

From: Sami Ahmad

Sent: Wednesday, November 11, 2020 5:23 PM

To: Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>; Superintendent; [email redacted]

Cc: [email redacted]

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Arab-American studies curriculum

To whom it may concern,

I am deeply troubled by proposed changes to the California high school ethnic studies curriculum. For too long, Arab youth have learned little about their history besides offensive and racist images, caricatures, and stereotypes, and the relegation of the history of such a substantial portion of the population to the margins of your curriculum is demeaning and troubling. Arab-Americans, and especially Palestinian Americans such as myself have a right to learn our history, and its erasure based on claims of antisemitism is simply wrong. Those who misconstrue criticisms of the Israeli state as antisemitic are in fact opposed by Jewish organizations both within and outside America, and these claims in fact violate one's constitutional right to free speech since they censor any criticism of human rights violations and silence advocacy for the Palestinian human condition. Shame on you for capitulating to such special interests at a time when demands for justice and equity are cried out across this country. Shame on you for letting this bias influence the curricula of our children. They deserve to study the history, learn the facts, and think critically about the world around them. To deny them these opportunities is not only wrong, it is dangerous. I urge you to reconsider.

Respectfully,

Sami Ahmad

[phone number redacted]