

From: Vicki Levy
Sent: Saturday, August 8, 2020 6:35 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I applaud the fact that you have proposed some improvements in the second draft of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), but as a nurse and a parent of a teacher here in our wonderfully ethnically diverse California, I am deeply concerned by some of the flaws.

It appears to me that the approach this second draft has taken is to remove many of the specifics or to move them to the footnotes, links, and bibliography where they will be less visible. It will be more difficult to ascertain the details of what will be taught, but the principles and ideological framework from which all lessons will be developed remain the same problematic ones as in the first draft.

ESMC guiding values and principles need revision because they are the basis of each unit and lesson plan. They do not reflect California's shared values, nor the values laid out in AB 2016. In addition, they advocate a narrow political philosophy and establish an "us vs. them" agenda.

The second draft does not prevent teaching offensive politically indoctrinating and anti-Israel elements from ESMC draft 1. Numerous sections of the ESMC need revision to expose students to "multiple and often competing sources of information" and ensure that "diverse viewpoints are respected". A suggestion would be to add Elements of Balanced Curriculum from the LA Unified School District's Ethnic Studies Curriculum to provide solid ground rules for course development.

The few references to Jews are misleading and offensive. Remove links to, and group advocacy of, virulently anti-Israel pro-BDS sites with malicious slander about imaginary genocide. Include the lesson plan, "[Antisemitism as the Middle Eastern-American Jews](#)," covering contemporary issues of antisemitism, bigotry, and the Middle Eastern-American Jewish experience produced by the JIMENA: Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa. Add a definition of antisemitism that addresses sinister stereotyping and double standards against Jews and Jewish institutions from all parts of the political spectrum.

My family was the only Jewish family in the neighborhood when I was growing up. I have personal experience with anti-Semitism due to ignorance and racism and am supportive having Ethnic Studies in schools. The content of the curriculum is very important to the success of this model curriculum. Adding guidance for teachers to expose students to "multiple and often competing sources of information" will help to foster respect for diverse viewpoints.

I appreciate your consideration in this matter and I urge you to make significant revisions of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum to address these concerns.

Thank you,

Victoria E. Levy, RN