

**From:** Jill Silverman

**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2020 2:54 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Item 2A- Proposed Ethnic Studies Draft curriculum

I am a San Francisco parent who has worked professionally to expand cultural understanding and awareness in educational curriculum throughout the state. I am pleased that the recently released draft model ethnic studies curriculum has removed much of the divisive language in the previous version and thank you for this extensive effort.. I do think that additional revisions are warranted.

The curriculum continues to divide populations into victims and oppressors, harming the ability of the course to build understanding, empathy, community or cooperation. Specifically:

**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" tone
- partly based on *Education at War*, which encourages "solidarity" and "linkages" with BDS, and anti-Israel narratives, harmful to many Jewish students

**\* Draft 2 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).

Indeed, I find it odd that a curriculum, in a section discussing Asian Americans, would include Arab Americans while ignoring Korean Americans or Indo Americans. Geography has never been a strong point of our educational system, but this twist defies logic.

I think the addition of Ethnic studies is commendable and beneficial if it is approached constructively. I hope that the curriculum will continue to be revised in a way that makes it more inclusive and inspirational for the very ethnic groups it hopes to target.

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to this effort.

Sincerely,

Jill Silverman  
San Francisco