

From: Debra Eskinazi

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 6:13 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: [email redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] CA Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum: Further Revision Urgently Needed!

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,
I, Debra Eskinazi Stockale appreciate some improvement in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), but I am concerned by the imposition of the offensive, one-sided political ideology that still remains in this proposed draft of California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.
Here are my major concerns:

- politically indoctrinating and anti-Israel elements
- comprehensive understanding of Middle Eastern communities
- misrepresentation of Jews

I am a Californian parent of school-aged children and a second generation Holocaust Victim. Having lost 11 family members to the Shoah (at Treblinka) and with the rise of anti-semitism so prevalent today, it's imperative that a balanced perspective is taught in our schools. I am a politically active and very progressive voter, but the anti-Israel leanings in the curriculum and in social action don't help the discussion.

My parents were Spanish speaking Jewish immigrants from Cuba and Argentina. They made a life here. They were educated here. We were able to assimilate into whiteness here and I received benefits of this association. I was the first person in my family to be able to stay in my native country past the age of 30, but I don't want language in the curriculum to also make it appear Jews don't have challenges or fears...even if passing for white. We are still at risk here and this rhetoric only hinders safe harbor. This curriculum also doesn't account for Jews of Color. I am all for coordinated resistance, but just as we can be against the actions of the US govt, doesn't mean all Americans are "bad", I do not want the inextricable link between Jews and Israel to mislead people into thinking that poorly illustrated criticism of the Israeli-govt and BDS justifies anti-Jewish sentiments and leads people down a wrong unbalanced path of history. Despite my progressive views, it is because of this misleading and offensive portrayal that I have not felt at home on the left or the right.

I urge you to make significant further revisions to the ESMC to address these concerns. Please revise the Guiding Values and Principles of the ESMC to use more precise and inclusive terminology, to align with the ESMC Guidelines, to build bridges of intergroup understanding, and to ensure critical thinking. Then adjust the lessons and sample topics accordingly to match the revised principles.

Thank you,
Debra Eskinazi Stockdale
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