

From: Jack Forman

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 11:25 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: [email redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] My Comments on First Revision of Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

As a concerned citizen and community college librarian in California, I have been following closely the work done so far to write an Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC).

Although I appreciate the positive changes you have made in the first revision of the curriculum, I am disappointed by and still very concerned about the rigid political ideology that underpins and permeates the document. This undercuts the original purpose of the legislation creating the curriculum (AB-2016), which was to prepare "pupils to be global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures". This is supposed to take place in a positive, unpolitical environment in which students can learn about how the many cultures that make up America have contributed richly and substantively to the development of our democracy. It should not be about distorting history to make divisive, simplistic, and specious arguments that create good guys and bad guys, victims and perpetrators.

I request that you add to the curriculum the current language regarding balanced Ethnic Studies curricula which the Los Angeles Unified School District has imbedded in their curriculum:

"In K-12 education it is imperative that students are exposed to multiple perspectives, taught to think critically and form their opinions."

To facilitate this, I urge you to revise the ESMC to ensure that students are exposed to multiple and sometimes competing sources of information

I also request you omit from the ESMC any remaining references to divisive and destructive constructs like "white privilege" - or if you want to keep this term and others like it in the curriculum, that you adequately define the terms without depending on the political ideology that drives "critical race theory".

In addition, I suggest that sections dealing with Asian-American cultures and Middle Eastern communities should reflect the broad geographic, religious and cultural diversity of these ethnic groups.

I hope you will seriously consider these suggestions I am making because I believe strongly in the original purpose of Ethnic Studies, and I think more work needs to be done on the ESMC before it is ready for implementation.

Thank you.

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