

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I am **greatly** concerned by the flawed and unbalanced Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. I support the idea of teaching an ethnic studies class, but urge you to make major revisions or a significant rewrite of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, consistent with the recommendations from the California Legislative Jewish Caucus letter, Stand With Us, Jimena, Amcha and others.

This proposal causes great hardship, discrimination, and hostility to me, my children, my grandchildren and the future generations of my family. It fails to discuss the antisemitism that has been spreading across the state and reinforces negative stereotypes about Jews. It goes a step further by singling out Israel for criticism which is a dangerous precedent, especially given the current state of hate crimes in America. All of this will effect my family's livelihood and safety as California residents and American citizens.

Despite the significant contributions of Jews to California's history, politics, culture, and government – and our community's longstanding struggle against hatred and discrimination – the ESMC erases the Jewish experience in America. The exclusion is offensive and inconsistent with the purpose of ethnic studies to promote inclusion and tolerance. Specifically, I would like to raise the following objections:

- This is indefensible in light of rising antisemitism in America and especially on college campuses.
- The ESMC omits any mention of antisemitism though there are three times as many hate crimes in America against Jews as against Muslims. The most recent FBI statistics record 938 antisemitic incidents and 273 Islamophobic incidents. Hate crimes against Jews rose by 37% according to 2018 FBI statistics, accounting for over half of religious-based hate crimes in the United States. Though a great deal of curriculum is devoted to Islamophobia, there is absolutely none devoted to anti-Semitism.
- The curriculum denigrates both Israel and Jews.
- The curriculum supports the antisemitic BDS movement. As Asad AbuKalil, Professor of Political Science and BDS leader at the University of California has said, "The real aim of BDS is to bring down the State of Israel."

I request you to make major revisions or a significant rewrite of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum to address these concerns.

Thank you,
Mahbobeh Hirmand