

To: State Board of Education (sbe@cde.ca.gov) & California Department of Education (superintendent@cde.ca.gov)

From: CDE Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Advisory Committee Members of 2019

Date: February 3, 2021

Re: Remove Names from Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

We are ALL former Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) advisory committee members alongside ALL the original writers of the model curriculum. We were chosen to serve based on our expertise in Ethnic Studies, curriculum development, and classroom teaching. It is due to our commitment to California students that we volunteered to serve on the Advisory Committee.

We request that our names be removed from the “Curriculum Acknowledgments” section of the ESMC, effective today. We were not fully consulted throughout the process of the curriculum development and significant parts of the curricular text do not fully reflect the work of past or present Ethnic Studies teachers/educators. Ethnic Studies guiding principles, knowledge, frameworks, pedagogies, and community histories have been compromised due to political and media pressure. Our association with the final document is conflicting because it does not reflect the Ethnic Studies curriculum that we believe California students deserve and need. Also our requests to extend the work timeline were denied beyond the stringent three meeting time-frame allotted, yet the timeline was extended when anti-Ethnic Studies stakeholders requested changes.

We share that our overall working experience with the CDE leadership, since Summer 2019, has been troubling and unprofessional. For example, the public comment summary failed to show that 30,000+ signatories, over 150 people of color led community organizations, professional associations, over 20 school districts in California (representing more than 1 million people) are in support of the original ESMC draft. The CDE silenced the voices of Ethnic Studies teachers/educators, who are all from racially and politically underrepresented groups. Also, we felt disrespected when the CDE did little to respond when reporters/media, legislators, non-Ethnic Studies academics attacked us.

We recommend improved collaborations between the CDE and authentic Ethnic Studies teachers/educators for the purpose of supporting students. For racial equity and inclusion, we ask that the CDE provide K-12 Ethnic Studies teachers the resources that they need to support students. Also we encourage that the CDE hire full-time Ethnic Studies experts with degrees in Ethnic Studies, as recommended since Fall 2018, to support teachers. Many studies have documented that student performance improves after taking an Ethnic Studies course. California students have been denied Ethnic Studies as conservative adults with other agendas have turned the model curriculum into something which is far from the scope and focus of Ethnic Studies.

We urge the CDE not to give in to the pressures and influences of white supremacist, right wing, conservatives (“Alliance for Constructive Ethnic Studies”, “Educators for Excellence in Ethnic Studies”, Hoover Institute, etc.) and multiculturalist, non-Ethnic Studies university academics and organizations (e.g., WestEd, History Project, etc.) now claiming “Ethnic Studies” expertise. We have been clear about our recommendations and have always been available to work with the CDE on authentic Ethnic Studies curriculum and professional development. Our decision to have our names removed from the Curriculum Acknowledgements is based on the **best interests** of California’s students.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Arzate

R. Tolteka Cuauhtin

Jeanelle Hope

Melissa Moreno

Samia Shoman

Dawniell Black

Angie Fa

Roselinn Lee

Jorge Pacheco Jr.

Alphonso Thompson

Lupe Carrasco Cardona

Guillermo Gomez

Stephen Leeper

Jenna Phillips

Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales

Artnelson Concordia

John Gonzalez

Theresa Montaña

Aimee Riechel

Vicky Xiong-Lor