

From: Ronald D. Fellman

Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2020 2:16 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: Fellman, Ronald D.

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Anti-Semitic and Radical Anti-Israel Content in California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Draft

Dear Chairperson Soomin Chao:

I understand that as the Chair of the California Instructional Quality Commission, you would have a say in the adoption of any changes in the California school curriculum. I want to bring to your attention the fact that the new draft of the California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMCD) contains disturbing antisemitic and radical anti-Israel content. In particular, the ESMCD's "Arab American Studies Course Outline" promotes the anti-Israel BDS Boycott movement, which lies about the Palestine-Israel situation and even radical-left Jewish organizations many prominent Muslim leaders say is counter-productive and would actually harm Palestinians by eliminating many of their jobs with Israeli companies.

I would hope that you would agree that any truthful and balanced curricula should not be biased nor politically motivated. We must strive to teach facts from all viewpoints and not indoctrinate our students. Basic education must, first and foremost, give students a firm foundation of the basic skills they will need to survive in the workplace, primarily, reading comprehension and analysis, proper writing style and grammar, and a firm grasp of mathematics and science, especially the Scientific Method.

Political propaganda and racial and religious bias have no place in our children's curricula.

Please reassure me that you will be taking a critical look at the ESMCD and heed the advice and opinions of the dozens of state leaders and tens of thousands of Californians who have already written to object to this new curriculum and that you will over-rule the adoption of the ESMCD by the 13+ California school boards that pass resolutions favoring this severely flawed program.

In particular, please understand that the ESMCD, as it currently stands, erases the American Jewish experience, fails to discuss antisemitism, reinforces negative stereotypes about Jews, singles out Israel for criticism and would institutionalize the teaching of anti-Semitic stereotypes in our public schools.

I hope that you would be as sensitive to the plight of Jews facing antisemitism and the violence we now see erupting around the world, including the recent murder of Jews even here in the US, as you are to other minorities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,
-ron fellman