

**From:** JEFFREY CARMEL  
**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2020 3:17 PM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESMC

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

I am happy to see that there have been improvements in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), but I am still concerned with the presence of some offensive, one-sided political dogma that remains in the second draft of California's ESMC.

Here are my major concerns:

1. There are misleading and offensive references to Jews remaining, particularly with reference to advocacy of anti-Israel and pro-BDS messaging.
2. Antisemitism is the leading hate crime in America by far, yet as best I can ascertain this is not addressed in the new version of the ESMC. It needs to be.
3. I am well aware that the section on Arabs in America was removed from the original version of the ESMC. I am also aware that there is a push to put it back in under the heading of Asian studies. If it is reinstated, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, a highly charged political subject, should not be part of the discussion as it is irrelevant to the American immigrant experience.
4. If the Arab experience is reinstated, there needs to be a balanced curriculum. For instance: Palestinian-Americans, who comprise an estimated 3% (1) of California's MENA population (2), were featured in the Arab American Studies course outlined in the 1st draft and mentioned in the Introduction as well as the Glossary. Yet, the two largest MENA groups in California – Iranians, who comprise 26% (3,4) of California's MENA population; and Israelis and Jews of MENA descent, who comprise 28% (3,4) — are not mentioned at all. Also not mentioned are MENA Christians (Assyrian Christians, Coptic Christians, and non-Muslim Middle Eastern Christians) who also comprise a sizable portion of California's MENA population.
5. I am a California parent, grandparent, and educator, and I am deeply concerned that the second draft of the ESMC does not always adhere to the shared values laid out in AB 2016. 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, in particular, **to ensure critical thinking**. Then adjust the lessons and sample topics accordingly to match the revised principles.

Thank you,

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Footnotes:

1. 2018 US Census Data, People Reporting Ancestry. <https://bit.ly/2YeEDAh>
2. ESMC Guidelines. <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/ethnicguidelines.asp>

3. 2018 US Census Data, People Reporting Ancestry. <https://bit.ly/2YeEDAh>
4. Berman Jewish Databank, US Jewish Population, 2018 (with MENA Jews accounting for an estimated 25% of California's Jewish population) <https://bit.ly/3hGTqvl>