

From: Carla S

Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2020 9:28 PM

To: [email redacted]

Cc: [email redacted]; Ethnic Studies; Superintendent

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support for an inclusive Ethnic Studies curriculum

Dear Director London,

As a longtime Oakland resident and a veteran 30 year public school teacher, I know the value of having a strong model

Ethnic Studies Curriculum to improve the learning environment for all students. Oakland needs to have a model curriculum that will empower the majority of students who are students of color. But in the struggle against the deleterious effects of white supremacy white students will also benefit from ethnic studies.

As a Jewish-American I know that the current curriculum reflects the history of Ashkenazi Jews or European Jews. Students of color rarely see themselves in the curriculum in a systemic manner. Ethnic studies centers the experiences of people of color in a way that has not been done before, and is essential for creating a critical thinking curriculum.

Another goal of the model Ethnic Studies curriculum is to create a safe learning environment for all. After 9/11 I witnessed how my Arab-American students were ostracized and called "terrorists" by their peers with whom they had studied all their lives. An Ethnic Studies curriculum that highlighted the history, culture, and accomplishments of Arab people and Arab-Americans would counter the dominate narrative and provide a way to challenge stereotypes.

Our core values in Oakland is to honor the contributions of all people and to create an environment that empowers all students to learn about each other's history and culture. 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.

I urge you to vote YES on supporting the California Ethnic Studies curriculum which so many teachers worked on to improve our students education.

Thank you,

Carla Schick

Retired public school teacher, Hayward USD

Rockridge, Oakland