

**From:** MARGARET FOUDA  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 12, 2020 9:11 AM  
**To:** Superintendent  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Ethnic studies in school

Dear Mr. Thurmond,

I am glad that the ethnic studies curriculum is being reviewed and hope that students will gain an understanding of the different backgrounds of students making up our student body.

After reading Jweekly, I was very concerned about comments you made regarding problems in the ethnic studies curriculum. You stated that you "circled" the word "Nakba" in the draft. "As far as I'm concerned, there should be no reference to the creation of anyone's homeland as being catastrophic".

The Nakba was a real event, the expulsion of three quarters of a million Palestinians before 1948 and in 1948 when the state of Israel was created. These people were not allowed to return to their homes. Many of these homes are now occupied by prominent Israelis or were bulldozed. More than 500 villages were destroyed, many planted over. For example Canada Park in Israel was created after the destruction of 4 Palestinian villages. Israel continues to remove Palestinians from their land. It has built a 30-foot wall through Palestinian land (declared illegal by the international court), created roads and housing for Jews only, and operates numerous checkpoints to control the non-Jewish population.

If we wish to understand history, we must acknowledge what happened to the people living on the land that Israel claimed: the Nakba. Many Israelis have acknowledged that Israel is becoming an apartheid state.

We do not leave out mention of the trail of tears and taking of Native American lands or slavery of African Americans when we read the history of the United States. We must not gloss over the real history of the creation of the state of Israel. There are many Palestinian students, children of the Diaspora in Alameda county schools. It would be unfair to gloss over their tragedy to make

sure Israel and Zionism is presented as flawless. Anti-Zionism is not the same as Anti-Semitism.

Sincerely,  
Margaret Fouda  
Berkeley, CA