

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.

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
[Enter the Chapter Number here, or just “General” for a comment that applies to the entire document.]	[Lena Brook] [Parent, San Francisco Unified School District]	<p>[General Comment]</p> <p>Having just learned about this highly problematic proposal today and given that comments are due now, I don't have the time to review the entirety of this document. However, I want to loudly echo the concerns expressed in a separate, July 29th letter by the members of the California Legislative Jewish Caucus that the curriculum in its current form has a dangerous anti-Jewish bias that would be highly problematic to institutionalize in California school children. Ultimately, ethnic studies curriculum ought to focus on teaching people how to think about others that are different from themselves, not to denigrate groups of people without adequate information or context or to be led toward specific conclusions. This approach is as dangerous to our communities as white supremacy.</p> <p>Jews are caught in a real bind in the US: on the one hand, our people are often in positions of power, and are also perceived as being white by many, especially people of color. On the other hand, we are a go-to ethnic group for white supremacists looking to commit hate crimes and have a history of vulnerability that cannot be underscored. Let’s remember that the Holocaust happened just over 50 years ago. And that Jews were fully integrated into German society for decades before history and Hitler turned on them.</p> <p>The Jewish experience – like that of many ethnic groups – is complicated and warrants rich and nuanced teaching. Many American Jews like myself struggle with what has happened in Israel and what this means to our culture and identities. Please teach California kids to be open-minded, critical thinkers who know how to ask the right questions and be open-minded. Don’t instill ideology. This simply isn’t helpful, left or right.</p>

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California Department of Education, June 2019