

**From:** eliana nedal

**Sent:** Saturday, July 25, 2020 11:21 AM

**To:** Ethnic Studies; Superintendent; [email redacted]

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Save Arab American Studies!: A Call to Action

Dear people who are capable of change,

As a devoted and involved member of the American community in California, my identity as an Arab is always misrepresented, misinterpreted, and ignored. I graduated high school this year with really strong bonds with friends, teachers, and staff members; however, when it comes down to it, the amount of surprise and ignorance that I experienced from the same people when I first came here sophomore year was tremendous. Comments like, "how exotic!", "you ride camels around, right?" "Aren't you supposed to be Muslim?", "You have different numbers in you language? How stupid!" and many many more have shaped who I am today. My fifteen-year-old self was not aware of the fact that I know more about them than they know about me. Although diversity and representation is preached, it is not embraced. The main reason for this lack of embrace and knowledge is a result of the non-inclusion of Arab American Studies in the system, therefore, I call you all who are capable of change to put yourself in the shoes of the thousands of Arab American students that walk the hallways without being able to fully embrace their own identity because it is not correctly and barely taught in the classrooms. Arab American history is rich with journeys, sacrifices, pioneers, activists, and so much more that contributed the modern day California and America that we see now. Change is needed, but it can only happen when you acknowledge and accept correct and impactful history. I hope my words communicate our goal.

Regards,

Eliana Nassar