

The California Department of Education received more than 3,600 submissions that contained the text below. Other identical comments may have been posted separately.

From: Gershon Bialer

Sent: Wednesday, September 2, 2020 12:02 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum: Jewish Americans must not be excluded!

Dear Instructional Quality Commission,

I am joining the call for meaningful inclusion of Jewish Americans in the California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum.

The removal of denigrating content from the initial draft and the addition of an acknowledgement that antisemitism is a form of hate is laudable. However, if this curriculum is going to be effective and appropriate for all Californians it must be truly inclusive, and that includes representation for the experience of Jewish Americans and the broad spectrum of diversity within the Californian Jewish community. Limited references to the Holocaust in history classes simply do not suffice.

Jews are an ethnic group that has historically faced intense discrimination and genocide, and Jews remain targets of hatred from the far left and right today. There are groups in the United States and California that seek to erase the Jewish experience from the history books, deny Jewish ethnic identity, and eliminate Jews. Antisemitic incidents and violent attacks have only increased in recent years. To exclude these facts from consideration in a curriculum for all Californians is unacceptable.

Additionally, Jewish Americans are diverse. Approximately 15 percent of Jews are people of color and people from the Middle East and North Africa. If the California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum is to be expansive in its inclusion of ethnic groups, then the Jewish American experience must be included.

That is why we are calling for:

- 1) The inclusion of a meaningful definition of antisemitism.
- 2) No return of the derogatory language about Jews, Israelis, and Israel, with guardrails in place to keep such language out of the classroom in the future.
- 3) The addition of a sample lesson reflecting the diversity of Jewish Americans.

Sincerely,
Gershon Bialer
[address redacted]
San Francisco, CA