

From: carls

Sent: Friday, February 7, 2020 4:24 AM

To: Shanine Coats

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Save ethnic studies – don't shut out Arab-American experience

Dear Instructional Quality Commission Shanine Coats,

I'm a constituent of yours and deeply concerned with reports that Arab American Studies may be cut from California's Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC), under the false premise of it not being within the four racialized groups of Ethnic Studies.

The field's leaders of color, including the Association of Asian American Studies, Asian American Studies Department Chairs, and the Save CA Ethnic Studies Coalition – are insisting Arab American Studies belongs in the curriculum, and that it remain.

As is evident in the spirit of AB2016 legislation, the California Department of Education must respect communities of color, and have deference to Ethnic Studies professors and practitioners of color for this project.

As a retired public school teacher I understand the importance of having an inclusive curriculum that teaches students about the histories and cultures of all people, and that creates empathy for the experiences of people in this country and around the world. Knowledge and genuine discussions about the contributions of people of color, including Arab Americans, is essential to creating a more understanding world. As a Jewish American I wholeheartedly support the inclusion of Arab-American studies in the curriculum.

Efforts to undermine or water-down any critical components of the draft, and of Ethnic Studies as a field must be rejected.

I know you are well-aware of the targeted attacks on Arabs and Muslims by the Trump administration, and the demonization of the struggle of migrants and people of color throughout the United States. As a sanctuary state, California should continue to be a counterweight against that trend – not serve as a stamp of approval.

Sincerely,  
Carla Schick  
Oakland, CA