

To those on the Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education:

From all that I have read, significant revisions are needed in the proposed current Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). Before turning to particulars, let me present my experience and background with California curriculum and with education in general. I was a French Professor, Division Chair, and then Dean of Instruction at Cabrillo College in Aptos for a total of 40 years. I served on the State of California, Foreign Language Model Curriculum Standards Advisory Committee. I served on The College Board's Foreign Language Advisory Committee. I have been a NEH peer reviewer for Division of Education Programs. I am the author of a number of textbooks for high school and college students. I mention all this simply to indicate that I have some experience with developing curriculum and the many decisions that need to be made during that process.

Ethnic Studies should be taught in our schools and indeed is very important in these difficult political times. But accuracy of presentation is critical. Those who have analyzed the current draft have highlighted many instances where what is presented is not balanced, inclusive or reflective of different perspectives vis a vis Israel and its history and challenges, the very divisive BDS movement, Anti-Semitism, and general discrimination and bigotry against Jews. This is not acceptable for a curriculum that purports to educate our children in a realistic, balanced manner about their world. I am a parent of five children and a grandparent of nine. The facts that are presented to them in school will shape their understanding of the world. It is so important that these facts be accurate and complete and reflect reality.

I urge strongly that you follow the suggestions made already by a number of groups such as the California Legislative Jewish Caucus, Stand With Us, Jimena, and Amcha, and make major revisions to this proposed curriculum.

Thank you.

Dr. Bette G. Hirsch