

From: Steve Epner
Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 8:20 AM
To: Ethnic Studies
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Address anti-Semitism.

With anti-Semitism on the rise in the world including California, it is unconscionable not to include it's discussion for the ethnic studies model curriculum. This is a shameful and deliberate omission that should be rectified; a sin of omission.

community with entertainment, office, retail, residential, recreational, public and park use.
Crucially, Measure E is the only way for

The city of San Diego has ambitious plans to turn the Sports Arena neighborhood in the Midway District into a housing, entertainment and commercial hub.

K.C. ALFRED U-T

Mullaney is chair of Save Coastal Access — No on E, a committee formed to preserve the 30-foot coastal height limit: savecoast.org He lives in San Diego.

ANTI-SEMITISM NOT ADDRESSED ENOUGH IN ETHNIC STUDIES

BY TYLER GREGORY

Growing up in San Diego in the 1990s, I had wrongly assumed that it was one of the world's safest places to be Jewish.

My worldview changed on the last day of Passover 2019, when a White nationalist gunman attacked the Chabad of Poway, minutes away from my childhood home, resulting in the death of one and wounding of three, including the congregation's rabbi.

I was shaken to my core. How could this happen here? How can we again make San Diego safe?

Now, as the deadline for the California Department of Education to finalize an ethnic studies course for high school classrooms fast approaches, Jews find themselves out in the cold, excluded from the curriculum. I think, "Where is the justice for the Jewish community?"

In the coming months, state officials have an opportunity to bolster the much-debated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum for the state's K-12 students by including a clear and meaningful definition of anti-Semitism, the world's oldest form of hatred, and a lesson plan on the Jewish American experience.

Without their presence, the curriculum will fail in realizing its critical goal: advancing justice in the classroom for marginalized communities in the state of California. It would be tragic, and highly ironic,

if a curriculum designed to mitigate bigotry further marginalized Jewish students by denying Jewish ethnicity at a time of rising anti-Semitism and White nationalism in California and across this country.

First, some history: The initial draft of the ethnic studies curriculum both excluded Jews and anti-Semitism, and included anti-Jewish and anti-Israel components, such as the use of a noxious hip hop song, whose lyrics state, "For every free political prisoner, an Israeli colony is expanded. For each greeting, a thousand houses were demolished. They use the press so they can manufacture, but when my sentence is judged, reality presents itself."

To be clear, the latter line is an anti-Semitic trope about Jews controlling the media.

An improved second version of the curriculum suggested in early August by the state Department of Education removed the most offensive and denigrating content, but did nothing to remedy Jewish exclusion. Nor did it meaningfully define anti-Semitism beyond notionally including it.

From the start of the process to create an ethnic studies curriculum, the Jewish Community Relations (JCRC) of the San Francisco Bay Area, where I serve as executive director, has held that if the curriculum included narratives beyond the four foundational ethnic studies groups — African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans and Latinx Americans — Jewish

narratives should also appear. The latest version, made public Aug. 12, subjectively cherry-picked additional ethnic groups, yet left our community, the most targeted group for hate crimes in California, notably absent.

Unfortunately, the Poway tragedy is not an isolated incident.

According to a state report released earlier this summer, anti-Semitic hate crimes rose nearly 12 percent in California in 2019, even as hate crimes overall declined statewide by almost 5 percent.

Further, White supremacist propaganda heavily targeted the Inland Empire and Southern California as a whole in 2019, according to an annual report released by the Anti-Defamation League.

As a result of these latest trends, coupled with the lack of Jewish inclusion in the ethnic studies curriculum, our JCRC has launched an urgent campaign, #JewsNotIncluded, that specifically calls for the inclusion of a meaningful definition of anti-Semitism; no return of the derogatory language about Jews, Israelis and Israel, with guardrails in place to keep such language out of the classroom in the future; and the addition of a sample lesson reflecting the diversity of Jewish Americans.

The campaign, found online at: <https://jcrcc.org/what-we-do/public-affairs/jews-not-included/>, has already spurred thousands of people to contact state officials

For another viewpoint

To read another perspective by The San Diego Union-Tribune Community Voices Project contributor Lallia Ailali on the state's ethnic studies curriculum and its approach to Arab American and Native American populations, please visit sandiegouniontribune.com/ethnicstudiesailali. If you would like to write us a letter to the editor on this subject, please keep it to 150 words and mail it to letters@sduniontribune.com

online before today's deadline.

At the end of the day, the interests of the Jewish community and the other ethnic studies groups are aligned, for those who target one ethnic group rarely stop there. "Hate begets hate; violence begets violence," Martin Luther King Jr. famously said. It is therefore my greatest wish that our community will work hand-in-hand with our neighbors in California to advance our shared values, including in the classroom, to the great benefit, and safety, of generations to come.

Gregory is the executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, Sonoma, Alameda and Contra Costa counties. He is originally from San Diego.

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