

From: Esther Andrews
Sent: Friday, August 7, 2020 5:37 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Needed revisions to ESMC

In looking at the proposed ESMC, I (and many in my community) see a dire need for revisions. We have serious concerns, things that will affect us personally and also the community as a whole.

I am a Jewish member of the community. My parents were lucky to leave Austria just in a nick of time, with no belongings and no money, (they had plenty in Austria), but with their lives. They went to Palestina, which later became Israel.

As you know, antisemitism can poison young people's minds. It's a poison that exists still today. We have to be extremely careful to make sure our young generation is NOT exposed to this kind of poison.

Anti Israel movements are basically based on antisemitism. BDS, for example, is not based on anything but antisemitism, and the desire to destroy Israel. That has no place in education.

Here are some of my concerns and suggestions for revisions:

*** ESMC guiding values and principles need revision because they are the basis of each unit and lesson plan. They:**

- do not reflect California's shared values, nor the values laid out in AB 2016
- advocate a narrow political philosophy
- establish an "us vs them" agenda
- partly based on the book *Education at War*, which encourages "solidarity" and "linkages" with BDS, and anti-Israel narratives, harmful to many Jewish students

*** The second draft does not prevent teaching offensive politically indoctrinating and anti-Israel elements from ESMC draft 1.**

- Add Elements of Balanced Curriculum from the LA Unified School District's Ethnic Studies Curriculum to provide solid ground rules for course development
- Numerous sections of the ESMC need revision to expose students to "multiple and often competing sources of information" and ensure that "diverse viewpoints are respected".

*** The few references to Jews are are misleading and offensive.**

- Include Mizrahi and other Jews of color
- Remove links to, and group advocacy of, virulently anti-Israel pro-BDS sites with malicious slander about imaginary genocide
- Add a definition of antisemitism that addresses sinister stereotyping and double standards against Jews and Jewish institutions from all parts of the political spectrum.

*** References to Middle Eastern communities should not favor one community over others**

- Mizrahi Jews and other Middle Eastern communities should be represented on an equal basis with Arab America.
- Mizrahi Jews and other MENA ethnic groups represent ~60% of CA's MENA population (estimated 500,000 Californians).

- Include the lesson plan, "[Antisemitism as the Middle Eastern-American Jews](#)," covering contemporary issues of antisemitism, bigotry, and the Middle Eastern-American Jewish experience produced by the JIMENA: Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa.

Thanks,

Esther Andrews