

From: michael eisler
Sent: Wednesday, December 23, 2020 1:13 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies

We believe firmly that adding a pedagogically sound Ethnic Studies course to California's high school curriculum will foster respect among students and an appreciation of our rich and diverse history. ADL was an early supporter of a statute to make Ethnic Studies a high school requirement.

ADL welcomes the removal of overt antisemitism and extreme and gratuitous anti-Israel bias from the revised Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) draft. In addition, we are grateful that the new draft recognizes antisemitism as a form of historical and continuing bigotry. The ESMC must remain free of the antisemitism and anti-Israel bias that plagued the initial – now abandoned – ESMC draft. Group bias of any sort and gratuitous political indoctrination do not belong in a high school curriculum.

The ESMC needs to include a [lesson plan on antisemitism](https://www.adl.org/education/antisemitism) (<https://www.adl.org/education/antisemitism>) and a comprehensive definition of this enduring and ever-evolving form of hatred. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition and contemporary examples are highly-regarded and we recommend its use. As respected experts, ADL refers to this definition explicitly in our guide *Antisemitism*

Uncovered (<https://antisemitism.adl.org/>) and more broadly in our resources. Similarly, the U.S. State Department has used this definition since 2010, along with the European Union and others. You can review the definition at www.state.gov/defining-anti-semitism.

In fact, the ESMC would benefit from an overarching statement similar to the Los Angeles Unified School District's "[Elements of a Balanced Curriculum](#)." As stated in its introduction:

At the college and university level, ethnic studies and related courses are sometimes taught from a specific political point of view or frame of reference. In K-12 education it is imperative that students are exposed to multiple perspectives, taught to think critically and form their own opinions on these and other issues.

In the interest of fundamental fairness, we must respectfully insist that there be transparency, adherence to established protocols, and an opportunity for public comment in all phases of the ESMC's development. Thank you very much for your consideration of our views, and your interest in this issue of great significance to California and the Jewish community.

Thank you for all your work and public service.

Best regards,
Michael Eisler