

From: Carls NY

Sent: Sunday, August 9, 2020 4:46 PM

To: Ethnic Studies

Cc: [emails redacted]; Superintendent

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposed to the revised Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Dear Committee members and educators,

We need an Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum that centers the narratives of Black, Indigenous and other people of color, and that makes connections between the movements for liberation in the United States with international movements against colonialism. Now, more than ever, facing COVID-19 and increased attacks from a president who supports and engenders attacks on Arab peoples, Muslims, immigrants from Central America and all people of color, we now an Ethnic Studies that fosters a deeper understanding of the movements for transforming our racist systems and institutions

Ethnic Studies in not just part of history or social studies; it has a unique methodology and background founded in the student movements of the late sixties. Ethnic Studies experts should be the people working on the curriculum and formulating activities that help students think critically about race, ethnicity, oppression and the movements for change. Asian American studies experts support the inclusion of Arab-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies in the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum. Yet, both Arab Americans and Pacific Islanders were left out of the revised curriculum.

As a teacher I saw that without appropriate education Arab American and Pacific Islander students were erased in the school culture and the studies in the average classroom. Students who experience a genuine Ethnic Studies Curriculum not only feel more pride in their own cultures, they also better understand the complex ways in which racism has been fostered in the world and the U.S., and methods for transforming racist structures. Students in Ethnic Studies have more success in school and in academics, and therefore, in their lives.

I demand that you reconvene the original committee of authors of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum in the next round of revisions through the State Department of Education. I also demand that Arab American and Pacific Islander studies be included. The voices of communities of color should be central to the formation of a curriculum serving the needs of our California students. We would be remiss, as adult educators, if we do not act to restore Ethnic Studies to its original principles and intent. California should be a leader for the entire country in creating a model curriculum that is responsive to the needs of our communities of color. s

Sincerely,
Carla Schick
Oakland, CA