

From: Jennifer Gonzalez

Sent: Monday, August 10, 2020 3:19 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Arab American and Pacific Islander: inclusion in Ethnic Studies

Dear California Department of Education,

I am writing in support of the effort to develop a broader framework for the model curriculum in ethnic studies. Specifically, it is important for the state of California to recognize the complex diversity of its wonderful population, and to emphasize the study of large and important minority communities whose heritage is frequently overlooked in ethnic studies courses. More should be done to ensure that Pacific Islander history and that of Arab Americans is included in the next model curriculum for the state.

As a professor of mixed-Mexican ancestry, I can say that I grew up at a time in California where the curriculum represented very little of my own heritage--and was impoverished because of it. That has changed, fortunately, for Mexican Americans. Now, however, I must speak on behalf of others who also need to find their histories and traditions, languages and cultural frameworks acknowledged and addressed in classrooms across the state. This is not merely for the sake of fairness, but also for the better future of a state in which all communities are valued and respected.

Sincerely yours,
Jennifer Gonzalez

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pronouns: she/her/hers

We have more possibilities available in each moment than we realize.
-Thich Nhat Hanh