

From: Deema T. Hindawi
Sent: Tuesday, July 28, 2020 1:50 PM
To: Ethnic Studies
Cc: [emails redacted]; Superintendent
Subject: [EXTERNAL] SAVE ARAB AMERICAN STUDIES

Hello,

My name is Deema Hindawi, I just graduated from Humboldt State University with a degree in Ethnic Studies, and was raised in the SFUSD school district. As an Arab youth, I didn't see myself in school, and never did I hear a teacher say Palestine in my K-12 education. In high school, I was lucky enough to be graduating the first year that Wallenberg created an Ethnic Studies elective and that changed my life, but still I learned close to nothing about being Arab. I loved everything we learned in that class, but I still felt somewhat invisible. When I told someone that I was half Jordanian during my freshman year of high school, he was super excited that they named a country after Micheal Jordan and even the teacher laughed. In middle school I was often called a terrorist and they knew nothing else of what it was to be an Arab. In elementary school I was the Indian kid because no one knew what an Arab was and it was easier to just ignore that part of me because unlike my sisters I was too dark to be white and didn't quite look like anything. I support including Arab American studies within the rubric of Asian American studies in this era of Islamophobia and xenophobia, in this we must include history and current struggles in Palestine be include because it is not anti-Semitic to do so. These revisions that affect Arab American studies should be made in collaboration with Arab American scholars and Ethnic Studies practitioners.

Best,
Deema Hindawi
San Francisco, CA