

California Department of Education

Executive Office

SBE-003 (REV. 11/2017)

imb-cfird-mar21item01

# California State Board of Education March 2021 Agenda Item #09

## Subject

Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum: Adoption of the Model Curriculum.

## Type of Action

Action, Information

## Summary of the Issue(s)

*Education Code* *(EC*) Section 51226.7 directs the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) to develop, and the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt, modify, or revise, a model curriculum in ethnic studies. The draft model curriculum has undergone three public field reviews. At its meeting on November 19, 2020, the IQC took action to recommend the draft model curriculum to the SBE, pending one final 45-day public comment period. That draft, known as the Third Field Review Draft, reflects numerous changes made by the IQC at its November 18–19 meeting. Those edits were in response to more than 57,000 public comments received over 18 months of development.

## Recommendation

The California Department of Education (CDE) recommends that the SBE adopt the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) with the line edits described in Attachment 2. The CDE also recommends that the SBE authorize CDE staff, pending approval of the SBE Executive Director, to prepare revisions requested by the SBE and correct any typographical errors and non-substantive clarifying edits.

## Brief History of Key Issues

Assembly Bill 2016, Chapter 327 of the Statutes of 2016, added Section 51226.7 to the *EC,* which directs the IQC to develop and the SBE to adopt a model curriculum in ethnic studies, hereafter known as the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. The original legislation included a deadline of December 31, 2019, for IQC action and of March 31, 2020, for final SBE action. Those deadlines were extended one year by Assembly Bill 114, Chapter 413 of the Statutes of 2019.

*EC* Section 51226.7 provides that the ESMC shall be written as a guide to allow school districts to design and adapt ethnic studies courses suited to their local communities, and that the ESMC shall include examples of school district courses approved as meeting the University of California’s A–G admission requirements. The statute does not impose a mandate on districts to utilize the ESMC.

A public information webinar was held on January 9, 2018, to collect public feedback on the project. The feedback informed a set of guidelines that were developed in collaboration with the IQC and adopted by the SBE at their meeting on July 11–12, 2018. The SBE also adopted the schedule of significant events and an application for the Model Curriculum Advisory Committee (MCAC) at that meeting.

The legislation required that the model be developed with participation from faculty of ethnic studies programs at universities and colleges with ethnic studies programs and a group of representatives from local educational agencies. The CDE posted the SBE-approved MCAC application on July 17, 2018, and recruitment remained open through October 17, 2018. Information about the application process was disseminated to county and district superintendents, charter school administrators, and chairs of ethnic studies departments at California colleges and universities. A total of 134 applications were received.

At its January 9–10, 2019, meeting, the SBE appointed 19 members to the Ethnic Studies MCAC. Two of those members subsequently withdrew and did not serve. *EC* Section 51226.7 requires that a majority of the MCAC consist of “kindergarten to grade 12, inclusive, teachers who have relevant experience or education background in the study and teaching of ethnic studies.” At its March 14–15, 2019, meeting, the SBE appointed a new Co-Chair of the MCAC to replace a member who withdrew.

### Development of the Draft and Field Review

The MCAC met for three two-day meetings, in February, March, and April 2019. At its meeting on May 16, 2019, the IQC approved the MCAC draft, with a few edits, for posting for a period of public review. That review was conducted from June 16, 2019, through August 15, 2019, and was the first of three public reviews. An overall summary of the public comment received during this project, broken down by the period of the three field reviews, is provided as Attachment 1 to this item.

The first field review resulted in over twenty thousand public comments, in the midst of considerable media attention to the draft. The IQC was scheduled to make edits to the document at its meeting on September 19–20, 2019, but instead elected to postpone action at the request of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI). In a news release dated September 16, 2019, the SSPI outlined a plan for the revision of the model curriculum that would include feedback sessions with ethnic studies teachers and experts, listening sessions to hear from districts that have successfully implemented ethnic studies curriculum, and a panel discussion of experts to discuss what information might inform the draft. The Region 15 Comprehensive Center conducted 11 focus group sessions with teachers and administrators over the course of the fall and winter of 2019–2020. The SSPI also hosted a series of webinars in 2020–21 with experts, teachers, and students to discuss some of the core disciplinary topics of ethnic studies.

### Revised Draft and Second Field Review

During the summer of 2020, the CDE prepared recommended edits to the draft based upon the extensive public feedback and the information received during the feedback sessions. At its August 13, 2020, meeting, the IQC edited the draft and posted the resulting draft for a second field review period, which took place during the month of September 2020. Once again, the public response was quite extensive, with over thirteen thousand comments received during the second field review.

At its meeting on November 18–19, 2020, the IQC considered the public comment and made more than two hundred edits to the draft model curriculum, including the addition of more than two dozen submitted sample lessons. The IQC acted to recommend the revised model curriculum to the SBE after it underwent one final 45-day period of public review.

### Third Field Review and CDE Recommendations

The third field review began on December 7, 2020, and continued through January 21, 2021. Again, there was considerable public interest, with more than fifteen thousand public comments received during that period. The CDE reviewed all of the submitted comments and prepared a final series of recommendations to the draft based on the comments and to make the content more internally consistent and aligned to the SBE-adopted guidelines and the authorizing statute. Those recommendations are listed in Attachment 2 to this item.

A set of revised draft chapters that incorporate the CDE-recommended edits to the third field review draft has been posted on the Model Curriculum Projects web page at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/cdereceditsesmc.asp>. The Third Field Review draft that was recommended by the IQC is posted at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/esmcthirdfieldreview.asp>.

## Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action

**March 2019:** The SBE appointed a new Co-Chair of the Ethnic Studies MCAC to replace a member who withdrew.

**January 2019:** The SBE appointed 19 members of the Ethnic Studies MCAC.

**July 2018:** The SBE approved the Schedule of Significant Events, Advisory Committee Application, and Guidelines for the Model Curriculum.

## Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate)

The CDE estimates that the development of the model curriculum cost $467,710. That amount includes the cost of contracted primary writers, travel and meeting expenses for the members of the advisory committee, professional editing and formatting of the final document, and a part-time Staff Services Analyst position that was funded to support the project in 2018–2019.

## Attachment(s)

Attachment 1: Summary Table of Public Comments (5 pages)

Attachment 2: CDE-Recommended Edits (120 pages)

# Attachment 1: Summary Table of Public Comments

During the development process, the Instructional Quality Commission approved the draft Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum three times for web posting in order to collect public input as required by *Education Code* Section 51226.7. The public comment periods lasted from June 14, 2019, through August 15, 2019; September 1–30, 2020; and December 7, 2020, through January 21, 2021. The comments were sent to [ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov](mailto:ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov) or other state email addresses, were left as voicemail messages, or were received by mail during that period. The table below tracks the number of comments[[1]](#footnote-1) received during, between, and after those public comment periods.

Full comments were posted on the California Department of Education (CDE) Box account and were made available to the members of the State Board of Education (SBE). Because of the large volume of comments that were received, form letter and postcard comments were not all posted individually but were tallied and included in the numbers below. Personal contact information such as email addresses and telephone numbers were redacted before the comments were posted. Access to the full comments was also provided to the public on request.

Due to the overlap in some categories and the fact that some commenters sent their comments to multiple email addresses, the numbers below are approximate. Duplicate comments from the same sender were deleted when identified. Comments about topics that received fewer than 10 submissions or which covered multiple areas are included under “Multiple/Other.”

| Summary of Comment | Number of Comments Received During First Field Review (Summer 2019) | Number of Comments Received, August 16, 2019, through July 29, 2020 | Number of Comments Received, July 31 through August 31, 2020 (after revised draft posted) | Number of Comments Received During Second Field Review (August 31 through September 30, 2020) | Number of Comments Received, October 1 through November 6, 2020 | Number of Comments Received, November 6 through December 4, 2020 | Number of Comments Received During Third Field Review (December 7, 2020, through January 21, 2021) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Comments supporting the draft Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum posted in 2019, or general support for ethnic studies | 365 | 54 | 39 | 23 | 3 | 1 | 18 |
| Comments about Jewish Americans and/or antisemitism | 18,457 | 470 | 529 | 11,876 | 272 | 248 | 6,544 |
| Concerns with the entire model curriculum and/or teaching ethnic studies in California schools | 595 | 79 | 170 | 98 | 8 | 1 | 351 |
| Comments about “critical race theory” or “critical ethnic studies” | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 3,314 |
| Comments about the portrayal of capitalism in the draft document | 226 | 13 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Comments about Arab Americans | 116 | 8,500+ | 3,071 | 43 | 25 | 8,775 | 5,206 |
| Comments about other West Asian groups, besides Jewish and Arab Americans | 0 | 0 | 164 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Comments about Arab Americans and Pacific Islanders | 0 | 0 | 72 | 3 | 0 | 16 | 0 |
| Comments about Pacific Islanders | 0 | 0 | 14 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Comments about Korean Americans | 45 | 1 | 0 | 209 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Comments about Japanese Americans | 0 | 0 | 0 | 61 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Comments about multiple Asian American groups | 0 | 0 | 0 | 743 | 42 | 17 | 35 |
| Comments about Armenian Americans | 13 | 3,000+ | 6,103 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 6 |
| Comments about Southeast Asian Americans | 10 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Comments to local school boards that were cc'd to CDE | 0 | 94 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Comments about Sikh Americans | 0 | 50 | 16 | 567 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Comments about Black Lives Matter and/or coverage of police brutality | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Specific edit comments not related to the issues above | 38 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 14 |
| Comments opposed to Assembly Bill 331 (Medina) | 16 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Multiple/Other | 30 | 42 | 34 | 51 | 31 | 31 | 98 |
| Blank or technologically inaccessible comments | 336 | 1 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 556 | 1 |
| Approximate Total | 20,247 | 12,312 | 10,217 | 13,726 | 390 | 9,673 | 15,598 |
| **Cumulative Total** | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | **56,892** | **66,565** | **82,163** |

California Department of Education, March 2021

1. Note: This document serves as a general summary. The number of comments does not reflect the number of signatures on a petition. All comments, including petitions or letters signed by multiple parties, are included in full to the SBE and the public via the Box link. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)