

From: Erika Ramirez

Sent: Thursday, August 13, 2020 10:01 AM

To: Superintendent <Superintendent@cde.ca.gov>; [email redacted]; Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>

Cc: [email redacted]

Subject: Include Arab American Studies in CA Ethnic Studies Curriculum

To whom it may concern:

As a product of California public schooling and a daughter to immigrant parents whose family has served in the US military I urge the board to not only include Arab American Studies in CA ethnic studies curriculum but also **reconvene the original committee of writers and experts 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. I am demanding to continue including both Arab American and Pacific Islander studies in the revisions.

- It's never been clearer how **important** Ethnic Studies is. The racial disparities in the impact of Covid-19, the xenophobic targeting of Asian Americans as “vectors” of disease, and the national uprising in response to the murder of George Floyd point to the need for anti-racist education: All students need Ethnic Studies in their K-12 curriculum to build empathy, unity and solidarity with each other, strengthening our movements for justice.
- The ESMC is structured around the core pillars developed by the founders of Ethnic Studies in 1969: American Indian studies, Africana/Black studies, Chicanx/Latinx studies, and Asian American studies. Following a decades-long tradition in higher education, the ESMC includes Arab American studies within Asian American studies. Leading Asian American scholars, including the National Association of Asian American studies, have issued statements defending the inclusion of Arab American studies in the CA ESMC.
- Ethnic Studies has been linked to increases in positive personal, academic, and social outcomes for students.
- 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.
- [TURATH](#) (Teaching Understanding and Representing Arabs Throughout History) is a 2020 report researched and written by the teenage members of Arab Youth Organizing (AYO). According to AYO's findings, more than 66% of the students surveyed said they received most of their

information on Arabs and/or Muslims from the internet or television; only 2.3% learned about Arabs and/or Muslims at school.

The proposed revisions published are devoid of the foundational values and pedagogy of Ethnic Studies. Furthermore, I find it unacceptable that Arab American and Pacific Islander content has been removed.

Thank you,
Erika Ramirez
Gabriela USA