

From: Blake Adham

Sent: Wednesday, September 30, 2020 11:59 PM

To: Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Commentary

Hello,

My name is Blake Adham and I am a Husband and Father raising a child who will attend public schools in the Westminster Unified School District. I myself matriculated through multiple School Districts in Southern California growing up and graduated from a California Public High School. My Father is a Lebanese Immigrant who fled Lebanon to escape a Civil War and was naturalized as an American Citizen. My Mother is a natural born American Citizen with multigenerational ties to the United States of America.

In the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum, I would like to see the following:

- Definition of Arab Americans which excludes any reference to religion or religious movements (e.g. Islam, Christianity, Judaism, etc...)
 - Religion does not identify the ethnicity or national origin of an Arab American.
- Inclusion of lessons on the contributions of Arab Americans to American Society and Culture, specifically focusing on ways in which these contributions have positively affected life for Californians.
 - Politicians like Darrell Issa, Justin Amash, Rashida Tlaib, James Abourezk, and more
 - Entrepreneurs like Steve Jobs (Founder of Apple), Said Hilal (Applied Medical Resources), Mohamed Hashish (Inventor of the Abrasive Waterjet)
 - Entertainers and Entertainment Executives like Casey Kasem, Ahmet Ertegun, Freddie Mercury, Shakira, etc...
 - Etc....
- Discussion of the stereotypes associated with Arab Americans and the increased anti-Arab sentiment after the Terrorist Attacks of 9/11/2001
 - Redefining what people think an Arab American looks or acts like
 - Explaining why it's wrong and dangerous to blame a group of people for the actions and crimes of a few individual

I also don't support the dismissal of, or attempts to silence, discussions on controversial movements such as the Black Panthers, Nazis, White Supremacy Groups, or the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement (these are just a few examples.) I think dissenting viewpoints are worth hearing and deserve inclusion in this curriculum.

Thank you for reading this email and for your support in creating this important curriculum.

Best Regards,

Blake Adham