

From: Debbie Kaufman
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2019 12:05 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: Ethnic Studies Curriculum

My concerns regarding the proposed Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
-----------------------------	---------------------------	--

Debbie Kaufman	Page 234	
----------------	----------	--

Encourage teachers to highlight BDS and a pro-BDS group called Direct Action for Palestine, but no voices critical of their perspectives.

I find this very discouraging since BDS is boycotting a country that has taken in thousands of refugees unlike the neighboring countries that refused them. I find it interesting that Israel built itself from the ground up; is one of the leaders of inventions in the world, yet there is never a positive word spoken about Israel.

Perhaps it would be good if it were also mentioned that Japan sent toys and kites to the Palestinians and Hamas stood behind the children and shot into Israel.

Life is never one sided, yet with this proposed curriculum is certainly quite biased. Please note that is one-sided views are taught in high school, they will be carried into college and further. Many colleges are already very anti-Israel and I think it would be a disservice to show only one side of the equation. Imagine all of the Jewish and Israeli people that live and help support our country seeing such negative and sometimes untrue views of them.

Page 234

Promote 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
There is no equivalence in these two instances.

Page 237

Use unclear language that implies "Israel-Palestine" as a whole is an Arab country
Israel is not an Arab country.

Page 242

Frame the Palestinian narrative of the 1948 War as fact, with no alternative perspectives

This again would be biased, as the splitting of the country and boundaries originally generated from the UN. The Palestinians were not happy with the boundaries and fighting broke out. Let's not forget that Israel had been declared a State and also had a voice. There are many perspectives in all activities and only one side, should not be an option.

Pages 256, 264-269

Encourage teachers to use a poem featuring harsh criticism of Israel, but no content offering a positive perspective about Israel or criticism of Palestinian leaders

Again, why would a curriculum show only one side of anything? Israel has done many positive things in its 71 year existence. Why would a school or teacher teach bias in a classroom?

The goal you state:

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."

I find your goal to be admirable.

However, I am interested to know why Jewish people are only mentioned lightly. I see many negative views about Jews, but as part of cultural diversity, it would be appropriate to bring up the strong resurgence of antisemitism not only in the United States, but the world. Is there any mention about the 11 Jews killed in a synagogue in 2018? Maybe other instances like Charlottesville with people chanting to kill Jews should be mentioned. A lot of people still don't believe that the Holocaust even happened, yet 6 million Jews were killed. I think if students knew about the bigotry regarding that group, and it was taught in the classroom, maybe they would have a better understanding. The students might be interested in helping educate or rid antisemitism's existence.

If you are going to teach cultural diversity and eradication of hate, it seems odd that you would use hate to end another country's existence as a tool.

Racism and antisemitism should have no part in this country and its educational system.

None of this is easy, but having a bi-racial, Jewish kid that is an educator – this type of behavior has sent him to the path of teaching Diversity to students and their parents. I personally feel that racism and bigotry has taken a negative step back 40 years and we have to make informed choices when sending a curriculum out to thousands of students. I am not sure why the State of California would entertain the thought of such negativity, when they are trying to teach students to be tolerant.

There is so much more to learn about American Jews as an ethnic group. Maybe the students could relate to Jewish people in business that surround their world such as:

Steve Ballmer (Microsoft/Clippers owner)

Sergey Brin (Google)

Mark Cuban (Landmark Theatres/Dallas Mavericks)

Michael Dell (Dell Inc.)

arry Ellison (Oracle)

David Geffen (Dreamworks)

Jeffrey Katzenberg (Dreamworks)

Uri Levine (Waze)

Lorne Michaels (Saturday Night Live)

Larry Page (Google)

Isaac Perlmutter (Marvel)

Sheryl Sandberg (Facebook; Google)

Ehud Shabtai (Waze)

Amir Shinar (Waze)

Jeffrey Skoll (Ebay)

Daniel Snyder (Dick Clark Productions/Washington Redskins)

Steven Spielberg (Dreamworks)

Nicholas Woodman (GoPro)

Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook)

All positive influences with kids today. I think it would be great if we could use positive images to show the students to open up their minds and do something good from it.

As the saying goes "When you know better, do better".

Thank you.