

To: State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, President Linda Darling-Hammond and members of the State Board of Education, and members and staff of the Instruction Quality Commission at the California Department of Education:

I write this letter in response to the current Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) and to express grave concerns regarding the lack of Arab American Studies representation in the latest draft of the ESMC. The relegation of Arab American Studies to the appendix of the curriculum is unacceptable, and goes against the assurances that Superintendent Tony Thurmond made to Arab American Studies educators and community.

This is an erasure of Arab American voices and experiences that is truly unacceptable. I therefore strongly urge the commissions to address these issues by doing the following actions:

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

As a Pacific Islander and educator within Pacific Islander Studies, I know firsthand how indebted our field of knowledge is to Arab and Arab American narratives, knowledges, and histories. In the fight to include Pacific Islands Studies in this curriculum, I cannot advocate for my people's representation without also standing in solidarity with Arab American teachers, organizers, students, and community to demand that Arab American Studies be included in this curriculum.

Without Arab American Studies with histories and content inclusive of Palestine, we do not have an Ethnic Studies curriculum that speaks back to power, revitalizes our communities, or provides visions of just and sovereign futures. We owe our students an education that draws from Arab American narratives, histories, and knowledge.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [lkava@sfsu.edu](mailto:lkava@sfsu.edu) to provide further information.

Sincerely,



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