

From: Rasha Anayah

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 10:28 AM

To: Ethnic Studies; Superintendent; [emails redacted]

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

To whom it may concern,

I am emailing to extend my support for including Arab American and Pacific Islander Studies in CA Ethnic Studies Curriculum. I am a former student of the SRVUSD school district as well as an alumna from UC Berkeley. Currently, I am a PhD candidate at Johns Hopkins University.

The need for this programming is essential for students of the public school system and as a former student of that system, I cannot even imagine how critical it would have been for me to learn my own histories at a young age. Diversity and inclusion efforts at all levels of academia and industry mean little when there is not a significant understanding of the context in which our communities are living.

Ethnic studies was first structured after the critical student strikes of 1969 in which students demanded their right to education on their histories. Ethnic studies has been linked to positive personal, social, and academic outcomes for students and it would be an insult to that history to purposely exclude Arab American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies from that tradition. In the post-9/11 era, exacerbated by Trump's Muslim ban, Arab American students are desperately in need of curriculum that reflects their histories and current realities.

To that end, I demand that:

1. The original committee of writers and experts reconvene to revise the original Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC). Ethnic Studies scholars and teachers are the experts on Ethnic Studies curriculum and pedagogy. Arab American scholars and teachers are the experts on Arab American curriculum and pedagogy
2. Pass an ESMC that includes Pacific Islander and Arab American studies course outlines and includes Palestine in Arab American studies.
3. Maintain the Ethnic Studies framework—with disciplinary knowledge, language, and pedagogy. Don't dilute it or convert it to a different field (i.e., multicultural studies, diversity studies, or area studies).
3. Work within clearcut structures for accountability, transparency, and consensus-building. Center those structures on Ethnic Studies practitioners of communities of color and Native peoples throughout the entire model curriculum process, up to ratification.

Sincerely,
Rasha Anayah