

Talking Points for speaking with Educators, Superintendents, and School Boards

1. Thank them for meeting with you. Your goal is to make them comfortable and get them off the defensive.
 - I fully support Ethnic studies.
 - When taught constructively, ethnic studies can build empathy and understanding while combating racism. It emphasizes civic responsibility, builds inter-ethnic group understanding, exposes students to multiple perspectives, and teaches them to think analytically.
 - It also leads to critical analysis of multiple perspectives, informed decision making, and respectful exchange of opinions.
 - My goal today is to get information – not to give it. I respect how hard everyone in this office/school/Board works to ensure that our children get the best possible education.
2. Get information about how Ethnic Studies curriculum is created. Who creates the curriculum? What is the review process? How is the community/parents involved?
 - The controversial material being taught to our teachers demands transparency with the public. We would like to work with you to ensure that any curriculum development or teacher training on Ethnic Studies is done so with a Constructive Ethnic Studies lens, promoting critical inquiry, multiple points of view, and highlighting the achievements of the marginalized communities.
 - I'm sure we all agree that politics, especially the personal politics of teachers, have no place in the classroom. Classrooms should foster discussion and analysis of the pros and cons to both sides of an issue, allowing students to give input based on personal experience and come to their own, informed conclusions. This subject has been so politicized that we need to work together to ensure that the classrooms don't fall victim to the heated rhetoric from both sides of the political aisles.
3. Engage in a discussion about the objectives of their curriculum. Try to get specifics. This is a good place to talk about concerns that you've seen in other, Critical-based Ethnic Studies curriculum.
 - Objective of AB2016 (as written in the bill) is "*preparing pupils to be global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures.*"
 - Ethnic Studies has been politicized, not only by the media, but also by activists in education. However, it's not necessary to sacrifice inquiry or impose a political ideology to achieve the engagement benefit of ethnic studies. A Constructive Ethnic Studies approach can work well to provide the success we are all looking for by promoting critical inquiry, multiple points of view, and highlighting the achievements of the BIPOC communities.
 - My biggest concerns about an Ethnic Studies curriculum are the following issues that I have seen in other examples:
 - Militant role models (Assata Shakur – convicted of murder, Oscar Lopez Rivera – responsible for over 130 bombings in US cities, Lolita Lebron – led an armed attack the Capitol by firing over 30 bullets into the House chamber, just to name a very few, while leaving out Martin Luther King, Jr, John Lewis, and Thurgood Marshall.)
 - Blatant anti-Semitism (this has come in the form of supporting BDS, calls for activism in Arab organizations that are actively working towards the destruction of Israel, and the inclusion of a

very skewed conversation about the Middle East, based on colonialism and coming from a very one-sided view).

- Focusing more on making minorities (or using intersectionality to have children identify as a part of a minority) perpetual victims instead of focusing on their abilities, how they worked together to overcome oppression, and accomplishments/contributions to the California and US of today.
- These are the kinds of things that Gov Newsom told the CDE to remove from the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, which was done only with some success.

Words matter. Below is a table that shows the differences between a Critical Ethnic Studies approach and a Constructive Ethnic Studies approach (like in the LAUSD Ethnic Studies curriculum).

| <p align="center">Critical Ethnic Studies’ political Guiding Values & Principles</p> | <p align="center">LAUSD’s neutral Guiding Principles</p> |
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| <p><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</p> | <p><u>Promote critical thinking about</u> the complexity of the intersections of race with gender, class, sexuality and other systems of difference that have power effects and result in privilege.</p> <p>Teach students to understand the concepts of intersectionality, power, privilege and/or oppression in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Their own identities as human beings and acknowledging their ancestral roots.</u> ○ <u>The complexity and diversity of the American experience</u> |
| <p><u>Challenge imperialist/colonial [and hegemonic] 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> |