

From: Ruth Parker

Sent: Friday, January 29, 2021 7:21 PM

To: [list of other recipients redacted]; Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fw: Dozens of Academics Challenge Bold Claims About Benefits of CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Any one who has been involved in the field of education as long as I have knows that there is always a new fad in teaching methods and/or content that teachers must learn to incorporate into their classrooms. These are always supported by some flawed studies and turn out to do more harm than good for the majority of students. This one is probably worse than most.

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From: J. Barry Gurdin

To: [list of recipients redacted]

Sent: Friday, January 29, 2021, 07:06:07 PM PST

Subject: Fw: Dozens of Academics Challenge Bold Claims About Benefits of CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

From: The Amcha Initiative

Sent: Friday, January 29, 2021 10:37 AM

To: J. Barry Gurdin

Subject: Dozens of Academics Challenge Bold Claims About Benefits of CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

In a scholarly review, thirty-five scholars [found](#) serious methodological flaws and a significant lack of evidence in the research hailed as the rationale for developing California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

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Dozens of Scholars Challenge CA Ethnic Studies Curriculum's Claims of Academic and Social Benefits

"It is unconscionable that with so much at stake, the State Board of Education would mislead California citizens into believing that bold claims about the benefits of ethnic studies courses for K-12 students are supported by considerable and robust empirical evidence, when this is simply untrue."



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In a [scholarly review](#) sent last week to California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond and President of the State Board of Education Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond, thirty-five academics detailed the serious methodological flaws and significant lack of evidence found in the research hailed as the rationale for developing California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). The letter was signed by seasoned university scholars and academics, many with decades of experience designing and carrying out empirical research and qualified to analyze scholarly publications.

The ESMC - whose current draft is based on the highly politicized Critical Ethnic Studies discipline - touts four scholarly articles as evidence that an ethnic studies curriculum will result in positive academic and social outcomes for students. However, after carefully reviewing the four articles, the academics, one of whom is AMCHA's

co-founder, UCLA Professor Emeritus Leila Beckwith, noted serious problems in the research and concluded that “none of these papers provides sufficient evidence for the claims that are attributed to it.”

In their letter, the scholars concluded, "It is unconscionable that with so much at stake, the State Board of Education would mislead California citizens into believing that bold claims about the benefits of ethnic studies courses for K-12 students are supported by considerable and robust empirical evidence, when this is simply untrue."

You can **read** and **share** the comprehensive scholarly review with your friends and family (see [here](#)).

AMCHA will be urging California legislators to carefully consider what it means to pour tens of millions of taxpayer dollars into mandating courses that have not been proven to benefit students either academically or socially, and, if they rely on a Critical Ethnic Studies framework, may well harm them.

AMCHA has been leading an effort to expose the dangers that Critical Ethnic Studies poses to all California students, and particularly Jewish students. In 2016, California state legislators passed a bill, AB 2016, mandating that the state’s Department of Education (CDE) develop a model ethnic studies curriculum for use in high school ethnic studies courses. Although the bill stated that the

goal of such courses was “preparing pupils to be global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures,” the politically motivated educators appointed by the CDE to help draft the model curriculum developed a curriculum firmly rooted in Critical Ethnic Studies.

Unlike the broad field of ethnic studies, with its goal of understanding and celebrating the contributions of California’s and our nation’s diversity, Critical Ethnic Studies is a narrow, highly politicized conceptualization of the field that limits its focus to specific identity groups, is firmly rooted in ideologies that divide society into oppressed and oppressor groups based primarily on race and class, and, as part of its disciplinary mission, uses the classroom to indoctrinate students into narrow political beliefs and activism. The discipline as a whole is rooted ideologies that are both antisemitic and anti-Zionist: when viewed through a Critical Ethnic Studies lens, Jews are seen as “white,” “privileged,” and clearly on the oppressor side of the race-class divide, while Zionism is seen as a “white supremacist” ideology and Israel a “racist” state whose very existence must be opposed.

Last year, realizing that coercing all high school students to take a highly politicized, divisive course in Critical Ethnic Studies would be a disaster for California students, especially Jewish students, AMCHA led a successful coalition [effort](#) urging the Governor to veto AB 331. However, a recent revival of the bill - now known as AB 101 - raises the stakes of the debate over the state’s model curriculum considerably.

With the discovery that the ESMC’s foundational claims are

baseless, AMCHA will be urging California legislators to carefully consider what it means to pour tens of millions of taxpayer dollars into mandating courses that have not been proven to benefit students either academically or socially, and, if they rely on a Critical Ethnic Studies framework, may well harm them.

In the News...

- *The Jewish Press*, [35 Academics Challenge Bold Claims about Benefits of California's Ethnic Studies Curriculum](#)
- *The Tablet*, [California Is Cleansing Jews From History](#)
- *The Jewish Press*, [California High Schools to Embrace 'Critical Ethnic Studies' that Say Jews Are 'Privileged'](#)
- *Jewish Journal*, [The Anti-Zionism of Critical Ethnic Studies](#)



