

**From:** Sapper, Dana  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 6, 2019 3:14 PM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies  
**Subject:** New Ethnic Studies Framework

Dear Committee,

As a Los Angeles Unified Teacher, a lifelong resident of California, and a Jewish American woman, I wish to voice my objection to the new Ethnic Studies Framework that has been proposed by your committee. I have examined the document in its entirety, and it is clear that the agenda of the committee is not to create a curriculum that will "enable students to develop a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusion, and aids in the eradication of bigotry, hate, and racism," as stated in the introduction. Conversely, the agenda is to create and strengthen a divide between certain ethnic or gender groups and those who may be white, heterosexual, Christian or Jewish. The curriculum is well designed to vilify members of these groups because of past aggression and discrimination, rather than to promote appreciation for the individual gifts that all individuals have and to bridge the distances between them with respect and understanding. It is possible to promote cultural diversity and inclusion without pitting one group against another, but that seems to be the approach taken in this Framework. Consider the effect that your lessons on Islamophobia would have on the Christian and Jewish students in the room, when the establishment of the state of Israel is defined as a "catastrophe" (Section 2, page 242), or when an entire high school course is offered in Arab-American Studies, but the glossary for the Framework doesn't even include the word "antisemitism." Consider also the marginalizing effect of the curriculum on White students, when nearly every lesson centers around "White Supremacy," "White Privilege" and "White Oppression." While I in no way deny that these constructs exist, I see no balance in the approach or presentation of this Framework.

Further, the lessons presented in the guide fail to accomplish your stated mission. While they do an excellent job of teaching the students about racism, bigotry, and discrimination, they do almost nothing toward working to create solutions to these very real problems. Lesson after lesson talks about harm done to various groups by the group in power, but almost none challenge the students to create meaningful solutions, improve their relations with members of another group, or take positive steps toward a community in which diversity is celebrated, honored, and accepted.

You cannot create peace by making war. I urge you to rethink the framework to better honor the needs of ALL students, not just the ones in the groups that you highlight, and to enhance the lessons to include solutions-based thinking.

Thank you for your consideration  
Dana Sapper