

From: Joel Margolis
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2019 12:45 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: My thoughts on the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear CDE Staff,

I am disturbed to hear that the State of California may soon mandate an Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) that incites hostility towards Israel.

Why must a curriculum designed to study ethnicity in America mention a foreign country like Israel? Even if there is relevance to a discussion of Israel, there is no justification for defamatory lies like the ESMC's charge of "apartheid" or its claim that Israel and its supporters operate "interlocking systems of oppression and privilege" that must be opposed with "direct action" and "resistance." Israel upholds laws of non-discrimination that are just as strong and comprehensive as those in the US.

The falsehoods expressed in the ESMC wrongly replace learning with political indoctrination. They also make a mockery of ethnic tolerance by instilling prejudice against Jews and the world's only Jewish state. Even more threatening, the hate speech may heighten the rise of antisemitism in America.

The ESMC urges "resistance" against Israel by endorsing the boycott movement known as BDS. BDS combats Israel through economic, cultural, and academic warfare. Just as white nationalists strive to restore the 19th Century supremacy of their race in America, BDS activists want to revive the 19th Century dominance of Arabs over Jews in the land that became Israel. The boycotters pursue this goal through the unfounded assertion that millions of Palestinians living outside Israel have a "right of return" to that country. Neither form of bigotry belongs in a public school.

Contrary to the ESMC narrative, Israel displays plenty of ethnic tolerance. In Israel, Arabs rise to high positions in both public and private sectors. Since 2015 the nation has invested billions of dollars to improve health standards, education, and business opportunities for its Arab citizens. The government's goal of doubling the number of Arabs in higher education by 2022 has already been met. And when Palestinians are wounded during bouts of terrorist in-fighting, they are treated in Israeli hospitals. These facts would be included in any fair analysis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Please revise the ESMC. The curriculum should celebrate ethnic diversity, not demonize an ethnic group.

Truly,

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