

## **CDE Note: This comment also included the attachment provided in the comment, “8-6-20 Group Attachment”**

**From:** alex shechter

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 4, 2020 9:55 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment on Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear IQC Members,

As a Jewish citizen of this country I am deeply concerned to learn about references to the BDS antisemitic movement in the California ethnic studies curriculum.

I am submitting the attached document as my comment on the ESMC. I applaud the CDE for making important changes to the ESMC, and appreciate their hard work during this time. While this new draft is a step in the right direction, I urge you to make further changes to address shortcomings that remain in the curriculum.

The curriculum creates a bias against Israel and the Jews and develops solidarity with anti-Zionism, BDS, and anti-Israel narratives, which would be deeply harmful to many Jewish students in the classroom

It portrays an impression that Israel is a colonial state oppressing an Arab minority, when this is totally far from the truth. Israel is a democracy that over 20% of its citizens are non Jewish minorities with equal rights. Many of them are Israeli Arabs, both Muslim and Christian.

The Palestinians are allowing their media to encourage their youth to view all Jews as legitimate targets of terrorism, thus making it more and more difficult to reach peace. They are raising their kids to hate Jews regardless of color, beliefs, age, gender or background.

Your curriculum is doing something similar, by describing the Jews as one community to be blamed for all middle east problems. This is far from the truth. Both in Israel and in California you will find Mizrahi Jews (Jews displaced from their Arab homes after the establishment of the State of Israel), Israeli Jews (who were born in Israel), Jews who were oppressed in the Soviet Union before its collapse, African Jews, Persian Jews and the list goes on and on.

All Jews are not alike, and not all Israelis are alike either. Majority of Israelis wanted to reach peace with the Palestinians and believed that it was achievable. They got disillusioned by reality:

Israel had over 1000 dead, the equivalent of 15 9/11s relative to its size, prior to building a security wall that makes it harder for terrorists to infiltrate Israel. The Palestinians were in control of over 85% of their territory before the suicide attacks started back in 2001. Israel had no choice but to do something about it, and the wall was the best solution to avoid bloodshed in both sides.

Israel disengaged from Gaza in 2006. Instead of investing in their citizens and negotiating further land returns, the Palestinians voted for Hamas, and let it take over Gaza. Hamas has fired thousands of rockets into Israel, with the goal of killing all Jews and destroying Israel. This is why Israel is not willing to give back land in the west bank unless there are guarantees that this won't happen in the west bank as well, which is 10 miles from the majority of Israel's population.

If you choose to mention the BDS, you should present it in an unbiased way, and include the background and reasons for the existing situation.

Also, you should mention that the Palestinian Arabs were killing Jews in the hundreds, if not thousands, even before Israel occupied Gaza and the West Bank in the 1967 war. The reason there was a 1967 war is that the Arabs wanted to kill all the Jews and destroy Israel.

**This kind of biased presentation is very dangerous especially when presenting this information to clueless students who will believe that these are the facts, and thus will have hostile views towards Israel and towards the Jews. Is this your intention?**

Why isn't there a mention of the Palestinian authority being a dictatorship? That they are oppressing their christian minorities, their LGBT population, that they won't allow Jews to live among them?

There are 0 Jews living in Gaza, but 20% of Israel is minorities, mostly Arabs. Why is that?

You mention the Palestinian refugees, but what about the equivalent number of Arab Jewish refugees who had to flee from the Arab countries after 1948? Israel took all of them in. Egypt and Jordan, who controlled Gaza and the West Bank respectfully, chose not to because they wanted to create a problem Israel and the Palestinians have to deal with to this day.

Jewish students already feel unsafe across all UC schools due to vocal and aggressive BDS supporters who prey on clueless students to push their agenda of destroying Israel and blaming the Jews for everything wrong in this world.

Please don't make high schools an unsafe environment for Jewish students as well.

Sincerely  
Alexander Shechter