

From: Joanne Donsky

Sent: Tuesday, September 22, 2020 5:35 PM

To: [emails redacted]; Tony Thurmond; Ethnic Studies

Cc: [emails redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please insure that politicized ESMC Guiding Values and Principles and their resulting lesson plans are changed

Dear IQC Members,

I am one of many who want to see the Guiding Values and Principles of the ESMC changed. This is critically important for improving the ESMC!

If you read the current Guiding Values and Principles carefully and compare them to the much better Guiding Principles of the LA Unified School District, I hope you will agree that it is the political ideology baked into the ESMC Values and Principles which creates so many of the problems in the ESMC.

The **political** indoctrination that flows from these Guiding Principles is totally **inappropriate** for K-12 students.

It is the politicized **Guiding Principles** that makes seminal leaders like John Lewis, Martin Luther King, and Thurgood Marshall outside the bounds of this curriculum. In fact Lewis is referenced only negatively in this curriculum as "passive" and "docile." In contrast, ESMC principles embrace revolutionary leaders like Mumia Abu-Jamal (Marxist advocate who murdered a police officer), numerous Black Panther leaders (all self-professed Revolutionary Socialists or Communist activists), Oscar López Rivera (led Marxist-Leninist organization responsible for 100 bombings in US cities), and Lolita Lebrón (led armed assault on the US House of Representatives, wounding 5 congressmen). While the second draft of the ESMC no longer specifies these figures, the Values and Principles resulting in their praise have not been changed, and the topics that lead to their discussion are also still included.

The ESMC Values and Principles also embrace antisemitic leaders like Clara Muhammed, Malcom X, Amy and Marcus Garvey, Reies Lopez Tijerina, anti-Zionist / pro-BDS leaders like Helen Thomas and Linda Sarsour, antisemitic groups such as Hebrew Israelites, Nation of Islam, and web links to groups promoting BDS and anti-Zionist material. All were included in the first draft. Please see the chart below comparing the ESMC's principles 4-7 to the Los Angeles Unified School Districts matching neutral principles for Ethnic Studies. The ESMC's promotion of a narrow political agenda stands in stark contrast to LAUSD's neutral and balanced principles.

The ESMC includes political dogma of "critiquing empire building and ... capitalism," challenging "imperialist colonialist beliefs," "connecting to resistance movements" and "post-imperial" "transformative resistance." This ideology is laid on top of the neutral ethnic studies curriculum, which seeks to "value diversity, manage the dynamics of differences" and "focus on the experiences, histories, cultures, struggles and accomplishments of specific ethnic / racial groups within American history."

ESMC's political Guiding Values & Principles	LAUSD's neutral Guiding Principles
<u>Critique empire-building in history</u> and its relationship to white supremacy, racism [<u>patriarchy, cisheteropatriarchy, capitalism, ableism, anthropocentrism</u>] and other forms of power and oppression	<u>Promote critical thinking about the complexity of the intersections of race with gender, class, sexuality and other systems of difference that have power effects and result in privilege.</u> Teach students to <u>understand the concepts of intersectionality, power,</u>

	<p><u>privilege and/or oppression</u> in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Their own **identities as human beings and acknowledging their ancestral roots. o The complexity and diversity of the American experience
<p><u>Challenge imperialist/colonial</u> [and <u>hegemonic</u>] <u>beliefs</u> and practices on multiple levels [Ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized]</p>	<p><u>Examine how race and ethnicity have been constructed</u> in the United States, have changed over time, and continue to shape the country today (History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools, 2016).</p>
<p>Connect ourselves to past and contemporary <u>resistance movements</u> that <u>struggle</u> for social justice on the global and local levels to ensure a <u>truer democracy</u>[1]</p>	<p>“Teach students about <u>social justice</u> and <u>social responsibility</u>, and to understand that they can become <u>agents of change</u> at local, state, national, and global levels.”</p>
<p>Conceptualize, imagine, and build new possibilities for <u>post-imperial</u> life that promotes collective narratives of <u>transformative resistance</u>, <u>critical hope</u>, and <u>radical</u> healing.^[2]</p>	<p>Focus on the <u>experiences, histories, cultures, struggles and accomplishments</u> of specific ethnic/racial groups within American history and society, with an emphasis on <u>truth and healing through empathy</u> and education.</p>

I hope that you will do everything you can to insure that these Guiding Values and Principles and their resulting lesson plans are changed.

We owe that to our students!

Thank you,

Joanne Donsky
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