

From: Karina Halevy
Sent: Sunday, January 24, 2021 1:01 PM
To: Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] please remove the antiSemitism in your new curriculum

Hello,

I am a resident of Los Altos, CA, and I am writing to express serious concerns about antiSemitism in California's proposed ethnic studies curriculum.

The proposed curriculum contains dangerous antisemitic language that conflates Jewish identity with privilege - the term "Jewish Privilege" is quite literally used by David Duke, former leader of the KKK. This is precisely how antiSemitism is normalized across all parts of the political spectrum, and it is dangerous to Jewish people. Furthermore, the proposal contains nonsensical terms such as "Jewish Middle Eastern Americans", fails to acknowledge the multitude of ethnic Jewish subgroups (including Beta Israeli, Bene Israel, Ashkenazi, Bukharan, and Yemenite), pretends as if antiSemitism was a thing of the 1940s and not the world's oldest hatred predating modern politics and still continuing to this day, singles out Jewish people as the only ethnic group mentioned in reference to "conditional white privilege" (not all Jews are white, and not all white-functioning people are Jewish), and falsely claims that American attitudes toward Jewish people changed after the Holocaust (once again, antiSemitism very much has not gone anywhere, as evidenced not least by the 6MWE shirts worn by rioters at the Capitol just a few weeks ago). Furthermore, the proposed curriculum says that Jews have "racial privilege" - Jewish people are not a race and therefore cannot have racial privilege as a monolith, and furthermore, they are the only ethnic group said to have racial privilege, which is blatantly false and harmful. What's more, the curriculum leaves out Palestinians (shameful given that Jews and Palestinians are native to the same area) and fails to mention and debunk antiSemitic conspiracy theories that fuel much of mainstream entertainment and media today.

Only Jewish people can and should define their identity, and they should be the ones deciding how they are represented in California's curriculum. Until major revisions take place, the proposal must be vetoed.

Thank you,
~Karina Halevy
Harvard College A.B. Candidate in Computer Science and History