

From: Malaya Tuyay
Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2020 11:32 PM
To: [emails redacted]
Cc: [emails redacted]; Ethnic Studies; Superintendent
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Oakland Save Ethnic Studies

Dear Oakland Board Members,

I urge you to put "Students First" by supporting the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum led by scholars of color from across California. Oakland is exactly the kind of city that should stand up for our underrepresented communities.

Ethnic Studies has always been about empowering students of color who are marginalized and minimized by our curriculum. We need to bring this conversation back to the focus of Students First, one of our Core OUSD Values. Our white students greatly benefit from having these critical conversations about race, so that all Oaklanders can build skills to navigate our society and build stronger communities and neighborhoods.

Ethnic/Pacific Islander/Arab American/Central American Studies is important to me because I didn't have access to this kind of learning growing up. I was never given the opportunity to learn the strength in my own hxstory and that led to a lot of internalized racism. I was never introduced to the power of my own roots because I was only taught stories of white communities. When I finally accessed ethnic studies in college (which many people do not have the privilege of accessing) I was able to learn so much about myself, my community, and how we can all better work together. Learning our own hxstories at a young age is so important to the development of young peoples' self worth. Learning the hxstories of different experiences around us helps young people build an empathetic and compassionate understanding of their peers and community.

We need Ethnic Studies and we must have these conversations to address racial tensions in our community, so that we can move toward healing, understanding, and solidarity across all of our cultures.

Please vote YES, thank you!

Malaya Tuyay, ally living in Melrose neighborhood / district 5