

From: Lisa Dondick Nissim

Sent: Friday, August 9, 2019 9:12 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: Tony Thurmond

Subject: IMPORTANT: Support Inclusion, Rewrite the Proposed ESMC

Dear Instructional Quality Commission of the California Board of Education,

The proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) is antithetical to what I have learned as a third generation Californian, third generation University of California graduate, and mother of fourth generation Californians. I am writing to urge you to make major revisions to the proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, consistent with the recommendations from the California Legislative Jewish Caucus letter, Stand With Us, Jimena, Amcha and others.

My life experience, educational experience and experience as the mother of a recent California high school graduate has taught me and my family the importance of teaching ethnic studies in high school, inclusive of major ethnic groups in California, including Jews. Despite the significant contributions of Jews to California's history, politics, culture, and government, and our community's longstanding struggle against hatred and discrimination, the ESMC erases the Jewish experience in America. This exclusion is offensive and inconsistent with the purpose of ethnic studies to promote inclusion and tolerance.

This is particularly indefensible in-light-of rising antisemitism in America, especially on college campuses. The most recent FBI statistics record 938 antisemitic incidents and 273 Islamophobic incidents. Hate crimes against Jews rose by 37% according to 2018 FBI statistics, accounting for over half of religious-based hate crimes in the United States. As Californians, we have a duty to stop antisemitism by educating our children and assuring they do not pass on this indefensible hatred to their children. The proposed ESMC is an embarrassment to our State and to the many generations of Californians before us who have worked to make this one of the most inclusive states in our country. Californians have always led the nation in teaching and modeling tolerance, the proposed curriculum would reverse the hard work of the generations before us to obliterate intolerance from our State and nation.

I urge you to rewrite of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum to address the concerns outlined in my email and in the feedback you have received from the California Legislative Jewish Caucus letter, Stand With Us, Jimena, Amcha and others.

Thank you,

Sincerely,
Lisa Nissim