

**From:** Kari Teweles  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 11:18 AM  
**To:** Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment for ESMC Second Field Review

To the Members of the Instructional Quality Commission and the State Board of Education,

I am writing in regards to the September 2020 version of the CA Ethnic Studies curriculum, and specifically about Appendix A - Unit 6: Irish and Jewish Americans. This curriculum is dangerous, puts the lives of Jews at greater risk, and must be changed.

I've spent hours thinking about and writing this letter and I hope you spend a couple minutes to read it in full. Thank you.

I vividly remember being the only Jew in my history class at Los Alamitos High School, sitting at my desk in the second row, briefly learning about a very watered down version of the Holocaust, as the boy who sat behind me, Sean, joked to "stop being so Jewish", and others drew swastikas on their notebooks. Los Alamitos High School also has a history of having lockers stuffed with vile antisemitic Nazi propaganda. While this was upsetting at the time, I now think of my two young daughters in this situation. Except this time, they are subjected to this type of hatred as they write a paper on their "racial privilege". And I am terrified.

This new curriculum encourages students to think about times in American history that have led to this "racial privilege" Jews now, supposedly, have. Was this when boats filled with Jewish refugees were turned away from America during the Holocaust? Or more recently, when our synagogues and Chabads have been shot up and burned down? Or something less violent, like the graffiti swastikas littering Jewish cemeteries, streets, freeways, and billboards? Or the high school students playing beer pong with the cups in the shape of a swastika in Newport Beach? Or when Orange County's Blaze Bernstein was viciously murdered for being Jewish by a boy educated in the public schools of California? Or when I was made fun of at school, and never told a teacher, because sometimes, the teachers laughed too. Or the antisemitic signs hanging from the 405 freeway in Los Angeles? I could go on...

Three years ago my family and I moved to a different area of Los Angeles, solely for the public schools, but we would never subject our children to this curriculum. It is gaslighting Jews and encouraging

teachers and students to talk about all of the “racial privilege” Jews have while completely ignoring the current climate for young Jewish students of all races in California today.

I want to leave you with this thought: a Jewish high school student having to write a report about their “racial privilege” on Friday morning and then walking past security check points, a police car, and armed guards to pray on Friday night. This is our reality.

Thank you for your consideration and I implore you to reconsider this curriculum and at the very least, remove Unit 6 of Appendix A.

Kari Feingold