



March 12, 2021

The Honorable Tony Thurmond
Superintendent of Public Instruction
California Department of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond
State Board of Education President
California Department of Education
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: The Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum’s Fulfillment of AB 2016 (Alejo)

Dear Superintendent Thurmond and Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond:

We are writing to you in regards to the upcoming State Board of Education (SBE) vote on the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). As a result of both the final product and the process to arrive to this draft, it is our belief that the ESMC does not currently meet the mandate set forth by AB 2016 (Alejo) and therefore should not be passed.

The mandate set forth in AB 2016 (Alejo) explicitly states that that:

[T]he model curriculum shall be developed with participation from faculty of Ethnic Studies programs at universities and colleges with ethnic studies programs and a group of representatives of local educational agencies, a majority of whom are kindergarten to grade 12, inclusive, teachers who have relevant experience or education background in the study and teaching of ethnic studies.¹

The California Department of Education (CDE) had previously brought together Ethnic Studies representatives and experts to participate in the development and drafting of the ESMC as required by AB 2016 (Alejo). However, these Ethnic Studies representatives and experts requested in a public letter on February 3, 2021² that their names be removed from the ESMC for two main reasons: 1) the process *did not* accept the participation or comments of the very Ethnic Studies professionals who were originally called upon to help inform the curriculum and 2) the final draft of the ESMC is simply not an Ethnic Studies curriculum.

Considering the current draft of the ESMC is neither a real Ethnic Studies curriculum nor was it written or truly informed by the experts of the discipline we are urging that the SBE refrain from passing a document which does not meet its legal mandate as clearly outlined by AB 2016 (Alejo).

Arab Resource & Organizing Center (AROC)
Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR)
Council on American-Islamic Relations, California (CAIR-CA)
National Lawyers Guild – San Francisco (NLG-SF)
Palestine Legal

¹ California EDC Section 51226.7 (a)

² <https://savearabamericanstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Letter-to-CDE-2.3.2021-1-1.pdf>