

**From:** Marla Sofer  
**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2020 5:14 PM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies  
**Cc:** [email redacted]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Parent Concern about Misrepresentation

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I recognize some improvement in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), but I am concerned by the imposition of the offensive, one-sided political ideology that still remains in this flawed draft of California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

I am a parent of a child who is enrolled in Ethnic Studies at San Mateo High School this semester, and I am extremely concerned about how this content will affect my daughter (or son in future years) as a student in the classroom who recognizes the biased curriculum and feels marginalized and even bullied as a result. My children are proud of their American, Israeli, and Jewish heritage and understand what it is like to live harmoniously with Arab communities. We make it a point to support Arab-owned businesses when we visit Israel, and in parallel, we are proudly Zionist. "Zionism" is not a term that my children should be made to feel ashamed of in school. Their father served in the Israeli military and their grandfather fought in multiple wars. Just as their father and grandfather did, my children are committed to protecting and respecting Israeli Arabs, Palestinians, and Israelis alike. In our home, we are careful about stereotyping and promoting narratives where we know we lack full context. I expect the same respect and caution to avoid bias from our public schools.

The curriculum guidance misrepresents history as well as Jews, Israel, and other ethnic groups. I'm deeply disturbed by the imposing one-sided political ideology that went into the Guiding Values and Principles. I urge you to make significant further revisions to the ESMC to address these concerns. Please revise the Guiding Values and Principles of the ESMC to use more precise and inclusive terminology, to align with the ESMC Guidelines, to build bridges of intergroup understanding, and to ensure critical thinking. Then adjust the lessons and sample topics accordingly to match the revised principles.

Thank you,  
Marla Sofer

Homeowner and parent of 2 public school children

Foster City, California