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Sent: Monday, January 25, 2021 5:36 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Addressing erasure of American-Jewish experiences

Hello:

As a 20 year-old undergraduate at New York University, who was also a product of CA public education from K-12, I would like to spell out the following thoughts I have on the incoming ESMC

I urge the California Department of Education, Instructional Quality Commission, and State Board of Education to revise the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) to address the following major flaws:

- The "Guiding Values and Principles" of the ESMC should be clarified and revised to encourage critical thinking, instead of harmful political agendas. The curriculum's values and principles directly reference and are based on specific pages from a book called Education at War. The relevant section of the book encourages teachers to "develop solidarity and create linkages" with anti-Zionism, BDS, and anti-Israel narratives. One of the ESMC's guiding values is connecting to "resistance movements that struggle for social justice on the global and local levels" - language which can easily be used to justify promoting this hate in the classroom.
- The last minute addition of a lesson plan solely focused on Arab Americans is discriminatory and lacking in transparency. The curriculum should be inclusive of all [Middle Eastern communities in California](#), such as Jews, Iranians, Arabs, Kurds, Assyrian Christians, Coptic Christians, and others. There is no educational or moral justification for favoring one of these communities over all others. The ESMC should be revised to add an inclusive unit about Middle Eastern Americans, which goes through the same vetting process as the rest of the curriculum.
- Existing references to American Jews should be edited to explicitly mention the experiences of Mizrahi Jews, Jews of color, Jews from the Former Soviet Union, and other Jewish communities in California whose stories are less widely acknowledged. Furthermore, a section should be added to the ESMC covering various forms of hate, including antisemitism across the political spectrum.
- There are numerous sections of the ESMC where it is essential to expand upon or reinforce the importance of exposing students to "multiple and often competing sources of information" and ensuring that "diverse viewpoints are respected".

To fully address these flaws, I add my name in support of the specific recommendations located [here](#).

Best,

Daniel Sherman