

Dear Sir or Madam:

I grew up in California attending public schools, and later attended U.C. Berkeley. I am a strong supporter of public schools.

While I think it is important to include some form of ethnic studies, I was dismayed to learn that the proposed curriculum included BDS, and I am guessing there are implications that Israel is an oppressive, colonial and/or racist power. Even if this is not explicit in the program, by including BDS and Israel in the curriculum, the implication is there, simply by having it presented in conjunction with the other ethnic studies topics. When something is presented in association with other subjects, the analogy is made, even without being stated. (The situation in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza is not comparable to South Africa, but the repeated use of words like "apartheid," for example, bolsters that association. The majority of Israeli Jews are not Ashkanazi, but an arbitrary categorization is made of Jews as "white" and Arabs as "brown.") Regardless of the private political positions of various educators, it is wrong for our school system to indoctrinate students into either political camp.

Thank you,  
Leslie O'Connell, Ed.M, Ph.D.