

From: Ben Feingold

Sent: Friday, September 25, 2020 10:10 AM

Good Morning,

I write you this letter to express my grave concern over the contents of the ESMC that has been posted for Field Review at the CA Department of Education's website. Specifically, my concern is over the UC-Approved Course Outline, Appendix A, Unit 6, "Irish and Jewish Americans: Redefining White and American". This sample curriculum includes antisemitic stereotypes and tropes, particularly that "certain events in American history...have led to Jewish and Irish Americans gaining racial privilege." This language is, first and foremost, patently untrue. When ships of Jews fleeing from Nazi-controlled Europe were turned away from our nation, Jews were not granted racial privilege. When young Jewish Americans face racist remarks and threats—as I did growing up—we are not afforded racial privilege. And when innocent Jewish Americans are attacked in their homes, schools, and places of worship, they certainly do not benefit from privilege.

Secondly, by defining Jews as "White and American", the proposed curriculum erases an entire sizable and growing subset of nonwhite Jews, whose experience as Americans is impacted by their Jewish religion and culture, as well as by their race. Too often Jews are stereotypically grouped as a single out-group—again highlighting their lack of privilege—and this curriculum promotes those antisemitic stereotypes, rather than accurately portraying Jews as a diverse, multi-racial group of people who share a common identity of religion and culture.

I continue to work every day to recognize and acknowledge the privilege I have: as a White, American man who grew up with food on the table and a roof over my head, I know that I am often the most privileged person in any room into which I step. But let me assure you, while I am extremely proud of being Jewish, I have never felt it is a source of privilege.

It is my sincere hope that you will remove this approved course outline from the ESMC, so that my two Jewish daughters—who will be educated in California's public schools, and who will undoubtedly face their share of antisemitic jokes, stereotypes, and attacks, just as their parents did before them—do not have to overcome yet another, state-sanctioned obstacle as they grow up as proud, Jewish Americans.

Thank you for your consideration,
Ben Feingold