

**From:** Daniel Nomanim

**Sent:** Tuesday, August 13, 2019 3:05 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Subject:** Concerns Re: proposed new Ethnic Studies Curriculum for California's High Schools

Dear Instructional Quality Commission, California Department of Education, and State Board of Education:

I am writing as a concerned citizen regarding the proposed new Ethnic Studies Curriculum for California's High Schools. While ethnic studies is crucially important to teach students about other cultures and religions and stave off xenophobia through learning, the current draft under consideration will, unfortunately, do the very opposite.

The current version unfortunately implicitly endorses the BDS movement, which is rooted in the philosophy that the State of Israel simply shouldn't exist and is an implicit legitimization of Anti-Semitism, as it sanctions the claim that the Jewish people has no right to a state of its own. Moreover, the movement endorses numerous false truths, such as the myth that Israel is an "apartheid state," even though non-Jewish Israeli citizens (including Muslims, Christians, and many other religions) enjoy the same rights as all Jewish citizens and many are even elected officials in the Israeli government.

As an employment attorney that represents discriminated minorities, I am well aware that sometimes people try to cover up their discriminatory purpose with bogus or "pretextual reasons" to try to pretend their decisions are proper and non-discriminatory. One way lawyers prove discrimination, however, is by showing that one group (such as all Chinese workers) are treated worse than others. In this instance, Israel's freedoms and commitment to protecting minorities are very similar to that of the U.S., yet the surrounding countries criminalize homosexuality, and subject those who engage in homosexual acts to the severest of punishments, death. (<http://www.outwordmagazine.com/inside-outword/glb-news/1239-israel-and-arab-countries-are-miles-apart-on-lgbt-rights>). Singling out Israel, when its neighbors are committing atrocities against vulnerable populations like LGBTQ individuals would obviously be held to be discriminatory in any U.S. Court.

Allowing such falsehoods endorsed by BDS into our education system will likely aggravate and throw fuel onto the growing fire of anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment in our State. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is tragic and complex, so any curriculum on the topic should be nuanced and explain the attachment that both minorities have to the land of Israel.

If you would like, I have suggestions regarding more historically focused books to be used as part of the curriculum. Only a balanced view of this conflict can eventually lead to peace. The current version of the ethnic studies curriculum is unacceptably flawed, and will result in the opposite of the intended result, fanning hatred and discrimination and misinformation, rather than fostering understanding and harmony.

Warm regards,

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