

11 Aug 2020

Dear Members of the Instructional Quality Commission,

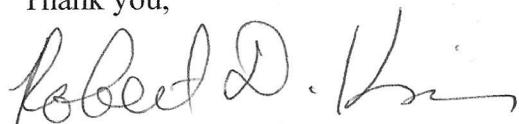
I appreciate some improvement in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), but I am concerned by the imposition of the offensive and one-sided political ideology that still remains in this latest draft of California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

In particular, the approach this second draft has taken is to remove many of the specifics of the prior draft that were called out as problematic (or move them "under the radar" to the footnotes, links, and bibliography). For example, removal of explicitly antisemitic slurs from the ESMC is noted, though anti-Zionist references remain in footnotes, links, and bibliography. However, many of the same lessons remain from the first draft, just with less detail, so there is less visibility to what potentially offensive details will actually be taught. History has shown us that there are those who will desire to promote personal agendas and biases if given the opportunity. The curriculum should be clear about content and boundaries that should not be crossed.

I am an alumnus of California public schools (K-12 / UC) and a parent of two children who attended public school in California. The importance of a comprehensive and balanced education for California's children should be a top priority of the state. Curriculum which promotes, or allows for the promotion of, misrepresentation of ethnic or religious groups serves no positive purpose, and only works to further exacerbate challenges with social equality for all.

I urge you to make significant further revisions to the ESMC to address these concerns. Please revise the Guiding Values and Principles of the ESMC to use more precise and inclusive terminology, to align with the ESMC Guidelines, to build bridges of intergroup understanding, and to ensure critical thinking. Then adjust the lessons and sample topics accordingly to match the revised principles.

Thank you,



11 - AUG - 2020

Robert D. Kiss, Ph.D. (Elected Member of the National Academy of Engineering)

San Mateo, CA