

From: Simi Yellen

Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2019 12:50 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: Fwd: California Department of Education Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

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

We, as members of the Los Angeles Jewish Community, are extremely concerned about troubling sections and omissions from the new proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum currently under a mandated public review before submission to the state board of education.

We commend the State of California for enacting legislation mandating a model curriculum to educate about different ethnicities and cultures. However, we are deeply concerned by sections of the proposed curriculum which omit antisemitism as a form of bigotry and openly promote hateful boycotts against the Jewish State of Israel.

We are therefore writing to protest the adoption by The Department of Education of its proposed Ethnic Studies Curriculum.

The proposed curriculum is objectionable as both anti-Jewish and anti-Israel. For example, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel is described as a positive social movement seeking "freedom for Palestinians," when in fact the goal of the founders of BDS is the elimination of Israel. Linda Sarsour, who is well known for public hatred of Israel, is pictured as a positive role model, and the proposed curriculum legitimizes the false description of Israel as an "apartheid" state. The curriculum also promotes a false equivalence between Palestinian-Arabs and Israel with that of the United States and African-American citizens, and with Israel's efforts to stop terrorists from entering communities to murder innocent people, and U.S. policies on the border of Mexico.

Teachers are also encouraged to use anti-Israel songs, which accuse Israel of stealing land, unjustly imprisoning people and demolishing homes.

Furthermore, the curriculum fails to include Jews as an ethnic minority even though the percentage of Jews in the United States is far smaller than that of other minorities described in the curriculum. Such an inaccurate and biased anti-Jewish and anti-Israel curriculum has no place in California or anywhere else, where it could be used as a model for teaching impressionable students, which would result in a climate of fear, harassment and intimidation, and incite hatred and harm against Jews.

In sum, we strongly urge you to reject the proposed curriculum until the bias and inaccuracies are corrected. Thank you for your time and consideration on this most important issue.