

From: Hedaia Anayah  
Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2020 10:19 PM  
To: Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>  
Cc: [email redacted]  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies

Dear Instruction Quality Control Commission,

My name is Hedaia Anayah and I'm a freshman Arab student at Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill. I am emailing to affirm that Arab American studies should remain under Asian-American ethnic studies, and should not be in the appendix.

As a Palestinian Arab American, I want people to understand that my people are more than what the media will portray as us. We are not the stereotypes and misconceptions. We are here and very relevant. We are teachers, students, frontline/healthcare workers, lawyers, politicians, etc. By removing Arab American studies, you are removing the existence of people who have contributed to this society and need to be represented in a positive notion.

Growing up, I felt underrepresented in school, and when I was represented, I felt misrepresented. In high school, I was called a terrorist by many teachers, faculties, and peers. I am defined by what people see on TV and what people need to define me as will be incorporated in this new curriculum. I am a person, I am an American, and I am Arab.

Our curriculum should center Arabs, our perspectives, our narratives, and our histories of resistance, and should be created by people from our community who actually work with our community. It's about time we are represented just as much as everyone else. I believe applying this curriculum will remove the ignorance students possess about diversity and ethnicities.

Please reconsider this decision, and incorporate the demands which are:

- Include the Arab American lesson plan submitted to the California Department of Education by members of the original Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) advisory committee.
- Re-insert Arab American studies in its rightful place—within Asian American studies.
- Align all lesson plans to the guiding principles of ethnic studies, which are anti-racist, decolonial and liberatory.
- Reject debunked definitions of antisemitism that equate criticism of Israel with antisemitism.

Best,  
Hedaia Anayah