

**From:** Thomas Watts

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 19, 2021 6:53 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum - Comment

Good evening,

I'd like to start by pointing out that I only learned of this proposed curriculum today, so I don't have time to delve into it in any great depth; however I have serious concerns based upon quickly skimming through it.

Intentional respellings eg. History as herstory or hxstory:

The word 'history' comes from Greek and has nothing to do with the male pronoun. In respelling a word, you're also redefining the word which is scarily reminiscent of Orwell's 1984. We're all extremely fortunate to live in an amazing period of history where both men and women of any ethnicity can lead us into the future; and I'm all in favor of inspiring students with accounts of women throughout history, but please do so while adhering to the truth.

BLM & police brutality:

While racism undoubtedly plays a role in the lives of many Americans, this curriculum attempts to draw attention to a further issue which in reality does not exist. Appendix A, page 64 states, 'Students will be exposed to contemporary discussions around policing in the US, specifically police brutality cases where unarmed African Americans have been killed.' Page 65 states, 'What can be done to help those impacted by police brutality and racial profiling?' The available data does not support the idea that police in the US kill disproportionately more unarmed African Americans.

[https://www.lawenforcementtoday.com/myth-of-systemic-racism-in-policing-is-threatening-the-security-of-the-american-people/?utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=grow.me&utm\\_campaign=grow\\_search](https://www.lawenforcementtoday.com/myth-of-systemic-racism-in-policing-is-threatening-the-security-of-the-american-people/?utm_medium=social&utm_source=grow.me&utm_campaign=grow_search)

On page 66, lines 1466 to 1476 make me extremely uncomfortable. While I wouldn't have a problem if this were a civics lesson which taught the fundamental concepts of social activism and allowed students to draw up a plan on a topic of their choosing, this seems to be teaching students to take up specific political causes.

Overemphasis on racism & oppression:

This curriculum appears overly focused on teaching through the lens of racism and oppression and I believe Chapter 1, lines 77-89 offer a good example. We absolutely should be teaching children more about the overlooked contributions to society as in lines 86 to 89. However the rest of the paragraph is quite simply divisive. The sentence 'people or person of color is a term used primarily in the United States and is meant to be inclusive among non-white groups, emphasizing common experiences of racism,' drives a huge wedge between white and non-white people and insinuates that, generally speaking, white people are racist towards people of color. I believe this curriculum should focus more on the positive aspects of how cultural diversity has, and will continue to, contribute to one of the freest nations in the world.

While I wholeheartedly support encouraging people to examine themselves and be respectful of others, this curriculum has gone way too far and only serves to further divide what should be a unified American people. I'd liken it to a snowball rolling down a mountain where we started with a worthy goal of eliminating discrimination, but the ball keeps on rolling and growing until it's

uncontrollably careening down the mountain. Please strip this curriculum off its critical race theory trappings and we might be left with something worth teaching our children.

I fully support exposing students to as many cultures and as much history as possible; however I also believe that schools should be teaching objective facts, which this curriculum does not appear to do, so I cannot support it in its current format.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of my comments.

Kind regards,

Thomas Watts