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**Subject:** Vermont Education Quality Standards

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July 19, 2022

From: Jewish Communities of Vermont Antisemitism Task Group

Re: Vermont Education Quality Standards - July 21, 2022, SBE EQS Subcommittee Meeting

Dear SBE EQS Subcommittee Members Ms. Gleason, Ms. Kolbe, Mr. Lovett, Ms. Lucci, and Mr. Brown,

Thank you for giving Jewish Communities of Vermont an opportunity to speak at your June 30 SBE EQS Subcommittee meeting. As we mentioned in our June 24 letter, Jewish Communities of Vermont is a non-denominational organization that seeks to encourage education about and connection with Jewish Americans in our state. We see Act 1 as vital to bestow in Vermont's youth an appreciation of the history, contributions, and perspectives of ethnic groups, social groups, and other groups that have faced marginalization, discrimination, and oppression. <https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/Public%20Comment-JCVT-June%202022-with%20attachments.pdf>

Our requests regarding the Education Quality Standards (EQS) revisions center on aligning the EQS definitions with the law (Act 1), specifically:

1. Define "ethnic group" to include, at a minimum, Act 1's listed ethnicities and "groups that have been historically subject to persecution or genocide." Generalities do not give teachers sufficient guidance and will not necessarily result in instruction on the groups the Vermont Legislature specified. State standards that are specific ensure content consistency in Vermont's classrooms.

2. Define "ethnic studies" to exclude "abroad" so Vermont's teachers teach about the history, contributions, and perspectives of the many diverse ethnic and social groups residing in the United States.

1. We've attached (i) an overview with the SBE EQS Subcommittee's charge, Act 1's requirements, and background on the EQS Working Group (its leadership and sequence of events regarding its work on the definition of "ethnic group" and JCVT's touchpoints, September 2021 to date), and (ii) screenshots of the comments the Working Group Subcommittee was tasked to consider when crafting an "ethnic group" definition for your review and approval.

Please reach out before or during your July 21 meeting if you have any questions

Attachments below.

Thank you.

Yoram Samets  
JCVT Antisemitism Chair