

From: sab em

Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 11:50 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: Superintendent; [email redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Be on the right side of history: Save Arab-American Studies!

Hello,

My name is Sabreen, an Arab Youth fighting for the dignity and strength of her community. I urge you to save Arab-American Studies and to make sure that Palestine and Palestinian people are not excluded from that. Despite growing up in what is considered a progressive district, I still faced much discrimination and challenges. Having ethnic studies taught to me when I was a high school student would've empowered me and changed the way I interact with my peoples history and also impacted the other way students interact with their Arab peers. Arabs in this country no matter how progressive a state can be, are othered and portrayed as foreigners and threats. This is also transferred in the way students interact with their Arab peers and youth. Having curriculum that is anti racist and anti colonial will help students grow to better understand people of other cultures and challenge what is popularly shown in media and supported by racist politicians. This will also empower Arab youth to be proud of their heritage and to learn about their histories here in this country too.

Ethnic studies should not be deradicalized or censored to please the interests of white supremacists. In 1968, when students at SFSU struck for ethnic studies they struck for curriculum that was explicitly anti-colonial and anti-racist, that would empower the youth, and go back to their communities to strengthen them and fight for self determination.

Palestine is an critical component of Arab American Studies and should be kept in it. We should not water down history and the struggles oppressed people face, because of critic especially critic from lobbyists and circles infamously known for supporting white supremacy and Islamophobia.

Stand on the right side of history. Stand with the youth! Stand with Black, Brown, and Indigenous Youth! Stand with Arab Youth! The youth are our future, and we should invest in empowering them.

Not telling them their cultures, histories, and identities don't matter and are "threats. A little over 2% of Arab youth reported learning about Arabs in schools. Let's change that now together by saving Arab-American Studies and ensuring that Palestine remains an important component of that.

Save Arab-American Studies!

Best,
Sabreen