

**From:** shaida hiekali  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 28, 2021 11:29 AM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ethnic studies - feedback

Hi there,

Thank you so much for reading-

Although with good intent, this ethnic studies curriculum as it stands is incredibly harmful in that it embeds within it anti Jewish tropes and delegitimization. Hate crimes against Jews in the US are on the rise, Jews are the single most targeted group of ANY community. the data is out I urge you to read it and listen to understand how detrimental curriculum that our kids will be learning can be. Furthermore we must check our own biases, why is privilege only referred to for the Jews? There is an incredibly harmful line on how Jews changed their last names and have gained social hierarchy and privilege... I can't tell you how manipulative that concept is. They changed their last names for safety, for assimilation in outright fear of death persecution, since throughout history they've been forced to convert, hide their identities and relinquish who they are. To then manipulate this into the privilege they have gotten is downright wrong and simply shows the context bias and inability to see the full picture frankly. All groups have some kind of privilege to a certain extent, yes, but the way this is set up is extremely important to consider. Why do we only hold this standard against Jews? Please reconsider

A few things to consider; the Jewish experience is unique, a diverse population, because many have been expelled from various countries worldwide. The experiences of middle eastern Jews, soviet Jews, Asian Jews must be heard because they are central to understanding those who are in the US today.

We must explore nuance, we must protect the Jewish people, this is education it is the single most important experience outside of personal narrative that one can learn and share.

Please consider the following as well:

1. I appreciate two lesson plans on Jewish Americans – Sample Lessons 40 and 41, *Antisemitism and Jewish Middle Eastern-Americans* and *Jewish Americans: Identity, Intersectionality, and Complicating Ideas of Race*.

Please retain the above lessons!

- I Suggest you add ADL's lesson [BINAH – Building Insights to Navigate Antisemitism and Hate](#)
- 2. Thank you for listing [antisemitism](#) as a form of bigotry and oppression in the ESMC, especially at a time of increasing hate crimes and incidents targeting Jews.
- the Jewish community must define the hatred targeting our community. We are the ones who experience this.
- I Urge SBE to use the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism, which the European Union and [S. State Department adopted](#) during the Obama Administration.

3. Please provide transparency and an opportunity for public comment in ALL phases of the development of a final ESMC.

4. Support a pedagogically sound Ethnic Studies course incorporating “core values of equity, inclusiveness, and universally high expectations” (Education Code section 51226.7) to enrich California students’ understanding of American history and current events.

THANK YOU

Shaida Hiekali

A concerned Persian Jewish voice in Los Angeles