

From: TQREJ Coalition
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 11:39 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Line Item Edits for ESMC

Line Item Edits

Chapter 2, page 7, in between lines 124-125, add:

Tribal Consultation: Conduct Tribal consultation with California Native American Tribes and Tribal organizations in the development of and prior to the implementation of their local Ethnic Studies programs, and include consultation with Native American and Indigenous organizations in their district, as well as with Native American scholars and educators.

Chapter 2, on page 13, on lines 289-295, please delete this paragraph:

An example of guidelines written by a district on how to implement ethnic studies is "Elements of a Balanced Curriculum, adopted by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Multidisciplinary Ethnic Studies Advisory Team in 2017.[8] When districts and LEAs create their own guidelines for teaching ethnic studies in their district, this may serve as a model guideline. LAUSD gathered many district stakeholder groups, found language to summarize how to address balanced pedagogy and instructional materials, and address student and teacher needs in support of teaching ethnic studies.

Rationale: Unfortunately, several years ago, the referenced LAUSD document was created without any consultation from teachers or students, which makes this paragraph inaccurate. The approach taken in 2017, under prior district leadership that is no longer in place, was unilateral, undemocratic, and this methodology was inadequate towards enacting the goal of authentically "addressing student and teacher needs in support of teaching ethnic studies". In fact, the referenced document is inaccurate and harmful on several levels within the greater context of the field of Ethnic Studies. Ethnic Studies and people of color perspectives have been marginalized by, as well as erased from, standardized Eurocentric K-12 curricula for decades (and centuries), even while that same curricula claims to be "neutral, objective, apolitical, and free of bias", doing harm to students of color daily. This is why Ethnic Studies is needed, it is adding balance to the general curricula, it is unapologetically anti-racist, and needs to remain so. The paragraph we are requesting to delete, and the referenced document instead serve to undermine that core anti-racist grounding of Ethnic Studies, as if racist perspectives also need to always be included and given equal credence, even in Ethnic Studies courses, which only would continue to perpetuate the harm done to students of color for far too long.

Fortunately, at this point in time, under newer district leadership, LAUSD is now collaborating with teachers, students and community members for the next era of ethnic studies in LAUSD. At the LAUSD-UTLA Ethnic Studies Committee Meeting on December 9th, 2020, it was announced that the district is revisiting the referenced document, which will likely result in its revision, to be grounded in authentic Ethnic Studies, rather than do harm as it currently does.

Though implicitly racist right wing pressures who wish to undermine Ethnic Studies had the referenced document inserted here, it should now be removed from the ESMC, as will be happening in LAUSD in the near future. It is outdated, inaccurate, and harmful to students of color.