

**CDE NOTE: There was no attachment provided with this item.**

**From:** Rabbi Daniel Bouskila

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 21, 2020 2:46 AM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Cc:** Tony Thurmond; Superintendent; Ethnic Studies; Stephanie Gregson; Shanine Coats; SBE; [emails redacted]; IQC

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Antisemitism and Middle Eastern American Jews – Inclusion of Lesson Plan

To the California State Board of Education and the IQC:

I hope this note finds you well. I'm writing to you on behalf of *the **Sephardic Educational Center***, a Los Angeles-based educational and cultural organization dedicated to teaching the history, philosophy and culture of Sephardic Jewry from the Middle East and North Africa. ***Sephardic Educational Center*** communities are an engaged portion of the 500,000 Middle Easterners residing in California who were omitted from the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum and we are proud to work with [a broad coalition of Middle Eastern organizations](#) promoting our inclusion.

On August 15, 2019, the ***Sephardic Educational Center***, in partnership with eleven Mizrahi and Sephardic Jewish communal organizations in California, [submitted our feedback](#) regarding the draft Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, in addition to a lesson plan titled, "Around the Middle Eastern Jewish World." To reiterate, our communities support AB 2016 and we firmly believe that now, more than ever, our students need rigorous educational opportunities to study issues of race and ethnicity.

We are very proud to support the lesson plan submitted by JIMENA to SBE on July 14, 2020, titled, "[Antisemitism and Middle Eastern-American Jews](#)." This lesson plan was written to specifically fit into California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum and it teaches students about antisemitism and the American Jewish experience through the lens of Middle Eastern Jewish Americans – the community my organization represents. As an indigenous, sub-ethnic group from the Middle East, who descend from nearly one-million Jewish refugees from the region, our communities have collectively dealt with issues of oppression, resistance, statelessness, immigration and also social responsibility, and the empowerment that comes from imaging and creating new possibilities for the improvement of society. Our experiences as Middle Easterners and as Jews provides a unique, intersectional vantage point for the integration of Jewish content into the curriculum.

Attached you will find a completed public input template with our updated requests which we hope to see included in the next version of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

Thank you,

***Rabbi Daniel Bouskila***  
***Executive Director***  
***Sephardic Educational Center***