

From: Christopher Wanis

Sent: Sunday, July 26, 2020 3:34 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] In Support of Palestinian Studies and the Arab American studies curriculum.

Hello,

My name is Christopher Wanis a student in California. I writing today to urge the IQC to use the CA Model Ethnic Studies Curriculum and include the proposed Arab American studies curriculum.

It is essential for California to include the Palestinian culture and history of struggle for liberation and oppression. The Palestinians are a people who have been oppressed for decades. And one of the most horrific tactics used against their people is the erasure of their history, culture, and identity. We have these tactics used against Indigenous people and Black people, where their history is ignored and erased to further their oppression.

Leaving out Palestinian culture will perpetuate this historical erasure and perpetuate the oppression of the Palestinians.

There have been attacks on the inclusion of Palestinian history and struggle as anti-Semitic. But it is not anti-Semitic to teach about the defense of human rights. Just like learning about the Civil Rights Movement and the current oppression of Black people in the US isn't anti-American, learning about Palestinian oppression and freedom movements isn't anti-Semitic. Organizations like Jewish Voice for Peace are in support of the proposed Arab American studies curriculum because they know how dangerous it is when Human Right Movements are censored.

The California Education system is seen as a model across the country for its efforts to bring about a better world through education. In this time of great xenophobia and islamophobia it is *necessary* to include the histories and current struggle of Palestinians and Arab Americans as a whole. Our students deserve to learn the truth and not have the truth be censored.

In summary I am urging that:

1. The IQC to use the CA Model Ethnic Studies Curriculum and include the proposed Arab American studies curriculum.
2. Palestinian history and current struggles be included in the curriculum
3. Arab American studies should be made in collaboration with Arab American scholars and Ethnic Studies practitioners

Sincerely,
Christopher Wanis