

**From:** Stephen Tolchin  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 8, 2020 6:09 PM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies  
**Cc:** [email redacted]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] ESMC Second Draft

**Here are my Main Concerns and suggestions for revision:**

**\* 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

I appreciate your attention to these suggestions.

Stephen Tolchin  
Los Altos, CA