

From: Jean Zeibak

Sent: Wednesday, November 11, 2020 2:07 PM

To: Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>; [emails redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Watered down Arab American lesson is relegated to the appendix.

Dear Cal Dept of Education members,

From the demands for racial justice sweeping our country it is offensive and dangerous to shunt the histories and perspectives of people of color to the sidelines. These revisions are tone-deaf to the political moment we are living in.

Young people in particular face the consequences of Islamophobia and anti Arab racism. Arab and muslim youth are simultaneously invisibilized and targeted.

Pro Israel interest groups should not define anti semitism. Definitions that name criticism of Israel as anti semitic are opposed by many jewish organizations, both in the US and internationally. These definitions violate our constitutional right to free speech their application censors virtually all criticism of Israel and advocacy for Palestinian human rights and equality. These definitions also downplay the main source of anti semitism in the United States, which is white nationalism.

You should reinsert Arab American studies in its rightful place-within the Asian American studies.

Reject debunked definitions of antisemitism that equate criticism of Israel with antisemitism.

Align all lesson plans to the guiding principles of the ethnic studies, which are anti-racist, decolonial and liberatory.

Include the Arab American lesson plan submitted to the California Department of Education by members of the original Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum advisory committee.

Please take this to heart and reinstate Arab American studies as it was first proposed before it was put in the appendix.

Thank you

Jean Zeibak