

From: Dorothy Heller
Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 11:44 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Dear Department of Education:

I am writing to you as a Spanish-speaking Jew from a multiracial and multicultural Jewish family that includes Hispanic and Mizrahi Jews.

Ethnic Studies are vitally important for our children's well-being, self-esteem and safety—which is why they must be inclusive, factual, and promote mutual appreciation and understanding.

Ethnic Studies should provide our students with tools to navigate and cooperate in California's multicultural and multiracial society—not to promote a narrow political agenda.

To quote Loolwa Khazzoom, who is also a Jew of color—the issue is not antisemitism or racism. **Antisemitism is racism**, and Ethnic Studies should never be used to promote racism.

Twelve to fifteen percent of American Jews are people of color—black, Hispanic, Middle Eastern—including my family. Mizrahi and MENA (Middle Eastern North African) communities represent 500,000 Californians. Invite Jews of color from Be-chol Lashon and Jimena to the conversation. .

I am counting on you to ensure that my grandchildren will be safe, seen, and represented in their schools and curriculum. I am counting on you to promote a model of Ethnic Studies that moves all of us forward to a better California and a better future, where we all “shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid.”

Sincerely,

Dorothy Heller