

Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum May 2019 Draft

(Download and use to provide specific recommendations)

Include the chapter of the model curriculum, the page number, and line number(s) to ensure that the California Department of Education and Instructional Quality Commission can reference the content of the document when reviewing your comments. Please email this document as a Word document to ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov. You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
General	<i>Linda Menges, President Las Virgenes Unified School District</i>	On behalf of the Las Virgenes Unified School District which serves the Cities of Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Westlake Village, and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, including Bell Canyon and parts of Woodland Hills and West Hills, we would like to share our significant concerns with the draft of the 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). These concerns lead us to request that the ESMC only move forward with substantial revisions.
		In reviewing the materials, the ESMC draft does not comply with its primary principle, "Include accurate information based on current and confirmed research to ... promote critical thinking and rigorous analysis of history, systems of oppression, and the status quo in an effort to generate discussions on futurity, and imagine new possibilities." Throughout the materials and glossary, the ESMC is inaccurate and misleading, with statements based on opinion and not research or facts. In addition, the draft reflects an anti-Jewish bias.

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		Our main issue is this: the exclusion of anti-Semitism as a form of discrimination marginalizes the Jewish experience. Further, while we appreciate the broader inclusions of “Islamaphobia” and other forms of discrimination in the Glossary, the noticeable absence of anti-Semitism is not appropriate.
		Reuters reports that anti-Semitic violent crimes have increased 13% over last year in major Western democracies including the United States; Pittsburgh’s Tree of Life Synagogue suffered the deadliest attack on Jews in US history; and here in California, the Poway shooting at the Chabad are significant indicators that the ESMC has turned a blind eye to hatred and terrorism against a significant part of our community.
		The ESMC draft delivers sole condemnation for Israel in biased factually inaccurate statements regarding and outright support of the Boycott, Divest, and Sanctions (BDS) movement with charges of one-sided violations to international law. The drafters of the ESMC give greater emphasis to the definition of Capitalism and Intellectualism than they do BDS and at its core, that contradicts the values of ESMC content: “empower students to be engaged socially and politically, enable students to develop a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusion, and aids in the eradication of bigotry, hate, and racism” Chapter 1 line 14-16.
		While we appreciate the intention to shine a light on the global history of discrimination, Diaspora, and hateful violence, as well as lessons on awareness and acceptance, without substantial edits, ESMC will add false fuel to an educational subject that requires broader objectivity.