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From: Kristin Schwall

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2019 6:17 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: Comments on the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Board of Education,

Please accept my enclosed comments on the draft Ethnic Studies Curriculum. The Board should throw out this curriculum and focus on more important issues like failing schools in poor neighborhoods, an economics class, getting rid of pathways, and improving the science sequence.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kristin Schwall  
Parent

## 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](mailto:ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov). You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at [kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov](mailto:kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov) with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
General	Kristin Schwall	<p>California does not need an ethnic studies curriculum. This model curriculum is demeaning and belittling to ethnic people. Economic background has a far greater effect on a student's success than ethnicity. The Department of Education should focus on improving failing schools in poor neighborhoods rather than developing this type of curriculum.</p> <p>A curriculum on economics would serve these people better. There used to be a requirement for a consumer economics class when I went to high school. It covered things like writing checks, balancing a checkbook, interest rates, loans, mortgages, supply and demand, and other truly useful topics. Although my kids graduated high school without this economics class and I can teach them this information, it would be better if the school did it for all students.</p> <p>The whole curriculum seems designed to emphasize the achievement gap. It should focus on the positive attributes of ethnicity not the negative. Rather than look at the achievement gaps celebrate the successes to hold up as an example that anyone can achieve success regardless of ethnicity. We need to focus on our similarities not on our differences.</p>

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
	Kristin Schwall	This curriculum is so biased and inflammatory that it will cause more division among people than is currently present. We need something that will bring us together and be inclusive. The news is full of stories about different groups of people being separate and unique. Our country has always been a melting pot. People come from all over and become American. My kids grew up here in California and met kids from all ethnicities, genders, and sexualities. They are extremely unbiased. My daughter's group of friends includes a black, a Chinese Italian, several whites, a girl becoming a boy, many Hispanics, and many different sexualities. None of it phases her a bit. She and her friends don't need an ethnic studies class; they live one. They have much in common because they live in the same neighborhood and go to the same schools regardless of what gender, ethnicity or sexuality they are.
General Comment	Kristin Schwall	This curriculum needs to be thrown away. It is an extreme political agenda under cover of ethnic studies. Many newspapers have come out against this curriculum including the San Diego Union Tribune, Los Angeles Times, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post. This headline from the Washington Post is pretty clear: "Critics slam draft of California ethnic studies curriculum as far-left, anti-Jewish propaganda." The rest of my comments are examples of issues with the curriculum, not an exhaustive list of issues. If you must have an ethnic studies curriculum, please rewrite the entire document to be accurate and unbiased.
Glossary	Kristin Schwall	The definition of capitalism includes a highly biased statement about capitalism exploiting Native People and people of color. Capitalism is not a form of power oppression. Capitalism results in a meritocracy where those who work hard can rise up the economic ladder. It allows people to gain wealth and own businesses regardless of their ethnicity.

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Introduction	Kristin Schwall	<p>The introduction claims that ethnic studies will help all students be better equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully navigate our increasingly diverse society. The last thing these students need to succeed in life is an ethnic studies class. Give them real knowledge and skills if you want them to succeed. I already mentioned the economics class which is missing, but also real hands on classes are missing at many schools. There is no shop, woodworking, cooking. While college prep classes should be emphasized for everyone, but not required; some people are not ready or suited to college and would benefit from more hands on classes. We should get rid of the Pathways in the schools in favor of more diverse electives so students can try different things and learn about different careers including STEM and non-college careers.</p> <p>The science sequence in high school should be revised to begin with physics, then chemistry and then biology so that more advanced honors or Advanced Placement (AP) classes can be taken. Basic physics can be taken with the level of math achieved by most incoming freshmen. Honors or AP chemistry can be taken junior year and AP biology can be taken junior year. The truly ambitious then have room to put AP physics senior year when their math level has advanced enough to deal with the more challenging concepts in AP physics.</p> <p>An ethnic studies class is not needed and it detrimental to many college bound students since it takes the place of an AP or community college class..</p>

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Introduction	Kristin Schwall	The introduction mentions centuries of educational trauma, dehumanization, and enforced sociopolitical, cultural-historical, economic, and moral constraints via the education system. It sounds like you are trying to scare them into not succeeding on their own. It is racist to think that these students don't need the government to give them something just because of their ethnicity. Regardless of ethnicity, they can succeed if give the chance and the motivation. They need positive messages, not codling, denigrating messages. I understand that there has been some oppression, but if we want to move forward, we need to focus these students on the opportunities out there. Show them the great things that have been done by ethnic people and how it was achieved. Success is achieved through hard work.
Introduction	Kristin Schwall	The introduction says the curriculum will "critique empire and its relationship to white supremacy, racism, patriarchy, cisheteropatriarchy, capitalism, ableism, anthropocentrism, and other forms of power and oppression at the intersections of our society." It sounds like the curriculum is going to discuss every negative aspect of the country without adding anything positive.
Introduction	Kristin Schwall	The introduction says the curriculum will "conceptualize, imagine, and build new possibilities for post-imperial life that promotes collective narratives of transformative resistance, critical hope, and radical healing." This is at least partially positive. However, the meaning of post-imperial life is unclear. The United States has never been an imperial country since we have never had a monarch. It sounds like you are preaching to slaves to rise up and fight the master. We have no slaves in our country any more, but we do have poverty which students can overcome.
Introduction	Kristin Schwall	The document is difficult to read because it has so many made up terms such as xdisciplinary and hxrstory. Did you know that history comes from Ancient Greek historia meaning inquiry. History is not gender specific. We do not need a new word to confuse matters.

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Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Sample Curriculum	Kristin Schwall	Page 4, Line 87: This section is very inflammatory by saying “Some examples of systems of power are: white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy.” To compare capitalism with white supremacy fiery. The document should use more neutral, unbiased language and terms. Here is a section of text from Vanderbilt.edu which is less inflammatory: “privilege is granted to people who have membership in one or more of these social identity groups: White people; Able-bodied people; Heterosexuals; Males; Christians; Middle or owning class people; Middle-aged people; English-speaking people.” If you want people to listen to your message, you need to rewrite the entire document so you don’t get people mad in the first sentence.
Sample Curriculum	Kristin Schwall	Page 5, Line 119 and 120: This section is untrue in saying “Years after slavery, many African-Americans continue to live in poverty because of racist, discriminatory laws.” It would be unconstitutional if there were still racist, discriminatory laws. These types of laws like redlining occurred in the past, but are no longer legal. It might be true that some people are still living in poverty due to past laws, but others have overcome the difficulties and moved on.
Sample Curriculum	Kristin Schwall	Starting with Page 26, Handout A, Five People I Know: This is not about ethnicity. It’s about poverty. If the white male had lived with aunt sleeping on the couch, he would have the same difficulties as the black female.
General Comment	Kristin Schwall	Your input template is not well designed. The columns are good, but the middle column should not be Name and Affiliation. Name and Affiliation should go at the top of the form and only be filled out once. It is silly to have me put my name next to each comment.