

From: Ella Revzin
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2019 8:41 AM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: Fwd: 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Madam/Sir,

As a Jewish citizen of this country I am deeply concerned to learn about your including the BDS antisemitic movement in the 2020 ethnic studies curriculum.

The curriculum is totally biased against Israel and the Jews. It portrays an impression that Israel is a colonial Jewish state oppressing an Arab minority, when this is completely far from the truth. Israel is a democracy with over 20% of its citizens are non Jewish minorities with equal rights. Many of them are Israeli Arabs, both Muslim and Christian.

The conflict with the Palestinians is a conflict lasting over 100 years, long before Israel was established, and Israel is not the only at fault here. There have been many attempts to reach a peace agreement and you mention none.

The Palestinians chose many times violence over negotiations. Palestinian Arab were slaughtering Jews even before there was Israel. They wiped out the Hebron Jewish community in 1929, community that existed for generations, long before diaspora Jews started immigrating back to their homeland in 1882.

Israel had over 1000 dead, the equivalent of 15 9/11 attacks relative to its size, prior to building the wall. The Palestinians were in control of over 85% of their territory before the suicide attacks started back in 2001. Israel had no choice but to do something about it, and the wall was best solution to avoid bloodshed in both sides.

Israel disengaged from Gaza in 2006. Instead of investing in their citizens and negotiate further land returns, the Palestinians voted for the Hamas, and let it take over Gaza. Hamas has fired thousands of rockets into Israel, with the goal of killing all Jews and destroying Israel. This is why Israel is not willing to give back land in the west bank unless there are gauntness that this won't happen in the west bank as well, which is 10 miles from the majority of Israels population.

The Palestinian Arabs were killing Jews in the hundreds, if not thousands, even before Israel occupied Gaza and the West Bank in the 1967 war. The reason there was a 1967 war is that the Arabs wanted to kill all the Jews and destroy Israel.

If you want to give an example of oppressed people there are many better examples which their facts are based on true events and data, unlike the BDS movement. To mention just few: Muslim's in China, LGBTs in the Muslim world. The Jews during the Holocaust, and in general, even in America. South Africa is another very good example, which is completely different than the situation between Israel and the Palestinians.

The BDS is promoting false information and hatred towards Israel and the Jews. If you choose to mention the BDS, you should present it in an unbiased way, and include the background and reasons for the existing situation.

This kind of biased presentation is very dangerous especially when presenting this information to clueless students who will believe that these are the facts, and thus will have hostile views towards Israel and towards the Jews in general. Is this your intention?

Why isn't there a mention of the Palestinian authority being a dictatorship? That they are oppressing their christian minorities, their LGBT population, that they won't allow Jews to live among them?

There are 0 Jews living in Gaza, but 20% of Israel is minorities, mostly Arabs. Why is that?

You mention the Palestinian refugees, but what about the equivalent number of Arab Jewish refugees who had to flee from the Arab countries after 1948? Israel took all of them in. Egypt and Jordan, who controlled Gaza and West Bank respectfully, chose not to because they wanted to create a problem Israel and the Palestinians have to deal with to this day.

Please see the attached formal forms for more information. Please revise the curriculum and remove BDS from it. There are far better and fact based examples one could use in the classroom.

Sincerely
Ella Revzin

Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

May 2019 Draft

(Download and use to provide specific recommendations)

Include the chapter of the model curriculum, the page number, and line number(s) to ensure that the California Department of Education and Instructional Quality Commission can reference the content of the document when reviewing your comments. Please email this document as a Word document to ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov. You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Page 2 of glossary and pages 234, 237, 242, 256, and 264-269 of the sample course model documents	<i>Alexander Shechter</i> <i>Concerned citizen</i>	<p>A glossary for the curriculum includes a definition of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement against Israel. It claims the purpose of BDS is to, "establish freedom for Palestinians living under apartheid conditions". It then parrots more BDS talking points while offering no critical perspectives about this campaign of hate, which seeks to end Israel's existence.</p> <p>It also doesn't mention that both Hamas and the Palestinian authority are dictatorships, which means that the Palestians will not be truly free even under their rule. The truly free Palestinians are the ones who are Israeli citizens (close to 20% of Israel's population).</p> <p>The sample lesson plans for the curriculum: Encourage teachers to highlight BDS and a pro-BDS group called Direct Action for Palestine, but no voices critical of their perspectives (p. 234). Promote a false equivalence between Israel's efforts to stop terrorists from entering communities to murder innocent people, and U.S. policies on the border with Mexico (p. 234).</p> <p>Israel built the wall after it has suffered the equivalent of 15 9/11 attacks. The wall was the best measure to avoid bloodshed from both sides, since Israel didn't</p>

		<p>want to re-occupy the Palestinian cities, which were under Palestinian autonomy following the Oslo agreement.</p> <p>Moreover, the Oslo agreement is not mentioned at all, nor the attempts to reach a peace agreement, and the reasons for their failure (according to Clinton it was Arafat's). Neither do you mention the unilateral disengagement from Gaza that backfired literally on Israel: Israel is no longer ruling Gaza and in return the Hamas has shot thousands of missiles into Israel, and dug tunnels in order to kill and kidnap Israeli citizens.</p> <p>Use unclear language that implies "Israel-Palestine" as a whole is an Arab country (p. 237).</p> <p>Frame the Palestinian narrative of the 1948 War as fact, with no alternative perspectives (p. 242).</p> <p>You don't mention the 1947 UN resolution to split Palestine (which at the time meant the homeland of the Jews) between the Jews and the Arabs. The fact that the Jews have accepted the resolution, declared independence, and the Arabs tried to annihilate it instead of choosing to live peacefully side by side.</p> <p>Encourage teachers to use a poem featuring harsh criticism of Israel, but no content offering a positive perspective about Israel or criticism of Palestinian leaders (p. 256, 264-269).</p> <p>Palestinians are oppressed by their own leadership. LGBT citizens are harassed and even murdered.</p> <p>The Introduction of the proposed curriculum states that, "The implementation of Ethnic Studies presents an opportunity for teachers to... enable students to develop a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusion, and aids in the eradication of bigotry, hate, and racism." Despite this stated goal, the curriculum does not feature a single lesson about the Jewish community, mentioning Jews only in passing. With antisemitism rising and ignorance about the Jewish people still a major problem in our society, the exclusion of Jews from this curriculum is deeply disappointing.</p>
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California Department of Education, June 2019