

From: nrtannous

Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2020 3:21 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public comment for the IQC 11/18

My name is Nadya Tannous. I am a Bay Area resident and previous student of Berkeley Public Schools. I am asking for you to re-insert Arab American studies in its rightful place — within Asian American studies and include the Arab American lesson plan submitted to the IQC by members of the original ESMC advisory committee. Also to include a Pacific Islander Studies lesson plan that covers the complexity and diversity of the Pacific alongside critiques of power and systems of oppression.

Anti-racism is something we must proactively build. We should not hide behind this passive rhetoric of multi-culturalism that acts as a cover for hiding from the important conversations.

As a Palestinian resident of the Bay Area with nieces and nephews in Oakland Public Schools, I am extremely concerned that all mention of Palestine and Palestinians have been erased. What does this message say to them and other Palestinian students, that there is no mention of their identity or people in this curriculum? And what message does it send to them that their teachers can't talk openly about Palestine in the classroom? Conflating criticism of Israel with anti-semitism is dishonest and it directly silences the real life experiences of Palestinians who are suffering under the policies of the Israeli state.

Where does exclusion of Palestine leave Palestinian children? Are you interested in empowering all California students or only some? Your answer will be clear.

Ethnic studies scholars agree that it's impossible to understand Arab American issues without understanding Palestine.