

From: Bella Yadegar

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 7:54 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: Concern about ESMC draft

Hello everyone!

My name is Bella Yadegar and I am a Los Angeles teen going into my sophomore year of high school! I am writing to you today to share my concerns about the new revisions of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum draft.

I am thankful that improvements have been made, but believe the curriculum should be more inclusive of Mizrahi Jews and other Middle Eastern immigrant communities. The Jewish community is diverse and this should be represented in the curriculum.

I also strongly believe we need to prevent bias of all forms in the classroom and this draft does not do enough to ensure critical thinking. As a student I fear the ESMC being used to promote one sided narratives that discourage my peers from making their own opinions and decisions on Israel and other important issues.

Over time we have seen the Jewish people persecuted again and again from the Spanish inquisition to the Holocaust to the Jews who were kicked out of their homes in the Middle East.

As a Persian Jew, my family was forced to escape from Iran because of our religion and had to start fresh in a new country. My grandfather's brother was publicly shot in the head and murdered for showing his support for Israel. Our family fled the country with young children, no money, and no understanding of the new country they were fleeing to.

A tragedy like this should never happen again and it is up to our generation to make sure everyone is educated and able to learn all sides of the story, preventing this in the future. My family experienced this atrocity and it should be part of our history and ethnic studies classes. These stories should be included. Being seen and heard in the classroom and feeling validated is incredibly important. Isn't that what this curriculum is supposed to be about?

Thank you,
Bella Yadegar