

From: Josh Molinari [email redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, January 26, 2021 11:24 AM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Hello,

My name is Josh Molinari, and I am a high school student from Maryland. You might be wondering why a teenager from Maryland would be emailing you about something going on in your state. I am here to encourage you to veto the proposed ethnic studies curriculum that I find to be extremely negligent towards Jews and their history. Let me give you my reasoning:

First off, I would like to say that I appreciate that you are actually taking effort to educate citizens about Jews, no matter how flawed the curriculum may be. Here in Maryland, we spent about 5 minutes talking about the Holocaust in school (I am currently enrolled in an AP World History class) and no time discussing any of the other struggles that have befallen the Jews throughout their centuries of existence. The fact that you're actually taking the time to discuss Jewish struggles is very important.

However, I find the way that the ethnic studies department is going about this to be, frankly, disgusting. Clearly whoever was in charge of drafting this curriculum failed to do any kind of substantial research on Jews and their current situation. Let me give you a few examples: Appendix A of the model curriculum discusses how Jews have essentially assimilated into the cultures of the nations in which they currently reside, and therefore have gained racial privilege. While I agree that racial privilege is an extremely pressing issue, especially in this day and age, I'm afraid Jews don't have much to show for in terms of it. If Jews truly did have racial privilege, the chants of "Jews will not replace us" at the 2017 Charlottesville riots and the disgusting shirts seen at the riot at the capitol, including those that said "Camp Auschwitz" and "6 Million Wasn't Enough" would not have received so much attention.

Another example of the flaws in this curriculum: One section of the proposed curriculum claims that antisemitism in America has gradually decreased since the 1940s, in the wake of the Holocaust. While I wish this was true, it couldn't be further from the truth. Look no further than the incidents occurring every day against the Jewish community during Chanukah last year. Synagogues vandalized, Jewish-owned businesses threatened, and some Jews being physically harmed (a man in Kentucky was run over during a Menorah lighting at a college). The Anti-Defamation League is currently reporting its highest number of cases of antisemitism since it was founded. All of these signs point towards an increasingly dangerous time for Jews in the US, and yet this proposed curriculum downplays this to the fullest extent.

There are several other examples of blatant ignorance in regards to the Jewish community within this proposed curriculum that I will not delve into, as I think I've gotten my point across; this curriculum is horrendous. As someone who could potentially be going to college in your state, I may have to rethink my options if this is the kind of garbage you're teaching your students. It is well known that your state is one of the most antisemitic states in the country. After reading this curriculum I can't say I'm surprised.

Being the ethnic studies department, you have a responsibility to educate the populace about the amazing diversity of our country, as well as the many struggles peoples of certain ethnic groups or nationalities may have overcome in order to get here. By passing this curriculum, you are ignoring the actual struggles of the Jewish people in the US, and are painting a fantastical picture of assimilation and happiness, which could not be further from the truth. In fact, this curriculum perpetuates the stereotypical white savior complex that many Americans have internalized, and which I'd hope that (considering you are the ethnic studies department) you are attempting to combat. This is the toughest time Jews in the states have seen in a very long time, and painting them as simply an interesting division of white people is wrong on several levels, both moral and factual. I'm not expecting you to respond to this email, however I am expecting one thing: change, both on a legislative and a social level. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Josh Molinari