

From: Barbara Berkovich

Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2019 7:57 AM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: Public Comment on model Ethnic Studies curriculum

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the State of California model Ethnic Studies curriculum.

Disturbingly, this agenda was inserted into an educational effort meant to teach students about marginalized communities. Moreover, despite its stated purpose, the proposed curriculum includes no lessons about Jews as a sizeable ethnic minority and frequent target of racism.

Attached please find my comment form.

Barbara Berkovich, PhD, MA

San Diego, CA

Public Input Template–2020 Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum May 2019 Draft

(Download and use to provide specific recommendations)

Include the chapter of the model curriculum, the page number, and line number(s) to ensure that the California Department of Education and Instructional Quality Commission can reference the content of the document when reviewing your comments. Please email this document as a Word document to ethnicstudies@cde.ca.gov. You may contact Kenneth McDonald, Education Programs Consultant, at kmcdonal@cde.ca.gov with any questions regarding this template or the public input process.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
Chapter 2 p.1	<i>Barbara Berkovich, PhD, MA educator</i>	I respectfully requesting the removal of BDS and other anti-Israel bias from the model curriculum.

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
		<p>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.</p> <p>Specifically, page 1 line 23, please remove the words "of color" so that the sentence reads, "model of other communities who do not see their unique experiences..."</p>
Chapter 2 234, 237, 242, 256, and 264-269	<i>Barbara Berkovich, PhD, MA educator</i>	<p>The sample lesson plans for the curriculum: Encourage teachers to highlight BDS and a pro-BDS group called Direct Action for Palestine, but no voices critical of their perspectives (p. 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 (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). 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 (p. 256, 264-269).</p>
Glossary Page 2	<i>Barbara Berkovich, PhD, MA educator</i>	A glossary for the curriculum 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

Chapter of Model Curriculum	Your Name and Affiliation	Comment (include page and line numbers where applicable)
		parrots more BDS talking points while offering no critical perspectives about this campaign of hate, which seeks to end Israel's existence.
General	<i>Barbara Berkovich, PhD, MA educator</i>	We encourage the addition of a lesson about American Jews as an ethnic group, including those who fled the Holocaust, oppression in the Middle East, and discrimination in the former Soviet Union.

California Department of Education, June 2019