

**From:** iriszippy

**Sent:** Thursday, August 15, 2019 1:46 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Subject:** Ethnic Studies: Letter of Concern

Dear Chairwoman Chao and Committee Members,

I write as a private citizen to express my very serious concerns regarding the current version of the state's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). I am shocked and disappointed by the the proposed ESMC's manifest indifference, and even hostility, to the American Jewish experience and community. The curriculum erases American Jewish history by failing to include Jews in a meaningful way, and it neglects any discussion of anti-Semitism. Further, it incorporates harmful anti-Jewish stereotypes in its completely inappropriate and biased criticism of Israel in a curriculum intended to focus on American ethnic groups.

Jewish identity encompasses not just a connection to a faith tradition; it is also an ethnic and cultural identification. Jews are a distinct and diverse American ethnic group deserving fair and respectful inclusion in any Ethnic Studies curriculum. The ESMC as it is currently drafted, however, fails to impart these basic lessons.

I urge the Instructional Quality Commission (IQC) to make substantial revisions to the curriculum to ensure it meets the goals of the ESMC's authorizing statute AB 2016 (Chapter 327 of the Statutes of 2016) to "prepare pupils to be global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures." California's high school students will benefit from a pedagogically sound course in Ethnic Studies. As AB 2016 states, "The state's educational standards should be guided by core values of equity, inclusiveness, and universally high expectations." We ask that you implement all necessary revisions to meet this standard by including American Jewish culture and history, teaching about anti-Semitism, and avoiding irrelevant and inflammatory polemics relating to Israel.

Thank you for your consideration and thoughtfulness in regards to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Iris Ahronowitz, MD