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From: Michele Mandell

Sent: Wednesday, August 14, 2019 1:07 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: tony thurmond

Subject: Anti Semitism should definitely be included in the new Ethnic Studies program.

Hello, As a Californian, I attended school here elementary, middle, high and University. I pay property taxes in California too. I do not have children of my own so I am not aware of a lot of what Californian schools are teaching these days, but when I heard about this issue last night, I had to write.

As a kid, I was afraid to be Jewish; I thought the Holocaust would happen again. I had to hear "Jewish Jokes" that I didn't understand why they were funny or sayings "don't Jew me," if someone was being cheap. It hurt and I had no idea why people spoke like that.

I had the opportunity to join a group from SF going to Israel in March and it was a hard, but fascinating trip. The people who arranged it had us visiting Arabs or Palestinians and Jews pretty equally. The following is a list of some of what we did: We had a Palestinian tour guide in the West Bank, we had lunch with a Christian Palestinian family, we visited two Imans, one who managed the mosque at the Dome of the Rock and one in Haifa, we visited a number of organizations that were trying to bring Palestinian and Jewish children together, we visited two schools that were taught by Jews and Palestinians and in one of them they were taught in Hebrew and Arabic equally.

I know it is the minority in Israel, bringing together the children of religious and secular Jews together with Palestinians, but every little bit helps. I am a Zionist but that doesn't mean I think what the IDF is doing to the Gaza Strip or in places in the West Bank is correct. It is deplorable and should not be glorified, but it can't be demonized if we are to teach a fair and non-bias look at the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. The walls were constructed because so many bombs were injuring civilians in Israeli cities. If Hamas, and others terrorist organizations in the Middle East were not trying to wipe out Israel, there would be no need for walls or the IDF.

Lack of education brings uncertainty and fright. Don't make what Jews have lived through here in the US, Europe and the rest of the world a secret. The American Indians were mistreated, the Irish, the Chinese and of course the African Americans, but that does not erase what Jews have gone through and continue to go through with terrorist attacks on Jewish organizations here and around the world.

Please bring a more in biased lean to the ethnic learning program. Do not put blame on anyone, just educate what is happening and did happen and help the children learn that discrimination is wrong of any people, Jews, included.

Thank you!

Michele Mandell
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