

I am writing because I am someone who signed on for and pushed for the new ethnic studies program to move forward as I feel it is necessary.

I am deeply concerned about the current draft and it's a false narrative which fails to show the truth of the history of my ethnicity. My family was among the many many Jews from the Middle East and North Africa who were deeply persecuted and banned from their homes, escaping death, when they found their way to Israel for a refuge at the formation of Israel. There are more middle eastern Jews in Israel than there are European because of this, even though we know the important role Israel played for Jews of Europe after everything was taken from them. Israel, as a young country, still sorting through many problems should not be held to a higher standard or be vilified. Ethnic studies should be where we learn of each other's rich histories and truths and should not have a biased narrative which diminishes Anti-Semitism and in tern, Anti-Zionism. As the African-American community has faced systemic racism for centuries, there should be an understanding that Jews in the Mideast have been fighting an uphill battle of systemic Antisemitism for many centuries as well.

I support an Ethnic Studies curriculum but with the outrageous rise of Antisemitism I cannot accept parts such as: Page **242** which uses politically biased language referring to the founding of Israel (lines 5157-61); and pages **268-69** (lines 5802-03) which uses the antisemitic trope of Jewish control of the media to baselessly accuse Israel of colonizing land.

As my family lived through that experience, it is exploitation and a false narrative of their story, hardship and constant persecution by the people in Israel and all the lands around it. It is wiping away the truth of the 800,000 Middle-eastern/North African Jews who had been kicked out of their homes and all surrounding land with nowhere to go.

Thank you for your time,
Please make a curriculum that is more inclusive and does not spread hate and incite rising Anti-Semitism.

Gal Desiderio