

**From:** Desmond Tuck <destuck@

**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2020 12:57 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY COMMISSION AGENDA - item 2 A.

My name is Desmond Tuck and I was a parent of two children in the Palo Alto Public Schools. I'm also an immigrant from South Africa, 42 years ago.

When I arrived in this country, I went to night law school for 4 years and have been practicing as an attorney in the Bay Area for 36 years.

I am also a volunteer karate instructor and have taught many teenagers for the past 30 years. Karate cuts across all ethnic, cultural, religious and racial lines and I'm well-acquainted with how important it is to ignore any such boundaries, real or imagined, when dealing with ethnic studies.

While this draft is an improvement over the first one, there is still much work that remains. I believe certain boundaries need to be respected within a school educational curriculum and I further believe that this draft document doesn't do that adequately.

I am a follower of the Jewish faith, and I've experienced significant anti-Semitism not only in South Africa, where I grew up, but also here in the USA from, among others, a supposedly well-educated UC Berkeley professor. So this is for me remains a painful issue that I wouldn't want anyone else to experience.

I am very concerned about political proselytizing in the principles and lessons in the Ethnic Studies curriculum. The book "Education at War" is recommended and referenced in the ESMC's Guiding Principles. That book explicitly states, "Schools are battlefields where war is waged." The CDE's job is not to wage ideological wars.

The CDE's job is to equip California students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed and thrive in a pluralistic state and 21st century economy. "Waging war" was never part of the approval that the legislature gave in AB 2016. If that's the Ethnic Studies agenda, California parents and voters need to be told so honestly so they can decide if that's what they want taught in the schools.

When I came to this country, one of the reasons I felt comfortable here was because there was no guidance about what I was supposed to think. All avenues for learning were totally open. If our children are told in schools what they are supposed to think and are criticized for what they say about ethnicity and especially about religion if it doesn't follow a script which is prescribed in schools, this society and our way of life are heading for destruction.

As recently as this morning I participated in a Continuing Legal Education seminar about diversity. I was interested to learn that the people teaching this to lawyers are utterly incapable of presenting a balanced view.

Teachers have a heavy burden to present to our children a balanced view about who we are as Americans. I think it's a subject they should stay well away from until there is a fair treatment of all groups, based on the thorough input from all of those groups, which I believe the current draft demonstrates it fails to offer.

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