

From: JWoo

Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2020 2:39 PM

To: [emails redacted]

Cc: Ethnic Studies

Subject: [EXTERNAL] In Support of Resolution 75 – 19/20 re: Ethnic Studies

Hello Oakland Unified School Board Members,

I am a teacher in OUSD, and I stand in solidarity with the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum draft as created by Ethnic Studies teachers, professors and educators of color from across the state.

We need more resources, curricula and support to better reflect our incredibly diverse student population in Oakland. Our Arab American, Pacific Islander and Central American student populations are significant and growing in OUSD, and they deserve to see themselves reflected in our classroom content. Our staff and other students should also learn this history. Our history textbooks are outdated, insufficient and continue to be far too Eurocentric, and sometimes offensive or minimizing to communities of color.

Ethnic Studies has been important to my professional growth and efficacy as a teacher in Oakland for the past decade. I was trained in teaching English and History, and the most common piece of feedback I received from my students was that history was depressing because of the genocide, trauma, and setbacks to equality that we learned about. The OUSD Ethnic Studies Resolution that you passed in 2015, and the professional development that accompanied that resolution helped me improve my teaching practice. It provided a framework to guide me in transforming my curriculum so that my students understood not only the historical oppression, but also individual and community resistance and resilience. It made me a more effective teacher for which you awarded me the honor of Teacher of the Year in 2018, and it made my students more empowered critical thinkers. The California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum would extend the groundbreaking work we have done in Oakland to meet the needs of our diverse student populations and fill in curriculum gaps that currently exist so that all our students can truly see themselves reflected in the curriculum.

Please vote yes on the proposed resolution by Directors Torres, Eng and Hinton to show OUSD's support for Ethnic Studies and our diverse students!

Thank You,
Jah-Yee Woo
Teacher & Oakland Resident
Oakland Tech
Districts 1 & 2