



5 Things To Know About Ethnic Studies

At Parents Defending Education, we are troubled by the blatant antisemitic responses to the ongoing crisis in Israel on display here in the United States. Unfortunately, the hatred that fuels much of that antisemitism and foments divisiveness can be traced to something with an innocent-sounding name: Ethnic Studies.

To help parents, advocates, and policy professionals navigate conversations with your children or your child's school, we assembled the below Ethnic Studies explainer.

1. Ethnic Studies may be of particular interest in schools as teachers and administrators struggle to find ways to talk about the war in Israel. Meanwhile, reading and math scores are at a record low, and instead of preaching politics, schools should focus on academics and improve education for all of America's children.
2. Through peddling misinformation about "colonialism" and "white supremacy," Ethnic Studies often uniquely [targets](#) Jews, alleging that all Jews are white or "white adjacent" and illegally occupy Israel. Thanks to the Jewish diaspora and intermarriage, there are Jews of many skin colors and backgrounds. Israel is the homeland of the Jewish people. But, no matter one's beliefs, teachers ought not use the classroom as a political soapbox or target students of any ethnicity, religion, or background.
3. "Ethnic Studies" sounds like lessons incorporating learning about different cultures and teaching tolerance and acceptance. Unfortunately, "Liberated" or "Critical" Ethnic Studies is found more commonly in K-12 schools today. This version focuses on white supremacy, systemic racism, privilege, connecting to "resistance" movements, and teaching students to be activists. There is no viewpoint diversity allowed, and it is critical race theory (CRT) by another name.
4. School curricula may have "Liberated Ethnic Studies," a form of ethnic studies designed to turn students into progressive activists and "Equipping Black, Chicanx/Latinx, Asian American, American Indian/Indigenous and low-income youth with skills to participate in community advancement, social justice, and transformative change." These curricula are not about true diversity, promoting understanding, or exploring different parts of history (all of which are important in education). Liberated Ethnic Studies has the singular purpose of indoctrinating students into divisive ideologies and turning them into activists.
5. Ethnic Studies, much like Critical Race Theory, divides students into powerful oppressors and disempowered victims, categorizing them based on skin color and sometimes gender and sexual orientation instead of their individual characteristics. Ethnic Studies forces students to accept its predetermined "truth" (or orthodoxy) and discourages and even suppresses inquiry and dissent. This is part of its agenda to turn students into activists rather than teaching them to become independent, critical thinkers.

[Learn more about Ethnic Studies here.](#)