

From: Offer Yehudai
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2019 10:20 PM
To: Ethnic Studies; Kenneth McDonald
Subject: Public Input: 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear California Board of Education,

My name is Offer Yehudai, 38 years old, father of 4 amazing kids and California resident for the past 8 years.

I am Jewish, was born in Israel and moved to California to build my startup that was acquired in 2016 and now part of public company employing in California and 7 other locations around the world.

I recently learned about the proposed 2020 Ethnic Studies Curriculum and found it disturbing. In my view, Ethnic studies are most welcome as a means of fostering tolerance and promoting a more equal and diverse society, one that values equal rights for everyone.

However, the proposed plan completely omit Jewish and Israeli-Americans as an ethnicity, ignores anti-semitism and scares me.

Even today, I privately fund security for my kids school against terror and the plan in question may increase and encourage people to commit act of hate. This is very troubling and shouldn't be taken lightly.

I can recommend adding other meaningful chapters:

1. Jews in California.

How Jews arrived to California (many of them after the Holocaust, which should definitely be mentioned as a driving force in this context)

What is anti-Semitism and how it was expressed in earlier days in the US and Europe as well as today. Why should we do whatever we can as a community to condemn any hate speech against Jews and anti-Semitism.

Jewish holidays that frequently are mentioned in the media like Hanukkah, Passover and Rosh Hashana should be studied. Jewish dishes (Chicken soup with Kneydalach, Challa bread).

Meaningful Jewish characters that should be discussed are Albert Einstein, David Ben-Gurion, Mark Zuckerberg, Cheryl Sandberg, Adam Sandler, Mila Kunis, Pink, Kate Hudson, Sergey Brin, Larry Page, Larry Allison.

2. Israeli-Americans in California.

Why Israel was established as a direct continuance to the Holocaust chapter, and the fact that it was founded by survivors who sought a safe haven from anti-Semitism and violence.

A specific lesson should include the "Mizrahi-Jews" who are Jews from the Middle East and North Africa, and were historically outcast or deported from Muslim countries such

as Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Morocco, Egypt. This Jewish population fled to Israel to live peacefully, since it is the only country in the world that accepted them as Jews in the 50's and 60's.

When and why Israelis started migrating to California. Their traditions, food (Hummus, Shakshuka, Falafel), etc.

Jerusalem, which is the "bible city" and the most holy city of all 3 religions, where Christians, Jews and Muslims all pray safely and publicly.

The Israeli Defense Force (IDF), the Israeli military, which is the only one in the world that mandates enlistment for both men and women to promote gender equality.

The Mosad as a meaningful contributor of intelligence, an organization which also protected Europe and the US from terror attacks.

Israeli contribution to the tech community and strong presence in Silicon Valley (Israelis invented the Cherry tomatoes, pill-camera, USB drives, Waze).

Meaningful characters of Israeli-American are Gal Gadot (super woman), Natalie Portman (actress), Safra Katz (CEO of Oracle), Noam Bardin (CEO of Waze).

Unique aspects of Israel as a center for promoting equality and liberal human rights.

Israel is the only democracy in the middle east with equal rights for men and women.

The only country in the middle east that allows gays to publicly celebrate their love. Tel-aviv biggest tech hub after Silicon Valley, and the holder of largest pride parade in the world after San Francisco.

I find it as your professional and personal responsibility to remove any educational materials that promote hate, fear and will tear our kids apart.

This is not California.

Regards,
Offer.