

From: Christopher DiLeo

Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2020 9:02 PM

To: Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment - Second Field Review of Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Commissioners,

Under California's AB 331, California high school students will be required to complete an Ethnic Studies course to graduate. I was happy when the CDE decided not to adopt a biased 2019 version of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), and ordered a new draft. At that time, Officials pledged to restrict the content to four traditional Ethnic Studies groups - African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Latinx Americans, and committed to purge the curriculum of antisemitic and anti-Israel content. The July 2020 ESMC draft was indeed restricted to the four groups and largely free of offensive content. ADL submitted initial comment towards improving the draft. Later, on August 12, the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) announced it would reinsert an unspecified lesson plan on Arab Americans within the Asian American curriculum. Unfortunately, the antisemitic and anti-Israel bias in the 2019 draft was found in the lesson plan.

I do not object to providing a range of options for teachers to ensure the curriculum reflects the unique backgrounds that make California public schools so special. However, I was moved to speak out and stand up when I see an injustice. If California passes this curriculum without correcting antisemitic bias, it can reverberate throughout the country because states often borrow curriculum from each other due to a process that can be expensive and time-consuming.

I strongly urge the CDE to fairly represent antisemitism by providing an accurate definition of the term, such as the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's, which the U.S. State Department adopted in 2010. I also urge the CDE to thoughtfully reflect on the chosen lesson plans to ensure they are accurate and equally address the diverse ethnic communities in California and the US.

Sincerely,
Christopher DiLeo