

From: lisa katriel

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 6:50 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: [email redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please revise the Guiding Values and Principles of the ESMC

To Whom It May Concern,

First, thank you for allowing the public to present concerns as you strive to craft an accurate and balanced curriculum. This is an important topic, especially if the goal is to educate our children so that they will understand the complexities of our shared history and gain an appreciation and respect for all ethnicities and different perspectives. If we are to truly teach our children to accept each other and to be better humans than it is critical that history be taught from a multitude of perspectives and in the most unbiased, non-judgemental way possible. We owe it to our children and society to educate ourselves from more than one perspective so that we may develop empathy and understanding of others. You have the chance to do this, so please, please take the time to do it right.

The current version of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), while improved from the previous drafts, is still problematic as it presents a one-sided political ideology that borders on discriminatory and limits our children's understanding of a complex situation. History is reflected by the historian, in this case, you. With power comes responsibility. The current draft, while better, still needs some work. I beseech you to reexamine from a child's eyes the curriculum and see if you would feel that you are understanding all sides and not being taught a biased or judgemental history. Our children's ability to think critically and develop empathy is learned from history which is multi-faceted and complex. They deserve a curriculum that reflects our shared, complicated history.

I am a parent of two boys who have family that perished in the Holocaust. We also have family that were fortunate enough to be given safe haven in Israel and this country. For my children to have to sit in a class and hear that Israel is a racist country and that anyone who supports Israel or is anti-BDS is a racist is itself a limited and discriminatory perspective. I am sure that the intent of the Board is not to create a hostile and discriminatory learning environment. yet keeping such language in the curriculum will have this result, intended or not. This is just one example of language I urge you to reconsider.

Our children deserve a fair and balanced education. We need to lead by example. Please make this curriculum objective, non-judgemental and treat all those whose history our children will learn about with the respect and appreciation all people deserve.

To this end, I urge you to please revise the Guiding Values and Principles of the ESMC to use more precise and inclusive terminology as set out by the ESMC Guidelines, which will build understanding and appreciation of our differences and ensure that our children are taught to be critical thinkers. This includes adjusting the lessons and sample topics to align with the revised principles.

Thank you for your continued work on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

Lisa Katriel