

From: Rina Shur

Sent: Sunday, August 9, 2020 12:43 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns and hopes regarding Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear IQC Members,

Our small family of 3 came to the United states 30 years ago, from the former Soviet Union.

For our wave of Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union, one of the first and profound differences that we experienced coming into US was the richness and diversity of peoples and cultures of this land, building their lives and this country together. Generations of immigrants brought their struggles, their traditions, their stories and their dreams. So many of these stories carried losses and tragedies, but also victories. For us the excitement of finding our place amongst many cultures, being able to proudly and without fear reclaim our roots and religion was a fundamental and profoundly freeing experience.

Free intellectual thought and richness of ideas, along with the culture of debate and discussions was another stark contrast with the Soviet dogma and indoctrination, where the only acceptable official position was the Marxist/Leninism paradigm. Generations grew up deprived of freedoms of ideas and having been fed propaganda instead of history and critical thinking.

So it is with utter heartbreak and deep concern that we find the same dogma and propaganda expressed in the proposed draft of the curriculum. I cannot comprehend how such a narrow, dogmatic and biased narrative can be presented in California schools, when it should reflect rich diversity of student body and build on the enormous potential of our children. How is it possible that they will be presented with such a divisive view of the world, and how can they grow up to build a just society for all people when this curriculum fosters adversity and nourishes victimhood? I see it as a tragic thing for our children's future.

I am urging you and hoping for further revisions that will move away from divisive propaganda towards mutual respect, richness of ideas, and hope for the future.

Sincerely,

Rina Shur,

Walnut Creek, CA