between tolerance and approval.</p> <p>Group members try to minimize conflict and reach a consensus "approval" through peer pressure, moral high ground, stereotyping, and an illusion of unanimity - without critical evaluation of alternative viewpoints by actively suppressing dissenting viewpoints, and by isolating themselves from outside influences. Laws and curriculum reflecting this type of thinking <i>are</i> causing conflict with First Amendment freedoms.</p>

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General #2	Melvin Ely Self	<p>2. The curriculum would be a tool for placing political or cultural dominance or authority over others. That's <i>Hegemony</i> and an attack by the the government on the general population, forcing us to participate in, celebrate, and endorse events with which we may disagree - beliefs and practices on the ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and religious levels.</p> <p>California high school students deserve an opportunity to learn the role of ethnicity, race and religion in the life of all of its citizens, to teach tolerance for religions, but there is no acknowledgment in the curriculum of, or effort to place education about, religion and spiritual beliefs associated with ethnic groups, races and nationalities.</p> <p>This silence amounts to a denial, or at least lack of recognition that some kind of religious belief is almost universal. According to the Pew Research Center, more than eight-in-ten people worldwide, identify with a religious group. One great commonality is the teaching of the "Golden Rule" (Do unto others what you would have them do unto you) which is found not just in Christianity, but also Judaism, Hinduism, Zorastrianism, Confucianism, Buddhism and Islamism.</p> <p>Even the the religiously unaffiliated have some religious beliefs engaging in certain kinds of religious practices. Twenty-seven percent of the "unaffiliated" in the United States say they attend religious services at least once a year.</p> <p>Instead of teaching religious tolerance, the proposed curriculum advances a narrow political agenda and denies the role and importance of religion. As noted by the California Legislative Jewish Caucus the curriculum “effectively erases the American Jewish experience,” “omits anti-Semitism,” “denigrates Jews” and “singles Israel out for condemnation.” So the "groupthink" increases intolerance and excludes any consideration of the impact of religious faith and practices on society throughout history!</p>

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