

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.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
GENERAL	Laura Kostinsky Retired teacher, member CTA, lifelong California resident	<p>I am sure that it is not the intention of the California Department of Education, nor consistent with California's educational standards, to introduce curriculum materials that teach the children to hate Jews and the world's only Jewish state, Israel, while also seeking to indoctrinate those who are charged with teaching the children.</p> <p>Please exercise extra caution when considering materials on the historically complex and nuanced Israeli-Palestinian conflict; scrutinize them closely for attempts to proliferate hate by bringing camouflaged political indoctrination into the classroom.</p> <p>Strikingly absent from this curriculum are any lessons about American Jews as an ethnic group and their contributions to society: technology, medicine, music, literature, cuisine, language, education, civil rights and more. Nothing about their history as a persecuted minority. Nothing about the Holocaust and how a little thing like prejudice, by small steps, can lead to an inconceivable slaughter.</p> <p>There seems to be more emphasis on Foreign Affairs or International Relations (with a very narrow focus, at that) than on Ethnic Studies.</p>
GLOSSARY	Laura Kostinsky	Why highlight and legitimize the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement against Israel by misrepresenting it in the Glossary? For recruitment purposes? BDS activists openly seek to end Israel's existence. They present a one-sided narrative, ignore facts, and promulgate patently false analogies, such as accusing Israel of "apartheid".
PAGE 234	Laura Kostinsky	More false analogies: When Israel builds a fence, it is to protect innocent people from being murdered by terrorists (bombing, stabbing, truck ramming and more). There is no comparison to the U.S. policy of detaining and mistreating asylum seekers at the border with Mexico.
PAGE 237	Laura Kostinsky	Misleading language: There is no Arab country of "Israel-Palestine"; Israel is the Jewish homeland.

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PAGE 242	Laura Kostinsky	More one-sided narratives that disregard facts and do not recognize various perspectives in this item about the 1948 war, when five surrounding Arab states invaded and attacked Israel the day after it was declared an independent state.
PAGES 256, 264-269	Laura Kostinsky	A poem is a nice touch. But not one that strikes Israel, the world's only Jewish state, with unmitigated criticism, not allowing for any positives, and ignoring the role of corrupt Palestinian leaders in fomenting violence and blocking progress.
INTRODUCTION	Laura Kostinsky	<p>The Introduction of the proposed curriculum states that, "The implementation of Ethnic Studies presents an opportunity for teachers to... enable students to develop a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusion, and aids in the eradication of bigotry, hate, and racism."</p> <p>The need is great for a curriculum that does just that:</p> <p>Incidents of anti-Semitic assault, harassment and vandalism in the United States in 2018, were the third-highest of any year since the ADL began tracking such data in the 1970s. Violence against U.S. Jews doubled in 2018, according to the Anti-Defamation League's yearly audit. Jews are afraid to wear anything that identifies them as Jewish. Students are afraid to counter misinformation about Israel in their classrooms.</p> <p>Yet, ironically, this curriculum does nothing to further understanding and acceptance and appreciation of Jewish culture. In fact, this curriculum drifts far from its stated goals to focus on propaganda about another country's political situation. Still more ironically, this curriculum leverages that "detour" to promote BDS, incite hatred of Jews and bolster the growing discrimination against Jews by human rights movements and universities where Jews have contributed so much and have so much more to contribute.</p>