

From: Deborah Eliezer  
Sent: Thursday, August 15, 2019 1:11 PM  
To: Ethnic Studies  
Subject: draft response letter attached

To Whom it May Concern,

I join with JIMENA, the ZOA and countless other organizations and individuals that are appalled this draft is being considered for education of our high schoolers regarding bias and ethnicity. I question the authority of those creating the curriculum and respectfully ask that attention be paid to the remarks below and those others who have sent in their criticisms of the draft heretofore. As Californians, we must strive for continued inclusivity for all citizens. We must teach our children that we are thought leaders in the U.S. and arm them with critical thinking skills, the values of inclusivity and the knowledge that their own beings are valuable contributions to our society. The only way to do that is with accuracy of fact and malleability of thought and feeling.

I look forward to hearing a more inclusive outcome from this work so that we may all benefit from the next generation's education.

Thank you,  
Debórah Eliezer Adabachi

General:

As a Mizrahi Jew born and raised in California, I call on the EMSC to do a better job of accurately representing Arab Jews. My story as a first-generation Iraqi Jew living in California has been so misrepresented and erased from history that I have written and perform my own show about my father's journey fighting for his community, fleeing Iraq, his imprisonment by his own country, his hard-won arrival to Israel and eventual relocation to California. {(dis)Place[d], foolsfURY Theater}. This story of Mizrahi Jewish identity of over 850,000 Jews has been erased because it invites a complexity society is loathe to embrace and that your binary assessment as represented in this draft reflects. I beg you to teach our children how to sit with multiple realities, to embrace multiple truths and educate them to hear all perspectives, not just popular or politically-favorable ones vogue at the time this dreaft was written. Do not demonize any one ethnic group as you have suggested in your glossary. Teach critical skills of inquiry so all students are able to think for themselves.

The omission of Anti-Semitism and a thorough assessment of anti-semitism in the US and California in particular is dangerous and appears to be a deliberate omission. The EMSC is purporting to teach greater appreciation for all ethnic cultures in our society, however leaves out Jews and gives value to BDS, which falsely defines Israel as an apartheid state. As a California native, I want children of this state to understand the accurate characterization of Jews here, in the US and abroad. I call on the EMCS to properly value the contributions Jews have made to the US society and California specifically and not to give in to Anti-Semitic hate speech that often mischaracterizes Jews in general and Israel in particular.

Chapter 4 Glossary and Bibliography, pg 2: Jews are not mentioned as an ethnic group. Anti-Semitism is not mentioned.:

Falsely describing BDS as a moment which characterizes Israel as an Apartheid state. Singling out Israelis and Palestinians in the only geographically-based ethically-specific term in your

Glossary of terms. This mischaracterization is dangerous for those young folks learning about apartheid, bias and politics for the first time.

- The over-emphasis of the Israeli Palestinian conflict and the definition of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) in the Model Curriculum are both framed entirely from the vantage of proponents of BDS and fail to adhere to curriculum guidelines that require content to be taught in a manner that is “balanced”, “inclusive”, and reflective of “different perspectives.”
- At a time of increased vulnerability for American Jews, it is essential that the State of California do its best to protect the unique needs and sensitivities towards American Jewish students.
- We believe it is critical to remove the unbalanced definition of BDS from the glossary of terms and to include a working definition for antisemitism.

Chapter 2, Sample Course Outline p. 269

Section on bias. Sample of rap song lyrics is anti-Semitic, characterizing Jews as control the media.

Chapter 2 handout B Privilege Walk

I have done the privilege walk on a couple of occasions. I find this to be effective for those who are privileged and totally demeaning for those who lack privilege. Just another way to affirm privileged people's place in society and “out” those who are not. Please explore other ways to work with this ideas. Yes, a physical exercise, but consider trust and the cruelty of teenagers.