

From: Ruth-Anne Siegel
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2019 10:06 AM
To: Tony Thurmond
Subject: Please Do Not Institutionalize Anti-Semitism in Ethnic Studies Program

Dear Superintendent Thurmond,

Please do not allow the State Education Department to eliminate Jewish people from ethnic studies curriculum, as they've always been included alongside similar Hispanic, Muslim, Arab, African-American and other "minority" communities. At a time of growing white nationalism and anti-Semitism and when Jews are being murdered in their places of worship across the country and world (eg, Poway, CA and Pittsburgh, PA synagogue mass murders for most recent reference), it would be a terrible injustice to exclude Jews from consideration as a discriminated "minority" group. Some people would argue that Jews are the "original minority" given that they were exiled from their homeland by the Romans in the first century of the common era and their wandering community has been chased, raped, murdered and pillaged around the world (primarily Europe) for nearly two thousand years until the re-birth of their nation, Israel, 70 years ago. The Russian pogroms, Spanish Inquisition, and Nazi Holocaust are only 3 of the most well known example of the hatred exhibited towards the Jewish people. Many other lesser anti-Semitic surges have also happened around the world, including the Middle East and right here in the United States.

It is a totally offensive and incorrect misrepresentation to include BDS in in your state curriculum "glossary" of terms since that movement labels Israel as an "apartheid state." While the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not without blame on both sides, the term apartheid is totally inappropriate and implies a foreign colonizer subjugating an indigenous people. The Jewish people, descendants of the exiled Israelites, have an equal and "original" right to the land, as do the Palestinian people. That right has been rejected by Arab leadership for nearly 100 years. Suggesting that the Jews are colonizers is outrageous and unfair. And, by the way, the United States House of Representatives recently overwhelming passed a resolution confirming such unfair treatment and designation of the Jewish State of Israel (by 92% majority). BDS is a hateful program aimed specifically to undermine the legitimacy and eradicate the existence of the State of Israel. Reference to BDS must not be included in our children's school curriculum.

In my comments above, I am referring to the following documents and pages in the proposed Ethnic Studies Curricula:

- Glossary: Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions
- Chapter 2: Pages 234, 237, 242, and 264-269

Thank you for your immediate consideration to correct these oversights and errors.

Regards,
Ruth-Anne Siegel