

**From:** Daphne Horowitz  
**Sent:** Friday, August 9, 2019 12:04 PM  
**To:** EthnicStudies  
**Subject:** ant Israel and Pro BDS taught in our schools

Hi,

I'm a pediatrician in Valencia and would like to voice my concern about governmental support for an educational program that unilaterally supports the BDS movement against Israel. The model ethnic studies curriculum shamefully supports BDS against Israel and refers to Israel as an apartheid state (despite Israel's demonstrable support for and representation by minorities including Arabs).

1. A glossary for the curriculum: **Page 2, lines 29-40** – includes a definition of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement against Israel. It claims the purpose of BDS is to, "establish freedom for Palestinians living under apartheid conditions". It then parrots more BDS talking points while offering no critical perspectives about this campaign of hate, including that its true purpose, as [stated](#) by its co-founder and leading activists, is to end the existence of Israel, the only Jewish state.

2. The sample lesson plans for the curriculum:

- Chapter 2: Encourage teachers to highlight BDS and a pro-BDS group called Direct Action for Palestine, but no voices critical of their perspectives (p. 234).
- Promotes a false equivalence between Israel's efforts to stop terrorists from entering communities to murder innocent people, and U.S. policies on the border with Mexico (p. 234).
- Use unclear language that implies "Israel-Palestine" as a whole is an Arab country (p. 237).
- Frame the Palestinian narrative of the 1948 War as fact, with no alternative perspectives (p. 242).
- Page 256 line 5477-5494, pages 264-270, lines 5692-5830: These sections:

Encourage teachers to use an anti-Israel poem which insinuates Jews control the media and use it to manipulate the public - a common antisemitic slur

3. The introduction of the proposed curriculum states that, "The implementation of Ethnic Studies presents an opportunity for teachers to... enable students to develop a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and inclusion, and aids in the eradication of bigotry, hate, and racism." Despite this stated goal, the curriculum does not feature a single lesson about the Jewish community, mentioning Jews only in passing. With antisemitism rising and ignorance about the Jewish people still a major problem in our society, the exclusion of Jews from this curriculum is deeply disappointing.

The biased sections and omissions listed above run counter to the stated purpose of the curriculum, in particular:

- Section 1(a): The State of California is committed to providing excellent educational opportunities to all its pupils;
- Section 1(f): The state's educational standards should be guided by core values of equity, inclusiveness, and universally high expectations; and

- Section 1(g): The state is committed to its efforts to provide all pupils with excellent educational opportunities, without regard to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, income, sexual orientation, or disability.

Additionally, California Education Code § 233.5(a) provides:

"Each teacher shall endeavor to impress upon the minds of the pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice, patriotism, and a true comprehension of the rights, duties, and dignity of American citizenship, and *the meaning of equality and human dignity, including the promotion of harmonious relations*, kindness toward domestic pets and the humane treatment of living creatures, to teach them to avoid idleness, profanity, and falsehood, and to instruct them in manners and morals and the principles of a free government."

The rise of antisemitism within our culture, which has been accompanied by an increasing general threat to freedom, human dignity and harmonious relations, is evidenced by the recent attacks of Jews in synagogues in Pittsburgh and Poway, as well as against other American citizens in El Paso and Dayton. The curriculum's failure to address antisemitism as a form of bigotry thus falls short of the above directive.

I hope that you can look into this. Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions.

Daphne Horowitz MD FAAP