

From: Mark, Lisa **On Behalf Of** Lisa Mark
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2019 12:52 PM
To: CFIRD
Cc: Ethnic Studies; Superintendent
Subject: Action Requested: ESMC Curriculum Changes

To Whom it May Concern:

I am extremely concerned and upset by the flawed and unbalanced Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. I whole-heartedly support teaching ethnic studies but request that you make major revisions to the ESMC, consistent with the recommendations put forth by the California Legislative Jewish Caucus, Stand With Us, Jimena, The Amcha Initiative, and other concerned organizations.

I grew up in Arizona in the 1970's, at a time when there was rampant and uncontrolled anti-Semitism. I was 11 years old when we moved and the first kid I spoke to had never met a Jewish person before. She asked to see my 'horns.' (You know, the ones that all Jews apparently have sticking out of our heads.) There were children whose parents would not let me play with them because I was Jewish. I, and the few other Jewish students at my middle and high schools were subjected to relentless harassment and bullying, for years, for our beliefs. Teachers and staff did nothing to help us. It was an awful experience and I'd hate for any other kid to have to go through it.

The ESMC curriculum affects me personally, not only by bringing up these traumatic memories of extreme anti-Semitism, but also because I had hoped that no other child would have to experience anti-Semitism, especially in this day and age. But, apparently, nothing has changed. What a travesty.

The ostensible purpose of California's new Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) is to build a shared understanding of ethnic groups' perspectives and engage minority students in school, but it is replete with anti-Semitic tropes, one-sided BDS bias, and demonization of Israel. Crucially, there is no mention of anti-Semitism. In addition, many sections in the ESMC are inaccurate, misleading and unbalanced. As the California Legislative Jewish Caucus wrote, "It would be a cruel irony if a curriculum meant to help alleviate prejudice and bigotry were instead to marginalize Jewish students and fuel hatred and discrimination against the Jewish community."

Highlights of my (and others') concerns with this one-sided, biased, and inaccurate curriculum include:

- Jews have been excluded from the ethnic groups mentioned
- Anti-Semitism has been excluded from hate crimes/discrimination even though half of religious-based hate crimes in the United States are against Jews
- The divisive BDS movement, which seeks to erase the state of Israel, is included with no balancing perspective and inaccurate 'facts'
- A song with language that suggests Jews control the media is included. I mean, really?! Do you really want to teach an entire generation of students anti-Semitic tropes?

If you've read this far, thank you. I respectfully request that you make major revisions to the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum to address these concerns.

Lisa Mark