

From: srshapiro
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2019 12:27 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

To Whom It May Concern:

Please note the following comments about the proposed 2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum which promotes anti-semitism despite its stated goal. It is for this reason that I am unalterably opposed to this curriculum which should be eliminated or largely revised as noted below.

General Comments: The [Introduction](#) of the proposed curriculum states that “[t]he 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 or antisemitism, mentioning Jews only in passing. With antisemitism rising and ignorance about the Jewish people still a significant problem in our society, the exclusion of Jews and antisemitism from this curriculum is deeply disappointing and educationally deficient.

(1) **Page 2, lines 29-40** . There is a problem with this section because it promotes the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement against Israel. The claim is false that the purpose of BDS is to “establish freedom for Palestinians living under apartheid conditions.” The section offers no critical perspective about BDS and its real purpose to end the existence of Israel, the only Jewish state.

(2) **Chapter 2. Page 234, lines 4956-4958**. This section encourages teachers to highlight BDS and a pro-BDS group called Direct Action for Palestine but no voices critical of their perspectives (p. 234). This chapter also 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.

(3) **Chapter 2. Page 237, lines 5024-5032** . This section uses unclear language that implies “Israel-Palestine” as a whole is an Arab country.

(4) **Chapter 2. Page 242, lines 5157-5161**. The narrative here talks about the 1948 War as fact with no alternative perspectives.

(5) **Chapter 2. Page 256, lines 5477-5494, pages 264-270, lines 5692-5830**. In this section, teachers are encouraged to use an anti-Israel poem which insinuates Jews control the media and use it to manipulate the public - a common, and quintessential, antisemitic slur.

More General Comments: 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." (Emphasis added).

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.

Furthermore, the California Education Code's "Prohibition of Discrimination" states, in relevant part, that "[n]o person shall be subjected to discrimination"

Thank you for your con

Sincerely,
Stephen R. Shapiro, MD