

From: Danielle York

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 7:30 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: ETHNIC STUDIES

Thank you for your time. My name is Danielle York and I am a Persian Jew. As a former student of LAUSD schools and having younger siblings still in the public school system, and someone who hopes to send my own children to LAUSD schools in the future, I call on you to fight for an inclusive and unbiased ethnic studies curriculum.

I fully support AB 2016 and its goal of ensuring CA students are “global citizens with an appreciation for the contributions of multiple cultures.” I believe in a curriculum that focuses on African Americans, Latinx, Native Americans and Asian Americans, and highlights important concepts such as equality, justice, race, ethnicity and identity. While I support the focus on these four groups, I do not believe this means we can blatantly exclude other minorities. In today’s climate, more than ever, it is urgently important that students from historically marginalized communities have access to a quality ESMC that reflects their own histories and experiences.

As a Persian-American Jew, whose parents fled Iran during the revolution due to religious persecution, and as a student growing up in times of increasing racism and antisemitism, which I have faced on my own school campuses, I am still disheartened by parts of the ESMC. I personally travelled to Sacramento last September to make my voice heard through public comment in a meeting with the Instruction Quality Commission to push for revision of the curriculum and here I am again, almost 1 year later calling for similar changes.

I am thankful for the removal of explicit antisemitic and anti israel narratives in the curriculum, but still In Chapter 3, references to American Jews ignore the experiences of Mizrahi Jews, Jews of color, Jews from the former Soviet Union, and other Jewish communities in California, whose stories are less widely acknowledged.

The ESMC should be revised to better represent the diversity of the Jewish community, as well as California's many immigrant communities from the Middle East.