

**From:**

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2020 7:55 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies; [emails redacted]

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Include Arab American Studies in CA Ethnic Studies Curriculum

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

I am a student at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law. I urge that course outlines and lesson plans on Arab Americans be returned to the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. In addition, I urge that outlines and lesson plans on Pacific Islanders, Cambodian Americans, Native Californians and African Americans -- which were removed from the initial draft -- be reincorporated into the Model Curriculum.

It is 2020. We should not be writing emails to the California Department of Education advocating for the inclusion of Black, Indigenous and people of color. Arab- and Pacific Islander-led community organizations should not have to mount mass campaigns advocating that they should be represented. It is unbecoming of us as Californians to witness a curriculum war on if Arab Americans or Pacific Islanders are AAPI enough to count. They matter. They are part of our common family. We should embrace them. We should listen to them.

I urge a Model Curriculum that includes Pacific Islander and Arab American studies course outlines and includes Palestine in Arab American studies. And I would like to see the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Advisory Committee reconstituted -- the Model Curriculum needs more new content for a variety of communities of color.

Finally, I would like to tell my children that post 9/11, we as Californians have grown out of Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism. We gain nothing by continuing to erase Arab Americans, and we lose a profound opportunity to stand for racial justice.

All best,  
Alex Mabanta  
Berkleley Law student

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