

From: Vicki Levy  
Sent: Sunday, August 11, 2019 2:46 PM  
To: Ethnic Studies  
Cc:  
Subject: 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I am very concerned by the recommended Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. While I applaud the idea of teaching an ethnic studies class, even going so far as to say that it should be a mandatory class for high school students, I find that the text of the proposed curriculum is terribly flawed in that it leaves out an entire ethnic group who have been the brunt of hate crimes and discrimination throughout history, the Jewish people. In the United States, antisemitism is on the rise. Anti-Semitic assaults in our country more than doubled in 2018. Half of religious-based hate crimes in the United States are against Jews. California's curriculum can serve as a model for the rest of the country. It is likely that other states may copy California's curriculum standards. As educators, you have a rare opportunity to teach students empathy and ethics in order to help balance the misinformation which leads to prejudice and bigotry. I urge you to make major revisions or a significant rewrite of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, consistent with the recommendations from the California Legislative Jewish Caucus letter, Stand With Us, and others. A curriculum that does not include the American Jewish experience and fails to discuss antisemitism is inconsistent with the purpose of ethnic studies meant to promote inclusion and tolerance. Jews have contributed significantly to California's history, politics, culture and government yet has a longstanding struggle against hatred and discrimination. You have an opportunity to promote tolerance while supporting diversity and inclusion.

I have experienced antisemitism first hand. As one of the few Jewish students in my school district, I was made to feel like an outsider based on the bigotry other students had obviously learned from propaganda. Even at a young age, I was aware that the slurs I was hearing had come from misleading information and prejudices passed on from generation to generation. The Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, if presented in a balanced way, has the chance to break the cycle of ignorance. Please do not let this chance slip by.

I beseech you to make major revisions or a significant rewrite of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum to address these concerns.

Thank you,  
Victoria E. Levy, RN,  
California Public School Parent and Volunteer