

From: Sharon Kritzer
Sent: Sunday, August 11, 2019 10:24 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Cc: Tony Thurmond
Subject: Rewrite Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum - Remove Anti-Semitism

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I am an alumni of the California Public School system and California resident planning on raising my children in California and am appalled by the proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. I find it bigoted, unbalanced, and plainly anti-Semitic, with the clear intention of demonizing the Jewish people and the State of Israel. There is no place for such a curriculum in our public education system.

As a student, I experienced bias and anti-semitism through my education inclusive of my own teachers displaying anti-semitism towards me and other students. We can only put a stop to this by improving the curriculum in a way that is balanced and educates students, alongside teachers.

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. For this to be excluded from ESMC is indicative of anti-Jewish agenda.

Further, ESMC neglects that Israel is the historical and ancestral homeland of the Jewish people. This is very much like the Native Americans have America as their native homeland. Instead, ESMC does a "comparison" between "Palestine and Mexico" -- a completely false comparison because there is nothing to compare between the two. The reason ESMC does this is because it seeks to polarize students, especially Hispanic students in California, to hate Jews and Israel and believe that the Palestinians are somehow more like them than Israelis are. The truth is the opposite -- many Israelis are like first generation Hispanics in California, with parents who fled (or who by themselves fled) violence and hatred in their birth homes to seek a better life in Israel.

I urge you to reject this curriculum and rewrite it together with more members of the community who will provide a more balanced view of Jews and Israel.

Thank you,
Sharon Kritzer